

JUST LIKE OLD

Astoria buildings receive facelifts that preserve the city's historical traits or architectural heritage



City of Astoria submitted photo

The old Victorian on 38th Street had fallen into disrepair.



City of Astoria submitted photo

The renovated home has received historic designation.

A VICTORIAN GEM

Justin Power, a remodeling contractor in Portland, bought an old Victorian in Uppertown in 2008 with the intention of bringing back its splendor.

But refurbishing the hillside home on 38th Street from a distance was difficult, since most of the work was squeezed into weekends.

"It turned out to be quite a bit more of an undertaking than I realized at first," said Power, a partner with Shelbyville Remodeling who is also a musician.

"Finally, last year I just borrowed a bunch of money and went for it," he said.

Built in 1908, the first occupants of the home were the Theodore Thompson family which, according to the city, included a laborer, a railroad worker and a tug messboy. Others who lived there in later years included a magazine agent, a grocer and a previous owner of the Desdemona Club.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

Each year since 1988, Astoria has recognized owners of residential, commercial or public buildings who have completed exterior restoration projects that preserve the city's historical attributes or architectural heritage.

The awards are named for Dr. Edward Harvey, a pioneer in historic preservation.

• **Residential award:** Justin Power, 778 38th St., Uppertown. The Victorian style home, historically known as the Thompson House, had been a code enforcement issue for the city for years.

The Astoria City Council will present Power with a certificate Monday night.

• **Honorable mention:** Astoria Brewing Co., 1196 Marine Drive, downtown. The property, historically known as the Fisher Building, was restored by Stephen and Karen Allen to preserve a 1960s feel.

The Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission will present the couple with the award Tuesday night.

The home had been altered several times over the years. Odd-sized aluminum sliding windows had been installed and the front porch had been removed. The city said the property had been in poor condition and was an eyesore to the neighborhood, with

numerous code violations.

While Power planned a restoration, the city suggested a historic designation, contingent on bringing back some of the original features.

He replaced the aluminum windows with one-over-one wood win-

dows, restored the front porch, repaired a rear addition, and repainted the exterior. The inside was gutted.

Power said he might live in the home someday. "I love the architecture out here," he said. "I love the feel."

Remodeling old homes can be a challenge, both architecturally and financially, but can bring value to a neighborhood and the city. As an incentive, the city has been recognizing the best restorations since 1988 with the annual Dr. Edward Harvey awards.

"I think it is very much reflective of the city's commitment to historic preservation," said Mike Morgan, the city's interim planner.

Power agrees that such projects are worthwhile.

"So if you have the bones and it's there, then restoring it just totally makes sense. Because it's so unique," he said.

"These old houses are beautiful."

— Derrick DePledge



City of Astoria submitted photo

Andrew & Steve's Cafe, a popular local haunt, reflected the mid-century, contemporary commercial style of the 1960s.



City of Astoria submitted photo

The Astoria Brewing Co., which kept the mid-century modern style during renovation, is a local historic landmark.

A 1960s FEEL

Stephen Allen was thinking about a new, modern look for the Astoria Brewing Co.

Astoria City Manager Brett Estes and city staff were walking by one day and suggested something else: Why not see if the old building could be restored?

The city provided some grant money so John Goodenberger, a historic buildings consultant, could help with design assistance.

Allen and his wife, Karen, ultimately decided to embrace the mid-century modern design of the

1960s as an exterior theme.

Built in 1924, the building on Marine Drive was historically known as the Fisher Building and served as an auto supply shop and Veterans of Foreign Wars hall. The building was remodeled in the 1960s when it became Andrew & Steve's Cafe, a popular local haunt. The alterations, according to the city, acquired historical significance because they are over 50 years old and reflect a mid-century, contemporary commercial style.

The Astoria Brewing Co. became a local his-

toric landmark in 2012. Stephen and Karen Allen will be recognized by the city for the restoration with a Dr. Edward Harvey honorable mention award.

The couple also owns the Wet Dog Cafe, the Chart Room, the Pier 11 building and the former Josephson Fish Station.

"You want to think that you're doing it just for the city's betterment," Stephen Allen said. "But it is nice to have someone say, 'Nice job.'"

— Derrick DePledge