

THIS PLACE

**Celebrating the 2025 Grant
Recipients of the Valerie
Sivinski Fund**

**Racial Restrictive Covenants
in Washington State**

**Makers on the Tide:
Earl & Floyd Willits and Their
Remarkable Canoes**

GOLDFINCH STANDARD

Best Moments in Preservation from 2024



**WASHINGTON TRUST
FOR HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

THIS PLACE

Winter 2025

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Cover: The inclusion of Percival Landing Park in Olympia in the national Network to Freedom is one of our Goldfinch Standards for 2024. Photo courtesy of Experience Olympia.

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The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit organization that works to advocate for and preserve Washington State’s historic and cultural places.

Here are just a few of the programs we operate:



WASHINGTON STATE
MAIN STREET
PROGRAM



MARITIME
WASHINGTON
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



YOUTH
HERITAGE
PROJECT



THIS
PLACE
MAGAZINE



VALERIE
SIVINSKI
FUND



Washington's **MOST
ENDANGERED
PLACES**

GET INVOLVED

MARCH 3-6
National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week
Washington, D.C.

We’re excited to head to D.C. for National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week in March! At Preservation Advocacy Week, Preservation Action and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers organize in-depth preservation policy trainings and briefings, exclusive tours, networking opportunities, and congressional office visits to advocate for funding and legislation that supports historic preservation. If you’re interested in joining us this year or in future years, email info@preservewa.org ASAP to let us know!

preservewa.org/public-policy

JULY 14-17
Youth Heritage Project
North Bend & Snoqualmie, WA

All high school age students are invited to get hands-on with history this summer in the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area! From July 15-18, students will have the chance to explore the relationship between people and nature in the area, including Tribal sites and uses; the impacts of logging, railroads, and hydroelectric dams; and today’s tourism economy. Partners include the National Park Service, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and the Snoqualmie Tribe. Youth Heritage Project is FREE OF COST for accepted student participants. We are also seeking adult educators and professionals to serve as teacher-mentors. Sign up for the YHP newsletter on our website and follow @preservewa on social media to be the first to learn when the application opens!

preservewa.org/yhp

WELCOME, NEW WASHINGTON TRUST BOARD MEMBERS

At the end of 2024, we said goodbye to three much-loved board members whose terms of service had ended: Logan Camporeale of Spokane, Anneka Olson of Seattle, and Stephanie Toothman of Seattle. All three have been critical resources and supporters of our organization for the past several years, and our deepest gratitude goes to all of them for their longtime service and commitment to the Washington Trust.

At our Annual Members Meeting in Walla Walla last October, our incoming board members for 2025 were announced. One face is familiar: Michael Walker of Vancouver, who had served in our one-year Young Professionals board role, is beginning his first full three-year term of service. Three faces are new to our organization: Autumn Adams of Ellensburg, Karen Fraser of Olympia, and Janet Lee of Seattle.

New Board Members:



Autumn Adams of Ellensburg serves in our Young Professional board position. A member of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Autumn was a McNair Scholar at Central Washington University, where she studied anthropology. In 2019, she was named one of five Champions for Change by the

Aspen Institute's Center for Native American Youth. She recently graduated from law school at Arizona State University, where she earned a certificate in Federal Indian Law, and is currently employed as the Indigenous Rights Fellow at Amnesty International. She plans to work for a law firm that practices in the areas of cultural resources and Indian Law. In joining the Washington Trust board of directors, she hopes to lend her perspective as an Indigenous woman to the organization's historic and cultural preservation work.



Karen Fraser is a native Washingtonian, born and raised in Seattle and now a resident of Olympia. She graduated from Roosevelt High School and the University of Washington before beginning her political career in Lacey as the first woman to serve on the city council and then as the first woman mayor during

the 1970s. She was then elected to two terms as Thurston County Commissioner, the second woman to hold that position, and elected as the first woman president of the Washington State Association of

Counties. Karen then took her public service to the state level, representing District 22 (the greater Olympia area) in the Washington State House of Representatives (1989-1993) and the Washington State Senate (1993 to 2017). In the Senate, she held many senior leadership positions and was actively involved in state-level international relations. She is a trustee and former chair at The Evergreen State College and serves on a variety of nonprofit boards.



Janet Lee is a planner and community advocate based in Seattle. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania with a master's degree in landscape architecture and regional planning, Janet worked at the University of Washington's Green Futures Lab and the City of Redmond before joining the King County

Executive's Office as a Project Manager and Senior Planner. With a deep commitment to equity and a passion for reshaping communities through strategic planning and policy, Janet has published articles about community engagement, civic planning, and affordable housing and has won national awards from the American Planning Association and American Society of Landscape Architects. She hopes to use her board service to help conserve our region's post-pandemic cultural landscape and creative economy for future generations. 🌱

WELCOME, NEW WASHINGTON TRUST STAFF

We're thrilled to share that the Washington Trust team has added two new staff members. A big welcome to Josh Cleveland, our new Neighborhoods Liaison, and Liz Arias, our new Main Street Representation & Belonging Research Intern! Both join us to pilot exciting new projects. Thanks to funding from the City of Spokane, Josh will work to support district improvements and organizational development in four of Spokane's historic neighborhood business districts. And thanks to funding from the Washington State Historical Society's Diversity in Local History Program, Liz will work to collect data about underrepresented communities' sense of belonging in Main Streets across the state.

New Staff Members:



Josh Cleveland centers his work around four vibrant neighborhood business districts within the city of Spokane: Hillyard, South Perry, North Monroe, and Garland. In partnership with the City of Spokane, he focuses on collaborative work to create sustainable solutions to improve and strengthen these vibrant districts.

