揭薩凡納活性化発展

當記者走訪薩凡納時，不禁想到不同的人說着同一番話：「美國的保育行動，非凡是以先鋒」。難怪當地著名的非牟利保育組織Historic Savannah Foundation（簡稱HSF）也在薩凡納成立的七十一年內，努力與業內的史學家、文物業者、業界小企業合作，推動市內的歷史古蹟活化與保育工作。

HSF主席兼行政總裁Daniel Carey指，該組織之所以成功運作，主要倚賴「保護基金」（Revolution Fund），「我們先籌集資金，然後動用資金購入一些老建築，並修繕其結構問題，至少要「見得人」，這就是第一步。」

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Nonprofit conservation organization revamps old buildings

When I traveled around Savannah, I often heard people saying, “The grass roots movement was the engine of America’s preservation efforts.” It’s little wonder that the Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF), a renowned local non-profit preservation organization, was also established from grass roots in 1955. The organization aims to promote heritage conservation and revitalization in Savannah by working with the local government, private properties and mid- to large enterprises.

Daniel Carey, HSF President and CEO, pointed out that the success of the organization lies in what he calls a “revolving fund.” “We raise funds with which we buy old buildings and fix their structural problems. The first step is to revamp the building so it becomes stable and presentable. After re-packaging, the building goes up for sale and we wait for a buyer with a commitment to preservation. They purchase the building from us and undertake further revitalization work. The rescue work is then complete.”

Through the purchase, resale, maintenance and conservation efforts, HSF has successfully preserved nearly 400 historic buildings to date. Carey admitted that even in a place like Savannah that values conservation, the organization still encounters challenges. “Firstly, from a lack of resources; and secondly, there are certain difficulties in tourism management. Savannah’s total annual number of visitors is seven million every year. They come here to appreciate the result of our conservation work. However, they also increase the pressure on carrying out conservation. We have to balance between these two factors.”

He also praised SCAD’s contributions to conservation. “If SCAD didn’t exist, Savannah would never be like this. SCAD cleverly revitalized 70 heritage sites in the city, and the students can travel around the city while attending different classes. They can experience the history of the city.” He believes the first heritage conservation project of a city has to be a success. “For the Hong Kong North Kowloon Magistracy building, the city is waiting for SCAD to establish itself as a role model in conservation.”