

Spring is Coming...

... and it's a great time to tackle home projects or try something new!



Wondering where to start when it comes to tackling spring projects? - use our maintenance checklist on page 3 as a guide for some of the routine tasks our old houses need for regular upkeep.

No experience with tools or need a refresher? - try one of the community education classes at Clatsop Community College to learn the basics about tool safety, wood window restoration, and more. For something more in-depth, try one of the college's weekend workshops. These spring term workshops provide hands-on learning opportunities, including gravestone restoration and the milling of wood siding. Check out the schedule for all of the Clatsop Community College historic preservation classes and workshops on page 6.

Looking to get out of the house? - come to one of our events! Topics in Preservation is a monthly gathering of LCPS members who come together to discuss topics related to historic preservation - join the conversation! Read about January's discussion on page 2 and check out upcoming topics on page 6. Stay up-to-date on all of our events by checking [**lcpssociety.org/events**](https://lcpssociety.org/events). If you are an LCPS member but are not receiving monthly emails about events, please contact us for assistance.

Do you have artistic talents that you'd like to share? - help us illustrate some of Astoria's oldest homes. LCPS is creating a new walking tour booklet highlighting the historic homes of Franklin and Grand avenues and will feature original artwork by local artists. More information is available on page 2 and at [**lcpssociety.org/artists**](https://lcpssociety.org/artists).

Infill: New Construction in Historic Districts



January's Topic in Preservation prompted a great conversation about what it means for new construction to be deemed "compatible" with its historic neighbors. We started the discussion by considering the wording of Astoria's relevant development code and then looked at commercial and apartment buildings that were granted a Certificate of Appropriateness by the City of Astoria over the past decade. We ended the evening examining the proposed new development (Owens II) next to the Owens-Adair

building downtown. There were strong opinions and interesting debates on all sides of the issue.

Some people found it challenging to analyze the compatibility of the Owens II project because it is located at the edge of a historic district and right at the point where commercial meets residential neighborhoods. Also, Astoria's code requires that new construction be compatible with adjacent historic properties, not a historic district as a whole, so the architects must respond to various building types, uses, and finishes but only within a one-block radius.

Some participants felt that the proposed modern design needed to be more in step or harmonious with the surrounding historic buildings, particularly the residential ones. Others thought the contrast of styles and materials helped to highlight the historical details of the surrounding buildings. We encouraged all participants to share their thoughts with the Historic Landmarks Commission and to participate in the public process.

The following week, the Historic Landmarks Commission approved the second proposed design for the Owens II project. Neighbors have appealed the decision to City Council.

There will be more projects in the coming few years that require the Historic Landmarks Commission to determine the compatibility of infill construction. We hope that having thoughtful discussions with others who care deeply about the preservation of Astoria's historic character, but who may have differing opinions will help us all articulate our thoughts clearly and respectfully when these projects come up for public debate.

We look forward to more lively membership discussions.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!



LCPS is creating a new, full-color walking tour booklet highlighting the historic homes of Franklin and Grand avenues in Astoria. We're asking local and regional artists who are inspired by the historic architecture of the area to contribute illustrations for this new guide.



Selected images will capture the spirit and character of the home while also being identifiable as specific homes from the tour. They can include the entire structure or a significant detail of the building.

The booklet will contain a total of up to 15 images from a variety of artists. Entries that are not selected may still be showcased at our pop-up gallery for the Second Saturday Art Walk on May 13th.

Submission deadline: **April 15th 2023**

Visit: **lcpssociety.org/artists**

For more information: Please contact Rachel Jensen at 503-468-0139 or info@lcpssociety.org



KUDOS!

to our amazing volunteers!

Astronemis Ray joined the LCPS board in 2020 after completing her ClatsopWORKS summer internship with us. Since then, she has utilized her leadership skills to chair our marketing and communications committee, which steers our events and membership. Last spring, Astronemis produced an audio program for local radio station, KMUN, about the new Fort Astoria sign, which featured a series of interviews she conducted with the individuals who helped write the language for the new sign, as well as the craftspeople and city employees involved in the sign's production. She also wrote an article for KMUN's newsletter, The Current, to promote the sign. In June, Astronemis led a Topics in Preservation event called "Eyes on the Ground" a presentation about the history of Astoria's sidewalks. At the end of the year, she was featured in Columbia Memorial Hospital's quarterly, Health Compass, about her passion for historic preservation and volunteering with LCPS.



