2017 Charles R. McGimsey III – Hester A. Davis Distinguished Service Award

James E. Bruseth

The Charles R. McGimsey III – Hester A. Davis Distinguished Service Award is one of the highest awards given by the Register of Professional Archaeologists. It is given for "recognition of the distinguished service of a Registered Professional Archaeologist to achieving the mission of the Register of Professional Archaeologists as evidenced by a single action or through a lifetime of elevated service." This year's recipient, Jim Bruseth, personifies the service to the Register and profession exemplified by Charles R. McGimsey and Hester Davis.

Jim retired from his position as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for Archaeology and Director of the Archaeology Division, Texas Historical Commission in 2011 after a long and distinguished career with the State of Texas and earlier with Southern Methodist University. He earned the Texas Award for Historic Preservation in 1987 in recognition of his significant contributions to Texas archaeology. Since 2011 he has served as Guest Curator for the La Belle Exhibit at the Bullock Texas State History Museum. Jim has published numerous articles and reports during his career, but his edited volumes on the La Belle shipwreck are his signature publications.

His publication From a Watery Grave: The Discovery and Excavation of La Salle's Shipwreck La Belle, has been the recipient of a number of significant awards. Those awards have included: the Presidio La Bahia Award in 2005; the Deolece Parmelee Award for Achievement in Historical Research in 2006; the Society for American Archaeology Book Award for Public Understanding of Archaeology in 2006; and the Society for Historical Archaeology James Deetz Book Award in 2009. Last month, he and his co-editors received the Nautical Archaeological Society’s prestigious Keith Muckelroy Award for his latest book La Belle, The Archaeology of a Seventeenth-Century Ship of New World Colonization. Additionally, in 2017, Jim received the award for Archaeological Research Excellence by the Center for Maritime Archaeology and Conservation at Texas A&M University.

In terms of his service to the Register of Professional Archaeologists, Jim served as the Chair of the Nominations Committee in 2007, and then as Grievance Coordinator-Elect from 2011 to 2013. During his term as Grievance Coordinator from 2013-2015 he also served on the Board of Directors. He undertook and completed the daunting task of updating the Grievance Coordinator's Manual during his term, which assures that grievances filed with the Register are dealt with in a systematic and consistent manner.

Jim is a worthy recipient of the 2017 Charles R. McGimsey III – Hester A. Davis Distinguished Service Award, and is a credit to the Register and our profession.