

THIS PLACE

**Excellence on Main Award
Winners: Showcasing
Outstanding People and
Projects in Our Downtown
Communities**

**Digging Into Indigenous
Maritime Heritage:
A Tribal Guide to Maritime
Washington**

**Activating Spokane:
Spokane Neighborhood
Business District Activation
Grants**



OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

2025 Conference Recap

THIS PLACE

Fall 2025

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Cover: The historic Skansie Brothers Netshed in Gig Harbor. Photo courtesy of Valley Photography 253.

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FOR HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

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



Washington’s **MOST
ENDANGERED
PLACES**

**THIS
PLACE**
MAGAZINE

VALERIE
SIVINSKI
FUND

GET INVOLVED

DECEMBER 9, 2025

Sivinski Holiday Benefit Seattle, WA

Join us this December for the Sivinski Holiday Benefit—the Washington Trust’s annual celebration of local places, people, and preservation in our state. This year’s party will take place on Tuesday, December 9, from 5:30-8:30 pm at the Stimson-Green Mansion in Seattle. As always, all proceeds from the event will directly support the Valerie Sivinski Fund, a grant program that provides support to grassroots preservation projects across Washington. The party will include the announcement of the 2026 Valerie Sivinski Fund grant recipients alongside all the holiday cheer we can muster—including festive attire, holiday décor, appetizers, an open bar, and our famous raffle.

Unable to attend but still want to support the Valerie Sivinski Fund? Consider making a donation online at preservewa.org/sivinskifund.

preservewa.org/holidaybenefit

MARCH 2-5, 2026

National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week Washington, D.C.

Save the date for National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week in March! 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. We’ll be looking for delegates to join us in D.C. in the coming months. If you’re interested, email info@preservewa.org to let us know! And if you’re not already on our “Preservation Issues and Advocacy Alerts” newsletter list, sign up on the public policy page on our website.

preservewa.org/public-policy

For more information about Washington Trust events or programs, please visit preservewa.org, or call our office at 206-624-9449.

FEDERAL PRESERVATION UPDATES

By Chris Moore, Executive Director

In a landscape of federal cuts and recission packages that have resulted in diminished funding for heritage and culture, historic preservation as a field has been swept up in the storm. Cuts to the National Park Service and other agencies with stewardship responsibilities for cultural resources (such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation) border on catastrophic, with the prospect of additional reductions in force poised to make matters even more dire.

Still, important programs such as State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and National Heritage Areas received level funding for Fiscal Year 2025 (which ended in September). And while Congress has yet to pass a Fiscal Year 2026 budget, early negotiations in both the House and Senate appropriations committees support level funding once again for these programs. There is a long way to go yet, but if level funding holds, we will gladly chalk it up as a victory, given the climate of cuts prevalent right now in Washington, D.C.

Policy, however, is a different story altogether. Much has been made about the onslaught of executive orders released in the early months of the second Trump Administration. While they cover a wide range of issues, several of these Executive Orders impact our work in the preservation and protection of historic and cultural resources.

National Energy Emergency

Early in his second term, President Trump declared a national energy emergency, citing high energy prices as a threat to national security and prosperity. This declaration triggered implementation of emergency procedures related to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Most notably, it reduced comment periods for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices from 30 days to seven days. Energy projects on federal land or requiring federal permits are complicated and often involve important cultural resources, and limiting State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices' opportunity to offer input is highly problematic. This "streamlined" review—part of broader deregulation efforts by the administration—will remain in place as long as the emergency declaration remains active. Section 106, which provides review of federal undertakings impacting historic resources, is itself being examined, as the Senate held hearings on this provision of the National Historic Preservation Act in late October. At the time of this writing, it is unclear what direction the Senate intends to take with regard to Section 106, but there is concern as this administration and the current Congress seek to dismantle the framework for cultural resource management.



National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the federal law that requires agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed action on certain elements of the environment (including historic properties and cultural resources) and consider these effects as part of the decision-making process. In May of this year, the Supreme Court issued a ruling on what has become known as the Seven County Infrastructure lawsuit. Their ruling found that a local review board had overreached its authority under NEPA. The result is a weakening of the law, as the decision significantly narrows the scope of environmental review allowed under NEPA. Specifically, federal agencies have much broader leeway in determining when and how NEPA is applied. Additionally, the cumulative impacts of a project are no longer required to be analyzed. For example, in the event of a large energy project likely to have adverse "downstream" impacts, such impacts can no longer be considered under NEPA.

Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History

In March 2025, the administration released its Executive Order on Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. In an effort to correct alleged revisionist efforts in how American history is presented, one outcome of the order is direction to officials to "prohibit expenditure on exhibits or programs...that divide Americans based on race" within any of the Smithsonian Institutions. This order has directly impacted the National Park Service (NPS), as the Secretary of the Interior followed with a Secretarial Order which tasks NPS to "determine whether, since January 1, 2020, public monuments, memorials, statues, markers, or similar properties... have been removed or changed to perpetuate a false reconstruction of American history...." Over the last decade, civic and public institutions, along with sites that tell the story of our nation's history, have worked to recognize the role that slavery, colonialism, and inequality have played in the shaping of our country. Acknowledging and understanding these

Left: Sound Transit's proposed Ballard Link light rail extension in King County is an example of a Washington project that has been subject to NEPA review. Photo courtesy of Sound Transit.

Below: The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington, D.C., is just one of the sites now subject to the Trump Administration's "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History" executive order. Photo courtesy of the Smithsonian.



challenging elements are key to collective healing and progress. We have great concern over how these policies will be implemented throughout our National Park system.

Demolition of the East Wing

In October, the East Wing of the White House was demolished to make way for a proposed new ballroom. The White House is perhaps the ultimate symbol of American democracy—the people's house, which presidents "rent" during their term in office. It is bad enough to see this National Historic Landmark treated in a way that erases history. Worse, it was done so with no regard to the public interest and without any process to determine whether this was the right thing to do. 🗑️



Above: The demolition of the White House's East Wing in Washington, D.C., in October. Photo courtesy of ABC News.



Right: The U.S. Capitol campus, where a government shutdown is stalling creation of a 2026 federal budget. Photo courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol.

LIGHTING THE WAY EAST: THE EASTERN WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR BLACK HISTORY AND CULTURE

By Damien Davis, Founder and Executive Director,
Eastern Washington Institute for Black History and Culture

A Vision Rooted in Curiosity and Community

The idea for the Eastern Washington Institute for Black History and Culture (EWIBHC) has been germinating for nearly a decade. When I relocated to the Tri-Cities in 2016, I found myself asking questions about the collective Black history of my new home. What I discovered was both astonishing and untold—a deep, complex, and often overlooked legacy of Black migration, innovation, and resilience across eastern Washington.

That curiosity became a mission. In 2024, while participating in an Inatai Foundation event as a board member for the African American Community, Culture, and Education Society (AACCES), the concept of an institution dedicated to preserving and presenting these stories began to take root. With the Inatai Foundation's initial seed investment and later with support from Women of Wisdom and the Three Rivers Community Foundation, the vision for EWIBHC started to take form. By early 2025, a three- to five-year strategic plan was underway—but history had other plans.

A Call to Action Accelerates the Timeline

In January 2025, our organization was contacted by a regional unit of the National Park Service to help reassess collections related to Black history and women's history. This call to action, paired with troubling national trends threatening how history—particularly Black history—is preserved and taught, propelled the institute into overdrive. By March, EWIBHC had secured its nonprofit status, formed its initial board, and began developing the tools, policies, and guidelines needed to bring the museum from concept to reality. Originally envisioned to launch around 2030, the institute's timeline has now been fast-tracked. The digital museum is scheduled to debut by the end of 2025, with a brick-and-mortar

home anticipated within the following 10 to 20 months.

This acceleration hasn't come without challenges. Shifts in traditional museum funding, increased scrutiny of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) programs, and broader national debates about education have only made the work more vital. As our board often reminds each other, preservation itself is an act of resistance.

Preserving a Rich and Overlooked Story

The mission of EWIBHC is simple but profound: to permanently showcase, curate, and educate the public about the Black experience in eastern Washington. Our name was deliberately chosen—"Black History and Culture," rather than "African American"—to honor the full diaspora of Blackness in America and across the world. Our geographic focus east of the Cascades acknowledges that much



Above: Hanford workers crowd a grocery store in 1944. Photo courtesy of the Department of Energy Hanford Collection.