A lifelong Washington resident and a proud Spokane resident for nearly 20 years, Josh brings a wealth of experience to this role. With a background in higher education development, management, event planning and coaching, and a passion for vibrant and equity-minded community building, he excels at building strong relationships and supporting sustainable, human-centered initiatives. Josh also holds degrees from Whitworth University and Princeton Theological Seminary. Beyond his full-time professional life, Josh is an active member of the Spokane community, enjoying water-wise gardening, local arts and culture, and exploring the region with his family.



As the Main Street Representation & Belonging Research Intern, **Liz Arias** supports efforts to amplify diverse voices and histories within Washington's Main Street communities. She assists with research and storytelling initiatives that center equity and inclusion in heritage preservation.

Originally from Grand Rapids, Michigan, Liz earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Economy and Global History from The Evergreen State College. They have contributed to projects like "Olympia's Hidden Histories Walking Tours," which explored local anti-war activism, and facilitated workshops on food sovereignty and cultural competency with Thurston Thrives. Liz is deeply committed to social and environmental justice, using their work to inspire sustainable, community-driven change. 🌱

THE GOLDFINCH STANDARD

Best Moments in Preservation from 2024

As a new year begins, we at the Washington Trust reflect on the successes of 2024 and celebrate the progress that preservation as a statewide movement has made. In honor of the Washington State bird, the American goldfinch, here are the Goldfinch Standards for 2024! We salute these standout achievements in historic preservation from the past year and hope they serve as inspiration for future efforts.

Walla Walla Hosts Statewide PLACES Conference

2024 was the first year that the annual conference formerly known as RevitalizeWA debuted as PLACES. The conference took place in Walla Walla in October—coinciding with the Washington State Main Street Program and Downtown Walla Walla Foundation's 40th anniversary years. (We personally think both have never looked better!) PLACES turned out to be our best-attended conference to date, attracting 385 registrants and generating about \$200,000 in local economic impact. The economic ripple will almost certainly grow into the future: almost half of conference attendees had never visited Walla Walla and expressed a strong interest in returning. The Washington State Main Street Program is a program of the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation.

City of Seattle Conducts Survey on Disability Activism History

In 2024, the Historic Preservation Program within the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods undertook a first-of-its-kind historic context study of Seattle's disability activism history. Intended as an inclusive and intersectional exploration of disability activism in Seattle and the places connected to those stories, the historic context study is a first step to integrating the stories of people with disabilities into the city's landmark lists and preservation efforts. By providing an accessible history and context, the project aims to make it easier for community members to advocate for these places to tell their stories.

Julia Butler Hansen House Added to the National Register of Historic Places

Built in 1867 as the town of Cathlamet was first being settled, the Julia Butler Hansen House is the oldest house in Wahkiakum County. For more than 50 years, it was the home of Wahkiakum County's most prominent citizen, Julia Butler Hansen, one of the most powerful and remarkable female politicians in Washington's history. Hansen served nine years on the Cathlamet Town Council, 21 years in the state House of Representatives, and 14 years in the United

States House of Representatives. (Then-Senator John F. Kennedy even visited her home in the 1950s!) In 2024, the Julia Butler Hansen was officially added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Washington Trust Awarded Paul Bruhn Grant

In 2024, when the National Park Service announced the latest round of grantees for its prestigious Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants, the Washington Trust was among them—the only West Coast organization included among the year's grantees! Through the grant, the Washington Trust will create a subgranting program supporting preservation projects in communities threatened by sea level rise and king tides. Over the next few years, grant funds will be distributed to projects in rural areas along Washington's coast, helping private and public property owners, government entities (including city, county, port, and Tribal governments), and nonprofit organizations to protect their historic buildings from the effects of damaging tidal events.

Yakima's Fruit Row Historic District Added to the National Register of Historic Places

Yakima's Historic Fruit Row is a collection of buildings along First Avenue that served as the primary storage, packing, and distribution hub for the agricultural industry in Yakima from the 1890s through the 1950s—at a time when the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway to the valley revolutionized the packing and shipping of the region's significant harvests. In 2024, the City of Yakima, with support from the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, successfully nominated the Fruit Row Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination helps to memorialize this important chapter of Yakima's history, while opening up opportunities for rehabilitation support and tax incentive programs for the remaining historic warehouses.



Left: The Julia Butler Hansen House in Cathlamet. Photo courtesy of the Wahkiakum County Eagle.

Doors Open Launches at 4Culture

2024 marked the first year that funds began to be collected from the new 0.1% sales tax increase in King County. Those funds have fueled the launch of Doors Open, a new cultural access program that will support King County arts, heritage, science, and historic preservation nonprofits, administered by 4Culture. In December, 4Culture announced the first round of grant recipients (including the Washington Trust, Historic Seattle, and other preservation organizations). Where previously, 4Culture's grant monies ranged from about \$10 million to \$15 million per year, with the addition of Doors Open Funds, the agency will award \$70.1 million across 720 organizations in 2025.



Above: Yakima's Historic Fruit Row in the 1920s. Photo courtesy of the City of Yakima.



Left: Attendees celebrate the opening of the PLACES Conference in Walla Walla in October 2024. Photo courtesy of Sydnee More Photography.

The Bush School’s Gracemont Alumni Hall Restored

The Bush School is an independent private school in the Denny-Blaine neighborhood of Seattle with more than 700 students in grades K-12. The school's Gracemont Alumni Hall is a historic mansion designed and built in 1915 by Kirtland Cutter (the same architect who designed the Stimson-Green Mansion). Now a City of Seattle landmark, the 12,000-square-foot building underwent a major renovation and seismic retrofit over nearly two years, led by the Rafn Company and SHKS Architects. The project included restoration of the building's original exterior masonry, ornate interior ceilings and walls, and historic woodwork throughout the building, as well as new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, safety, and energy upgrades. In fall 2024, the project was awarded with Historic Seattle's Outstanding Stewardship Award.

