

## **2014 Preservation Awards**

**Here is background on each of the awards, as compiled by Bill Raymond, the city's Historical Administrator and emcee for the program, which was presented at the White House Hotel.**

### **Restoration Project Award of Merit**

**Rue Vieux LLC, 129 Rue Magnolia**

Our first award winning project shows what a group of committed preservationists and a little TLC can do to transform a non-descript home that was used as an office with an astro turf cover porch and a structurally questionable rear addition into an architectural jewel and a highly successful retail outlet. The 1923 Bungalow at 129 Rue Magnolia was rough to say the least when it was purchased by Rue Vieux, LLC as their third project in the area. The goal for this project was to restore this fine example of Biloxi bungalow architecture by highlighting its classical craftsman's feature. For this project and all they do for downtown Biloxi, I am proud to present the Restoration project of Merit Award to Rue Vieux LLC, for 129 Rue Magnolia.

### **Restoration Project Award of Merit**

**Bruce and Alice Duckett, 116 Benachi Avenue**

The next project was the latest in a long line of preservation projects for this couple including a number on Benachi Avenue. Because of their love of Benachi Avenue, in 2012, this couple purchased the home at 116, which at the time was divided into three apartments and it had suffered the worst of 1950's indignities when the second floor front entrance porch had been enclosed with jalousie windows. Though built as a single family home built in 1922, the house was divided by the original owner into two apartments in 1940. The new owners took on the task of returning the house to its 1940's appearance. Today the house enhances the architectural treasure that is Benachi Avenue. For faithfully restoring 116 Benachi Avenue, the City of Biloxi presents a Restoration Project Award of Merit to Bruce and Alice Duckett.

### **Outstanding Residential Restoration Project**

**Yong Kim, 632 Howard Avenue**

There were a number of wonderful residential restoration projects over the last two years but there was one that stood out not only for the vibrant color palette used in the restoration but also the significance of the building and its importance in telling our City's architectural story. The house at 632 Howard Avenue which housed Galloway's Funeral Home was known for its elaborate Queen Anne detailing and distinctive cross with exposed bulbs mounted next to the front door. Unfortunately like many of us the house had been showing her age and was in a state of disrepair. Fortunately the house was purchased in 2013 and the new owner began a complete restoration. Today, the building once again takes its place as one of the finest homes on East Howard Avenue. For all his hard work and dedication to preserving the architectural integrity of the house the City is happy to present the Outstanding Residential Restoration Project Award to Yong Kim for 632 Howard Avenue.

### **Outstanding Adaptive Re-use Project in an Historic District**

**Downtown Biloxi Development Group,  
131 Lameuse Street**

Our next project is a great example of how to turn a sow's ear into a silk purchase. When the American Legion Building at 131 Lameuse Street came on the market, I am sure many people looked at the building and thought this building is too ugly and dated. And they were right. The building did nothing to support the historic nature of downtown Biloxi. Then came along Laura and Buzzy Bolton with Arlene and Tom Wall and they had a vision for the building, which would take the eyesore and make it a commercially vibrant building for Downtown Biloxi. After extensive renovations which included the addition of a balcony and major façade changes, the building now houses thriving businesses and it

complements the area in scale and design. This year's outstanding Adaptive Re-Use Project Award is presented to Downtown Biloxi Development Group for 131 Lameuse Street. Here to receive the award is Laura and Buzzy Bolton unfortunately Arlene Wall could not join us this evening.

**Excellence in Restoration**

**Mladinich Holding, LP for White Pillars, 1696 Beach Blvd**

Our next recognized project has been a jewel of the coast since its construction in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. But time and progress had hidden the true beautiful of this Neo-Classical Revival structure. When built by Dr. Hyman Folkes for his family, Gunston Hall was the epitome of genteel southern living. It was later purchased by the Mladinich Family and converted into the White Pillars Restaurant. After surviving the devastation of Hurricane Katrina which mercifully took the old converted gas station out front, the Mladinich Family took on the task of restoring this important piece of Biloxi architectural history. With the eyesore gas station gone, family removed the glass that enclosed the front porch and returned the building façade to its original elegance and completed a \$2 million dollar renovation. For their dedication to restoring White Pillars, the City presents the Excellence in Restoration Award to Mladinich Holding, LP. Here to accept the award is Deborah Holstein, daughter of the true visionary of this project John Mladinich, and her husband Brooks.

