



## 47th Annual Preservation Awards

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Metropolitan Historical Commission

# 47th Annual Preservation Awards

Thursday, May 18, 2023

4:30 p.m.

Nashville Public Library

## WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Lynn Maddox

Chair, Metropolitan Historical Commission

W. Tim Walker

Executive Director, Metropolitan Historical Commission

Mayor John Cooper

Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County

## AWARDS PRESENTATION

### FLETCH COKE AWARD

### ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### COMMISSIONERS' AWARD

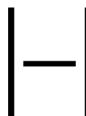
### CLOSING REMARKS

### RECEPTION

HASTINGS

225 Polk Avenue

THANK YOU!



## NOMINATIONS

### Residential

845 Glen Avenue  
915 Waldkirch Avenue  
949 Russell Street  
1015 Villa Place  
1410 Chickering Road  
1500 Dallas Avenue  
1709 Primrose Avenue  
1710 Linden Avenue  
1805 Lakehurst Drive  
1915 Holly Street  
2509 Belmont Boulevard  
2700 Oakland Avenue  
3713 Princeton Avenue  
4700 Hazelwood Circle  
YWCA, 209 7th Avenue North

### Infill

117 Bowling Avenue  
602 Taylor Street  
1904 Blair Boulevard  
3903 C Kimpalong Avenue

### Commercial

#### *The Wash*

1101 McKennie Avenue  
*Werthan Warehouse*  
601 Taylor Place

## Haynes Heights Neighborhood Association Leadership Recognition

On May 17, 2023, the Metro Historic Zoning Commission honored the Haynes Heights Neighborhood Association as its first Leadership Recognition recipient. The recognition honors a neighborhood association, merchants association, or individual that has, through leadership, made outstanding contributions to their community and worked towards preservation and education regarding the history of their neighborhood/district. The winners of this recognition inspire others to take action in their communities.

Haynes Heights is honored as the first historic overlay that tells the story of a neighborhood developed for African Americans during the “Jim Crow” era and as the first overlay to protect mid-century architectural styles, such as Ranches and Split Levels. Property owners within the overlay were instrumental in obtaining this protection of their history and accomplished the task of designation during COVID, just as they have been the key force to prevent rezonings over the years that would likely have resulted in the loss of this important neighborhood. The MHZC is proud to honor the neighborhood’s many efforts towards preserving their story and their neighborhood during Preservation Month.

## **GARY M. BURKE** **FLETCH COKE AWARD**

Gary M. Burke is widely known for his advocacy for the preservation of Fort Negley, the surrounding community, and the stories of its descendants. For Burke, this work is deeply personal. As a child, the Nashville native would visit the park surrounding Fort Negley with his family and picnic on its grounds. In recent years, his connection to the fort has come full circle. After several years donning the military uniform of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) as a member of the 13th USCT Living History Association, participating in encampments and reenacting the life of a soldier stationed at the fort, Burke learned that he was a descendant of Fort Negley. His great-great-grandfather, Peter Bailey, was a private with Company K, the 17th Regiment of the USCT, and was stationed at Fort Negley during 1864 and 1865. Burke's mission to educate others about the lives of Black soldiers during the Civil War took on new meaning. He has passionately embraced a renewed duty to give voice to those who labored at Fort Negley, including as a participant and promoter for the Fort Negley Descendants Project, board member with the Friends of Fort Negley, and Fort Negley tour narrator for Nashville Sites. Additionally, he serves on the board of the Preservation Society of Nashville.

Burke was instrumental in establishing the first historical marker dedicated to the African American soldiers who fought in the Battle of Nashville at Granbury's Lunette, as well as Civil War Trails signage, "Into a Trap," located nearby at STEM Preparatory Academy. For this work, Burke was featured in a *Nashville Scene* cover story and appeared on WPLN Radio and News Channel 5's Openline News show. Often dressed in the military uniform of the USCT, he has spoken to groups at local universities including Vanderbilt, Tennessee State, Lipscomb, and Fisk, as well as home school groups at Travellers Rest. He has participated in events at Nashville City Cemetery, the African Street Festival, and Juneteenth at Fort Negley, and has served on panels, videos, and discussion groups on Fort Negley. Burke has given tours for groups such as the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association and has appeared in documentaries such as "Blood & Fury: America's Civil War: The Battle of Nashville." He has performed the National Anthem for the Nashville City Cemetery Association's Memorial Day Dash for several years and has led the Memorial Day benediction prayer at Stones River National Battlefield. Additionally, his work has inspired his poetry, which he often performs at commemorative gatherings.

A tireless advocate for Fort Negley, Gary M. Burke embodies a connection to the fort that is both inspirational and relatable.

## PHIL PONDER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Distinguished civic leader and treasured visual historian, Phil Ponder was raised in Florida, graduated from the University of Florida in 1955, and completed three-and-a-half years in the U.S. Navy in 1959. He moved to Nashville to work at Genesco, serving in various management positions for 30 years. A resident of Hermitage, he is an active leader in many community activities, nonprofits, and civic organizations, many based in the Donelson-Hermitage area. Ponder represented District 12 as a two-term member of the Metropolitan Council (1995-2003) and served over twelve years as a member of the Metropolitan Planning Commission. As a Planning Commissioner, he served as the commission's representative to the Historic Zoning Commission and Board of Parks and Recreation. From 2004-2014, Ponder was a local staff member for U.S. Congressman Jim Cooper, serving as community liaison for the Fifth District. He recently added the Fire and Building Code Appeals Board to his long list of Metro board and commission service.

