



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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June 1, 2016

**SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2016 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO
TOWNE FARM IN BOXFORD**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of the Towne Farm, Boxford, to receive a 2016 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

Secretary Galvin presented the award at a recent ceremony in the Massachusetts Archives Building, Dorchester. The Towne Farm is one of 12 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The projects the Commission is recognizing this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. The sensitive rehabilitation and restoration of the Towne Farm in Boxford by its owner, Christine Barendsfeld, and her team has preserved a remarkable collection of historic agricultural buildings, as well as seventeen acres of rural land.”

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Towne Farm includes a circa 1790 farmhouse and barn, and a 1 ½-story carriage house, constructed between the barn and the farmhouse around 1858. The three-story farmhouse is a fine example of Federal-period architecture, with a center chimney, two parlors, a kitchen with a hearth, and three bedchambers. The barn, with its hand-hewn framing, was originally built in the English style, and converted in the mid-19th century to the New England style by Henry A. Towne, for whom the farm is named.

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

The carriage house originally stored grain, cordwood, and carriages, and served as farmhand living quarters in the 20th century. The property also includes a 1907 water tower and a utility shed that was moved to the site ca. 1900. The shed became part of the farm's water system, and incorporated a windmill that pumped water up to the tower.

In 2009, with the property under threat of demolition by a residential developer, Boxford resident Christine Barendsfeld purchased the Towne Farm and undertook the significant restoration and rehabilitation of its buildings and structures.

The project team's skilled craftsmen and preservation experts rehabilitated the farmhouse and its outbuildings to the highest standards. Aluminum siding was removed from the farmhouse to reveal historic wood sheathing, which was replaced in kind. All historic wood windows were restored, and the interior's historic paint and wallpaper were researched. The team returned the carriage house to its historic condition and configuration, guided by an image from the late 1800s. Here, too, aluminum siding was removed, and original vertical sheathing was repaired, while windows were reinserted in the original locations based on framing and sheathing evidence. The water tower was repaired and its roof replaced.

The owner has also kept the property's seventeen acres in agricultural and woodland use. She offers ecologically sensitive farming workshops and opportunities to the local community, as well as hosting programs in meditation, yoga, art in nature, and music. Through the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, two farmers were given the use of one acre for five years. The large-scale restoration of the Towne Farm has created a wealth of resources for the community while preserving a landscape and buildings that reflect the region's proud agricultural heritage.

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L to R: Benjamin Nutter, Andi Gori, Secretary William F. Galvin, Christie Barendsfeld, Arron Sturges, Steve Howell

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