PreserveMN 2022 Speaker Biographies

Keith Baker – Keith Baker is the executive director for ReConnect Rondo, Inc., an umbrella advocacy organization committed to addressing racial disparities in Minnesota. Keith is leading the organization’s mission to revitalize the Rondo Community with a land bridge that reconnects Rondo and creates Minnesota's first African American cultural enterprise district. Keith has more than 35 years of experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. His 18 years with the Minnesota Department of Transportation included oversight of federal and state professional technical contract administration and construction compliance monitoring.

Renée Barnes (she/her) – Renée is a Cultural Resources Project Manager at Bolton & Menk. She has a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and a M.F.A. in Architectural History from the Savannah College of Art and Design. She began her professional career in 2006. Her expertise lies in Section 106 review/compliance, Minnesota state laws regarding cultural resources, and infrastructure development projects. She has served on her local Heritage Preservation Commission and is currently a board member of the Minnesota chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. She is passionate about welcoming emerging architectural historians into the profession.

Wendy Biorn – Wendy is the Executive Director of the Carver County Historical Society in Waconia, Minnesota, where she is overseeing the $1.2M restoration of the Andrew Peterson Farm. She holds a BA from Augsburg and secured an MA in Public and Nonprofit Administration at Metro State University. She earlier worked for the Minnesota Historical Society's Kelly Farm, and the Rockford Historical Society.

Leslie Coburn – Leslie is an Environmental Review Specialist at SHPO, managing project reviews and helping government agency staff, consultants, and applicants comply with federal ("Section 106") and state preservation laws. She serves on the SHPO Planning Team, which recently completed the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan 2022-2032. As an AICP-certified planner and long-term thinker, Leslie is keenly interested in safeguarding the future of Minnesota’s historic properties through effective preservation planning and support for traditional building trades.

Jon Commers – Jon brings 25+ years of work in redevelopment and related fields to the Leijona development team, including economic development, urban policy, and finance. Jon is also managing principal of Visible City, a firm helping clients interpret a wide array of data for decision making in cities. The development, land use and social implications of historic reuse have been a career-long interest to Jon. Previously, between 2011-19, Jon served two terms
representing St. Paul on the Metropolitan Council. Since 2014, he's has also served as an adjunct instructor in the Urban Studies program at the University of Minnesota.

**Tony Dierckins** – Tony, a native of St. Paul, has written or co-written nearly thirty books—a dozen of which focus on the history of Duluth—and is a past recipient of the Duluth Depot Foundation's Historic Preservation and Interpretation Award. His works include Lost Duluth, Crossing the Canal, Duluth's Historic Parks, Glensheen: The Official Guide, and Duluth: An Urban Biography. Dierckins also works as the publisher of Zenith City Press, dedicated to celebrating historic Duluth. His newest book, released in 2022, is Duluth's Grand Old Architecture: 1870–1940.

**Jon Discher** – Jon is the Communication and Grants Manager at the Minnesota State Historic Preservation office and has been in that role since 2019. Prior to joining SHPO, Jon worked for Minnesota State Parks and Trails as a web and social media coordinator, and has 20+ years of experience working in government communications. Jon earned a Master of Public Administration from the University of New Hampshire, and studied Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota and Political Science at the University of New Hampshire.

**Greg Donofrio** – Greg Donofrio is Associate Professor of historic preservation and public history in the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota, and is affiliate faculty in the Master's in Urban and Regional Planning program in the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. His teaching and research examine how communities find significance in, make use of, and preserve the historic built environment. Donofrio is co-founder and current director of the Heritage Studies and Public History Program.

**Sean Dunham** – Sean is the Heritage Program Manager at the Chippewa National Forest. His research interests revolve around the relationship between people, their culture, and their environment in the Northwoods of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Before his career with the Forest Service, he worked in the private sector as a heritage consultant working on a variety of heritage related projects. Sean holds a PhD in anthropology from Michigan State University.

