



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff

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Telephone: 617-727-9180

DISTRICT # 5 SCHOOL, SHREWSBURY, 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 District # 5 School in Shrewsbury for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its June 12, 2013, 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 historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the District # 5 School in the National Register will help to preserve one of the oldest and best-preserved one-room schoolhouses in Massachusetts.”

The District # 5 School, 2 Old Mill Road, is a Federal-period, small, brick one-room schoolhouse set on a very small lot located at the intersection of Old Mill and Main Streets in Shrewsbury. The well-preserved school building was constructed in 1929, about 1 ½ miles west of the town center, in what was then a rural section of town. What was once farmland surrounding the schoolhouse has since become a residential neighborhood, built up in waves of post-World War II suburbanization. The setting still preserves some of its original, tranquil rural character because Old Mill Street is lined with large trees, and the school’s main façade looks out over an undeveloped, wooded area. Measuring approximately 21 by 31 feet, the District # 5 School is the oldest surviving schoolhouse in Shrewsbury. It served students of many ages, ranging from five to fifteen or older, in its only classroom.

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

When the nearby Artemas Ward School, which had multiple classrooms, opened in 1917, the District # 5 School was closed, reflecting the changing character of the town from rural to suburban, as well as changing educational standards for both curricula and buildings. It is not known how the building was used during the years immediately following its closure. By 1942, carpenter Albert Pliny Knight occupied the former schoolhouse as his home. Knight made relatively minor changes to the building, with only basic electrical services and no evident heating provisions. In 1974, the Shrewsbury Historical Society bought the District # 5 School from the town for \$1.00. During the 1970s and 1980s they repaired the building, restored it to its early 19th-century appearance, and turned it into a one-room school museum focused upon special programs for schoolchildren.

The District # 5 School is one of 5 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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