



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

WILDER HOMESTEAD, BUCKLAND, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Wilder Homestead in Buckland for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its September 8, 2010, meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich architectural, cultural, archaeological, and historic resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Wilder Homestead in the National Register will help the Buckland Historical Society to continue using this fine representative of Massachusetts’ agricultural heritage as an educational resource.”

The Wilder Homestead, located on Ashfield Road, is a well-preserved example of a late 18th-century Western Massachusetts farmstead. In addition to a house, barn, and shoe shop, the property includes fields that remain in agricultural use. The main building, constructed ca. 1775, is a 2 ½-story, center-chimney, Georgian-style house with Federal details; it is one of the few saltbox houses surviving in Franklin County. An original feature of particular interest is its large chimney foundation, which was mentioned in a poem composed for the Buckland Centennial. The English-style Wilder barn is one of a dwindling number that stands in good condition beside its original house. Gardner Wilder, who built the house, was Buckland’s first treasurer. Descendants also took active roles in Buckland society and politics, and the property remained in the Wilder family for five generations until it was given to the Buckland Historical Society in 1981. The shoe shop was built between 1812 and 1820 by Dan Townsley, and was moved from its original location, about half a mile southwest of the Wilder Homestead, in 1952 to save it from demolition. The shop was relocated to the Wilder Homestead in 1991. The Buckland Historical Society maintains the homestead, which now serves as a historic house museum.

The Wilder Homestead is one of 8 historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation’s official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are over 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

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).

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133