

## Quotes

It is forbidden to disfigure external decorations on private buildings through modern additions, and to spoil historic buildings in an important town out of avarice and the desire to make money.

Theodosius, Valentinianus, Arcadius [309 AD]  
Quoted by Anthony Crosby in the *APT Bulletin* [1987] <sup>i</sup>

Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build for ever.... For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, nor its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity. It is in their lasting witness against men, in their quiet contrast with the transitional character of all things, in the strength which ...maintains its sculptured shapeliness for a time insuperable, connects forgotten and following ages with each other, and half constitutes the identity, as it concentrates the sympathy of nations: it is in the golden stain of time, that we are to look for the real light, and colour, and preciousness of architecture; and it is not until a building has assumed this character, till it has been entrusted with the fame, and hallowed by the deeds of men, till its walls have been witnesses of suffering, and its pillars rise out of the shadows of death, that its existence, more lasting as it is than that of the natural objects of the world around it, can be gifted with even so much as these possess, of language and of life....

John Ruskin  
*The Seven Lamps of Architecture* [1890]<sup>ii</sup>

They [buildings of past times] are not ours. They belong, partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us. The dead have still their right in them: that which they laboured for, the praise of achievement or the expression of religious feeling, or whatsoever else it might be which in those buildings they intended to be permanent, we have no right to obliterate. What we have ourselves built, we are at liberty to throw down; but what other men gave their strength and wealth and life to accomplish, their right over does not pass away with their death; still less is the right to the use of what they have left vested in us only. It belongs to all their successors.

John Ruskin  
*The Seven Lamps of Architecture* [1890]<sup>iii</sup>

What we want to conserve, therefore, is the evidence of individual talent *and* tradition, of liberty *and* union among successive generations of Americans. We want the signs of where we came from and how we got to where we are, the thoughts that we had along the way and what we did to express the thoughts in action. We want to know the trails that were walked, the battles that were fought, the tools that were made. We want to know the beautiful or useful things that were built and the originality that was shown, the adaptations that were made and the grace-notes to life that were sounded. We want to know the experiments in community living that were tried and the lessons that were taught by a brave failure as well as by a brave success. It is all these things and more like them that we want to keep before our eyes as part of our lived life as a people, and as connecting links between a past which millions of Americans helped make and a future we must continue to make.

Sidney Hyman  
*With Heritage so Rich* [1966]<sup>iv</sup>

The past is not the property of historians; it is a public possession. It belongs to anyone who is aware of it, and it grows by being shared. It sustains the whole society, which always needs the identity that only the past can give. In the *Grapes of Wrath* John Steinbeck pictures a group of Oklahoma farm wives loading their goods into an old truck for the long trip to California. They did not have many possessions, but there was not room for what they had.

The women sat among the doomed things, turning them over and looking past them and back. This book. My father had it. He liked a book. *Pilgrim's Progress*. Used to read it. Got his name in it. And his pipe—still smells rank. And this picture—an angel. I looked at that before the fust three come—didn't seem to do much good. Think we could get this china dog in? Aunt Sadie brought it from the St. Louis fair. See? Wrote right on it. No, I guess not. Here's a letter my brother wrote the day before he died. Here's an old-time hat. These feathers—never got to use them. No, there isn't room .... How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past?

These are not members of a historical society. They had never seen a museum or a memorial. They were just people, asking a poignant and universal question: "How will we know it's us without our past?" We do

not choose between the past and the future; they are inseparable parts of the same river.

Dr. Walter Havighurst  
Quoted by Carl Feiss in  
*With Heritage So Rich* [1966]<sup>v</sup>

The Congress finds and declares that

- (a) the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;
- (b) the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people; ....

Preamble to the National Historic Preservation Act of  
1966

Material culture may be the most objective source of information we have concerning America's past. It certainly is the most immediate. When an archaeologist carefully removes the earth from the jumbled artifacts at the bottom of a trash pit, he or she is the first person to confront those objects since they were placed there centuries before. When we stand in the chamber of a seventeenth-century house that has not been restored, we are placing ourselves in the same architectural environment occupied by those who lived there in the past. The arrangement of gravestones in a cemetery and the designs on their tops create a *Gestalt* not of our making but of the community whose dead lie beneath the ground... The written document has its proper and important place, but there is also a time when we should set aside our perusal of diaries, court records, and inventories, and listen to another voice. Don't read what we have written; look at what we have done.

James Deetz  
*In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology  
of Early American Life* [1977]<sup>vi</sup>

Preservationists are the only people in the world who are invariably confirmed in their wisdom after the fact....

John Kenneth Galbraith  
Presentation to the National Trust for Historic  
Preservation [1979]<sup>vii</sup>

If we fail to defend our American heritage here at home, there is little point in defending ourselves against assault from abroad... The soldiers, sailors, flyers, and marines of World War II knew what they were fighting for. They were fighting, of course, for the continuance of free democratic institutions but also, perhaps more deeply and certainly quite literally, for their homes: back home where they had come from—in South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Alabama. We dreamed of the homes of our parents and grandparents, our home schools and churches, our home streets, the public buildings and squares and parks of our home towns. Thank God, when we were mustered out, they were still there! ... During the past twenty years, following enactment by Congress of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the State Historic Preservation Officers ... have continued to fight, with weapons of peace, to defend and save the wonderfully diverse heritage of cities, towns, streetscapes, and buildings which Americans call "Home."

