

Abbotsford, May 8th, 2024

For immediate release

South Poplar Schoolhouse Team nets Conservation Award

Every year Heritage BC receives nominations of projects and people across the province who have made an impact on heritage stewardship and conservation. This year, 22 recipients were recognized in five categories. Among the recipients of this year's award were Travis Thuro and Ian Froese of Thuro Construction & Design, who worked with staff from Heritage Abbotsford Society to restore Abbotsford's historic South Poplar schoolhouse. At the May 2nd Heritage BC awards reception in Nelson, BC, the restoration team was awarded an Outstanding award in the Conservation category.

"Travis and Ian demonstrated excellence through their hard work" says Heritage Abbotsford's Executive Director Christina Reid. "Training and education is an integral part of the Society's Applied Heritage Preservation program. What was so different about this process was the level of care Travis and Ian took to honour the history of the building. They really went above and beyond, made it personal."

The Heritage Abbotsford Society received funding to restore the building under the Unique Heritage Infrastructure stream of the Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP) in 2021. Since its founding in the 1960s, the Society (previously the MSA Museum Society) has identified, reviewed and recorded a number of older buildings in need of both restoration and protection. "The building itself is culturally significant, and we wanted to support the owner, the Abbotsford School District, in preserving it" says Reid. She explains that the project was designed to serve as an economic stimulus package for trades. "That's where Thuro Construction came into the picture. Travis and Ian connected with alumni and helped us build context and came up with elegant solutions to some tricky challenges in the process."

“The quality and breadth of heritage projects that are being developed in communities big and small across British Columbia is impressive. It demonstrates how important it is to dig deep to learn about the heritage that makes our communities what they are today, and the value in sharing and preserving what we learn”, says Britney Dack, Chair of Heritage BC. “The Historic South Poplar Schoolhouse Restoration is an excellent example of a project that is embedded in community. It stands out in its incorporation of the TRC Calls to Action, and in using the project to create learning opportunities for local students.” ---

About Heritage Abbotsford Society

Heritage Abbotsford Society is the registered charity which operates Trethewey House Heritage Site under a fee-for-service agreement with the City of Abbotsford. The Mission of the Society is to collect, record, preserve and share the stories of Abbotsford. Operating from the Heritage Site, the Society provides heritage and youth educational programming and events to thousands of Abbotsford residents and visitors of all ages every year. For more information, please visit www.heritageabbotsford.ca