**Meghan Elliott** – Meghan Elliott's career is dedicated to historic building redevelopment. Trained in structural engineering and architecture, she started her career in earthquake engineering. In 2011, she founded New History, a consulting practice dedicated to making historic sites and buildings economically, socially, and physically viable. In 2020, Meghan co-founded RevitalizeMN to advocate for the extension of Minnesota’s historic tax credit, and to bring awareness to building reuse for economic development, sustainability, housing, and heritage. In 2021, she added real estate redevelopment to her career, and is in the process of transforming the historic St Louis County Jail into Leijona.
**Jeremiah Ellis** – Jeremiah earned the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (MNSAH) 2022 David Gebhard Award for authoring "St. Paul's Distinct Leadership Tradition: A Century of the Sterling Club." In 2017, he organized the Clarence Wigington History and Architecture Bike Tour. Currently, Ellis serves on the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and was recently named an Arthur C. McWatt Senior Fellow with Ramsey County Historical Society. Jeremiah has deep family roots in the historic Rondo community and is a board member of the African American Interpretive Center of Minnesota. Ellis holds a master's degree in public administration. Jeremiah and his wife parent their elementary-age son in Saint Paul.

**Jessica Fortney** – Jessica started in the field of history and cultural resources with a degree in Anthropology focused on Archaeology from the University of Minnesota Duluth. Soon after, she went to Clemson University and received her M.S. in Historic Preservation. After graduation, Jessica joined Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps as a Crew Leader and worked all over Minnesota learning hands-on preservation skills. Later, Jessica was the Program Manager for Northern Bedrock and managed Halfway Ranger Station Historic District for the Corps. Currently, Jessica is a Historic Preservation Specialist/Historian for the Eastern Region of the U.S. Forest Service.

**Jake Foss** – Jake is an archaeologist in MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit. He's worked on documenting and preserving Minnesota's past since 2009 for tribal and state governments and for the Minnesota Historical Society. Prior to that, Jake worked as an archaeologist in other Upper Midwest states, the Great Plains, and the Rocky Mountains. Recently Jake has focused on applying GIS, application development, and other digital technologies to help us better connect with and understand the existing information that is vital to the work we do as preservationists.

**John Fulton** – John is a Grants Specialist at the Minnesota Historical Society Grants Office, providing administrative support and content reviews for the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage program and the Heritage Partnership program. He also leads the Heritage Preservation, Planning and Outreach department's webinar and manual writing efforts.

**Steve Gallo** – Steve is a published historian who holds a degree in history from Belmont University (B.A.), with a Master of Research and PhD in American Studies from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. His research focuses on the social and cultural impacts of landscaped public space in the post-Civil War South, with particular attention paid to gender and race. Since completing his PhD in 2021, he has been employed as a cultural resource management consultant at 106 Group. Steve co-authored the local designation study of Fire Station No. 24.

**Stephanie Atwood Hatzenbuhler** – Stephanie's introduction to historic preservation came in 2003 when she was asked assist on the National Register survey of her hometown in Upper Michigan. She went on to receive a
degree in Industrial Archaeology from Michigan Tech, where the focus of her studies was the mining history and landscape of the Keweenaw Peninsula. Since then, she has worked as a historical consultant on projects in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. In her current role at MnDOT, she manages the effects of transportation projects on Minnesota's historic properties.

**Baird Jarman** – Baird is an Associate Professor of Art History at Carleton College. His research focuses on nineteenth-century American visual culture, such as Gilded Age satire, Civil War reportage, Progressive Era mural painting, and early motion pictures. He is currently completing a book about political caricature during the Reconstruction era. Baird serves on the Minnesota State Review Board which reviews proposed National Register of Historic Places nomination forms. He earned a BA from Williams College, an MA at Williams College/Clark Art Institute, and an MA, MPhil, and PhD from Yale University.

