

# HERITAGE

THE UTAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2012

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## Snowbird: Vision for a Modern Resort

BY KIRK HUFFAKER

**Thousands** of snow and summer enthusiasts visit Little Cottonwood Canyon and Snowbird resort every year, but few likely recognize the wealth of history, planning, and architecture behind creating this landmark. Settlement history in the canyon dates back to the mid-nineteenth century when a U.S. Army soldier first prospected for silver in 1869. Tiny minerals found on that excursion became one of the largest producers of silver ore in the Wasatch Mountains. Known as the Emma Mine (namesake for Snowbird's Big Emma ski run), the mine produced more than \$3.8 million in silver. At its peak, the canyon was home to more than 8,000 residents and workers around the town of Alta and two smelters.

But mining eventually gave way to winter recreation. In the early 1960s, avid skier and Alta Lodge manager Ted Johnson, referred to locally as the Silver Fox because of his wealth of gray hair, had a vision to start a new resort in Little Cottonwood Canyon just be-



*This photograph at Snowbird was taken by Julius Shulman shortly after the resort opened. Photo courtesy of Brixen & Christopher Architects.*

low his beloved Alta. While quietly buying up and assembling old mining claims in the canyon, Johnson began design work. He refined his vision through his world travels, including a trip to the French Alps where a negative impact on the landscape was seen by Johnson at Avoriaz.

In 1965, the Snowbird Design Group was founded to create the first master plan. The original group was composed of Robert Bliss, Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Utah; James Christopher, principal at Brixen & Christopher Architects; Dan Kiley, renowned landscape architect and site planning consultant based in Vermont; and architect Jack Smith. Johnson was adamant that the new resort not look "alpine lodgey" and based on the steep terrain and available land, the only choice for design would

be to make it compact and dense. An aesthetic very unlike Alta, located just above Snowbird.

*(continued on page 4)*

Preserving, protecting and promoting Utah's historic built environment through education, advocacy and active preservation.

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# First Word in Preservation



I have to give a shout out to our interns. We've had four this summer working on programs for UHF and it's been enjoyable to have new energy and idealism in the office. With them on board, we are getting further down the road toward our goals. When an intern comes on board at UHF, we want to make sure that they have an experience that builds their knowledge about historic preservation as well as their resume. So we give them meaty, complex projects to work on and set high goals. They also get a dose of realism in how an organization does their

work. Yes, while those old days of having your intern wash the car and feed the cat are over, we're celebrating their ingenuity to bring new products your way. So here's who they are and what they've been working on.

- Brittany DuClos (Planning, U of U) is creating a property owner's guide to historic paint colors.

- Shannon Garrison (Masters in Historic Preservation, Penn) joined us by way of her hometown San Francisco to conduct easement inspections of 120 properties statewide.

- Amy Thompson (Planning, U of U) started working in Spring 2012 and is continuing work on research and planning for an "underground" tour of Salt Lake City with stories about people and places that will get your heart pumping.

- Caitlyn Tubbs (Planning, U of U) will graduate in 2013 and worked this summer on a Disaster Plan that can be used internally by the organization in case of a major natural disaster as well as an external version for the public's use that will be one of our property owner's guides.

Here's to a great partnership between students and UHF. We'll look forward to working with these talented individuals in their professional capacities!

*If you or someone you know is interested in an internship or volunteering to do similar program work or research, contact me at [kirk@utahheritagefoundation.org](mailto:kirk@utahheritagefoundation.org) or (801) 533-0858 ext. 105.*

Kirk Huffaker  
Executive Director

# UHF Revolving Fund Loan Program Activities

BY ELIZABETH BRADLEY-WILSON

## 368 Quince Street, Salt Lake City

The Utah Heritage Foundation Historic Properties Committee recently approved a low-interest CDBG Fund Loan totaling \$100,000 for the property located 368 Quince Street. After sitting vacant for three years, this property was recently purchased by a long time resident of the neighborhood, believing it is time to make something happen. This is a complete rehabilitation project and will include the reconstruction of the historic porch, and upgrades or repairs to just about everything. The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing all need upgrades to meet code requirements. The interior walls and ceilings are covered in up to five layers of wallpaper over lath and plaster. And the list goes on. According to sanborn maps, the original portion of the home includes the two rooms that front Quince Street constructed of adobe. It was John Platts, who owned much of the land between Quince Street and Center Street, Apricot and Fifth North, that built this original section. In 1897, two rooms were added to the rear, and then prior to 1910 the second story was added.



