



**William Francis Galvin**  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**SECRETARY GALVIN TO PRESENT 2013 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO  
CAROLYN HARRIS OF WILMINGTON**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of Carolyn Harris to receive a 2013 Massachusetts Historical Commission Local Preservationist Award.

“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. Wilmington is fortunate to have Ms. Harris, whose dedication to historic preservation will benefit the town for generations to come.”

Under the leadership of Carolyn R. S. Harris, and through her outstanding ability to collaborate with civic organizations and departments, the Wilmington Historical Commission has earned a reputation of balancing progress with preservation for future generations. Ms. Harris was born and raised in Wilmington and attended Lowell State College, where she obtained an undergraduate degree in history and education, as well as Master of Arts degrees in teaching and American studies. Ms. Harris worked for the North Reading School Department for more than thirty years, serving as the chair of the History Department for many years leading up to her retirement. Ms. Harris was appointed to the Wilmington Historical Commission in 1987. She was elected chair of the Commission in 1988, and has held the position for 25 years. With Ms. Harris at its helm, the Commission has successfully advocated for the preservation of Wilmington’s historic resources, and has educated the community about the town’s history. Among the preservation achievements with which Ms. Harris has been associated are: the establishment of five National Register historic districts in the town; expansion of the town’s historic house plaque program; preservation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of two of the town’s one-room schoolhouses; successful nomination of several private and public properties to the National Register of Historic Places; and promoting awareness of threatened historic sites and properties such as the Clapp Mill, the Butters Farmhouse, the town’s Scales Keeper’s House, the Whitefield School, and the Town Pound, among others. She was instrumental in the creation of the Wilmington Town Museum at the Col. Joshua Harnden Tavern. Today, the Museum is a vibrant historic resource, receiving hundreds of visitors annually. It is also the site of educational programs, social events, senior citizen work programs, and Eagle Scout projects. “Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever” is her motto. Ms. Harris is held in the highest regard by Wilmington’s administration and its citizens. She will soon retire from the Wilmington Historical Commission.

This is the 35<sup>th</sup> year of MHC’s Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Secretary Galvin will present the awards at an afternoon ceremony on May 25, 2011, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. Carolyn Harris is one of 12 individuals, projects, and organizations to be honored.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs ([www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)).

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