Architectural historian and tour guide, Eric Wheeler, has been a supporter of LCPS since he moved to the area from Portland. He brings his skills as a tour guide and has lead LCPS members on multiple architectural tours

throughout the area, including an Ebba Wicks Brown tour, and most recently, a tour throughout downtown Astoria that featured auto-centric buildings, most of which have since been adaptively re-used. Leading up to the centennial of the great Astoria fire, Eric guided groups of people through the LCPS 1922 Fire tour. Eric is also the newest member of the LCPS board!

Maintenance Checklist

for Historic Buildings March, April & May

Exterior

- ❑ Check chimney, trim, and casings for cracks, gaps, peeling paint, and rot that may be causing leaks
- ❑ Check roofing nail heads that may be popping through shingles - patch as needed
- ❑ Check gutters and downspouts for debris and blockages - make sure they are firmly secured in place
- ❑ Wipe away moss and dirt from walls - check siding for rot, peeling paint; check brick for cracks and broken mortar
- ❑ Trim back any landscaping that is touching the house (there should be enough room to walk between the planting and the house)
- ❑ Inspect foundation and ensure a proper slope of soil around house
- ❑ Inspect the whole perimeter for any damage caused by high winds and winter storms

Interior

- ❑ Check condition of windows: paint, oil, glazing, ropes, and hardware - note any condensation or leaks. Perform window maintenance or call a professional
- ❑ Inspect basement and attic for dampness, water intrusion, and mold - check for gaps and cracks in foundation and basement floor
- ❑ Check plumbing fixtures for leaks and tighten as needed
- ❑ Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- ❑ Check for buildup and debris in dryer vent - clean as needed
- ❑ Add a light coat of wax or oil on windows, doors, wood detailing, and cabinetry
- ❑ Tighten loose screws and doorknobs

Welcome Ryan Prochaska

New Head for Clatsop Community College Historic Preservation & Restoration Program

In the world of historic preservation, it's not uncommon to have a certain building that initiates the enchantment of historic structures and the pursuit of mastering fine craftwork. Birdwatching enthusiasts use the term 'spark bird' - for the species that triggers a lifelong passion for birding. There's no specific word for it in historic preservation, but for Ryan Prochaska, the new head of the Historic Preservation & Restoration program at Clatsop Community College, the Secrest Barn was his certain building, or, in this case, his 'spark barn.' The one-of-a-kind 1883 octagonal barn was built in rural Iowa by George Frank Longerbeam for local farmer, Joshua Hunt Secrest. According to a local newspaper from that time, the pastoral marvel was once considered the largest building of its kind in the country with room for 32 horses, 16 cows, and 200 tons of hay. The eight-sided building is crafted ingeniously with a self-supporting Gothic roof constructed of 8 hand-laminated strips, each 40 feet in length. Looking up at the bell-shaped roof, viewers are dazzled by its artful construction, which implemented bent-lamination, a technique once often used in ship-building. Though he had no formal education or training in architecture, Longerbeam was considered a master builder - honing his skills from acute observation and logic.



Summer of 1997 and fresh out of college, where he had spent several years studying art and philosophy, Ryan was ready for his next move when he found a chance to collaborate with a few other new graduates at a nine acre farmstead just west of Downey, Iowa. The property provided hands-on learning opportunities with working the land, growing food, and everything in between, but Ryan had his eyes set on the Secrest Barn. Where studying philosophy had given him a baseline in ethics and logic, restoring a 19th century building added the layer of problem solving that often arises in historic preservation - but this wasn't his first swing of the hammer.



Ryan grew up in Iowa under the roof of an environmental engineer. By trade, Ryan's father taught practical and applied concepts like hazmat training, but as a parent, he strived to inspire fundamentals - and what does a dad like that do with a bored kid on a Midwest Summer afternoon? Like many parents, plopped his son in front of the TV, but instead of cartoons, he would put on an episode of *This Old House*, then with the credits still rolling, he'd have Ryan come outside and explain to him - show him - what he learned. This concept of learning-by-doing fostered the development of a strong intuition for building and construction but more specifically, a natural affinity for craft.