Left: The Lewis Street underpass, which divided the Black and White sections of the once segregated City of Pasco. Photo courtesy of Damien Davis.

Below: Civil rights protestors in Kennewick in 1963. Photo courtesy of the Franklin County Historical Society & Museum.



Building the Archive Together

Preserving this history is a community effort. In May or June 2026, EWIBHC will host its first Community Digitization and Archiving Event, inviting residents to bring family photos, letters, and artifacts to be scanned and documented. We understand that not everyone is ready to part with their physical family treasures, but every story matters. By digitizing materials, we can protect them for future generations while allowing families to retain what is most personal. Those who wish to make formal donations will be guided through a careful collections process to ensure their artifacts are preserved with integrity.

If you have materials, stories, or questions about participating, please contact us at admin@ewibhc.org.

A Living Institution for the People

The Eastern Washington Institute for Black History and Culture aims to become more than a museum—it will be a *third space* for gathering, dialogue, and collaboration. Many such spaces were lost during mid-20th-century "beautification" efforts that dismantled Black neighborhoods and cultural centers. Our goal is to restore that sense of belonging and connection through preservation and storytelling. As we continue to grow, EWIBHC invites supporters from across Washington to join our capital campaign and membership program, helping to build a permanent home for this vital piece of our shared heritage.

The Black experience in eastern Washington is not a footnote to the state's history—it is an integral thread in its fabric. By preserving these fast-disappearing stories and places, we honor those who built them and ensure that future generations will know not just *that* they existed, but *how* they lived, led, and loved. 🖤

of the state's Black history has traditionally been curated and interpreted on the west side, particularly in King County. Those institutions do tremendous work; our goal is to complement that narrative by amplifying the eastern story.

This story stretches far beyond the Manhattan Project—though that is a major chapter—to include early pioneer settlements, Buffalo Soldier regiments, railroad and transportation workers, civil rights activism, and the many families who built communities in towns like Pasco, Spokane, Roslyn, and Walla Walla. Together, these narratives tell not just of migration but of belonging, perseverance, and cultural contribution.

Innovation in Preservation: A Digital Future

EWIBHC is embracing technology as a tool for access and preservation. The institute will launch both a website and mobile app as part of its digital museum initiative. The website (www.EWIBHC.org) will serve as the museum's digital hub, featuring online archives, virtual exhibits, a community calendar, membership opportunities, and donation links. The app, launching in early 2026, will use augmented reality (AR) technology to offer self-guided history tours. Through an interactive platform called StoryQ, visitors will be able to explore historic sites, view archival images and video clips, and visualize what communities looked like during pivotal moments in the region's Black history—even when those physical places no longer exist. From Pasco's once-thriving African American neighborhoods to the rail towns that connected the region, these digital tools will let users walk through time, ensuring that place-based storytelling remains alive and accessible.

OH, THE PLACES YOU’LL GO!

By Lydia Felty, Main Street Specialist

As we welcomed attendees to PLACES 2025 on a clear October day, the energy in Gig Harbor was palpable. We were hosting an early registration event at 7 Seas Brewing, the magnificent vista ahead of us complete with boats exploring the harbor, a blue heron perched on the dock, and Mount Rainier standing tall in the background. Shortly after sunset, Harbor WildWatch introduced us to an iconic Gig Harbor event, Pier into the Night—where a diver uses an underwater video camera to live stream what they encounter below the surface as experts narrate their findings in real time—and the crowd buzzed with questions and expressions of delight, the first of many moments of wonder and learning to come.

Each year, I am reminded of how enthusiastically curious PLACES attendees are. The PLACES Conference brings together preservationists, planners, downtown development professionals, and anyone

else invested in the continued care of place through historic preservation, placemaking, and economic vitality—a group who wants to know everything from how the waterfront brewpub is zoned, to whether that netshed’s wood is the original, to what types of critters live in the harbor.

This introduction to Gig Harbor was particularly apt for this year’s conference: alongside our partners at the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and the Gig Harbor Waterfront Alliance, we were excited to feature the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area, with tours and sessions highlighting how Washington’s coastal communities are maintaining and sharing their water-based stories and resources—a first-ever partnership for our conference as we brought PLACES to Gig Harbor for the first time.



Left: A line-up of Gig Harbor powerhouses! (From left to right) Carrienne Ekberg of the Gig Harbor Waterfront Alliance, Miriam Battison of the Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Katrina Knudson of the City of Gig Harbor, Pat Schmidt of the Gig Harbor Waterfront Alliance, Mayor Mary Barber, and Lindsay Stover of Harbor WildWatch.

Below: (From left to right) Maddie Levesque of the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Yumi Shridhar of Island County, Christa Robertson of the Downtown Bellingham Partnership, and Prathamesh Bange of WSU Pullman (one of this year’s PALs!)

With more than 400 attendees, 40 classroom sessions, nine mobile tours, and seven venues, there was no shortage of excitement. Our Opening Plenary set the tone for the week, featuring a keynote address from Brendan A. Nelson, a widely respected leader in Tacoma’s nonprofit and civic landscape, who talked about the power of storytelling and inclusive community building in our multi-faceted work. Mobile tours gave attendees a look at Gig Harbor through different perspectives, not to mention Bremerton and Tacoma. In panels, workshops, and presentations, we dove into coastal historic preservation and how to teach traditional trades, storytelling and volunteer engagement, community partnerships and adaptive reuse—and everything

in between. New friendships were made over games of cornhole and scoops of local ice cream during the Welcome Block Party, forged over engaging lunchtime conversations and walks between venues, and relished over maritime-themed snacks and a peek into the Skansie Netshed during our Farewell Picnic in the Park.

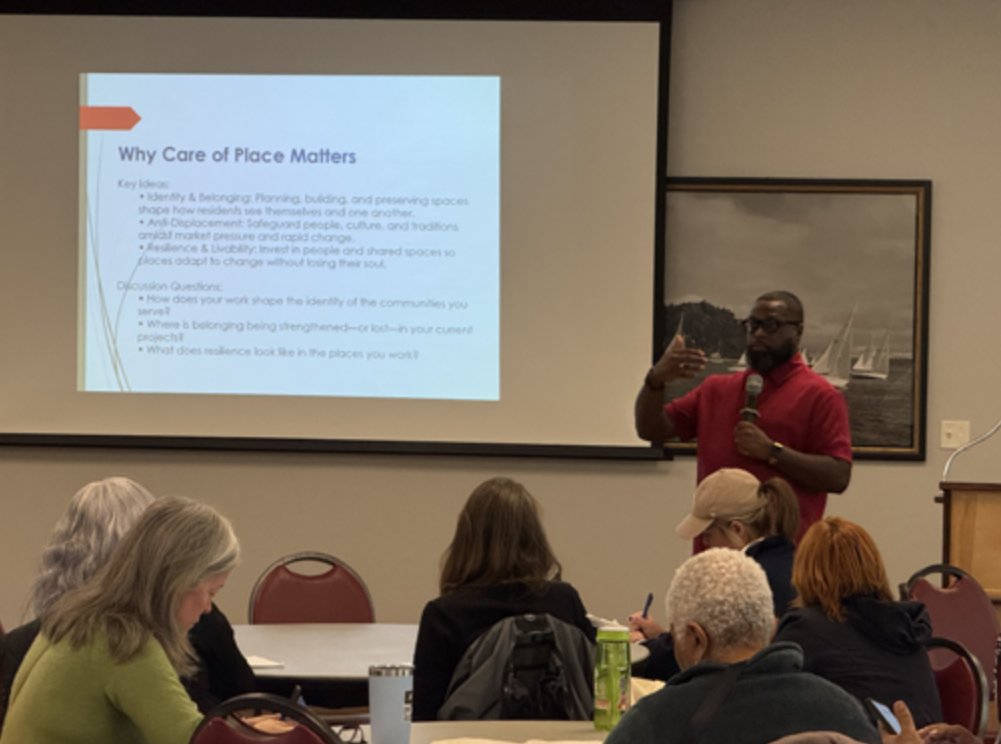
Every year, the Excellence on Main awards ceremony is a highlight of the conference. This year, hosted at the historic Foss Waterway Seaport on Tacoma’s waterfront, was no exception, as we cheered for the incredible people, places, and projects that make Washington truly special. It’s inspiring not only to hear the stories of each award, but also to celebrate with a group of people who understand so



Right: At Pier into the Night, Harbor WildWatch staff narrated undersea discoveries in Puget Sound.