**Outstanding Commercial Restoration Project White House Hotel, 1230 Beach Blvd**

Our next award is one that I never truly believed would ever happen. The building once a grand dame of the Gulf Coast tourism industry was in an advanced state of disrepair, was listed as one of the ten most endangered places in Mississippi by the Mississippi Heritage Trust, and a little over a year ago was the subject of a debate in the City Council to demolish the building. Today Cora White's beautiful White House Hotel has been saved from the wrecking ball and magnificently restored to its rightful position as a showplace of gracious living and southern hospitality. Here to receive the award for Outstanding Commercial Restoration Project for the White House Hotel is hotel owner Lori Stewart and general Manager Cono Carrana.

I would like to also recognize Lolly Barnes, Executive Director of the Mississippi Heritage Trust, who worked for a number of years to save the hotel and keep the wrecking ball at bay. She will now come up and make a presentation.

**Vision for Preservation Award**

**Randy Barras**

Our next award recipient was one of the first business owners to recognize the economic potential of the residential neighborhoods in downtown Biloxi. In 1985, while others were moving out and moving north, this businessman found a late nineteenth- early twentieth century boarding house at 122 Fayard Street. He then took on the task of meticulously restoring the structure, careful to maintain the buildings architectural integrity. A process he was to have to repeat after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. For his unwavering support of historic downtown Biloxi and his commitment to preservation, it is my honor to recognize Randy Barras with the 2014 Vision for Preservation Award.

**Volunteer Preservationist Award**

**Richard Murden**

The next honoree has been a board member of the West End Hose Company #3 Fire Museum for over 13 years and currently serves as president of the board. On any given weekend, he can be found at the museum, eagerly awaiting visiting with his infectious smile, signature handlebar mustache, and period West End #3 bibbed shirt and stove pipe hat. This volunteer has been instrumental in the growth of the

museum from spearheading projects such as research and restoration of artifacts to providing educational programs for visiting school and youth groups. This volunteer has an enthusiasm and passion for the preserving the history of the Biloxi Fire Department which engages children and adults in wanting to learn more. For all his work on behalf of the Biloxi Fire Museum we honor Richard Murden with the Volunteer Preservationist Award.

**Advocate of Preservation Award**

**Martha H. Tripp**

Some people come to preservation late in life that is not the case with our next recipient. Pride in her community and its history was instilled in this lady as a very young girl. For her celebrating our cultural traditions was a family affair that continues today. Even though she is a retired school teacher, she has never stopped instructing our community about its traditions and history through formal programs such as the annual Mardi Gras Shoe Box Float Contest that she single handedly organizes or the informal neighborhood walks that she directs so that neighbors can learn about each other and the history of the area. For her ongoing efforts to educate our community, we present Martha Hunt Tripp with the advocate of Preservation Award.

**Outstanding Preservation Craftsman Award**     **Buddy Jumonville**

Our next honoree is a lifelong Biloxian and comes from a family of legendary Boat builders. At age 10 he began working with this grandfather Tony Jack Covacevich and at 11 he built his first boat, a 12' cypress rowing with his great grandfather Jackie Jack Covacevich. Wooden boats and Biloxi's maritime history have been a lifelong passion for this recipient. Most recently he has been volunteering countless hours to restore 4 cat boats as well as overseeing the entire restoration of Biloxi's White Wing Queens the Mike Sekul and the Glenn L. Swetman. For his dedication to Biloxi's maritime history and the art of wooden boat building, we present the Outstanding Preservation Craftsman Award to Buddy Jumonville.