Ryan carried those fundamentals over to his career as a contractor, focusing his lens on woodworking and reclaimed materials. He then found a position at The Herbert Hoover National Historic Site where he could broaden his craft skills even further. The position blossomed with an opportunity to receive formal historic preservation training through an out-of-state online program.

Completing the specialized training sparked a realization: there are not enough historic preservation programs teaching the art of craft, and something really ought to be done about that. So, Ryan turned to Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In 2008, the city had faced devastating floods that had required aid from FEMA. Unfortunately, prior to demolishing several historic structures, the agency had neglected to perform a

Section 106 review – under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, a Section 106 review *requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve throughout the country* (achp.gov). To remedy this, FEMA invested money into a mitigation project for Cedar Rapids to partner with Kirkwood Community College and create a continuing education historic preservation program that would train students in traditional craft of historic structure repair and preservation as an effort to preserve the heritage of the city.

After Ryan stepped in to help develop the program, he continued on by teaching historic preservation basics but also research-based courses, which were designed to benefit both owners of older homes and professionals in fields like contracting, inspecting, and real estate to help strengthen their understanding of historic building anatomy.

In Ryan's vision, everyone can hold a piece of the puzzle. With historic preservation, there is always a bigger picture - it has a way of connecting history with art and philosophy - and combined, those principles build the foundation of its craft. The Historic Preservation & Restoration program at Clatsop Community College offers opportunities to learn the craft of woodworking, plaster, window and door restoration, masonry, and the art of documenting historic structures - tailoring its projects to the region and supporting the local community. What is unique about the program is its in-depth, hands-on workshops, which are part of the curriculum for students of the program, but also attract students from schools statewide as well as members of the community. In the Fall of 2022, Ryan took over the position of Program Head after Lucien Swerdloff, one of the program's founders, retired earlier in the year. His plan is to continue connecting the program and its students with the community by helping graduates go on to find success as professional craftspeople as well as empowering homeowners to fix and maintain their older homes.

In both the classroom and the workshop, Ryan invites his students to get up close and personal with old buildings. His learning-by-doing style teaches traditional craft skills while instilling problem solving and pragmatic fundamentals - where the *how* of basic construction meets the *why* of historic preservation. With so many examples of well-preserved historic buildings, the North Coast sparks a certain romanticism that draws preservation enthusiasts to the area and inspires artists to come together - to create and to share. It's a place where people can find their own *spark barn* or *spark house*. It is Ryan's hope that a cross of passions will connect the arts world and the crafts world. Working together gets more done, especially in a small, tight-knit community.

So be sure to give Ryan a warm welcome and reach out to him if you have questions about the program or interested to get connected in historic preservation projects: rprochaska@clatsopcc.edu

The **Historic Preservation & Restoration program at Clatsop Community College** offers students hands-on craft skills combined with historic preservation theory and documentation. Since its launch in Fall of 2009, the program has seen its graduates go on to become preservation professionals at the National Park Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and architectural firms, as well as running their own contracting businesses.

The program offers a one-year certificate and two-year Associate of Applied Science Degree that can be transferred to a four-year university. Courses include print reading, construction drawing, architecture history, green building, project management, technical writing, computer aided design, and preservation theory. On the weekends, students participate in hands-on workshops both at the school shop and on-site at historic buildings throughout the region. Locally, CCC HP students have performed work on Alderbrook Hall, the Masonic Temple, the Oceanview Abby, Brownsmead Train Depot, Hilltop Cemetery, Lindgren Cabin, the Knappton Cove Quarantine Station, and the Charlene Larsen Center for the Performing Arts.

If you are interested to learn more about the program or enroll in some of the classes, visit clatsopcc.edu/historic-preservation