Charles E. Lee  
Testimony to the Subcommittee on Interior,  
House Appropriations Committee [1987]<sup>viii</sup>

Every study of travel motivations has shown that an interest in the achievements of the past is among the three major reasons why people travel. The other two are rest or recreation and the desire to view great natural sights... Among cities with no particular recreational appeal, those that have substantially preserved their past continue to enjoy tourism. Those that haven't receive no tourism at all. It's as simple as that. Tourism does not go to a city that has lost its soul.

Arthur Frommer  
*Preservation Forum* [1988]<sup>ix</sup>

It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.

William Murtagh  
*Keeping Time: the History and Theory of Preservation  
in America* [1988]<sup>x</sup>

A house is so much more than timber, cement, and mortar. It is a love-structure which stores up memories. It is security, shelter, healing, and peace. It is the shared joys, tears, dreams, and heartbreaks of several generations.

Rev. W.R. Bouknight, III  
Bulletin of Trenholm Road United Methodist Church  
[1990]<sup>xi</sup>

History is no longer a spotlight. We are turning up the stagelights to show the entire cast.

David McCullough  
45th National Preservation Conference [1991]<sup>xii</sup>

[Grassroots preservation] is empty pocketbooks, bloody fingers, and private satisfactions. It is long hours, hard work, and no pay. It is a personal dialogue with ghosts. It is a face-to-face confrontation with the past... It is an equation between self and history so powerful that it makes us lie down in front of bulldozers, raise toppled statues, salvage old boats.

Peter Neill  
45th National Preservation Conference [1991]<sup>xiii</sup>

Why should we care about preserving archaeological sites? ....most of human history is preserved only in archeological sites. ....the major means by which human beings have adapted to this planet, in chronological terms, left behind only archaeological sites as their most tangible legacy for the modern world. This is the fishing-gathering-hunting way of life, described by one archaeologist as one of the most remarkable success stories in the natural world. The hunting and gathering strategy exclusively characterized human life arguably for close to two million years and is now all but extinct. To my mind there is no better reason to study this unique and enduring slice of human experience.

Brent R. Weisman  
*Archaeology and Public Education* [1993]<sup>xiv</sup>

Historic preservation makes sense in large measure because historic preservation makes dollars and cents, but it also saves dollars and cents. Historic preservation is a rational and effective economic response to overconsumption. To make a new brick today to build a building on a site where there is already a building standing steals from two generations. It steals from the generation that built the brick originally by throwing away their asset before its work is done, and it steals from a future generation by

using increasingly scarce natural resources today that should have been saved for tomorrow.

Don Rykema  
*The Economics of Rehabilitation* [1997]<sup>xv</sup>

Protecting this country's heritage—from fishing villages to city neighborhoods, from barns to courthouses, from historic bridges to older schools, from urban parks to rural landscapes—will help make America a better place... Preservation ensures that future generations will have a past to appreciate. Preservation is more than just saving buildings, a house museum here and there. It's about creating and enhancing environments that support, inform, and enrich the lives of all Americans. Preservation is revitalizing traditional downtowns, the "Main Street" businesses that are the lifeblood of small cities and rural communities. It is bringing new life to the neighborhoods of great cities that have suffered from decline and neglect.

Richard Moe  
*Forum New* [2000]<sup>xvi</sup>

The following is Ken Burns's response when he was asked: How important is preservation of place in the recalling of history?

It's critical. We strain to listen to the ghosts and echoes of our inexpressibly wise past, and we have an obligation to maintain these places, to provide these sanctuaries, so that people may be in the presence of forces larger than those of the moment.

Ken Burns  
*Preservation* [2005]<sup>xvii</sup>

---

<sup>i</sup> Anthony Crosby, "I'm a Collector," *APT Bulletin* 19, no.2 (1987): 4.

<sup>ii</sup> John D. Rosenberg, ed., *The Genius of John Ruskin: Selections from His Writings* (New York: George Braziller, 1963), p. 132-33.

<sup>iii</sup> Rosenberg, p. 137.

<sup>iv</sup> U.S. Conference of Mayors, *With Heritage So Rich* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 1-2.

<sup>v</sup> U.S. Conference of Mayors, p. 130; John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (New York: Viking Press, 1939, Penguin Books, 1992), p. 88.

<sup>vi</sup> James Deetz, In *Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1977), pp. 160-61.

<sup>vii</sup> Leslie E. Wildesen, "What's the Use?" *Colorado History News*, February 1988.

---

<sup>viii</sup> Charles E. Lee, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer and President of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, Testimony to the Subcommittee on Interior, House Appropriations Committee, Washington, D.C., 26 February 1987.

<sup>ix</sup> Arthur Frommer, "Historic Preservation and Tourism," *Preservation Forum* 2, no. 3 (Fall 1988): 10.

<sup>x</sup> William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1988), p. 168.

<sup>xi</sup> Bulletin of Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, Columbia, S.C., 14 January 1990.

<sup>xii</sup> Peter H. Brink and H. Grant Dehart, eds., *45th National Preservation Conference, San Francisco, California, October 1991: A Summary and Recommendations* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992), p. 4.

<sup>xiii</sup> Brink and Dehart, p. 2.

<sup>xiv</sup> Brent R. Weisman, *Archaeology and Public Education* 4, no. 2 (November 1993).

<sup>xv</sup> Don Rypkema, *The Economics of Rehabilitation* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1997), p. 23.

<sup>xvi</sup> *Forum News* 7, no. 2 (November/December 2000): 1

<sup>xvii</sup> "An Exchange with Ken Burns," *Preservation*, January/February 2005, p. 16.