**Outstanding Preservation Volunteer Award**     **Ray Bellande**

Our next award recipient is well-known for his lifelong passion of accurately recording and promoting the history of Biloxi and the gulf coast. This volunteer created a website [www.biloxihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.biloxihistoricalsociety.org) which is unarguably the best single source for information on Biloxi's history. He also works with the Biloxi City Cemetery archivist to make sure that cemetery data and obituary information is available on the online resource [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com). This volunteer not only donates his time but also his resources having given \$5000 to the seafood museum for the restoration of Harry Del Reeks "Golden Fisherman." For these efforts and many more that are too numerous to list, the City of Biloxi is honored to present Ray Bellande the Outstanding Preservation Volunteer Award.

**Preservationist of the Year**

**Jane Shambra – Local History and Genealogy  
Department of the Biloxi Public Library**

Our next honoree is everyone's go-to-resource for history and images of Biloxi. If she does not have the answer to your question, she will not stop until she finds what you need. A native of New Orleans, this preservationist has embraced this community and its history and is truly a Biloxian. She is a founding member of Preserve Biloxi and is instrumental in the annual Old Biloxi Cemetery tour and Preservation in May Celebration. If you dream up a topic to do with Biloxi history, this lady and her staff can create an exhibit. For her dedication to promoting and sharing Biloxi's rich history, the City recognizes Jane Shambra with the Preservationist of the Year Award.

**Excellence in Preservation Award**

**Lee Ann Dubaz for the Biloxi Public Schools Museum**

Our next honorary has served on the Preserve Biloxi Committee for a number of years while working to preserve the history of Biloxi Public Schools as the school district historian, the only one in the state. The fruition of that work was unveiled in May with the opening of the Biloxi Public School District Museum which documents and displays the rich and varied history of the public education in Biloxi. For her work in opening the museum and dedication to Biloxi, we present the Excellence in Preservation Award to Lee Ann Dubaz.

**Leadership in Preservation**

**Biloxi Bay Chamber of Commerce**

Though not a preservation organization, the next group being recognized has lead efforts to promote our community heritage, sponsoring projects such as the Biloxi History Cruise, the 12 palms dedication, and the Jean Guilhot headstone placement. This organization also annually co-sponsors the Old Biloxi Cemetery and Preservation in May and is a founding member of Preserve Biloxi, a new organization dedicated to preserving Biloxi's architectural and cultural history. For these efforts and many more, we are proud to present the Leadership in Preservation Award to the Biloxi Bay Chamber of Commerce. Here to accept the award is Culture and Heritage chairman Errol Bradley and executive director Tina Ross-Seamans

**Outstanding Preservation Organization**

**Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum**

The next recipient defines preservation, persistence and resilience in the City of Biloxi. After almost being wiped off the map by Hurricane Katrina still organization did not give up. Instead they waded through miles of government red tape as well as funding and location issues to building a museum that tells the story of When Biloxi was the Seafood Capital of the World and beyond. For safeguarding and sharing our maritime history the City is proud to present the outstanding Preservation Organization Award to the Maritime and Seafood Industry Museum. Here to accept the award is Executive Director Robin David and Board President Robbie Schmidt.

**Julia Guice Lifetime Achievement Award**

**Lolly Barnes**

Our final award of the evening is presented to a woman who has devoted her entire professional life preserving and protecting the history of Biloxi and now the entire state of Mississippi. As the former Historical Administrator for Biloxi she oversaw the restoration of numerous historic properties including Tullis Manor, the Saenger, the Old Brick House, the Crawford House and the list goes on. She also created Preservation 101, a historic preservation education program which in my tenure as Historical Administrator we have continued as Preservation in May. After leaving the City, she went on to work on the White House Restoration Project and to help with the recovery following Hurricane Katrina working with volunteers and professional to document and save as much of our architectural legacy as possible. Today she has expanded her reach and is sharing her talents around the state as Executive Director of the Mississippi Heritage Trust, a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and promoting our states architectural history. So all she has done for historic preservation in the City of Biloxi and throughout the State of Mississippi, It is my honor to present the inaugural Julia Guice Lifetime Achievement Award to Lolly Barnes.