Upcoming Workshops & Events

Clatsop Community College Classes

Community Ed (non-credit) with Brian Pietrowski

Where/When: Alder Hall Shop 5:30 to 8:30pm

Cost: Each class is \$35

Register at www.clatsopcc.edu/ceregister

Friday, April 14 - Intro to Hand Tools

Friday, April 21 - Machine Tool Basics

Friday, May 19 - Window Glazing & Restoration Basics

Friday, May 12 - Bandsaw Box Project

Academic Credit Classes Spring 2023

These courses can be audited

Register at www.clatsopcc.edu/register

History of Pacific Northwest Architecture

Tuesdays, 6 to 8:50pm with John Goodenberger

Building Codes I: Intro to Residential Codes

Thursdays, 6 to 8:50pm with Matt Moore

Clatsop Community College Weekend Workshops

Historic Site Analysis and Work - Ocean View Cemetery

April 15 – 16, 9am to 4pm with John Goodenberger

Material Analysis - Monitor Millwork Shop Gordon House, Silverton, OR

April 29 – 30, 9am to 4pm with Ryan Prochaska

Facade Restoration - Criterion Schoolhouse in Salem, OR

May 13 – 14 & 20 - 21, 9am to 4pm with Ryan Prochaska

LCPS Events

www.lcpsociety.org/events

Topics in Preservation, every 3rd Wednesday 6:30 to 8pm

March 15th: New Materials and Old Buildings

April 19th: Historic Preservation Easements

May 17th: Salvaging Materials for Restoration

May is **National Preservation Month** - stay tuned for a list of activities and ways to participate!

To name it is to know it

By Eric Wheeler



This is the first of a proposed series of articles about ways to identify architectural details and styles. I lead architectural walking tours in Astoria and in a number of communities in the Pacific Northwest. On those walking tours, I always emphasize the importance of learning the names of architectural details and styles. Learning the name of a detail, style or type helps one recognize those elements on future walks and travels. As a champion of historic preservation, I find that the naming process lends a

deeper appreciation to a given building, and by extension, to the architectural flavor of the surrounding neighborhood.

In this article, I'll focus on a very popular architectural detail seen in many Astoria neighborhoods; the 'knee brace'. The knee brace is a triangular, wooden element found under the eaves of a Craftsman style house that supports the fascia board on the edge of the eaves. The term, knee brace, may be due to the similarity to a bent human knee; with the lower leg the vertical element, upper leg the horizontal element and the 'knee' at the juncture of the two elements under the eaves. This exposed carpentry detail reflects the 'honesty of expression' philosophy that is fundamental to the Arts and Crafts Movement. The knee brace is one of several examples of exposed carpentry seen in Craftsman houses on the West Coast. And like many architectural details; the knee brace is often more ornamental than functional. The simple construction of the three-piece knee brace leads one to speculate that in the past one could run down to the local lumber yard to purchase decorative knee braces to fit various sized buildings. The knee brace is related to the Victorian Era bracket (a topic for another column) and serves a similar structural/decorative function. However, unlike Victorian brackets, the knee brace shouts out..."I'm a Craftsman". If your house has knee braces you can probably say: "I live in a Craftsman style house"!



Supporting Members	Business Members	LCPS Board of Directors
Blair Henningsgaard Chris Connaway Doug Thompson Ed Overbay Eric Wheeler Glen Herman James & Amy Genereaux Jan Faber & Vicki Baker Jessica Stewart JoAnne Lumpkin Brown Karen Parrott & Randy Ralls Kelly & Charlie Shumar Kim Isaacson Kyle & Brian Walker Lauren Wilson Lucien Swerdloff Mike & Laura Brosius Richard Winn Ronald & Charlene Larsen Sheila Nolan Steff Eiter Wade Freitag	Astoria Vintage Hardware Astoria Wood Windows Gaetano's Market & Deli	Karen Parrott, President Kelly Shumar, Vice President Richard Winn, Secretary Wade Freitag, Treasurer Astronemis Ray Lucien Swerdloff Eric Wheeler

Know a nonprofit that needs money for a preservation project? Check out the LCPS grant program!
 Projects in any of the following categories will be considered:

- Documentation of historic architecture and sites
- Preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation of historic resources
- Education of community members

Learn more at
www.lcpsociety.org/grants

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Register at www.lcpsociety.org



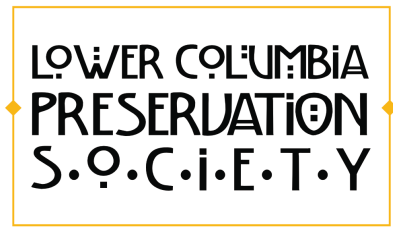
Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____

Level of Membership

- ☐ \$10 Student ☐ \$35 Household
☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$75 Business
☐ \$100 Supporter

Payable To

Lower Columbia Preservation Society
 P.O. Box 1334 Astoria, or 97103



PO BOX 1334
ASTORIA, OR 97103