## 583 North Columbus Street, Salt Lake City

Utah Heritage Foundation has been the holder of a preservation easement on the property located at 583 N. Columbus Street since 1993. Located just north of the State Capitol, this single-family residence was built in 1890 and is constructed of brick. A PAST Fund Loan of \$20,000 will fund a new roof, the construction of a slightly larger dormer than what is existing on the north side, and upgrade the plumbing on the inside of the new dormer which houses a bathroom.





## Snowbird: Vision for a Modern Resort (cont.)

The initial master plan was completed in 1966 and further developed in 1971 by Enteleki Architecture, which consisted of architects Ray Kingston and Jack Smith. Kingston had worked on the Snowbird project since 1965 as an intern architect in the office of Brixen & Christopher.

With master plan in hand, Johnson set off to find investors. His efforts fortuitously led him to meet Dick Bass in 1969, a Texas oil man and investing partner in Colorado's Vail Resorts. Bass recognized the wisdom of Johnson's vision and his commitment to be the major investor in Snowbird launched the resort into a building boom. Opposition to building Snowbird came from the Sierra Club and Wasatch Mountain Club as they were present at every public meeting. However, the Forest Service and Salt Lake County approved the necessary permits to build.

For the 1972-73 season, the Lodge at Snowbird, Tram Terminal, Village Plaza and Bridge, Mid Gad Valley Restaurant, and Gad Valley Warming Hut were all completed; the first three being designed by Brixen & Christopher Architects and the last two by Enteleki Architecture Planning & Interior Design. Kingston also designed and completed a

*(continued on next page)*

*Several awards were garnered by the early projects at Snowbird including:*

- Honor Award for Snowbird Corp. Offices, Western Mountain Region AIA, 1969*
- Merit Award for Snowbird Project, Utah Chapter AIA, 1970*
- Merit Award for Base Facilities, Tram Terminal and Lodge at Snowbird, Western Mountain Region AIA, 1972*
- Merit Award for Snowbird Master Plan, American Society of Landscape Architects, 1974*
- First Award of Honor for Cliff Lodge, Annual Western Mountain Region AIA, 1974*
- Honor Award for Turramurra Lodge (Inn at Snowbird), Western Mountain Region AIA, 1975*
- Environmental Award, Ski Magazine, 1975*



*The Lodge at Snowbird was designed by Brixen & Christopher Architects of Salt Lake City and construction on the Lodge was completed in 1972. Its style reflected Brutalist design trends of the time while its form took advantage of the sweeping mountain views.*

# Snowbird (cont.)

residence for Ted and Wilma Johnson at Snowbird that is evocative of the style of the other structures. The Turramurra Lodge (now Inn at Snowbird), designed by Brixen & Christopher, was completed later in 1972, while the Cliff Lodge (Enteleki) opened in 1973, and Iron Blossam Lodge (Enteleki - Ray Kingston designer) opened in 1974.

Snowbird has been criticized for its lavish use of concrete and the large size of the structures. But the concepts of the original master plan to develop a megastructure concept in order to concentrate development on a few acres have been followed, thereby keeping the maximum amount of land in its virgin state rather than defacing hundreds or thousands of acres with smaller buildings and their necessary roads and utilities.

In 1974, Johnson sold his interest to Bass but his name still remains today on runs named Regulator Johnson and Silver Fox.

**Join Salt Lake Modern on Saturday, September 22 to learn more about Snowbird's history and design with a tour and presentation by architect Ray Kingston. See page 9 for tour info or visit [www.slmodern.org](http://www.slmodern.org).**



*All buildings at snowbird feature outdoor spaces that give users direct access to nature at every chance. Photo below was taken by Julius Shulman and is courtesy of Brixen & Christopher Architects. Photo at bottom right is by Utah Heritage Foundation.*







JOIN US FOR AN UGLY SWEATER PARTY TO SUPPORT  
UTAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SNOWBIRD  
AND ITS ICONIC MID-CENTURY MODERN ARCHITECTURE.

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2012

6:30 - 9:00 P. M.

CLIFF LODGE, SNOWBIRD RESORT

TICKETS ARE \$125 PER PERSON

SPONSORED TABLES OF TEN START AT \$1500

RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 14

PURCHASE TICKETS OR TABLES OR BY PHONE  
(801) 533 - 0858 OR ONLINE

[WWW.UTAHHERITAGEFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.UTAHHERITAGEFOUNDATION.ORG)





## COCKTAILS ★ DINNER ★ AUCTION ★ LIVE MUSIC

UGLY SWEATERS AND SKI OUTFITS ENCOURAGED



New this year - Text bidding

Our themed auction is always an event highlight! This year our auction will be even more exciting and fun – you will be able to place your bids by texting, so don't forget your cell phone! No more hovering over an item to make sure you are the highest bidder when the auction closes. Now you will be able to bid on items as you visit with friends and enjoy the party - all from the convenience of your phone. If you don't text or don't have a cell phone, no worries – bidding stations will also be available.