All photos in article courtesy of Films by Rach.





Left: Tacoma's Brendan A. Nelson was both our Opening Plenary speaker and also a panelist presenting about the importance of care of place.

Below right: A young attendee/future preservationist at our Farewell Picnic in the Park showed his love for Gig Harbor.

Bottom: The historic Foss Waterway Seaport in Tacoma hosted our annual Excellence on Main awards ceremony.

intimately the impact that each awardee has made on their community.

Driving home at the close of the week, the rain that had held off for all our conference adventures finally arrived. Whether it was the sky echoing the heartache of leaving Gig Harbor or simply October in Pierce County is hard to say. What I do know is that we left with a renewed sense of wonder, energized for the year ahead, and counting down the days until we see each other again at PLACES 2026 in Ellensburg.

PLACES is Washington's annual statewide conference focused on the continued care of place through historic preservation, placemaking, and economic vitality, brought to you by the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation and the Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER

We want to take this opportunity to introduce you to a new member of the Washington Trust team!

While we were saddened to bid farewell to our former Grants Coordinator Charlotte Hevly this past spring, we know she will remain a friend and ally in the preservation field (particularly since her new role is at the National Trust for Historic Preservation), and we look forward to continuing to work with her in the future.



Stepping into the role of Grants Coordinator, we're happy to welcome Corah Whipple to our team. Meet Corah!

Corah Whipple

Corah supports the Washington Trust's grant programs—including our own Valerie Sivinski Fund grant program, as well as the capital grant programs

we administer for historic barns, cemeteries, county courthouses, and theaters on behalf of the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation—helping fund preservation projects in communities across Washington. She comes from a background in nonprofit communications, advocacy, and marketing, and she's always been drawn to work that connects people to place. For Corah, historic preservation is a meaningful way to care for history, culture, and the built environment—work that feels tangible, community-centered, and full of possibility. She enjoys being part of something that supports local efforts and keeps important stories alive.

Outside of work, Corah volunteers with women's rights and environmental organizations. She loves reading about history, hiking with her dog, watching for whales, and learning everything she can about the native plants, fungi, and birds of the Pacific Northwest.



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EXCELLENCE ON MAIN AWARD WINNERS

Showcasing Outstanding People and Projects in Our Downtown Communities

By Breanne Durham, Washington State Main Street Program Director

The Excellence on Main Awards are organized annually by the Washington State Main Street Program to celebrate exceptional entrepreneurs, organizers, and preservationists across Washington State. Organizations in the Washington Main Street network are invited to make nominations in a variety of categories. Through a competitive awards process, roughly a dozen people, places, or projects are recognized each year.

In 2025, we were delighted to celebrate the following awardees at the PLACES Conference held in Gig Harbor:

PURPOSEFUL PROMO

Make Music, Aberdeen

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

TwispWorks, Twisp

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Creators Law, Roslyn

BRICK & MORTAR REHABILITATION

Hotel Hardware, Dayton

PLACES FOR PEOPLE

Moveable Furniture, Pullman

OUTSTANDING SPECIAL PROJECT

Mobile Greeters, Port Townsend

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Jeannie Bayles, Ellensburg

LEGACY ON MAIN

Owens Meats, Cle Elum

LEGACY ON MAIN

Kelly's Hardware, Chelan

LEADERSHIP ON MAIN

Andra and John Mobley, Stevenson

EXCELLENCE ON MAIN

Ballast Book Company, Bremerton

The Excellence on Main celebration also included recognition of outstanding volunteers from local Main Street programs across the state, including:

- Bob Brock, Issaquah
- Danielle Esquibel, Centralia
- Kurt Grimmer, Gig Harbor
- Suzanne Hall, Ellensburg
- Janice Heedum, Kent
- Tessa Henrichsend, Cle Elum
- Victoria Locke Carty, Langley
- Logan McQuaig, Bellingham
- Craig Schulstad, Camas
- Chelsea Whitney, Pullman
- Greg Wilson, Wenatchee

Congratulations and thank you to all of our 2025 Excellence on Main awardees and spotlighted volunteers! Learn more about each category, our 2025 awardees, and all past awardees by visiting preservewa.org/eom-archive.

The Washington State Main Street Program is a program of the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, managed by the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.



Clockwise from above:

The 2025 Excellence on Main awards ceremony took place in the foyer of the beautiful Foss Waterway Seaport in Tacoma.

Before the program, guests checked out the Foss Waterway Seaport's maritime exhibits.

Washington State Main Street Program Director Breanne Durham, shown here with the night's top award winner, Kate Larson of Ballast Book Company, served as the evening's emcee, presenting winners with their awards.

Andra and John Mobley, owners of A&J Market in Stevenson, won the Leadership on Main award.

Multiple generations of the Owens family, owners of Owens Meats in Cle Elum, were in attendance to accept the Legacy on Main award.

All photos courtesy of Films by Rach.



Left: At the end of the night, Ellensburg attendees and Entrepreneur of the Year Jeannie Bayles celebrated with a photo together. Photo courtesy of Films by Rach.



ACTIVATING SPOKANE: SPOKANE NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT ACTIVATION GRANTS

By Josh Cleveland, Spokane Neighborhoods Liaison

There are exciting things happening in Spokane! The Washington Trust is midway through a two-year grant project with the City of Spokane to work with four historic neighborhood business districts to implement placemaking, economic recovery, and organizational development initiatives. Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, the project includes Spokane's Garland, Hillyard, North Monroe, and South Perry neighborhoods.

In May 2025, stakeholders in the four districts were invited to apply for activation grants to help to jumpstart the work of the grant and show visible impact, while additional, larger priority projects were identified and vetted. By the end of the process, 27 grantees from neighborhood businesses and organizations were offered matching activation grants ranging from \$500-\$5,000, and the projects were as varied and unique as the districts themselves.

Here are just a few of the many impactful projects completed between May and September 2025, which highlight the excellent work of dedicated neighborhood business district stakeholders and partners!

The Garland district is known for its historic Garland Theatre, its neon signage, and its walkable footprint. Business owners Danielle Amstrup of Pleasantries and Mica McClung of Spokane Baby Company identified an opportunity to add planters outside their storefronts to beautify their spaces and provide a warm welcome to district visitors. McClung also added a new sandwich board to direct district visitors to her shop. According to Amstrup, the feedback has been incredible positive: "The number of people who have come inside and commented on how beautiful the flowers are has been overwhelming! While we were planting our boxes, a woman stopped by and said, 'Thank you for making the street beautiful.'"

In the Hillyard district, Brianna and Dave Musser have been dedicated to the restoration of their building, the United Building, which houses five separate businesses within the heart of the district. Given the United Building's listing on the National



Above: The new planters and sandwich board outside Spokane Baby Company in the Garland district.

All photos in article courtesy of Josh Cleveland.

Right: A wayfinding billboard helped locals find the new location for the Emerson-Garfield Farmers Market in the North Monroe district.

Below: New outdoor sconces illuminate the historic United Building in the Hillyard district.



Register of Historic Places, they have worked closely with the Spokane Historic Preservation Office to ensure that their restoration projects are consistent with the standards for the property. To beautify their building and add additional lighting to their district, the Mussers added four sconce lights to the building's façade. As Brianna comments: "The attention that it brings to the building in the evening and night hours is incredible—what a change! It is easier for patrons to find our building in the evening, and people have commented on the lighting drawing their attention to the architectural features of the building."

As in many neighborhood business districts, a farmers market is not only a space for residents and visitors to purchase goods from local vendors but also a space for community. A recent relocation of the farmers market in the North Monroe district to a nearby but off-the-beaten-path location required the Emerson-Garfield Farmers Market team to



think creatively about how to ensure both new and longstanding patrons knew how to find their new location. After an early summer installation, market leaders noted, "There are almost weekly anecdotal examples of how the billboard has helped with awareness raising and wayfinding."

