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Secretary of the Commonwealth

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CATBOAT *WITCH* (WAREHAM) 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 *Witch*, a catboat docked in Wareham, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its March 12, 2008 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 this property on the National Register will help to protect our heritage for generations to come.”

The *Witch*, a wooden catboat now named *Gypsy*, is one of four identical sailing vessels built in 1900 to the same design by nationally known naval architect Bowdoin Bradlee (B.B.) Crowninshield. It is the only one of the four known to survive. Designed for recreational sailing and racing, the *Witch*, as originally constructed, had an overall length of 22ft. 4in. The boat was built on Cape Cod at the A.C. Howland Co. Boatyard in Monument Beach. The boat is significant for its association with the social history of recreational sailing and racing in Massachusetts and the nation, and it may represent the oldest surviving example of the designs of B.B. Crowninshield. The *Witch* is one of the very oldest actively sailed yachts of any design in the United States; remarkably, the wooden boat has served its original purpose, providing family recreational sailing, for more than 100 years.

The Catboat *Witch* 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 65,000 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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