**Lee Johnson** – Lee is the Heritage Program Manager at the Superior National Forest. He received an undergraduate degree in Anthropology and History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Masters of Anthropology from the University of Minnesota. Lee has held several jobs at the Superior National Forest before becoming the Forest Archaeologist. Lee's research interests include the archaeology and history of the fur trade period in the western Lake Superior Basin, prehistoric hunter gatherer economies in the sub-boreal region of North America, and the history and ethnography the Border Lakes Anishinaabeg.

**Maggie Jones** – Maggie is a historian in MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit. She has been with MnDOT since 2018 and completes Section 106 documentation for Transit and Highway projects to preserve Minnesota's historic properties. Prior to that, Maggie worked as an architectural historian in Iowa and Colorado.

**Regine Kennedy** – Regine Kennedy is Planning & Engagement Manager, and an experienced planner and resourceful project manager with 106 Group. She promotes equitable and inclusive planning processes and has become a trusted collaborator of community organizations, state, local, and tribal governments, state and national parks, and heritage sites throughout the country. She has presented on interpretive topics at multiple conferences and her work has won national awards.

**Bruce Koenen** – Koenen is a native Minnesotan, raised on a farm in Chippewa County. After high school he farmed for a couple of decades before getting a degree in anthropology from MSU-Moorhead. As an archaeologist he began doing county and city highway archaeological surveys with the Minnesota Historical Society. That work took him to every county in the state. When that program ended in 1995, he started working for the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) where among other things he manages the archaeological site files. Bruce has been involved with the development and implementation of the OSA's online web portal since its inception.
Michael Koop – Michael works with Minnesota’s Heritage Preservation Commissions to advise them on developing and administering local preservation programs, and he serves as the Certified Local Government Coordinator for the State Historic Preservation Office. He is a Board member of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. He received his MALA in Cultural Landscape Preservation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Laura Koski – Laura has nearly 10 years' experience in the field of archaeology working in both the CRM and academic sectors. Koski’s specialties include Zooarchaeology and GIS, often combining the two to better understand the meaning of depositional patterns of faunal material at archaeological sites. She has completed numerous zooarchaeological studies spanning both prehistoric to historic period sites from Zanzibar to the Midwest, as well as completed cultural resource geodatabases for both MNHS, MNDNR, and now for the CRSL. Koski acted as the GIS and Technical lead for the CRSL project.

Jim Krumrie – Jim started his career in GIS back when maps were still chiseled into stone tablets. Over time the technology has improved greatly while he has gained geospatial experience in areas ranging from property and casualty insurance, to hydrology, to NextGen 911 systems. His latest foray is into the Historic Preservation realm as SHPO’s Information Manager. Jim is helping to bring SHPO into the digital age by leading efforts to scan its plethora of inventory and archaeological site forms and build a website where such information may be shared with appropriate controls.

Judge LaJune Thomas Lange – Judge Lange received her B.A. from Augsburg College and J.D. from the University of Minnesota. She served as a Fourth Judicial District Court Judge for the State of Minnesota handling complex civil and criminal cases until her recent retirement. Judge Lange now serves as Senior Fellow with the Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Judge Lange is an internationally recognized expert in human rights and the rule of law in developing nations. Judge Lange served as the lead consultant and researcher on the community outreach project.

Charley Langowski – Charley is the Operations Director at Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps. She has a passion for community development, heritage management, and providing hands-on experience in the heritage fields! She has received a B.S. in Anthropology from Appalachian State University and an M.A. in Cultural Heritage Interpretation from the University of Leicester. She has experience developing interpretative plans, facilitating collections management projects, implementing adaptive reuse plans, and fostering meaningful community partnerships.
Zakcq Lockrem – Zakcq Lockrem, Managing Principal, Asakura Robinson, focuses on the experience of public space and the role of movement through the city in shaping civic engagement and built form. As managing principal and director of planning at Asakura Robinson, Zakcq is responsible for the overall direction and operation of the firm’s urban planning practice. With over 15 years of experience, Zakcq successfully manages many of the firm’s most complex and multidisciplinary projects including Plan Downtown in Houston, the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework in Austin, and the Deer Springs Livable Centers Study in Las Vegas.

