



Menil House, Philip Johnson, 1951; renovation and conservation, Stern and Bucek Architects, 2004.

## Good Bricks Honor Preservation Excellence in Houston

Greater Houston Preservation Alliance (GHPA) has recognized 13 projects and individuals with 2005 Good Brick Awards for excellence and leadership in historic preservation. The awards were presented on January 28.

GHPA has awarded Good Bricks since 1979 to honor exceptional preservation projects and the people who make them happen. A jury of design and preservation professionals and community leaders selected the winning projects, which range from late Victorian cottages to a post-World War II industrial plant.

"We were very impressed with the variety of the nominations. The winners include individual homeowners who did all of the work themselves and major public institutions that brought in nationally known consultants," said GHPA Executive Director Ramona Davis. "So often we hear that there is nothing historic left to preserve in Houston. The number of preservation projects being completed certainly disproves that belief."  
— David Bush

**Maloney, Martin & Mitchell, LLP; WLS Interests, Inc.; and Southcorp Realty Advisors, Inc. for the Clocktower Building, 3401 Allen Parkway.** The renovation and adaptive re-use of the former Rein Co. Building preserves an important part of Allen Parkway's rapidly disappearing architectural heritage. The former printing company was built in 1928 in the popular Spanish Colonial style. Now

known as the Clocktower Building, the project is a visible historic preservation success. The project architect is Cisneros Design Studio.

**Heights Industrial Center for 22nd Street Lofts.** After a long period of neglect, this 110-year-old former textile mill and mattress factory is finding new life as a residential development. A sensitive renovation enhances the building's straightforward industrial design while maintaining the courtyards and green spaces of the 19th-century factory complex. The project architect is Nonya Grenader, FAIA.

**Carl and Carrie Corson for 308 Cordell Street.** The owners of this 1910 bungalow in the Brooke Smith Addition met the challenge of adapting a small historic house to modern lifestyles, while preserving the home's original materials, detailing, and character. The owners did much of the critical work themselves, including selecting quality materials to maintain the home's integrity.

**Bill England and Minnette Boesel for "Rosecroft."** Built in 1916 at 4809 Walker, this Craftsman-style home is one of at least four California-inspired houses built in Eastwood by artist Charles T. Sherman. The sensitive renovation of this house restored Sherman's original painted frieze and maintained the distinctive built-in Arts & Crafts-style fixtures.

**Geoffrey and Karlene Poll for 1605 Heights Boulevard.** In 1918, Alfred C. Finn, architect of the San Jacinto Monument, designed this impressive home for an oil company executive. The house eventually was divided into apartments, and a period of neglect compromised the architect's vision. The current owners used quality salvage materials and Finn's original blueprints in their faithful restoration of this National Register-listed property.

**University of Houston-Downtown for the Willow Street Pump Station.** Portions of the 1902 Willow Street Pump Station and adjacent 1915 City Incinerator were on the verge of collapse when the Workshop for Historic Architecture at the University of Houston College of Architecture and the Engineers Council of Greater Houston adopted the site as a project. Today, the Romanesque Revival-style structures at the confluence of White Oak and Buffalo bayous have been preserved as a community conference and exhibition facility and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Gensler was the project architect.

**220 Venture Partners, LP and Benchmark Hospitality for Hotel ICON.** The 1911 Union National Bank Building had stood vacant and deteriorating for almost 20 years when new owners began the two-year process of transforming the 12-story neoclassical building into a luxury hotel. Restored to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this local landmark is now a vital part of Houston's revitalized Main Street/Market Square Historic District. Mitchell Carlston & Stone, Inc. was the project architect.

**Avenue Community Development Corp. and Anthony Colca for the Summer Street Project.** Nine historic cottages dating from the 1870s to the 1940s have been renovated as affordable housing through the efforts of an innovative non-profit organization and a concerned property owner. Avenue CDC, which develops affordable housing and promotes historic preservation in Houston's First Ward, and Anthony Colca, who had inherited the properties and still lived in the neighborhood, were determined to preserve the area's historic character and protect long-term tenants from displacement.

**Texas Medical Center for the John P. McGovern Campus.** When Nabisco's Houston Bakery opened in 1949, it was said to be the most modern bakery in the United States. More than 50 years later, the Texas Medical Center chose to preserve the building and convert its 11 acres of floor space to a multi-use medical office building. Transformed "from cookies to caring," the building today houses traditional office space, medical research

and educational facilities, laboratories and a telecommunications center. W.O. Neuhaus & Associates were the project architects.

**Roger Wood and James Fraher for Down in Houston: Bayou City Blues.** This comprehensive book documents the evolution of Houston's unique form of the blues through evocative photography and extensive interviews with performers, club owners, record producers, and audience members. At the same time, it celebrates the vibrant African-American community in the Third and Fifth wards that produced this distinctive sound. Published by the University of Texas Press, *Down in Houston* is available for purchase through the GHPA Bookstore at [www.gpha.org/bookstore](http://www.gpha.org/bookstore).

**GHPA Preservation Partner in Print Award to Houston House & Home Magazine.** Since founding this monthly magazine, Publisher Mike Harrison and Creative Services Director Tim Beeson have offered extensive coverage of local preservation projects. Their personal commitment to preservation is exemplified by the transformation of the 1950s cinder-block building at 931 Yale into the magazine's headquarters, which enhances their historic Heights neighborhood. Their generous support of GHPA includes contributing design services for the organization's newsletter.

**Stewart Title Award to the Menil Foundation for the Menil House.** In 1951, completion of this International-style house provided a home for John and Dominique de Menil's art collection and introduced architect Philip Johnson to Houston. On inheriting the property, the Menil Foundation was faced with many difficult decisions but ultimately decided to preserve and conserve this important building. By preserving this landmark, the Menil Foundation is helping explain the history of modern architecture in Houston and the de Menils' unique contributions to the cultural life of the city. Stern and Bucek Architects supervised the project.

**GHPA President's Award to Minnette Boesel.** Longtime preservation advocate Minnette Boesel is being recognized with GHPA's President's Award for her leadership, dedication, and years of volunteer service. A former GHPA president, Boesel was one of the first to promote downtown revitalization through the adaptive re-use of historic buildings as residential lofts and apartments. She remains a leading proponent of downtown Houston's redevelopment and has also been a driving force in the revival of Eastwood, having renovated several historic homes in that neighborhood. ■