Parkland Community Association Takes Ownership of Parkland School

Built in 1908, the Parkland School in Pierce County was added to our Most Endangered Places list in 2022, when its owner Pacific Lutheran University sought to delist the building from the Pierce County Register of Historic Places and apply for its demolition as a part of a sale agreement to developers. In response, local advocates formed the Parkland Community Association, which began raising awareness and funding to save the school. Thanks to private donations; grants from the Pierce County Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission, Washington Trust, and National Trust for Historic Preservation; and a \$500,000 state appropriation, in May 2024 the Parkland Community Association signed papers with PLU to close on the purchase of the building, which will be used as a community center.



Right: Aerial view of the historic North Monroe Business District in Spokane. Photo courtesy of Rogue Heart Media.



Colfax Downtown Association Launches Small Business Incubator

Colfax—population 2,700—is a Washington Main Street Community with big goals to support its local entrepreneurs. In 2024, after being awarded a \$2.3 million grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce's Small Business Innovation Fund, the Colfax Downtown Association purchased and renovated two historic buildings along its Main Street to create spaces where small business entrepreneurs could develop their ideas and products. The small business incubator currently houses a restaurant, wine bar, and a small-batch candle and skin care product store, as well as the downtown association's offices. Yet another case study in how historic buildings can be home to positive community impact, business growth, and job creation!

Washington Trust Receives Grant to Support Four Spokane Business Districts

In 2024, the City of Spokane awarded the Washington Trust with a Neighborhood Business Districts grant to support district improvements and organizational development in four of Spokane's historic neighborhood business districts. Funded using federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, the two-year grant totals more than \$2 million. The grant scope includes funding placemaking and design improvement projects in Spokane's Hillyard, Garland, North Monroe, and South Perry business districts, while also supporting organizational development in all four districts. The Washington Trust will work closely with stakeholders and neighbors from the four districts to identify goals for both the use of project funds as well as plans for district sustainability and engagement.

Percival Landing Park Added to National Network to Freedom

In 2024, the National Park Service added the Charles Mitchell Escape Site at Olympia's Percival Landing Park to its National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom—the first-ever listing from Washington State. The site marks the place where 12-year-old Charles Mitchell, brought to Washington Territory by his enslaver in 1855, escaped by stowing away on a steamship bound for Victoria, British Columbia, on a maritime underground railroad. Although discovered and apprehended by a ship captain determined to return him to slavery, Mitchell was rescued on the docks of Victoria by an anti-slavery crowd and later declared legally free by the Canadian courts. Sites listed in the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom receive national recognition and are added to a national database of underground railroad history, as the program aims to honor, preserve, and promote the history of resistance to enslavement through escape and flight.



Above: Percival Landing Park in Olympia, now included in the national Network to Freedom. Photo courtesy of the City of Olympia.

APIAHiP Forum Hosted in Seattle

Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (APIAHiP) is a national nonprofit that works to advocate for the protection of historic and cultural sites significant to Asian and Pacific Islander American communities. In 2024, APIAHiP's annual Forum took place in Seattle, with more than 240 attendees gathered in Seattle's Chinatown-International District for the multi-day conference. Thanks to the Washington Trust's previous Preservation Programs Director, Huy Pham, now APIAHiP's Executive Director, the Seattle area was well-represented. More than 24 local historic and cultural sites were visited through in-person tours, events, conference sessions, and events, including a day-long tour to the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial and Bainbridge Island Filipino American Community Hall.

Top right: The Bush School's Gracemont Alumni Hall building in Seattle. Photo courtesy of Rafn Company.

Left: APIAHiP Forum attendees gather outside the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle. Photo courtesy of APIAHiP.



Holy Rosary Church Protected Through Vatican Decree

Built in 1920, Holy Rosary Church is an icon of the Tacoma skyline and a cornerstone of the community. It was added to Washington’s Most Endangered Places list in 2020 when, due to structural concerns, the Seattle Archdiocese shuttered the building and began to pursue demolition. Since that time, we’ve been working with our local partner, Save Tacoma’s Landmark Church, to advocate for saving the building. In May, the Vatican officially weighed in, and fortunately, they sided with Save Tacoma’s Landmark Church, declaring the decree to demolish Holy Rosary null and void. The Seattle Archdiocese is now weighing proposals from several individuals and groups to navigate a future use and owner for the landmark.

“This is Maritime Washington” Videos Win Emmy

“This is Maritime Washington,” a video campaign introducing Washington residents and visitors alike to the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area. In the process of making the seven short films that comprise the campaign, Fishboat Media collaborated with many of Maritime Washington’s regional partners, navigated the 3,000 miles of Washington’s saltwater coastline that make up the heritage area, and conducted dozens of interviews with the people who make this region vibrant. In 2024, “This is Maritime Washington” was nominated for—and WON—an Emmy Award from the Northwest Chapter of the National Academy for Television Arts & Sciences in the Single Spot or Campaign category.

Camp Waskowitz Protected by Conservation Easement

Camp Waskowitz, home of Highline School District’s nationally recognized environmental education program, is the oldest outdoor school program in the country. Located in North Bend, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed the facility in 1935 to serve as its base camp for Forest Service projects in the Snoqualmie Valley area. Out of more than 4,000 “temporary” CCC camps built nationwide, it is one of the few remaining that retains its original design integrity and “rustic utilitarian” feel. Camp Waskowitz was placed on our Most Endangered Places list in 2005. Fortunately, in 2024, Highline Public Schools, the Trust for Public Land, and King County agreed to a conservation easement that will preserve the Waskowitz Outdoor Education Center and 345 acres of surrounding forest, protecting the area from development in perpetuity.

Spokane Preservation Office Increases Representation on Local Historic Register

Over the past year, the Spokane Preservation Office added two new listings to their local historic register: the Cook-Abele House and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center at East Central. The Cook-Abele House was built by Julian Francis Abele, one of the most significant Black architects in U.S. history, and was home to Julian’s sister Elizabeth Cook, an accomplished artist, and brother-in-law John F. Cook III, a pharmacist and mayor of Bonner’s Ferry, Idaho (at a time when he was the town’s only Black resident). The Martin Luther King Jr. Center at East Central’s historic significance is due to its association with the racially and ethnically diverse East Central neighborhood, particularly with the League of



Left: The Cook-Abele House, now listed on Spokane’s local historic register. Photo courtesy of the City of Spokane.