Andy Madson – Andy has practiced architecture within LHB’s Housing Studio for over 20 years. Andy has gained valued experience in all phases of the project delivery process from early design work through construction administration. The mix of projects that Andy has worked on is varied and each presents their own unique challenges. Whether a project consists of renovation, new construction, historic status requirements, brownfield sites; Andy welcomes the challenges that each project brings. His recent historic projects include Leijona (Duluth), Renaissance Bo (St. Paul), and Bimosedaa (Minneapolis).

Andrew Nelson – Andrew has 10 years of experience in the industry and brings a strong focus on constructable design to the mechanical engineering field. His passion for building and problem solving led him to pursue a career in the built environment. He began his career at a construction firm where he learned the critical skill of designing mechanical systems to maintain installation ease and lowest first cost while still maintaining system efficiency. Andrew thrives on working with clients to determine realistic concepts that will be both installable and functional. As a mechanical engineer, Andrew has helped clients achieve effective and efficient solutions.

Jeremy Nienow – Owner of Nienow Cultural Consultants, Jeremy is a passionate cultural resource preservation liaison, consultant, and educator actively pursuing new synergies, technologies, and projects within local county organizations, higher education, and the professional heritage preservation community. Dr. Nienow has more than 25 years’ experience conducting CRM projects throughout the Midwest. Lately, NCC’s research has been focused on Historic Fort Snelling’s Lower and Upper Posts with several years of investigations completed, along with various historical urban archaeology projects. Nienow acted as the project manager for the CRSL project.

Erin Que – (she/her) Erin is an architectural historian with six years of experience in cultural resource management, heritage preservation planning, community engagement, and interpretive planning. She holds a B.A. in Architecture from Washington University in St. Louis and a Master of Architectural History with a Certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Virginia. Her background in diversity, equity, and inclusion stems from a prior career in student affairs. While exploring her own heritage as a biracial Chinese Minnesotan, she is also interested in bringing more voices to the table, and empowering communities to preserve their heritage and significant places.
Steven Robertson – Steven Robertson has a BS in Public Administration and a MA in Urban Planning. He has worked in municipal government for over 20 years. He is currently employed by the City of Duluth as a Senior Planner.

Jade Ryerson – (she/her) Jade is a master’s student in the Heritage Studies and Public History program at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, with an emphasis in historic preservation. She has written extensively about the places where women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ folks made history for the National Park Service Cultural Resources Office of Interpretation and Education. In addition to her experience with digital place-based interpretation, she brings her insight from working with the Grants Unit at the Minnesota Historical Society, in which she assessed to what extent the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage (Legacy) Grants program serves BIPOC communities.

Catherine Sandlund – Catherine Sandlund is a Design Reviewer with MNSHPO. Ms. Sandlund attended the University of Minnesota where she acquired a Masters in Architecture, a Master of Science in Architecture – Heritage Preservation, as well as a Bachelors of Arts in Studio Arts. Prior to joining the SHPO, Ms. Sandlund worked as Principal Planner with Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development where she collaborated on the authorship of the MPLS2040 Plan and was the East Sector Planner. Preceding that, Ms. Sandlund worked at Minnesota Historical Society in the Minnesota State Historical Department where she was the Grant Program Design Reviewer and was the Designer for the Minnesota Main Street program to encourage transformations of older historic commercial districts by using inclusive, comprehensive, people centered, and place-based approaches to community revitalization. Ms. Sandlund is passionate about Preservation Planning and how good plans can help all community members experience the benefits of historic preservation.