Grant Elementary School resides in the heart of the South Perry district. The school and its staff and students, families, and visitors are all key members of the close-knit community. T.E.A.M. Grant, the school's parent/teacher organization, identified an opportunity to revitalize a 120-foot, decades-old mural to reflect the joy and spirit of the school and the neighborhood. The mural's characters depict the diverse culture of the school and welcome students and community members to the neighborhood, with characters holding signs that say, "You belong here."

The next time you make your way to Spokane, keep a lookout for these and other unique investments made by tireless members of these vibrant neighborhood business districts!

To learn more about the Spokane Neighborhood Business District Grant, visit preservewa.org/spokane. 📍



Left: The revitalization of a decades-old mural at Grant Elementary School makes for a more welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant district in South Perry.

Event Recap

2025 ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

By Kristy Conrad, Development Director

After a glorious, downtown-trotting PLACES Conference in Gig Harbor from October 8-10, the Washington Trust's 2025 Annual Members Meeting took place in one of the Maritime City's community gems, the Harbor History Museum, on the evening of Friday, October 10.

Members and friends of the Washington Trust gathered to check out the museum's many maritime exhibits, enjoy delicious food donated by local restaurant Butter Chicken Indian Kitchen, and listen to a short program by board president Matt Inpanbutr and executive director Chris Moore. Chris began the evening by thanking the audience, including special guests Washington State Representative Adison Richards and Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce president and CEO Miriam Battson.

Chris noted at the outset the wonderful week we had had in Gig Harbor. With 425 attendees, this year's PLACES was the best attended conference ever.

Not only that, it was our first conference bringing together the Washington State Main Street Program and the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area, with audiences from both programs in attendance and conference sessions and mobile tours focused on the programs' shared storytelling and placemaking roots. Chris thanked our conference partners, the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and the Gig Harbor Waterfront Alliance, for their support in making this year's conference such a success.

Chris observed that Pierce County boasted strong Main Street representation. Of our network of nearly 80 towns and cities across the state, five hail from Pierce County: Gig Harbor, Puyallup, and Sumner as Communities, and Buckley and Eatonville as Affiliates. Chris also noted that in a year of tough state budget cuts, we were grateful to the Washington State Legislature for acknowledging Main Street's economic and community benefits, as they saw fit to authorize continued full funding for the Washington State Main Street Program (which the Washington Trust operates under contract with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation).

On the maritime front, Chris pointed out that naturally Pierce County was the site of several key Maritime Washington National Heritage Area activities in recent years. In 2023 and 2024, we were fortunate to partner with the Port of Tacoma, Foss Waterway Seaport, and Youth Marine Foundation to offer Family Days on the Foss, providing free sails on



Left: Board president Matt Inpanbutr and executive director Chris Moore served as the evening's emcees.

Below: As part of the program, Damian Davis of Richland (third from left) was welcomed to the board starting in 2026. (Alongside, left to right: Nick Vann, Horace Foxall Jr., and Zane Kanyer.)

Bottom left: Washington Trust board members Edna Fund of Centralia and Kyle Walker of Freeland.



Lastly, the Washington Trust has long been an advocate for cultural access initiatives across the state. Chris noted that several years ago, the Washington State Legislature passed enabling legislation to allow counties and cities to impose a 0.01% sales tax to direct funding to arts and cultural organizations. The first to take advantage was Tacoma, with the establishment of Tacoma Creates. The Cities of Olympia and Vancouver, along with King and San Juan Counties, have since followed suit. This has resulted in millions of dollars for arts, history, heritage, and culture in Washington State already—and we hope there is much more to come. The City of Gig Harbor has placed their own cultural access initiative on November's ballot, and we hope voters will support it!

After highlighting the Washington Trust's recent Pierce County activities, Chris and Matt moved into the voting portion of the evening's program. Per the Washington Trust's bylaws, our general membership votes on both those current board members returning to serve a second term of office and on the slate of new board nominees seeking to join in the coming year. Six board members were nominated to return to serve a second term on the board of directors: Autumn Adams of Ellensburg, Jan Bader of Vancouver, Fred Goldberg of Olympia, Stephen Waite of Edmonds, Connie Walker Gray of Seattle, and Andrew Zellers of Seattle. These board members were unanimously voted to return by the assembled crowd.

Next, three new board members were presented as nominated to join the Washington Trust board of directors starting in 2026: Amanda Clark of Spokane, Damien Davis of Richland, and Katie Enders of Seattle. These three nominees were unanimously voted to join the board by attendees. We look forward to introducing them to you in more detail in our 2026 communications! 🗳️

the YMF's training vessel, the MV *Doolin-Rogers*, for kids and families. We have also provided Maritime Washington grants to two area organizations: the Tacoma Historical Society, to support the digitization of their maritime collection and creation of virtual story maps for the public, and the Harbor History Museum, to support the design and installation of interpretation for the historic fishing vessel *Shenandoah*. Lastly, Chris noted that Pierce County is currently hosting one of Maritime Washington's major interpretive projects, "Filipinos and Washington's Waterfront," a new exhibit celebrating the contributions of Filipinos to Washington's maritime history and culture, created in partnership with the Filipino American National Historical Society. That exhibit is currently on display at the Foss Waterway Seaport in Tacoma and will make its way to the Harbor History Museum in 2026.

Next, Chris pointed out the Washington Trust's identity and activity as an advocacy organization—fighting to support and preserve our state's historic and cultural places. This year, we've been advocating for continued funding for Maritime Washington at the federal level and continued funding for the Washington State Main Street Program at the state level. In addition, in recent years we've been part of a coalition of partners advocating for the preservation of the Nettie Asberry House in Tacoma, supporting the Tacoma Colored Women's Club in securing funding from the state legislature, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and others. We've also been advocating for the old Parkland School in Parkland, which has been on our Most Endangered Places list since 2022—helping the Parkland Community Association acquire the building from Pacific Lutheran University and restore it for community use.



Above: The 2025 Annual Members Meeting took place in the beautiful foyer of the Harbor History Museum.

Right: Attendees chatted before the evening's program.

All photos in article courtesy of Breanne Durham.



Event Recap

2025 YOUTH HERITAGE PROJECT

By Moira Nadal, Preservation Programs Director

This past July, for our annual summer Youth Heritage Project (YHP), the Washington Trust partnered with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and brought 37 high school students to the cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie. For 12 years now, YHP has been a signature program of the Washington Trust, serving as a place-based field school introducing students to a breadth of professional opportunities in the fields of history, culture, and nature. It's also a vital piece of the Washington Trust's commitment to engage younger and more diverse audiences in the important work of historic preservation. This incredible program is offered completely free of cost every year, thanks to the generous support of our founding partners, the National Park Service and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and other key funders.

This year, students explored a section of the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area, one of Washington's two National Heritage Areas (along with the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area, which the Washington Trust administers). From the first day's orientation to the land via the Snoqualmie Tribe's origin story, our students learned about the various people who have lived, worked in, and shaped the area, impacting the landscape through both traditional ways of living and major infrastructure development.

We started at historic Meadowbrook Farms, learning about the origin of the Snoqualmie Tribe and the beginning of human habitation in the area, all the way up to Mountains to Sound's work

managing the National Heritage Area. The next stop was a walking tour in downtown North Bend, where students learned about architectural styles and evolution through building observation. With nothing but general context clues, students examined and analyzed why buildings look different from each other, reflecting changes in taste, uses, technological innovations, and modes of access.

The next morning, at Snoqualmie Falls, students examined numerous types of signage and wayfinding. They also visited Puget Sound Energy's Hydroelectric Museum on the site to learn



Above: The Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust was a fantastic partner and "client."

Below: YHP students visited Meadowbrook Farms, the valley where the Snoqualmie Tribe originally inhabited the land.

All photos in article courtesy of Moira Nadal.



Above left: At every site, students were asked to analyze the tools used to interpret and tell stories.

Above right: The behind-the-scenes tour of the Northwest Railway Museum's conservation lab was a highlight of the week.

Below: In downtown North Bend, students learned to "read" a building and better understand design and construction.

Bottom right: Our YHP Town Hall was held at the Historic North Bend Theatre, complete with welcoming marquee.



about the impact of the dam and power plant. We had lunch on the shores of Rattlesnake Lake and learned about the layered history of the place, from maintained camas prairie to early railroad town and the eventual flooding of the town of Moncton due to the construction of the nearby Masonry Dam. At the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum, students split into smaller groups to try out living history through hands-on activities and for a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's archives. After dinner, we learned about the Snoqualmie Tribe's work to remove invasive species at Lake Sammamish State Park to restore salmon habitat. Students tackled managing wild grasses at a plot of the park to help plantings of native species flourish.