Women for Community Action, a group of 25 Black women who advocated for the formation of a day care and community center and contracted with Spokane City Council to run the center.

Seattle Theatre Group Acquires Kerry Hall

Located in Seattle’s Capitol Hill, Kerry Hall is a Spanish Colonial-style building built in the 1920s as the home of Nellie Cornish, founder of Cornish College of the Arts. After becoming part of the college campus, the building served as a hub for dance and music education. The father of modern dance himself, Merce Cunningham, performed there. However, in

2024, Cornish College of the Arts announced it was selling the iconic building, raising fears about its future. Fortunately, in November, the perfect buyer stepped up: Seattle Theatre Group, the nonprofit that manages and programs historic venues like the Paramount, the Moore, and the Neptune Theatres. STG at Kerry Hall, as it has been dubbed, is expected to debut a full slate of programming by summer 2025. 🎭



Above: The 2024 Northwest Emmy Awards, where our “This is Maritime Washington” video campaign was named a winner! Photo courtesy of Fishboat Media.



Above: The historic Kerry Hall in Seattle, now owned by Seattle Theatre Group. Photo courtesy of CBRE.

CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT

By Chris Moore, Executive Director

The old adage “change is the only constant” holds true in many situations, but right now it feels especially salient in politics. After 12 years of incumbency, Washington State has a new governor. At the federal level, the Trump administration is back in the White House four years after their first stay ended (historical note: President Trump and Grover Cleveland are the only two presidents to be elected to non-consecutive terms). And it isn’t just the faces that have changed: in both cases, policies and funding for historic preservation have the potential to be impacted as well.

As he promised during the campaign, on the first day of his second term President Trump issued executive orders intended to boost energy production. By declaring a national emergency based on the high cost of energy, the administration seems poised to sidestep what they deem to be undue regulations and project reviews. Section 106, which requires federal agencies to consider whether

projects they are involved with will harm historic and cultural resources, may be impacted by the declaration. Under current law, if it is determined that a federally funded or permitted project will result in the loss of historic resources, measures must be taken to minimize and mitigate the loss. President Trump’s emergency declaration could nullify such review for projects seeking to boost energy, potentially putting at risk resources like cultural landscapes and traditional cultural properties.

As we prepare to attend this year’s Preservation Advocacy Week in the nation’s capital, long-standing policies such as Section 106 will be top of mind, as will support for the Historic Preservation Fund. Congress has yet to pass a full 2025 budget, despite the federal fiscal year beginning on Oct 1, 2024. Rather, the federal government is operating at the same funding levels as last year. For the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), this equates to \$188.6 million to support a wide array of preservation programs, including for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices—the very folks who implement federal preservation policy at the state level. 2025 budget proposals sought to cut funding to the HPF, decreasing federal support for important grant programs. Our marching orders

as a preservation field are simple: keep in place federal support that works to preserve, rehabilitate, document, and acknowledge the places and spaces that represent our collective history.

Here in Washington State, the goal is similar, if for different reasons. With a projected \$10-\$12 billion budget shortfall over the next four years, the Washington State Legislature will look at cost-saving measures in order to balance the budget. Following his inauguration, Governor Ferguson directed state agencies to engage in budget-cutting exercises. At the Washington Trust, we will support the important work of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), which conducts thousands of reviews each year for projects that impact historic resources. They also oversee the impactful Washington State Main Street Program—a network of 76 cities and towns promoting economic development through historic preservation. Furthermore, several key capital grant programs run through DAHP. Thankfully, outgoing Governor Inslee’s proposed capital budget, released in December, included funding to continue these four popular programs as follows:

- **\$3.947 million** to continue the Historic County Courthouse Grant Program. Funding would support the rehabilitation of nine county courthouses
- **\$1 million** to continue the Heritage Barn Grant Program, providing matching grants to preserve historic barns statewide
- **\$515,000** to continue the Historic Cemetery Grant Program, prioritizing funding for cemeteries with military burials
- **\$515,000** to continue the Historic Theater Grant Program, supporting these important community gathering spaces which also serve as catalysts for downtown economic activity

We remain encouraged by the legislature’s past support of these important programs. And we know how much Main Street matters to people in communities across the state. Still, it remains a challenging budget environment. Coupled with

Left: The Rialto Theatre in Tacoma, which received a Historic Theater Grant in the 2023-2025 grant cycle. Photo courtesy of The Stranger.

Below: The Douglas County Courthouse in Waterville, which received a Historic County Courthouse Grant in the 2023-2025 grant cycle. Photo courtesy of John Deacon.

Bottom right: The historic barn at Clausen Legacy Farms in Spokane County, which received a Heritage Barn Grant in the 2023-2025 grant cycle. Photo courtesy of Scott Figenshow.



changes in leadership at the state and federal levels, it is more important than ever for elected officials to hear from each of you about the key role played by the historic barn on the road leading into town in terms of local food production, the impact of the theater that provides youth programming for kids interested in the arts, and the power of being able to memorialize and honor those who have served by visiting their final place of rest at the town’s cemetery. Over the course of this legislative session, we’ll call on you to reach out to officials with your stories conveying pride of place. And we hope you’ll answer the call—it makes all the difference in saving places that matter! 🍷



Above: The Washington State Capitol Building in Olympia. Photo courtesy of the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services.

Right: The Weyerhaeuser Office Building in Everett, which DAHP consulted on when undergoing renovations. Photo courtesy of Welcome magazine.