Want to make a weekend out of it?

For those of you who want to make a weekend out of it, we have a discounted room block at Snowbird. Salt Lake Modern will be hosting an architectural tour of Snowbird on Saturday morning, and Oktoberfest will be going on Saturday and Sunday. We have a block of standard rooms at the Cliff Lodge at the rate of \$89 per night plus a \$12 resort fee and taxes. To make your reservations, please call Snowbird directly and let them know you are with the Utah Heritage Foundation group (or group code 2BJ602). Additional group rates are available for a deluxe room at the Cliff Lodge for \$139 per night plus a \$12 resort fee and taxes, or a standard room at the Lodge at Snowbird for \$79 per night plus \$6 resort fee and taxes. These rooms are based on availability.





# An Interview with James Christopher, FAIA

BY ALISON FLANDERS

**Snowbird Mountain Resort** is exceptional for many reasons, but one of the most visible is its breathtaking modern design. I recently sat down with Jim Christopher, an architect on the Snowbird Design Group and UHF Trustee, to ask him about the planning and design that went into this one-of-a-kind resort.

Christopher, of Brixen & Christopher Architects, was awarded this project after being in business for just two years. The firm's largest project to date included several stages of planning and ultimately developing the first master plan as well as the design for several of the original buildings.

With the concept of the resort being high density structures made of concrete, glass, and wood, the first structure to be completed was a stand-alone three-story building. Used for several purposes since its construction, its original use had the first floor occupied by Snowbird's founder, Ted Johnson, and his wife. The second and third story housed the sales office and a couple model units to show perspective buyers, respectively.

Christopher is also the designer behind the Base Village, the Tram Building, and The Lodge at Snowbird and said that "about three-quarters of the condominiums were

sold before construction even began. At the time the selling price was the highest in the nation by square foot." Although Christopher does admit that Sun Valley Resort in Idaho was selling condominiums at a comparable price.

Working on the Snowbird Design Group, Christopher says, the modern design met little resistance as the team and owner all had a similar vision of what would make Snowbird the world class resort it is today.



*The photo above shows Snowbird with both the Lodge at Snowbird and the Tram Building in the later stages of construction,*

*The photo to the right is the interior of the "model condo" that was in the sales building to let perspective buyers have an idea of what to expect upon completion of the resort.*

*Photos courtesy of Brixen & Christopher Architects.*





# Salt Lake Modern Fall Event

## SNOWBIRD: VISION FOR A MODERN RESORT



Saturday, September 22  
10:00 a.m. – Noon  
\$10 for general public  
\$5 for UHF and SLM members  
Cliff Lodge, Superior Room

What's the word on the 'Bird? Snowbird is turning 40 but this place isn't "over the hill," it's up one! Join Salt Lake Modern and architect Ray Kingston to gain a better understanding of Snowbird's history and legacy. See and hear what went into the planning and design of Utah's only modernist resort. Tour public spaces of three early structures with Kingston and fall in love with the Brutalist style!

After the Salt Lake Modern event, you can conveniently adjourn to Oktoberfest where you can grab a brat, a beer, and ride the bull! If you'd like to make a weekend of it, join Utah Heritage Foundation at its annual fundraiser – the Ugly Sweater Party – on Friday, September 21 and stay overnight with special rates for our friends!

**This event is held in conjunction with DOCOMOMO National Modernism Tour Day.**

**Tickets available in advance online by calling (801) 533-0858.  
Day-of Tickets will be sold at Snowbird in the Superior Room of the Cliff Lodge.**

[www.slmodern.org](http://www.slmodern.org)



# Rehab It Right! At the Preservation At Work Project House

BY ELIZABETH BRADLEY-WILSON

**Many of us** that live in historic homes have been faced with deteriorating wood features. When left unaddressed it can lead to the loss of historic features or even threaten the structure of your home. The Preservation at Work Project House is like any other and has some deteriorating wood.

Presenter, Michael Mahaffey and John Buchei, both with Home-Tech, Inc. the General Contractor on the project, demonstrated to attendees of a recent workshop how to repair different wood components on the Pugsley Street house. The workshop began focusing on the front porch and its wood columns, then took a brief detour to a rear window with a wood sill and frame, and then back to the front of the house where Michael found himself up in the front gable, and finally the day ended with patching some deteriorated wood with first wood petrifer and then a mix of epoxy and wood filler. Part of the discussion through the afternoon included when is a piece of wood salvageable to repair versus replace, and how to make that call.