Day Three started with a visit to the Northwest Railway Museum, where students explored the train shed exhibit hall housing many years of trains and trolleys and streetcars. They were even able to climb aboard historic trains, seeing the evolutions in cab technology and car design. We were incredibly lucky to have the students allowed access to the museum's conservation and restoration workshop in addition to the opportunity to ride the rails on a maintenance vehicle.



At lunch, we were joined by Caroline Villanova of the Greenway Trust, who acted as the client for the students' final projects. She asked them to develop proposals for how to interpret the story of humans' relationship to the landscape for an audience of their peers, using the different tools and methods of interpretation that they had experienced during their site visits.

On the final day of YHP, everyone gathered at the historic North Bend Theatre for our Town Hall event, where we were honored to host North Bend mayor Mary Miller—as well as many students' families, past YHP attendees, stewards of the sites we had visited during the week week, educators and preservationists, and an esteemed panel of judges ready to evaluate the students' proposals.

Four groups presented creative and thoughtful approaches to interpretation for the historic Snoqualmie Depot, the stretch of the Sunset Highway that runs through North Bend, the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum, and Rattlesnake Lake. I was bowled over by how much they had absorbed and synthesized in just a few (jam-packed) days! I'm so grateful every year for the sponsors and supporters of this program, the many generous local partners and hosts who give their time and expertise, our fantastic teacher/mentors who guided students through the week—and of course the students! 🍷



DRYFT MUSIC & STIMSON-GREEN

By Darren Hummel, DRYFT Music Founder

I began holding intimate concerts in some of Seattle's most iconic historic venues under the name DRYFT Music in January 2018. My goal was to find beautiful, meaningful spaces where audiences could convene in a quiet listening room and hear some of the most talented singer-songwriters from the Pacific Northwest.

The first show—held on Lake Union in a 1922 steamship, the *Virginia V*—was a huge success. People loved attending a living room-style show in a unique historic space with the ability to explore areas usually off-limits to the public. The musicians loved having a room full of attentive listeners, giving them a rare opportunity to interact with the crowd, tell stories about their songs, and showcase their original music. The venues benefitted by having hundreds and eventually thousands of people visiting their unique location, reaching a much wider audience than traditional marketing could reach. It was an all-around win for everyone.

Seeing how impactful these shows became, I then expanded my series and began to hold concerts at

the Stimson-Green Mansion. I also did a trial run of four concerts at the Aberthau Mansion in Vancouver, British Columbia, and was set to launch in Portland, Oregon, at two different venues, when the pandemic struck. This brought a halt to live music across the country and the world. Live shows disappeared—and for quite some time, we collectively missed this amongst our regular daily experiences.

Live-streamed concerts came and went. But they never replaced the incomparable intimacy of sitting in a room with other people watching and listening to someone play a song less than 10 feet away. As life slowly began to return to normal, I re-launched the series on the *Virginia V* in July 2023 and at the Stimson-Green in January 2025.



Above: Chairs placed in front of the library's dramatic fireplace.

Left: The library of the Stimson-Green Mansion set for a small DRYFT concert.

Photos courtesy of DRYFT Music.



Left, below, and bottom left: Performers at a DRYFT concert at the Stimson-Green Mansion.

All photos courtesy of DRYFT Music.

The concerts at the Stimson-Green seem to carry a bit of magic and whimsy. As everyone gathers in the library minutes before 8:00 pm, the lights dim and the show begins. The singer-songwriter is illuminated in front of the grand fireplace, and the room comes to a hush. The storytelling begins, and the music flows through the space, permeating the aged floors and wooden rafters, carrying melodies across space and time, perhaps awakening long-lost stories of those who once walked the halls of this eclectic 1901 manor.

Every space has its own sense of history and conveys this through its walls, décor, flourishes, paintings, doors, lighting, and creaky floors. When I hold intimate concerts at the Stimson-Green, one can almost taste the history. It is palpable to the senses. When the music begins, resonating throughout the storied walls, something comes alive, not just to me but to everyone in the room experiencing this ephemeral moment, this connection to strangers, this shared experience that brings people together no matter what might separate them outside of this room.

Some people have asked me why I do it—why I go to all the effort to make these concerts happen and bring people together for these short but memorable evenings. I recently listened to a podcast about purpose, and it deeply resonated with me. The “why”



of what I do is reflected and felt through many small but significant impacts: upon the many people who listen to a particular song at a show and walk away with a new perspective, idea, or revelation; upon the musician who shares their often deeply personal song for the first time with an engaged audience, inspiring them to write more, share more, be more vulnerable; upon me, witnessing a room full of laughter after the performer tells a funny story or a room full of quiet claps when a sad song is shared that touches nearly everyone in the room.

Even though I've considered ending the concert series from time to time, it's those heartwarming moments, the words and expressions of gratitude from the musician, the smiles and thunderous applause from the crowd, the appreciation of the venue hosts, that all remind me of the unparalleled value in holding them. It's increasingly rare to go to a show where you can interact with the musicians and listen just an arm's-length away—and even more rare to experience this kind of intimate show in one of Seattle's most iconic mansions.

To experience the magic yourself, go to www.dryft.in to find a show that works for you. Hope to see you at the Stimson-Green! 🍷

THE TOKELAND HOTEL

By Moira Nadal, Preservation Programs Director

Did you know that one of the most acclaimed restaurants in Washington is housed in the state's oldest hotel? If you didn't, now's the time to add The Wandering Goose and the Tokeland Hotel to your upcoming travel plans!

The historic Tokeland Hotel is located in the small town of Tokeland in Pacific County, in the southwest corner of Washington State. It was an area inhabited by Shoalwater Bay Tribe with few European or American settlers until the 1850s. One of the earliest settlers was a gold prospector from Philadelphia, George H. Brown, who established a homestead for his family, operated several farms, and traded with local Tribes. In fact, his daughter Elizabeth grew up speaking Chinook. It was Elizabeth and her husband

William Kindred who in 1885 completed the two-story wood frame farmhouse that would become the original structure of the Tokeland Hotel—first known as the Kindred Inn.

Over time, with their daughters, the Kindreds purchased additional land and developed a golf course, dairy, oyster farm, and post office in the area. In 1910, they expanded the size of the hotel, adding a new wing, introducing gas and electric lighting, and upgrading the plumbing. Additional amenities included a gun club and a nine-hole golf course. Over time, the Tokeland Hotel helped spur tourism in the area. The Kindred family continued to operate it until Elizabeth and William's deaths in 1931 and 1943 respectively. With no heirs, William bequeathed

the property to the family's long-time caretaker and friend, Effie Reinkins. In the next 75 years, the hotel has been lovingly stewarded by several families, each adding their own chapter to its history. The Tokeland Hotel was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Fast forward to 2018, the start of the Tokeland's current era. Heather Earnhardt was operating a successful restaurant in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood (the original The Wandering Goose) but she and her partner Zac Young, a master carpenter,

wanted to raise their children outside the city. They heard the Tokeland Hotel was for sale and booked a weekend stay to check it out. They arrived on a Friday night and put in an offer by Monday. Since then, they've relocated The Wandering Goose to the hotel, and Zac has focused his energies and talents on restoring the Tokeland building and property.

In 2023, the Tokeland Hotel was awarded a \$75,000 Third Places grant from the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (administered by the Washington Trust) to conduct much-needed



Left: Kindred's Tokeland Hotel, circa 1915.

Below: The back of the Tokeland Hotel, circa 1910.

Opposite: The newly repainted exterior of the Tokeland Hotel today.

All photos courtesy of the Tokeland Hotel.





foundation and exterior repairs to the building. In 2024, the Tokeland was one of 50 restaurants in the nation to be awarded a National Trust for Historic Preservation Backing Historic Small Restaurants grant, which funded new exterior paint and a replaced and extended back porch. Also in 2024, the Wandering Goose was awarded the Slow Food Snail of Approval, given to restaurants and food purveyors who are committed to the quality, authenticity, and sustainability of our state's local foodways.