RACIAL RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS IN WASHINGTON STATE

By Amanda Miller, University of Washington,
and Dr. Larry Cebula, Eastern Washington University

The language is shocking.
“No person or persons of any race other than white or Caucasian race shall use or occupy any dwelling on any lot.”
“No part of said property shall ever be used or occupied by any person of the Ethiopian, Malay, or any Asiatic race.”
“Said property shall not be resold, leased, rented, or occupied except to or by persons of the Aryan race.”
“Property shall be used for burial of human dead of the Caucasian race only.”

For the last four years, teams from the University of Washington (UW) and Eastern Washington University (EWU) have worked to uncover racist property restrictions like these and help property owners address them. Washington will soon be the first state in the nation to identify all of the racial covenants and to provide property owners with a legal remedy.

Legal covenants on residential properties have gone hand-in-hand with residential development in the United States. Many are harmless. They might limit commercial development or prohibit the keeping of farm animals in residential neighborhoods. But by the early 20th century, some developers included covenants that limited the race, and in some cases religion, of who could live in a neighborhood.

In 1948, the Supreme Court ruled racial property restrictions unenforceable in courts of law, and after 1968, it was illegal to write new ones. Yet old racial covenants remain in many chains of title, with few property owners even aware of them.

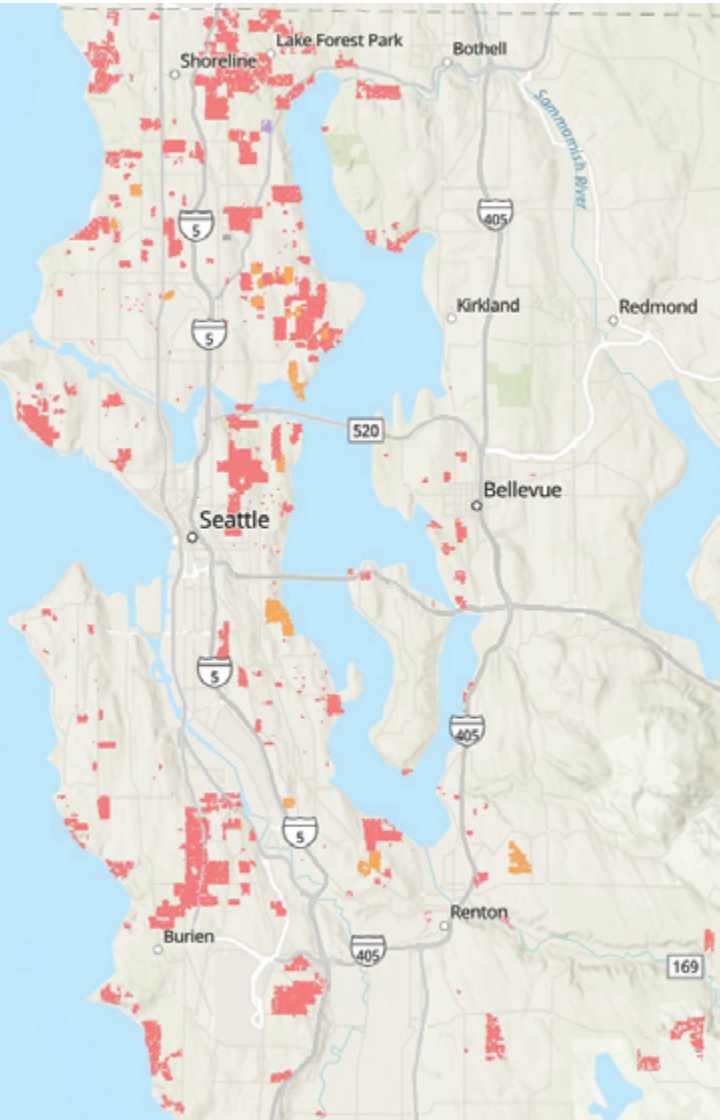
In 2021, House Bill 1335 authorized the UW and EWU to locate all of the racial property restrictions in Washington State and to inform property owners of legal remedies. Our research teams are reviewing all plat maps and deeds, usually from 1920 to 1968, in all 39 counties. Some counties have digitized records, so we used OCR (optical character recognition) to search for keywords that might indicate a racial restriction. Possible matches were confirmed with the help of 1,800+ volunteers via Zooniverse, a crowd-sourcing website. In counties without digital records, our research teams spent hours at the archives flipping through dusty volumes of bound deeds or scrolling through microfilm.

Currently, our teams are finishing up archival research in a few counties and mapping our results so that homeowners can see if their property had a racial restriction.



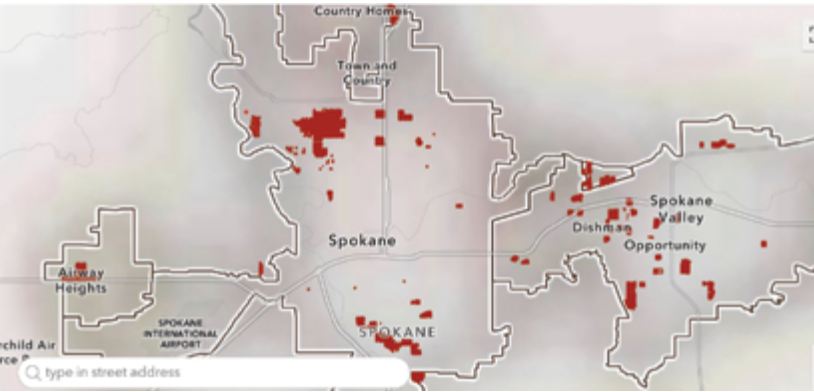
Left: For counties where records have not been digitized, the teams searched through 600- to 800-page deed books like these.

Above: EWU student Zachary Welsh trains a group of students on how to find racial covenants in deed books while project director Dr. Tara Kelly and CWU professor Dr. Josue Estrada look on.



