

Elizabeth Mills Brown AWARDS

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The Elizabeth Mills Brown Award recognizes design excellence in the restoration, rehabilitation, adaptation, and reuse of historic structures. The award is named after and honors the work of Betty Brown, a prominent Connecticut architectural historian, preservationist, and civic leader, and author of the extraordinarily comprehensive and meticulously researched *New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design* (Yale University Press, 1976). This award is presented in conjunction with Preservation Connecticut.

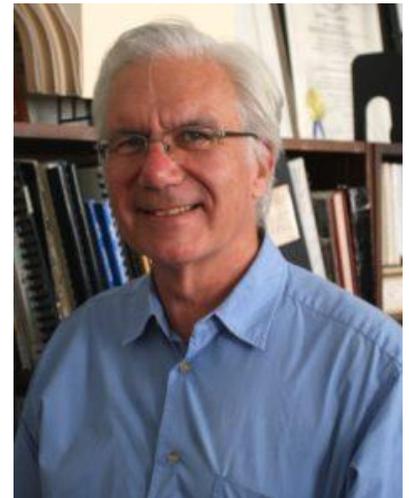
2021 Elizabeth Mills Brown Jury



Tod Bryant
Principal
Heritage Resources



Julie Carmelich
Historian
State of Connecticut
Historic Preservation Office



Wes Haynes
Executive Director
Merritt Parkway Conservancy

Excellence

Harbor House | J.P. Franzen Associates
Photography: Neil Landino Photography



This house, located in the Southport, Connecticut Historic District, is an excellent example of the Second Empire style. It was designed by Lambert and Bunnell architects of Bridgeport, CT and built in 1867. The owners who recently purchased the home wished to renovate with the primary goal of making the structure more energy efficient and less dependent on fossil fuel.

There was also serious deterioration of the front porch due to wood decay and failure of the foundation. A comprehensive application was prepared to present the Fairfield Historic District Commission which included placement of a photovoltaic array on the roof, removal of existing outdoor HVAC equipment, conversion of existing single pane windows to double pane and replacement of deteriorated fabric on and around the front porch.



Jury Comments: This is an excellent example of combining historic preservation and energy efficiency. The photovoltaic panels were worked in without detracting from the architecture, and the porch reconstruction carefully matched existing details.

Hill-Stead Museum Visitor Center | Centerbrook Architects and Planners

Photography: Derek Hayn/Centerbrook



Conceived by

the pioneering early 20th century architect Theodate Pope Riddle, the 152-acre property houses her family's furnishings and Impressionist art, including masterpieces by Monet, Degas, Picasso, and Whistler, as well as extensive pastures and gardens, partly designed by Beatrix Farrand.

The Visitors Center enhances the variety and quality of the visitor experience with indoor and outdoor amenities that respect the distinctiveness of Theodate Pope Riddle's architecture. Importantly, the project expands Hill-Stead's exhibit offerings with new galleries that meet museum-level standards for light, temperature, and humidity control. Upon arrival, there might appear to be few alterations; the restrained yet impactful transformations reveal themselves incrementally.

Realized in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Economic Community Development and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the new 7,000-square-foot Visitors Center at the Hill-Stead Museum adapts and preserves historic interconnected outbuildings which originally housed stables, carriages, automobiles, and farm equipment.



Jury comments: This project made an already exciting place even more exciting. The elegant integration of new design with old allows expansion of museum programming and gives the historic outbuildings the care and attention usually devoted only to a main building.

Saint Mary Place | Patriquin Architects

Photography: Ian Christmann

The renovation of the Saint Mary Star of the Sea Church school into Saint Mary Place affordable housing combines strict standards for historical rehabilitation with careful additions of modern amenities necessary for a new use. Built in 1898 in New London, CT, the building was a parochial school for grades K-8. After the school's closure in 2012, the Owner and Design Team began work in 2014 to give the building new life as affordable supportive housing.





This rehabilitation project gives new life to an historic architectural treasure in New London, while providing much-needed supportive, affordable housing for the community. By carefully preserving and restoring historic features, while integrating modern requirements for the changing use, Saint Mary Place serves as a model for how historic buildings can be creatively and thoughtfully reimagined for the 21st century.

Jury comments: *Affordable housing has become a real crisis in Connecticut, but this project shows that affordable projects can use historic buildings and achieve a level of finish and quality not often possible in new construction.*

Sun Tavern | David Scott Parker Architects

Photography: Durston Saylor Photography, David Scott Parker Architects

Dating back to 1639, Fairfield's Town Green is one of the oldest public spaces in Connecticut, encompassing an important collection of educational, civic and historic structures located on a 20-acre common. Fairfield Museum, in partnership with the Town of Fairfield and other community organizations, is leading a collaborative effort to revitalize this unique, municipally-owned cultural landscape as a center for creative place-making and regional tourism. Foundational to that effort has been the recent preservation and adaptive re-use of historic Sun Tavern, to again serve as an anchor for this dynamic community center.





Located immediately adjacent to Fairfield County's original courthouse, the Sun Tavern witnessed some of the most important moments in the region's early history. Now restored, this important structure again functions as a portal, welcoming guests and interpreting Fairfield's storied past.

Jury comments: This is excellence in purist restoration, the kind where the building is treated as a precious object. The museum chose to use the tavern as an educational object, so they didn't have to overdo the mechanical systems. It really captures the feel of an older building in a pristine state.

Merit

165 Capitol Avenue | Amenta Emma Architects

Photography: Robert Benson Photography

Converting 165 Capitol into a vibrant, modern workplace for Connecticut's Constitutional Offices, while preserving the building's unique historic heritage, saves a significant building and gives it a revitalized role in the Elm Street Historic District (National Register of Historic Places).

***Jury comments:** The architects got the hierarchy of spaces right, restoring historic finishes in the corridors and entrance lobbies while modernizing the office spaces.*



Joseph R. Ensign House | Crosskey Architects, LLC

Photography: Ian Christmann Photography

The Joseph R. Ensign house anchors the south end of the Simsbury Center historic district. The house was built for Joseph Ralph Ensign, president of the Ensign-Bickford Company, and his wife, Mary Phelps Ensign. The project conformed to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation by introducing new uses that required minimal change to the historic Mansion and property.

***Jury comments:** This project let the historic architecture set the environmental tone without intruding upon its quality and residential feeling.*



Elizabeth Park Visitors Center, West Hartford | Schadler Selnau Associates

Photography: Schadler Selnau Associates P.C.

Elizabeth Park in West Hartford, CT welcomes thousands of visitors each year. The objective was to transform an uninsulated 85 year old building, originally constructed for the sole purpose of providing restroom facilities, into a year-round Visitor's Center. The building and grounds are historic, and were intended for Spring through Fall visitors to the park. The building remained open until the 1970s.

Jury comments: This project did what rehab is supposed to do: it created a new use for a building that was no longer suitable for its original purpose.



Victorian Cottage and Barn | David Scott Parker Architects

Photography: Durston Saylor Photography, David Scott Parker Architects

The Victorian Cottage today is a treasured place for families with younger children, offering opportunities to learn about Fairfield's heritage with interactive maps, history and hands-on activities. The adjacent Victorian Barn tells the story of Fairfield's agrarian roots, promoting conversations about contemporary food issues and providing tangible comparisons of past and present agriculture.

Jury comments: *This project tells a story about patience, and how sometimes you have to expend a lot of patience to save a building.*

