

Make it better... but don't change it too much

University of Washington's Storefront Studio students hear from the Roslyn community

by Lyn Derrick

Following on the heels of a virtual, online computer trip to Roslyn, 14 Storefront Studio architecture students from the University of Washington made an appearance in person at the studio's first open house on Friday, April 1.

Inside the N.W.I. Building where the studio session was held, 14 t-shirt designs lined one wall, all developed by the students based on their virtual trip to the area.

Coal mining figured prominently in those t-shirt designs, as did the town's lineup of rustic main street façades – illustrating students' first impressions of the community.

They were in town to delve deeper, however, to fill in around those first impressions with the substance that makes Roslyn 'tick,' and to learn about its dreams for the future.

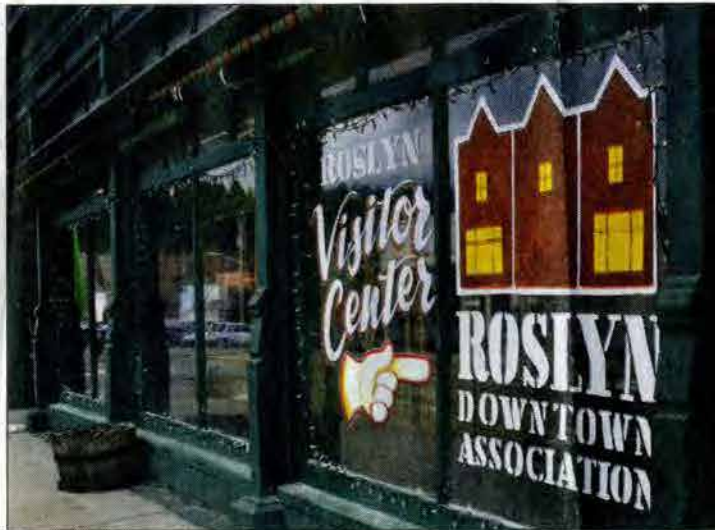
In her presentation, Librarian Erin Krake told the students, "I moved here because I loved it, not because I wanted to change it."

Her comment summarized the consensus among presenters: Make things better but don't change it too much.

Roslyn Downtown Association, the organization that brought Storefront Studio to town, agrees.

"The idea," said RDA Vice President, Jenny Aurit, "is to improve the economic vitality of the community – while preserving its history and all the things that make it unique."

Recognition of that uniqueness brought the Studio, an experiential learning program for students within the university's architectural department, to Roslyn for a second year in 2010. That's something the program hadn't done before.



THIS CORNER of the N.W.I. Building in Roslyn houses the city's new Visitor Center. During this year's Storefront Studio session, the inside will receive attention from UW architecture students with the help of professional mentors. "We are so happy with the turn out and community support we received at the first open house for Storefront," said RDA Vice President, Jenny Aurit. "We feel we've come full circle by hosting it at the new Visitor Center. It's opening is such a milestone for our organization and symbolic of the possibilities for Roslyn's future."

Lyn Derrick photo/2011

A third unprecedented return this year underscores the Studio's belief in Roslyn's distinctiveness, as well as a desire to help the city move a little closer to achieving its goals.

Studio Director, UW Professor Jim Nicholls, says this year is different because students have an opportunity to work with architectural mentors, Kevin Kane of SKHS Architects and Daniel Stettler of Stettler Designs.

Kane will work with students on plans for the N.W.I. Building Visitor Center, and Stettler will work with them on plans for the former postmaster's house. Additionally, Nicholls said students would work with Lehrman Cameron Studio on exhibit designs for the Visitor Center.

"We are working with professional offices as well as university faculty so student projects will be better set for po-

tential implementation after the studio ends," said Nicholls.

"The first year we were in Roslyn students painted the historical route of the train tracks on the road to connect the two ends of the Coal Mines Trail. This year in addition to posters and books of our proposals, we plan to design and build a Visitor's Map and exhibits on Roslyn in the Visitor Center as a concrete contribution of our collaboration with the city and the Roslyn Downtown Association."

One of the main reasons the Studio is returning for this third "go around" is the positive way the community has treated students in the past.

"The productive and positive collaboration between students and the community – and the mutual respect of Roslyn Downtown Association and the University of Washington, makes



PROFESSOR JIM NICHOLLS told students to "go online and find out everything you can about Roslyn." Afterwards, as their first assignment students designed t-shirts based on their impressions. Pictured here: two examples of those t-shirts. Lyn Derrick photo/2011

this ongoing project possible," said Nicholls.

Illustrating the community's reception, Nichols told those gathered for this session that two students who "were out taking pictures on their first walking tour of Roslyn were given bouquets of daffodils, a dozen fresh eggs – and thanked for coming to town."

At the next open house on Friday and Saturday, April 29 – 30, community members can expect to see models and pictures of student proposals for the exhibit in the Visitor Center, along with plans and pictures of alternate ideas for the N.W.I. Building and the postmaster's house.

Plus, "some recycling strategies for Roslyn, as well as more



STUDENTS VOTED on the best t-shirt design, which narrowed the field down to two. This t-shirt graphic is a compilation of those two. Students wore this shirt as they explored Roslyn on Saturday, April 2. Lyn Derrick photo/2011



STOREFRONT STUDENTS examine their t-shirt designs and other illustrations about Roslyn posted on the wall of the N.W.I. Building. Lyn Derrick photo/2011



HELPING TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC VITALITY is a goal of the Roslyn Downtown Association. Storefront Studio students visit a business located in the N.W.I. Building. The shop is called Fused. The artist/owner creates and sells his own glass artwork, and encourages visitors to do the same. Here a local, Matt Hughes, accepted that invitation and shows students one of his creations. Lyn Derrick photo/2011

t-shirts," said Nicholls.

The t-shirt designed by the students as their first exercise was very popular with visitors to the open house.

"After running out of the ones we brought," Nicholls said, "we started to take orders for a second printing."