To date, we have uncovered more than 80,000 properties impacted by racial covenants, in every corner of the state. Some patterns have emerged. Racial restrictions were never “standard procedure” for the majority of property developers. Most developers didn’t impose them even at the height of the practice. Racial covenants were not a strictly urban or suburban phenomenon; we have found restrictions in rural areas, resort areas, and even cemeteries. Some developers who routinely added racial covenants were among the most prominent members of their communities, such as William Stacey Cowles, Jr., the owner and publisher of the *Spokesman-Review*, and William Boeing, the founder of The Boeing Company.

The effects of racial restrictive covenants and other forms of housing segregation continue to impact home ownership and intergenerational wealth building for communities of color, but there is some good news on that front. In April 2023, the state legislature passed the Covenants Homeownership Account Act, which provides no-interest downpayment loans to people from communities that were affected by housing discrimination and are still feeling its effects today, in an effort to redress some of the harm caused by state-sanctioned segregation.



Left: Racial covenants have been identified across King County.

Above: In Spokane, some neighborhoods that were planned in the mid-20th century included covenants, but most did not.

Below: EWU project director Dr. Tara Kelly reads through a deed book at the Washington State Archives Central Branch in Ellensburg.

All photos courtesy of the University of Washington and Eastern Washington University.



As initial research draws to a close, our teams are expanding outreach efforts with presentations to schools, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, and more. If your organization is interested in a presentation on the project, email wacovenants@gmail.com for western Washington or tkelly12@ewu.edu for eastern Washington.

Visit our websites to view the interactive maps:



University of Washington
depts.washington.edu/covenants



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Event Recap

2024 SIVINSKI HOLIDAY BENEFIT

By Kristy Conrad, Development Director

On December 17, the Washington Trust's ever-popular Sivinski Holiday Benefit made its annual appearance once more.

Befitting the season, the Stimson-Green Mansion was aglow with fairy lights, tinsel, and garland—as well as the winking sequins of Chris Moore's now-legendary holiday blazer. Our executive director (and indeed the entire Washington Trust team) held court with more than 150 guests, who mingled, nibbled on delicious appetizers from Kaspars Catering, and toasted 2024 with beer from our friends at Stoup Brewing Capitol Hill.

The Sivinski Holiday Benefit is one of our most popular signature events, with tickets regularly selling out in advance, and for good reason. Not only is it the perfect opportunity to hang out with Washington's most passionate preservationists, all clad in their holiday finest, it's also a festive fundraising event. All proceeds raised from the holiday benefit, including tickets, donations, and raffle ticket sales, benefit the Valerie Sivinski Fund—our grant program supporting grassroots preservation

projects across the state. Since the Valerie Sivinski Fund's establishment in 1997, we have awarded approximately \$250,000 in grants to more than 200 projects across the state.

In recent years, the need for project funding has grown exponentially, and we have strived to meet that need, increasing our holiday benefit fundraising goal to \$20,000 annually. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and guests (and in particular, one generous anonymous donor who matched donations received over \$10,000), we're happy to announce that the evening was a tremendous success! We met our fundraising goal, thereby fully funding nine much-deserving projects, spanning the state from Steilacoom and Republic to Bellingham and Walla Walla. (See page 16 for a full list of our 2025 grantees and their proposed projects.)

We are so grateful to all of the sponsors, guests, and donors who helped make our 2024 Sivinski Holiday Benefit such a wonderful evening! We look forward to seeing you all back at the mansion in December 2025. 🍷



Above: A festive group gathers on the main stairwell landing of the Stimson-Green Mansion. Photo courtesy of C.B. Bell.

Right: (From left to right) Mary Rossi, Kim Owens, and Stephenie Kramer pose with props at the evening's photobooth. Photo courtesy of Carson Meacham.

Below right: Washington Trust incoming board president Matt Inpanbutr celebrates his first-ever raffle prize win. Photo courtesy of C.B. Bell.

Below left: Also a raffle prize winner that evening: the Washington State Historical Society's Jay Baersten, who gives a grateful hug to Moira Nadal. Photo courtesy of C.B. Bell.



Above: Chris Moore (far right) finds competition for Best Dressed in the form of guests Ken Coler and Nicole Klein. Photo courtesy of C.B. Bell.

Left: Guests, including King County's Robert Renouard, line up to purchase tickets for the famed Sivinski raffle. Photo courtesy of C.B. Bell.



CELEBRATING THE 2025 GRANT RECIPIENTS OF THE VALERIE SIVINSKI FUND

By Charlotte Hevly, Grants Coordinator

After a successful Sivinski Holiday Benefit on December 17, 2024, we are excited to share the 2025 grant recipients of the Valerie Sivinski Fund!

The Valerie Sivinski Fund was named in honor of the late Valerie Sivinski—a former board president of the Washington Trust, respected preservation architect, and advocate for historic preservation across the state. Grants from the Valerie Sivinski Fund support planning, research, education, and advocacy initiatives for local preservation projects. Since its establishment in 1997, the Valerie Sivinski Fund has awarded approximately \$250,000 in grants to more than 200 projects across the state. These funds support local organizations and historic preservation advocates in their efforts to save important historic and cultural sites in Washington State.



Thanks to the generosity of our guests and donors at the holiday benefit, we're happy to award a total of \$20,000 to the following nine organizations and community groups:

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (APIAHIP)

In support of developing educational resources about the Bellingham Riots of 1907 and the significance of Bellingham's Arch of Healing and Reconciliation.

Clark County Historical Museum

In support of conducting a preservation needs assessment for the 1908 McLoughlin Heights Church of God building, home to one of the first African American congregations in Vancouver.

Ferry County Historical Society

In support of conducting vital preservation work on the historic J. W. & Elizabeth Slagle House and Barn in Republic.



Above: The J. W. & Elizabeth Slagle House and Barn in Republic, built in the early 1900s and gifted to the Ferry County Historical Society in 2010. Photo courtesy of the Ferry County Historical Society.