"Tokeland Hotel is committed to conducting our business in an ethical and socially responsible manner that aligns with our core values: Big Food, Big Love," says Heather. "To keep our community connected, we host regular events that bring together artisans and storytelling fishermen, bagpipe players, and dog lovers. Together with our neighbors, the Shoalwater Bay Tribe, we maintain the wetlands surrounding the hotel. We strive to maintain the original spirit of the Tokeland Hotel and Wandering Goose restaurant as an establishment that is run by locals for both locals and tourists. This place has deep multi-generational roots within the community, and we want to continue honoring that tradition." 🍷

Top: The lobby and bakery counter of the Tokeland Hotel today.

Right: Owner Heather Earnhardt at work in the bakery.

Photos courtesy of the Tokeland Hotel.



Alumni Spotlight

CAMERON WONG

Tell us about yourself. Where are you from? How did you come to be interested in history/preservation/placemaking?

I grew up in the Seattle area. Growing up, I was never really a history person. I think for me and for a lot of people, you read about random facts and figures in class, but it isn't really super interesting until you find a story that appeals to you in a different way. That's how I got into preservation. The first preservation-related project I worked on was at the University of Washington, with the ASUW Shell House restoration. I got involved with that because I had rowed in high school and got connected that way. That definitely opened up preservation to me. For me, it was rowing that made the story and the place where it happened much more interesting—the fact that the building was still there, and you could go in, sit in that space, and feel the layers of history.

After that experience as an undergrad, I started researching and diving into more preservation-adjacent projects, and I joined the Renton Downtown Partnership's board. At the time, I wasn't really familiar with Main Street and how it related to preservation—it was the city that I had grown up in, and that was the connector. I was on their board for

three years, and I did a lot of work trying to bring preservation into the downtown revitalization conversations that we were having. After I finished my board term there, I started working for APIAHIP [Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation]. We do a lot of work around the country with Chinatowns and other Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. I also recently joined the Seattle City Landmarks Preservation Board, which is giving me a taste of technical, local preservation regulations.

How did you first interact with the Washington Trust?

My first interaction was with the Washington Trust was through the Washington State Main Street Program, through serving with the Renton Downtown Partnership. It was in 2023, at the conference in Vancouver where I was a fellow, that I first met the Main Street team—Breanne, Jonelle, Lydia. Just seeing their passion for that specific part of preservation, the Main Street world, was really great, and they're always super helpful and really supportive for all the communities. And then I found out the Washington Trust had just had your gala at

Below: Cameron Wong (third from left) as one of our conference fellows (now PALs) in Vancouver in fall 2023. Photo courtesy of Casey Evans Media.





Left: Cameron attended Preservation Advocacy Week in 2024, alongside our Preservation Programs Director Moira Nadal. Photo courtesy of Moira Nadal.

Below: Cameron (second from right) poses with members of our Washington delegate and Washington Congresswoman Kim Schrier (third from left) at Preservation Advocacy Week in 2025. Photo courtesy of Moira Nadal.



Right: Cameron attends our 2025 PLACES Conference in Gig Harbor, alongside Renton Downtown Partnership Executive Director Julia Lopez-Garcia. Photo courtesy of Films by Rach.



the ASUW Shell House, which I thought was a cool intersection with my background.

What was memorable about that first experience with the Trust? How did it impact you, personally and/or professionally? How did it affect your studies or pursuits afterwards?

Being a fellow at that first conference in Vancouver was really great. There were five or six of us, and each person had a different topic or interest area in preservation—someone was studying architecture, someone worked at a planning department, and there were people in other arts and culture nonprofits as well. That was the first time I saw how multi-disciplinary preservation can be—it touches so many different fields. And it was actually in Vancouver where I met [APIAHiP Executive Director] Huy Pham, and that connection was really great. I think all these different threads gave me a

greater appreciation for the nonprofit field. Coming from someone who was in the private sector for a little bit, it's been inspiring to see the passion and commitment that people have to their work.

What are you doing now? What do you envision as your career trajectory?

I'm currently the Development Specialist for APIAHiP. I've been here for almost two years, and it's my first job in nonprofit fundraising. I've really enjoyed my time here, and I've had the opportunity to think about my future and learn about career paths in preservation. I've decided to go into architecture

and study like preservation from that lens. Actually, when I was a kid, I wanted to be an architect, and that went by the wayside as I got into college. But coming back to it now has been good because I've had all these experiences in preservation to give me a holistic view. I'm applying to UW and maybe Oregon, to their architecture programs. I want to make preservation a part of what I do in school and in my career after that. I'm looking to pursue preservation as a certificate. One area that's really intriguing to me is adaptive reuse, and I know UW has a professor who specializes in that. I'm applying this fall for admission next fall. That's the plan!

What are your thoughts on the future of preservation? How do you think the preservation movement here in Washington can address some of our communities' challenges, or where should it adapt/improve in order to do so?

I definitely have been thinking a lot about this, especially being on the Landmarks Board now. I think Seattle and the state as a whole have been obviously dealing with a lot of challenges around housing and development in general, and I know the Trust talks a lot about this too—how so often, people see preservation as an obstacle to development and housing. But preservation can be an asset, can be part of the future of a state and a city that are growing so rapidly. I think architecture and the built environment are really a reflection of what a community values. If they build buildings that they know are going to last, that shows that they value that. With adaptive reuse, when we protect and save and reuse old buildings, they're always popular and people love going to them. Every time we go to the Gig Harbor or these smaller communities where they have these beautiful buildings that are still in use, it

just shows how much opportunity there is for us to lead in how we preserve and reuse our historic spaces. That's something I'm thinking about as I'm on the Landmarks Board and as I start potentially going back to school. Not only how we build new things, but also how architecture and everyone in the built environment can be involved in preservation—how it can be a value that we as a state or a city have, so we can build and reuse and plan and work together towards that goal.

What would you tell other young people about getting into the field of preservation? Any advice that you would offer them?

I would say, based on my experience and how I came into preservation, that if you weren't a history person growing up, don't discount preservation, don't say, "Oh, it's not for me." There are so many ways that you can get involved in preservation, through Main Street or architecture or the cultural preservation we do at APIAHiP. I think it's worth seeking out opportunities to learn and get involved. All of the organizations that I've interacted with here are always looking for younger people to get engaged. Go to events, meet people for coffee—be open to pursuing new interests that you come across along the way.

What is your favorite place in Washington State, and why?

I would have to say the University of Washington and the buildings here are definitely special to me—particularly the Shell House. I've also discovered more of an appreciation for the outdoors over the last couple of years, hiking, going out to the coast. Any of the towns along the coast like Gig Harbor are great. But I think UW, the Shell House, and their connection to my story probably makes them my top choice. 📍



Above: Cameron at our 2024 Sivinski Holiday Benefit at the Stimson-Green Mansion, alongside Lan Nguyen of SSF Structural Engineers. Photo courtesy of Carson Meacham.

BALLAST BOOK COMPANY

By Breanne Durham, Washington State Main Street Program Director

Ballast Book Company in Bremerton is no mere bookstore. Rather, it has grown into an economic driver for its downtown, a community hub, and an award-winning model for civic engagement.

The bookstore first opened in Bremerton in 2015 as a pop-up of Poulsbo's Liberty Bay Books and "never unpopped," according to Kate Larson. It was Kate who came over to Bremerton from Poulsbo to manage the bookstore under the Liberty Bay banner, and when the owner wanted to retire in 2021, Kate took the reins, and Ballast Book Company was born.

Today, Ballast Book Company hosts numerous events such as midnight release parties and author talks throughout the year, even beyond their own

walls. Events include sold-out author talks at the nearby Roxy Theatre, with an author signing at a nearby brewery. Seven monthly book clubs— Book Club at the End of the Universe; General Fiction; Oh, the Horror!; Movie Lovers; Wine and Silence; Fantastic Books; and Reading the Rainbow—are held across downtown, in three different business locations. One, Wine and Silence, is an hour-long session of reading your own book silently and brings upwards of two dozen people into a downtown wine bar on a Wednesday night every month. All the while, within the store, Kate and her crew of "bookeroos" share recommendations for great things to do in downtown Bremerton. The economic uncertainty that has prevailed this year has not stopped Kate's



Above: Inside the Ballast Book Company in Bremerton. Photo courtesy of The Seattle Times.

never-ending passion for connecting people with books. Ballast Book Company's stance is clear—no to book bans and yes to love and self-expression. Despite the economy, business remains brisk at Ballast, as the community knows and trusts where Kate stands as a business owner. That success and community connection were acknowledged when Publishers Weekly nominated Ballast for 2025 Bookstore of the Year.