If you missed this workshop, don't worry there are more to come. Topics and dates are posted online at [www.utahheritagefoundation.org](http://www.utahheritagefoundation.org) as soon as they become available.

*I want to personally thank the Historic Properties Committee. This project wouldn't be possible without them and the countless hours of service.*

*Steve Cornell, Chair*

*Janis Bennion*

*Ritch Carlson*

*Roger Durst*

*Cory Jensen*

*Carl Leith*

*Michael Mahaffey*

*Craig Paulsen*

*Barbara Pioli*

*David Richardson*

*Monte Still*

*Heather Weight*



Michael Mahaffey of Home Tech, Inc. demonstrates wood repair on a column during the August Rehab it Right! Demonstration Workshop.

Workshop support provided by:

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A UHF and SLC Redevelopment Agency partnership.



Thank you to our community partners who are making this project possible.



Midwest Floor Coverings, Inc.



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### JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

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Kate Langeland & Alex Benzon  
Laura Smith & Randy Barton  
Elyssa Hutchings & Josh Clark  
Sally Trevethan & David Robinson  
Madeleine Hansen & Geremy Mustard  
Neesha Rutledge & Clayton Killpack  
Hillary Wood & Sean Davis  
Lauren Nelson & Layton Bell  
Alana Delacruz & Russell Johnson

Elizabeth New & Brandon Runyan  
Lauren Anderson & Graham Anderson  
Nicki Anderson & Ivan Lucero  
Ashley Kirk & Chad Mears  
Sara Stork & Jose Cruz-Rojas  
Aime Larsen & Matt Talley  
Oksana Shimanovich & Dennis Allen  
Bethany Johnson & Robby Picard  
Jessica Butler & Enrique Arce-Larreta  
Utah Pride Center - SAGE  
Beth Winder & Tyler McIntyre

Tina Nicol & Kelly Kirkham  
Mandy Oliver & Norman Su  
Kari Zimmer & Matt Jones  
Anne Plummer & Spencer Allen  
Seantay Flemming & Matthew Hall  
Alisa Bishop & Patrick Bradley  
University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute  
Jodi Millward & Tom Ammon  
University of Utah – Surgical Intensive Care Unit

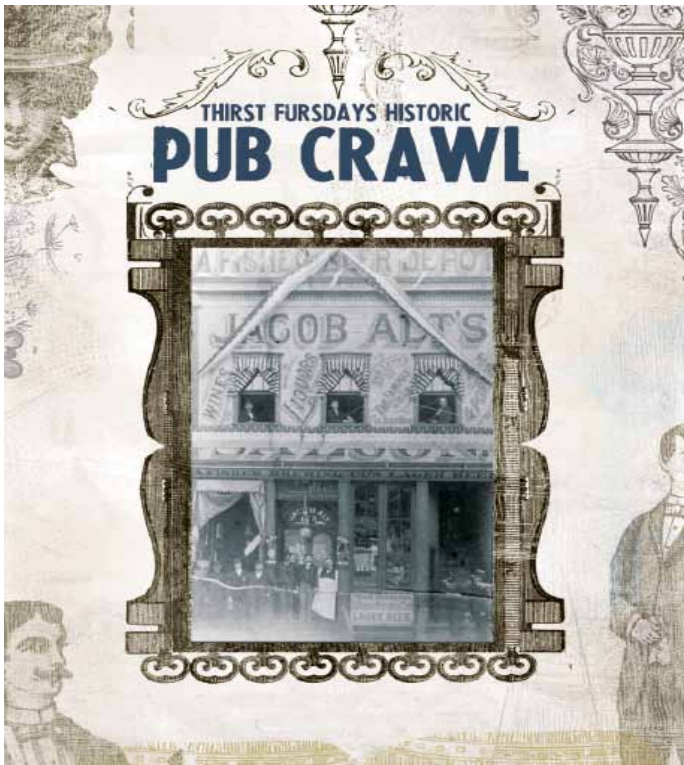


**Utah Heritage Foundation**  
Memorial House in Memory Grove Park  
P.O. Box 28  
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## UHF's Events

## Fall 2012



**October 4 • November 1  
December 6 • January 3**

\$20 per person • \$15 for UHF Members

Advance ticket purchase required.  
(801)533-0858 or online

[www.utahheritagefoundation.org](http://www.utahheritagefoundation.org)