Left: Bellingham's Arch of Healing and Reconciliation, the subject of APIAHIP's Sivinski grant project. Photo courtesy of the Sikh American History Project.



Right: The Bigelow House is one of the oldest houses in Olympia and one of the best examples of Carpenter Gothic architecture in the state. Photo courtesy of Olympia Historical Society and Bigelow House Museum.

Below: The 1890 Electric Light Works Building now operates as the Power House Theatre Walla Walla, hosting more than 18,000 people annually for arts and cultural experiences. Photo courtesy of Nikki Phillips.

Fort Walla Walla Museum

In support of creating new exhibit signs for a pavilion housing the 1878 Blue Mountain Locomotive.

Olympia Historical Society and Bigelow House Museum

In support of installing UV film on the windows of the historic Bigelow House to protect interiors and collections.

Power House Theatre Walla Walla

In support of developing interpretive resources celebrating the history of the Power House Theatre building (the 1890 Electric Light Works Building).



Above: Steilacoom's historic Wagon Shop designed and built by Nathaniel Orr and stayed in family ownership until 1974. Photo courtesy of the Steilacoom Historical Museum Association.



Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society

In support of purchasing materials to make its signature collection of 55,000 maritime photos properly stored and accessible to the public.

Steilacoom Historical Museum Association

In support of conducting a preservation assessment of the structure and siding of the 1860s Wagon Shop.

Waterville Historic Preservation Commission

In support of replacing damaged and lost National Register plaques on buildings in the Downtown Waterville Historic District.

We are thrilled to honor Valerie's memory and her work in the preservation field through these grants supporting such a diverse range of projects and historic sites across the state. Congratulations to all the 2025 Sivinski grant recipients! 🎉

MAKERS ON THE TIDE: EARL & FLOYD WILLITS AND THEIR REMARKABLE CANOES

By Michael Sullivan, Principal, Artifacts Consulting

Earl and Floyd Willits created about 920 canoes from 1921 to 1962 at their Day Island workshop in Tacoma. The brothers specialized in one model: a 17-foot red cedar strip canoe, built with painstaking attention to detail. Earl cut every piece of cedar, while Floyd drove more than 7,000 copper fasteners per boat and applied the varnish. Their deliberate approach produced only a handful of canoes each month, emphasizing craftsmanship over speed.

The early 1900s saw a rise in outdoor recreation as railroads expanded access to newly created national and state parks. Unlike the heavy rowboats made further east, the Willits brothers used western red cedar, a lightweight material that allowed for sleek, easily portable canoes. Their design remained unchanged for those 55 years, though they eventually added accessories and trim options.

Willits canoes gained national attention in 1933 when featured in a *National Geographic* story. In 1936, the Willits brothers exchanged ideas with George Pocock, who used red cedar to craft world-class racing shells for the University of Washington's Olympic-winning rowing team featured in the book and movie *The Boys in the Boat*. In 1939, writers from Tacoma famously retraced a section of Lewis and Clark's journey on a 3,500-mile voyage with a Willits canoe.

By the 1950s, however, aluminum and fiberglass had become easier and cheaper to shape into canoes, bringing the era of the handmade wooden canoe to an end. The serial number 918 was stamped into the final canoe in early 1962, just months before Earl's death. Floyd would die in 1967.

In 2021, the heirs of Earl and Floyd Willits decided to sell the brothers' workshop on Day Island. The

space had remained largely as it was left when Floyd passed away—still full of machines, tools, materials, fragments of handmade canoes, and even the last canoe the brothers worked on together. The contents of the canoe factory were inventoried, cataloged, and donated to the Foss Waterway Seaport in Tacoma.

The unexpected treasures found in the workshop were the complete records, letters, and diaries of the Willits brothers, along with an extraordinary collection of photographs and negatives taken by Earl over a 50-year span. The documents and photographs were donated to the Pacific Northwest Room of the Tacoma Public Library.

Today, the Willits canoe remains an icon throughout Washington State. Willits canoes are on display at several museums and maritime centers around the Puget Sound. In October 2024, the Washington State History Museum opened the exhibit “Makers on the Tide,” which features three Willits canoes and a documentary film about the

Left: The Willits brothers only ever produced a single model of canoe and sold directly to individuals to minimize costs. Image courtesy of the Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library.

Below: A Willits canoe on display at the Washington State History Museum's “Makers on the Tide” exhibit. Photo courtesy of Carson Meacham.

Bottom: Floyd and Earl stand in front of a canoe and their shop on May 26, 1960. Photo courtesy of the Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library.



brothers, their canoes, and their time. And on the list of pure Washington maritime experiences is undeniably the chance to paddle a Willits canoe in Pacific Northwest waters. It's like playing a Stradivarius at Carnegie Hall.

Read the full story at maritimewa.org/willits and visit the “Makers on the Tide” exhibit at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma now through February 16, 2025. 📖



Left: A cedar lumber truck parks in front of the Willits Brothers shop on September 12, 1949. The wood on this truck would become a precious canoe. Photo courtesy of the Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library.



LATINOS IN HERITAGE CONSERVATION



Above: Performers at the Chicano Park Kiosko during a cultural celebration. Photo courtesy of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.

Tell us about your organization's mission and work. Where are you located, and what communities do you serve in Washington State?

Latinos in Heritage Conservation's mission is to build a movement that affirms Latinx heritage through education, conservation, and leadership development. We know that in order to help shift the preservation work that's being done in the United States, we need to focus on creating new leaders, developing that pipeline, and educating our partners at the local level so they're empowered to do their work.

We work with organizations throughout the United States, including Washington, and our

primary audience is Latinx communities. We work with communities on the ground who are either living in historic neighborhoods or renting spaces that have been adaptively reused—a lot of businesses. People come to us asking questions about compliance, permitting, or what is a designation means, so a lot of times it's just educating and connecting them with partners locally. We offer community and educational workshops to Latinx communities, where we use our Latinx preservation toolkit to teach about historic preservation. We also have a new Latinx preservation grant program, which serves grassroots nonprofits in communities who are already doing this work but require more resources. Through grants, we provide technical assistance from the beginning of the project to the end. I hope we get Washington projects

Right: LHC conducts an oral history interview as part of the Abuelas Project.