Along with his public service, Phil Ponder is highly regarded for his distinctive watercolor paintings, which first began as a hobby in the 1970s. After his retirement from Genesco in 1989, Ponder became a watercolor artist as a second career. While he primarily documents historic structures in Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Ponder has also painted points of interest across the United States and around the world. Best-known for his limited-edition prints of skylines and famous buildings, his works capture memories, celebrate Nashville's historic architecture, and record the ever-changing city. Since 1982, he has released eleven skyline paintings of Nashville, documenting the loss of historic buildings as well as the creation of new icons. His unique style utilizes precise mathematical calculations and a combination of pen and ink/watercolor techniques to achieve great detail and warmth of color. To date, he has completed over 700 paintings, more than 450 of which are contained in the 2021 book *Phil Ponder* celebrating 40 years of his craft.

Ponder's highly detailed watercolors are iconic and so cherished that one of his pieces, "Market Street, Too," was selected to be transformed into a massive etched aluminum mural for AT&T's rebuilt facility on 2nd Avenue North, commemorating the buildings lost in the 2020 bombing. The mural will sustain the memory of the historic nineteenth century façades, preserving the images of the buildings before the bombing's impact and restoring beauty to this block – a generous gift to the citizens of Nashville after several challenging years.

## **RCA STUDIO A COMMISSIONERS' AWARD**

Built 1964-1965, the RCA Victor Studios Building, better known as RCA Studio A, contains recording studios and offices, integrating recording and administration under one roof. Located at 30 Music Square West in the heart of famed Music Row, RCA Studio A is integral to Nashville's music industry history. Drawing on the success of the earlier-built RCA Studio B next door, Chet Atkins and brothers Owen and Harold Bradley commissioned W.B. Cambron and Co. of Nashville to design and build an office building, for RCA to lease, that also contained a sizeable, cutting-edge studio. Alan Stevens and John E. Volkmann of RCA Victor, New York City, managed the studio engineering and acoustical design. The dramatic, gymnasium-sized room measures about 75' x 50' and is three stories high, spacious enough to accommodate a full orchestra and choir along with a live band, allowing a natural mix of vocal and instrumental sound and artist interplay. The studio's unique capability and particular acoustics helped bolster the iconic Nashville Sound, blurring the lines between country and pop. Countless artists have recorded in the studio, including Eddy Arnold, Maxine Brown, Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, and George Strait, to name just a few.

In 1977, RCA closed its Nashville studios, but leased the office building until 1990. Meanwhile, the studio was renamed Music City Music Hall and later Javelina Studio. In 2002, musician Ben Folds began leasing the building long-term, operating the studio under the names Ben's Studio and Grand Victor Sound. In 2014, when RCA Studio A was threatened with demolition to make way for condos, Folds, along with Sharon Corbitt-House, Trey Bruce, Garth Shaw, and the newly formed Music Industry Coalition (MIC) joined forces with the Metro Historical Commission and Historic Nashville to rally to save the studio. The joint outcry from the music industry and preservation communities inspired partners Aubrey Preston, Mike Curb, and Chuck Elcan to step in to purchase and save the iconic property. Today, RCA Studio A remains an active studio, and new artists have joined the legendary list of acts recorded in the famed space. In 2015, the building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, nominated by Dr. Carroll Van West. Since 2016, Grammy-winning producer Dave Cobb has been the steward of the historic studio, which houses Low Country Sound, the label imprint he runs.

The threat to RCA Studio A galvanized a movement to preserve Music Row and other music industry resources across the county, leading to a comprehensive documentation study supported by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. While the outcry over RCA Studio A did not halt the loss of other Music Row properties, it brought much needed and overdue attention to the area's importance and impending threats, cautioning Nashvillians against taking any of these historic resources for granted.

## JUDGES

**Kaitlyn Jones** is a native Nashvillian with a decade of experience working for R.C. Mathews Contractor, a firm known for its historic renovations of the Frist Art Museum, Hermitage Hotel, Ryman Auditorium, and others over its 80-year history. She serves on the Board for PENCIL, NAIOP Nashville, and AEC Power Women and is an active member of Urban Land Institute (ULI) Nashville Chapter, Associated Builders and Contractors, and the Rotary Club of Nashville. She received the 2017 NAIOP Middle Tennessee Developing Leader of the Year award and was nominated for the 2016 Nashville Athena Young Professional Leadership Award. She served as a member of the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission from 2017 to 2022.

**Dr. Victoria Hensley** is a postdoctoral researcher with Vanderbilt University's Center for Humanities and History of Art Department. At Vanderbilt, she is working with students to complete heritage development projects for the Vaughn Home, one of the university's original faculty homes. She has taught courses on historic preservation for both Vanderbilt and the University of North Alabama. Previously, she served as a graduate assistant at Middle Tennessee State University's Center for Historic Preservation, completing projects across the South. She received her BA from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill as well as her MA and PhD in Public History from MTSU. She also serves as a board member for the Friends of the William Edmondson Homesite in the Edgehill neighborhood of Nashville.

**Justin Heskew** is the Federal Programs Supervisor and Federal Historic Tax Credit Reviewer at the Tennessee Historical Commission. In this role, he supervises Federal Program staff and assists the public with preparing historic tax credit applications for review by the National Park Service and interpreting how the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation relate to proposed projects. He has a combined fifteen years of historic preservation experience in state and local government, including previous experiences at the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the City of Hattiesburg, MS.



## **METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
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Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
615.862.7970

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**Cover:**

*Sunnyside Mansion-Sevier Park*, Phil Ponder.