But Kate's impact is more than her own success—it's also the economic impact she promotes amongst her neighbors. Kate insists on Ballast being open seven days a week to support people coming downtown every day of the week, and she encourages her customers to support other shops

as well. Every First Friday Art Walk, she invites a local artist or author to table at her store. Kate even serves on the board of the Downtown Bremerton Association, Washington's newest designated Main Street Community.

Because of Kate's fearlessness, her passion for downtown and small businesses, and her community-first entrepreneurship, Ballast Book Company was awarded our top award at this year's Excellence on Main awards ceremony, which took place on October 9 during the 2025 PLACES Conference in Gig Harbor. Kate has said about the bookstore's name: "The idea is that the ship of your life sometimes goes through storms, and books are the ballast that steady your ship." In a downtown district that is on the rise, in a state that loves to read, and in a nation that desperately needs more places of connection, we commend Kate, her bookeroos, and her cozy shop of books for being the ballast to many. 📖



Above: The exterior of the Ballast Book Company on Pacific Avenue in downtown Bremerton. Photo courtesy of the Ballast Book Company.

Right: The dedicated bookeroos of the Ballast Book Company. Photo courtesy of the Ballast Book Company.



Above: A sold-out author talk by Gig Harbor's Matt Dinniman at the Roxy Theatre. Photo courtesy of the Ballast Book Company.

Right: The Ballast Book Company even staffs a booth at local festivals and events. Photo courtesy of the Ballast Book Company.



DIGGING INTO INDIGENOUS MARITIME HERITAGE: A TRIBAL GUIDE TO MARITIME WASHINGTON

By Meagan Harden, Maritime Washington National Heritage Area
Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow

As part of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area team, I take joy in sharing the sights, sounds, and flavors of Maritime Washington with my out-of-state visitors. Whether we're boarding the *Chelan* ferry to San Juan Island or witnessing salmon return to the Ballard Locks fish ladder in autumn, I love showing off our state's saltwater stories. But my favorite thing to share with guests is the Pacific geoduck, a delicious (and funky!) shellfish that lives burrowed in mud beneath the Salish Sea. A beloved treat in Washington and beyond, most people don't realize that the geoduck is also a product of Washington's Indigenous roots: the word "geoduck" itself comes from the Lushootseed word *gʷidəq*. Each time visitors use the word *gʷidəq*, they affirm the role

that Washington's Indigenous people play in shaping our maritime heritage.

Here at Maritime Washington, we are embarking on a project that will showcase Indigenous connections to the Salish Sea, guided by the power of sea, story, and collaboration. Over the past year, I've taken a cue from the *gʷidəq*, digging deep into the enduring relationships between Tribal nations and Washington's saltwater shores. The Maritime Washington National Heritage Area spans more than 3,000 miles of coastline, including ancestral homelands and waters belonging to 21 federally recognized Tribal nations. Thanks to generous support from the Mellon Foundation, I've joined the Maritime Washington team as a postdoctoral fellow

Left: Interpretive signage at Old Man House Park in Suquamish tells the history of Old Man House.

Below: A view of xʷsəqʷəb (Agate Pass) from Old Man House Park.

Photos courtesy of Meagan Harden.



Above: Geoducks harvested near Port Angeles. Photo by Heather Johnson, courtesy of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area.

Right: Squaxin Island Tribal member and Director of the Squaxin Island Museum Charlene Krise speaks at Olympia's Indigenous Peoples' Day Celebration in Squaxin Park. Photo courtesy of Meagan Harden.

to launch a pilot project in partnership with two of these Tribal nations—the Suquamish and Squaxin Island Tribes—to document, interpret, and amplify Indigenous connections to the Salish Sea.

Expected to launch in summer 2026, the final product will be a Tribal Guide to Maritime Washington: a digital resource that invites Washingtonians to engage with the region's rich natural and cultural heritage, with Tribal nations' perspectives front and center. In addition, we'll work with both of the pilot Tribal nations to identify and create an individual product to further share their stories, such as a video, brochure, or map.

As the project's coordinator, I've had the privilege of learning directly from Suquamish and Squaxin Island Tribal members. I've met geoduck divers, fishermen, canoe skippers, and elders who generously share their time, knowledge, and traditions with me. I've attended clam digs, honored the legacy of Chief Seattle at the Suquamish Tribe's Chief Seattle Days celebration, and danced alongside new friends at the Squaxin Island Tribe's Indigenous Peoples' Day gathering in Olympia. These experiences, graciously



Above: (From left to right) Suquamish Tribe Shellfish Manager Viviane Barry, Suquamish Traditional Food and Medicine Program Coordinator and Tribal member Azure Boure, and Director for Suquamish Research and Strategic Development and Suquamish Tribal member Robin Sigo speaking at the 2025 PLACES Conference in Gig Harbor. Photo courtesy of Meagan Harden.



shared by Tribal collaborators, have allowed me to metaphorically (and, when the sun's out, literally!) dip my toes into the living cultural landscape of the Salish Sea.

Every visit to Suquamish or Squaxin Island deepens my appreciation for this place: it's impossible *not* to be moved by the glitter of sunshine on calm waters or the whisper of salty air through towering cedars. But, as our Tribal partners remind me, the Salish Sea is far more than a beautiful backdrop: it is the center of life for Coast Salish peoples, a relative, provider, and teacher all in one.

Cassy George, the Suquamish Tribe's Lushootseed Language Program Coordinator, explains, "Generations of our people have been nourished by the ample amount of food that *xʷəlc* [the Lushootseed word for the body of water we call 'Puget Sound'] has provided us with. The *xʷəlc* has been our highway connecting us to other Tribal nations, and the *xʷəlc* continues to provide for our people today." For Cassy and others, these waters have provided food, transportation, and lifelong learning since time immemorial.

As Maritime Washington enters the second year of this collaboration with the Suquamish and Squaxin Island Tribes, we continue to follow the *gʷidəq*'s example by taking time to dig deep. We are listening, learning, and ensuring that our work reflects the richness of Indigenous maritime heritage. "The Suquamish Tribe has been deeply connected to the lands and waters of the Salish Sea for thousands of years," says Kali Chargualaf, the Suquamish Tribe's Higher Education Program Manager. "Suquamish's history, knowledge, and traditions are essential to telling the full maritime story of this region."

The pilot Tribal Guide to Maritime Washington is just one step in Maritime Washington's commitment to amplifying Indigenous maritime heritage. We are honored to join the Suquamish and Squaxin Island Tribes in this journey and look forward to sharing the final products of this work with all of you! 🐚

MARITIME HERITAGE COMES ABOARD WASHINGTON’S FERRIES

By Alex Gradwohl, Maritime Washington National Heritage Area Program Director

Few experiences capture Washington's maritime heritage more perfectly than gliding across the Salish Sea aboard one of the iconic white-and-green Washington State Ferries. Last summer, passengers traveling between Anacortes and the San Juan Islands enjoyed an extra-special voyage, featuring talks and storytelling about maritime heritage led by a Washington State Parks ranger.

Ranger Kathy, an expert in interpretation, rode aboard select ferry routes from July through October, talking with visitors and providing information about the area's rich maritime history and natural beauty. Ranger Kathy helps folks connect with and understand the cultural, historical, and natural resources of a place. Each morning, she set up a table with historic photos, maps, books, and materials from local museums, historic sites, and other destinations in Anacortes and the San Juan Islands. After a special announcement from the captain about her presence

aboard, interested guests could join Kathy for short educational talks and informal conversations about this special place.

“She told stories highlighting the Salish Sea’s interconnected ecosystem one moment and helped visitors navigate island bike route logistics the next,” explained Emily Herman, Interpretive Specialist II for San Juan Area State Parks. “Kathy catered her interpretation to the route and passenger and particularly enjoyed engaging with children, learning from locals, and promoting responsible stewardship to island visitors.”

This program was a long-envisioned collaboration between the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area, Washington State Ferries,



Above: Ranger Kathy speaks with young riders.

Left: Ranger Kathy shares information with visitors about the San Juan Islands.

Below: Washington State Parks rangers on board the ferry Chelan.