Rob Skalecki – Rob holds degrees from Iowa State University in History (B.A.) and Sociology (B.A.), with a Master of Heritage Studies and Public History (MHSPH), Historic Preservation, from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. He has been a core member of the Historic Preservation section of the City of Minneapolis’ Department of Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED) since 2019 when the preservation team was created. Rob has served as the City’s representative and project manager for the Fire Station No. 24 Landmark Designation and the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Grant Community Outreach project from 2021 to present.

Amy Spong – Amy Spong has been Minnesota’s Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer since 2016 and has over 25 years of experience in the historic preservation field. She was hooked after her first internship in 1994 with the City of Minneapolis which included driving around in an old station wagon verifying and updating inventoried properties on their “800 List!” Ms. Spong’s interdisciplinary housing degree prepared her for the multifaceted field of preservation along with her professional experiences, including with the Colorado State Historical Fund and as the City of Saint Paul’s preservation specialist for 16 years, where she was recognized with a Minnesota Preservation Award for Stewardship and Advocacy from Rethos in 2014.
Fred Sutherland – Fred is a registered, professional archaeologist with over 15 years experience. He has led teams in archaeological research, fieldwork, and laboratory analysis, and he helped found the Great Northern chapter of the Society of Industrial Archaeology. Dr. Sutherland's doctoral research involved leading a team of residents from a former Minnesota iron-mining district to document over 450 historic properties and sites. Sutherland acted as the research lead for the CRSL project, and as one of the coordinators working directly with local historical societies and independent researchers.

Alice Thomas – Alice has a Ph.D. in Higher Education Policy and Administration, is the co-founder of several community organizations in Northfield, Minnesota, and is a member of a variety of municipal commissions and boards including the Heritage Preservation Commission. In retirement, she restored her 1878 residence and co-founded and served as a board member of Save the Northfield Depot, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Lindsey Wallace – Lindsey Wallace is a 106 Group architectural historian and planner with 15 years of professional experience working at the intersection of historic preservation, cultural resources, grant management, and community development. Lindsey brings a keen attention to detail, complex problem-solving skills, conscientious management, and excellent customer service to all her work. She currently serves as the co-chair of the climate change working group for the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Preservation Priorities Task Force.

Ginny Way – Ginny is the National Register Architectural Historian in the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office. In this role, she reviews National Register eligibility documentation, National Register of Historic Places nominations, and Historic Tax Credit applications. She works closely with all office preservation programs, particularly the Environmental Review Program and Survey and Inventory Program. She feels very lucky to have a job that allows her to think, problem solve, and actively contribute to the preservation of historical and cultural resources. Ginny especially enjoys the collaborative aspects of her work.

Alexandra Wenzl – Allie started her career in the field of historic preservation as a seasonal stone mason at Crater Lake National Park. She attended the historic preservation program at Ball State University and received a M.S. in Historic Preservation in 2003. Since her graduation, Allie has worked for the Forest Service as the director as the Historic Tallac Site, as the Forest Historian at the Mt. Hood National Forest, as the Regional Heritage Lead in the Pacific Northwest Region, and as a Historian in the Eastern Region. One of Allie's favorite historic buildings in Timberline Lodge on the Mount Hood National Forest.

Natascha Wiener – Natascha is a registered architect, serving as the Historical Architect at the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. She is a coordinator for the Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, a subject matter expert for the Environmental Review Program, as well working on the Office's efforts to understand heritage's roll in, and response to, the climate crises. She is a board member of the Association of Preservation Technology Western Great Lakes Chapter.
Royce Yeater – Royce is a retired historical architect (NDSU, 1969) with a master’s degree in architectural history (UVA, 1975) and 40 years of experience in restoration and project development. He is the former Director of the Midwest Office of the National Trust, and now serves as a Director and consultant to the Jeffris Foundation.

Sadie Young – Sadie is a Project Manager at Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps. She comes to Northern Bedrock as the Project Manager after years of working in Grand Portage, MN as a natural resource assistant, wildland firefighter and crew leader. She has received a B.S. from UMD in environmental science and an M.S. from Bemidji State in environmental chemistry.