

MARION DEAN ROSS CHAPTER REPORT OF THE 2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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The Marion Dean Ross/Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians held its Annual Conference October 12, 13, and 14, 2007 in Corvallis, Oregon, on the campus of Oregon State University. The conference was attended by sixty-eight members and guests from varied parts of British Columbia, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and California. The organizing theme of the conference was "Stewardship and Sustainability: Shaping Cultural Landscapes in the Twenty-first Century." Excursions to rural sites outlying Corvallis offered opportunities for viewing paradigms of sustainability in cultural resource management. Local Chairman BA Beierle was supported by Associate Coordinator Elisabeth Potter, Chapter Treasurer Shirley Courtois and other officers along with nine cooperating host organizations and agencies. .

Pre-conference Excursion

Friday afternoon's featured excursion was an arm's-length tour of the Hull-Oakes Lumber Company mill located in the foothills of the Coast Range. The last of the steam-powered long-and-large lumber manufactories operating commercially in the Pacific Northwest, the Hull-Oakes mill supplies custom long lengths for varied purposes, including restoration of historic vessels and buildings. The tour was launched by industrial historian George Wisner and led by company employees. Conferees were greeted also at the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, where they inspected a settlement-era farmhouse and a historic hunting lodge and associated barn that are maintained as integral features of the refuge headquarters. .

Opening Session

The conference opened formally on Friday evening in Oregon State University's Memorial Union with a reception and two special presentations. University Archivist Lawrence Landis discussed the career of Portland architect John V. Bennes, who was campus architect from 1907 to 1941. William G. Robbins, the University's Emeritus Distinguished Professor of History, discussed market-related threats to natural resources and public lands and the effects of shifting land-use policies in the Pacific Northwest.

General Session

Six papers were presented by member scholars during the Saturday morning session. Leonard Eaton, Emeritus Professor of Architecture, University of Michigan, considered architectural application of the "ideogram" concept advanced by Harvard University professor Kenneth J. Conant. Martin Segger, Adjunct Professor of the Fine Arts Faculty, University of Victoria, illustrated the career of 19th Century English

architect Richard Roskell Bayne in Colonial India. Anne Lawrason Marshall, Associate Professor, University of Idaho Department of Architecture and Interior Design, examined content of a design project resulting in Stastny/Brun Architects' Huhugam Heritage Center in the Gila River Indian community of Arizona.

David Pinyerd, principal of Historic Preservation Northwest Consulting, described the design and function of station buildings of the U. S. Lifesaving Service on the Oregon coast. Architectural conservator Alfred Staehli, FAIA, considered the role of the Federal Housing Authority in postwar home building and the influence of G.I. dream houses on popular builders' homes following the Second World War, .

The final paper was presented by Melissa Stoller, candidate for a Master's degree in Historic Preservation at the University of Oregon. Ms. Stoller considered how interior spaces were conceived, built, and reshaped in the settlement-era house of Thomas and Walter Monteith in Albany, Oregon. Her thesis project is expected to become the basis for a new interpretive plan for the popular house museum. As the conference Lovett Scholar, Ms. Stoller was granted an award from the Chapter fund supporting the participation of younger scholars that was established by Wendell Lovett and Grant Hildebrand in 1996..

New Books by Chapter Authors

A central feature of the display of recent books by Chapter authors was A Greek Temple in French Prairie: The William Case House, French Prairie, Oregon 1858-59, newly completed by Grant Hildebrand and Miriam Sutermeister and published under Chapter copyright as the latest educational project.

General Meeting and Election of Officers

Martin Segger presided at the annual luncheon meeting of the Chapter during which the following were elected to serve two-year terms: Edward Teague, president; Phillip Mead, vice-president; Bernadette Niederer, secretary; and Shirley Courtois, treasurer. Jeannette Reynolds was called to continue as membership coordinator, and David Pinyerd subsequently assumed responsibility for the Chapter newsletter. The following were named regional delegates to the board of directors: Martin Segger, Harold Kalman, Caroline Swope, and J. Philip Gruen,

Other formalities included the presentation of framed certificates and gifts of appreciation to outgoing President Martin Segger and Newsletter Editor/Webmaster Helen Edwards, both of whom had served three consecutive terms in their respective roles.

Saturday Afternoon Tours

Saturday afternoon's schedule included a walking tour of the Oregon State University campus led by University Archivist Lawrence Landis and a tour of the downtown historic district of Corvallis, the Benton County seat. The downtown tour led by Mary Gallagher, Curator of History and Research for the Benton County Historical Society, culminated in a top-to-bottom inspection of the Benton County Courthouse (1887-1889) Oregon's oldest courthouse in continuous use by local government.

Saturday Awards Banquet and Keynote Address

The University's Memorial Union was the venue for the Chapter Awards Banquet, during which Shirely Courtois, Kenneth Guzowski, and Jeannette Reynolds were presented with Marion Dean Ross Distinguished Service Awards.

Speaker of honor at the banquet was Robert Melnick, FASLA, Emeritus Dean, University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts, and present Interim Director of the University of Oregon Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. Having lately served as Visiting Senior Program Officer for The Getty Foundation in Los Angeles, Professor Melnick was able to exercise one of his areas of special interest by overseeing a three-year grant program for preserving the cultural landscapes of college campuses throughout the country. His remarks illuminating the theme of the conference were delivered under the title "Caring for American Campuses: Stewardship Lessons from the Getty."

Sunday Caravan Tour

The focus of Sunday's exit tour was the historic archaeological site of Fort Hoskins, a U. S. Army boundary post on the Coast Indian Reservation established in 1856. David Brauner of the Oregon State University Department of Anthropology undertook the archaeological investigations and spearheaded efforts to bring the landscape into public ownership. At the place now maintained by the Benton County Parks Department as Fort Hoskins Historic Park, Dr. Brauner guided conferees across the contours of the site, explaining interpretive and development plans that include the full span of land use, from Native American and settler contact times to post-military phases. The conference concluded with a box lunch in the park's spacious picnic shelter and overlook.