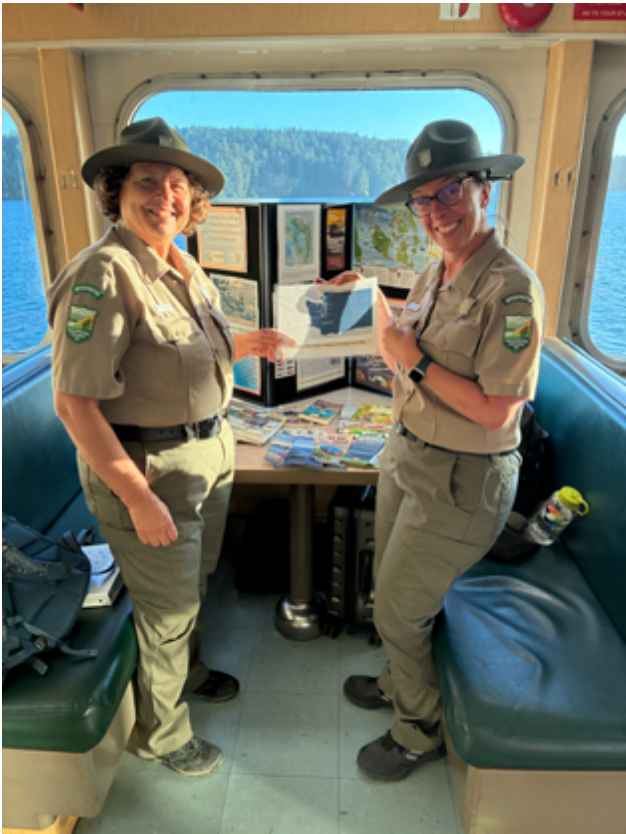
and Washington State Parks. Our ferries are central to Washington's maritime story—from canoes, to tall ships, to the Mosquito Fleet, to today's Jumbo Mark II ferries. They also offer an ideal setting for sharing our state's natural, cultural, and historical heritage: on the water, in the thick of it all, with a built-in audience. We knew that providing interpretation and storytelling aboard ferries would be an amazing opportunity to share our state's maritime heritage with residents and visitors alike.

Making this vision a reality took years of collaboration with our partners. Washington State Ferries stepped up with the perfect venue and technical support, while Washington State Parks brought the interpretive expertise and staffing. Maritime Washington joined forces with Friends of Moran State Park to fund a full-time seasonal Interpretive Specialist position within State Parks. We also helped train Ranger Kathy and connect her with partners across the San Juan Islands and Anacortes—including local parks, historical societies, and visitor bureaus—so she could share their stories and inspire riders to explore more of Washington's maritime heritage through their sites.

Ranger Kathy's program aboard the ferries this summer was an undeniable success, with positive feedback from riders and overwhelming support from locals and tourists alike. In fewer than 30 total days aboard, Ranger Kathy reported engaging with more than 1,300 visitors in meaningful interactions. Local partners on the islands and in Anacortes also reported receiving visitors on Kathy's recommendation.

Maritime Washington sees this project as a successful proof of concept and hopes to use this as a “pilot” that could repeat and expand in the

future. Free and accessible programming aboard Washington State Ferries is a perfect fit for our mission of connecting people with the stories, experiences, resources, and cultures of our state's saltwater shores and waterways. We give big thanks to our fantastic partners at Ferries and State Parks for being such enthusiastic collaborators. And of course, a huge round of applause to Ranger Kathy for her trailblazing work bringing this program to life! 🗡️



Above: Ranger Kathy's table included an ever-evolving collection of maps, historic photos, stickers, books, responsible travel tips, and materials from local attractions.

Left: Ranger Kathy (left) is joined aboard by Ranger Emily.

All photos courtesy of Washington State Parks and Maritime Washington staff.



Partner Showcase

FRIENDS OF WATERFRONT PARK

We sit down with Jason Merges, Senior Manager of Marketing and Content for Friends of Waterfront Park, to discuss his organization's work on the Seattle waterfront.

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

Friends of Waterfront Park is the nonprofit partner responsible for fundraising, programming, stewarding, and managing Seattle's new Waterfront Park, a 20-acre, world-class public space along the city's central shoreline. Our mission is to bring people and communities together to ensure the park thrives as a vibrant gathering place—one that fosters connection, celebrates Seattle's natural beauty, and honors the stories of this land and its people. Located along the downtown waterfront, the park reconnects Seattle to the Salish Sea through natural landscapes, accessible pedestrian connections, and welcoming spaces to gather with friends, family, and community. We serve everyone who visits the waterfront. Whether you're a longtime Seattleite or a first-time visitor, we want each experience at Waterfront Park to spark

joy, belonging, and a deeper connection to this remarkable place at the heart of our city.

The Seattle waterfront has undergone major changes over the past decade. Tell us about the recent reopening and your involvement with the park's revitalization.

On September 6, Friends of Waterfront Park and the City of Seattle celebrated a milestone decades in the making: the grand opening of Waterfront Park. For the first time, all 20 acres of this reimagined shoreline came alive with activity. More than 100 community partners—artists, cultural organizations, educators, and local small businesses—brought the park to life through performances, art installations, and shared experiences. More than 50,000 visitors joined us that day to explore, dance, and celebrate together, a powerful reflection of what this park was always meant to be: a place for everyone. The grand opening embodied our core values of connection, inclusivity, and collaboration, showcasing the incredible creativity and community spirit that make Seattle such a remarkable place.

Left: Waterfront Park and the Seattle city skyline. Photo by Erik Holsather, courtesy Friends of Waterfront Park.

Opposite bottom: Visitors pack Waterfront Park's grand opening celebration on September 6, 2025. Photo by John Feit, courtesy of Friends of Waterfront Park



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

In 2023, Friends of Waterfront Park and the Washington Trust [through the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area program] partnered to host “Tidelines to Timelines: A Storytelling Event” at Waterfront Park, which shined a light on the history of Seattle's waterfront and centered Black, Indigenous, and personal stories of resilience and solidarity. Our organizations, along with the Wing Luke Museum, Black Heritage Society, Wa Na Wari, and Sea Potential, engaged in a months-long process to co-create the program that invited members of the public to engage with audio histories, spoken word performances, and other forms of storytelling to learn about the history of Seattle's waterfront from an often untold perspective. You can still engage with the program through our website at waterfrontparkseattle.org/waterfront-histories.

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

For us, preservation is an act of ongoing care. As stewards of this new public space, we see it not as something to be kept static, but as something to be nurtured. Waterfront Park is the result of decades of vision, collaboration, and investment, and our role is to ensure that this investment continues to serve the people of Seattle and all who visit. Preservation means honoring the promises made to the community: that the park will remain clean, safe, and welcoming and that it will continue to evolve with the city, reflecting the stories, cultures, and connections that make this place so special—now and for generations to come.



Above left: The Salmon Homecoming event that took place on September 20, 2025, at Waterfront Park. Photo by Jo Cosme, courtesy Friends of Waterfront Park.

Above right: Excited participants at Waterfront Park's grand opening celebration on September 6. Photo by Brandon Patoc, courtesy of Friends of Waterfront Park.

Below: Speakers at the Tidelines to Timelines event in September 2023. Photo courtesy of Sunny Martini.



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

Our vision is for Waterfront Park to become Seattle's most beloved public space—a symbol of civic pride, connection, and cultural belonging. As we look to the future, our focus is on ensuring that the park continues to thrive: filled with activity, cared for by community, and reflective of the diverse stories that shape Seattle.

How can people get involved with your work?

Join our newsletter to hear about upcoming community events, markets, concerts, fitness classes, and year-round programming (including cozy winter activations!): waterfrontparkseattle.org/sign-up. If you're inspired by our vision and want to support our ongoing stewardship and programming, you can learn more about ways to get involved at waterfrontparkseattle.org/support. 📩



FAREWELL, THIS PLACE!

We’re sad to announce that, due to budget constraints and rising costs, this issue will unfortunately be the last for our printed magazine. But fear not! We’re working to transition much of the magazine’s recurring content to ongoing news posts on our website. Stay tuned to **preservewa.org** (and our social media channels **@preservewa**) for new original content, policy and advocacy updates, Main Street and preservation case studies, and much, much more. We hope you’ll also continue to contribute to the Washington Trust through your donations and memberships. Your support is needed now more than ever!



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