Below: Community members share historic photos as part of the Abuelas Project.

Photos courtesy of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.



applying! At my recent visit, during the conference in Walla Walla, a lot of people came up to me talking about projects they were working on—both recent history but also histories from the 1920s to '50s on topics like canneries.

Tell us about a recent project or initiative that your organization has undertaken that represents your overall goals and values.

We just launched the Abuelas Project, which is a crowd-sourced, GIS-based project that works to democratize whose stories are being told. We're going across the country, hosting oral history workshops and inviting communities to come. We record their stories, and we put them up on our website for the Abuelas Project. A lot of Latinx stories aren't being told; our sites aren't being identified. Because there's no documentation, those sites are not being designated or protected. The Abuelas Project is about, first, acknowledging and validating people's stories and experiences in Latinx communities across the

country. Second, once those stories are posted online, practitioners can utilize it as a database to see what sites and stories matter most to communities within their own geographic scope—with the intention that it will help bridge a gap between communities and practitioners that want to do this work but don't know where to start or what sites are important.

We represent data from the GIS database through story maps. We recently did a Texas pilot, then a Route 66 pilot. Now we're going to do the borderlands pilot, where we're capturing a lot of sites and stories around things such as *conjunto* music. We're utilizing a lot of different cultural mediums that we know tell stories—maybe they're not in a history book because historians haven't captured them, but communities are using them to capture folklore and stories. With these projects, we think about historic preservation and documentation in a different way than traditional preservation practice typically does. The idea is to help democratize storytelling and provide access and opportunity for communities to participate and lead their own storytelling.

How have you interacted with preservation and/or the Washington Trust so far?

One of our former board members, Ray Rast, currently sits on the board of Washington Trust, and your Preservation Programs Director, Moira Nadal, sits on our board. Having those two contacts has allowed us over the last few years to hear what is happening in Washington State. We've done things like providing letters of support for issues focused on Latinx heritage and collaborating with you on your most recent conference. While I was there for PLACES in October, I visited different Latino sites and neighborhoods like Pasco, as a way to begin to conceptualize how we can do more work in Washington.



What does “preservation” mean to you, and how does it impact your organization’s work?

Historic preservation to me is about storytelling, conserving those stories and making sure that they are here for future generations. That can be in the form of buildings where those histories actually happened, or it also can be in a landscape that no longer exists. A lot of times, the work that LHC does within historic preservation isn't always resource- or building-focused because we're dealing with stories and contributions that have been overlooked. So we're trying to strengthen and democratize the preservation field by acknowledging those overlooked histories. That way, in the future we have the opportunity for bricks-and-mortar preservation. Bricks-and-mortar preservation—conservation practices, methodology, compatible materials—those are all really important, but that's the best-case historic preservation scenario. For many of us who work with Latinx or BIPOC communities, we aren't in that situation. Only certain types of histories and sites are afforded the luxury to get to that point, to preserve the physical fabric of a building. So instead, we take a lens of acknowledging public history within a community or within a landscape, because we know that a lot of Latinx sites have been demolished. Less than 1% of sites listed in the National Register are associated with Latinx histories and heritage. Knowing that, we take a more proactive approach within our own preservation practice. That helps create this ethos around how we interpret or define historic preservation.

Above: A community mural in San Antonio's historically Mexican-American Westside neighborhood.

Below: Performers from Danza Azteca Guadalupeña showcase Mexican culture during a parade.

Photos courtesy of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.



What is your vision for your organization’s future? In that future, how could preservation be a better ally and support your work more?

LHC has been in existence for 10 years, though we're in our third year of actually having staff—so we're still a nascent organization when it comes to staff capacity. Looking at the projects that we daydreamed about 10 years ago with our founding members, when we said, “This is the work we want to do,” we're still so early on in a lot of those projects. But when I think about a five- or 10-year plan, I want to make sure that we have long-term sustainability, that we're still here. The big dream is that we'll be here in 50 years, and then we can be up for historic designation ourselves. And I hope then we can look back at the impact we've had, that we can recognize that Latinx history is American history, and that we can be at the point where we're conserving or rehabilitating our historic sites because they've been saved and there's actual physical fabric to work with.

As far as how people can support us, I think it's important to actively question preservation work, the initiatives that are being done, the partners that are being brought to the table. I think you [the Washington Trust] are doing that, like at your conference. Being able to hear the Latinx oral histories in the walking tours [in Walla Walla] was really incredible. But it's not something that we see all the time at the state level. We recently sent out a survey to all of the SHPOs [State Historic Preservation Officers], as part of an equity study to see how many Latinx sites have been designated in recent years. The National Park Service's Latino theme study came out in 2013, so we're 10 years out from that and we want to analyze what kind of impact it had. And a lot of the SHPOs are coming back and saying, “We don't have any new designations, but this is inspiring us to really think about it.” For our statewide partners, I think it's important to think critically and ask yourselves, “Are we thinking about Latinx histories and stories when we go to communities?”

How can people get involved with your work?

You can check us out at www.latinoheritage.us. We have a lot of great information on our website, like the Abuela Project and the Latinx preservation toolkit. We always have volunteer opportunities. And our next conference, *Congreso*, is going to be in Chicago in 2026. Partners come out from across the country, and it's a great space to listen and learn and connect with people, to get inspired. So join us in Chicago. We'd love to see you there! 🇲🇽



Above: Folklorico dancers perform a celebration of Mexican culture at Rio Vista Farm, a National Historic Landmark in Texas. Photo courtesy of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.

HERITAGE BARN OF WASHINGTON 2025 CALENDAR



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