



Historic Salem, Inc. presents the 2013 Preservation Awards

Former Baptist Church/ Law Library

*Goody Clancy Architects, Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Trial Courts, and
Division of Capital Asset Management*

This structure began its life in 1806 as the First Baptist Church of Salem. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the original colonial style was altered to reflect the then-popular Italianate style. The moving of buildings, particularly houses was common two hundred years ago, when the church was built. But it is not so common now and the move, in 2008, of this two centuries old building was much anticipated around Salem. Now situated 175 feet west of its original location, it serves as the Essex Law Library for the newly constructed Ruane Judicial Center. The restoration of this building, designed by Goody Clancy architects was completed in 2011 and the library is open to the public.

66 Derby Street

Jay Levy and Neal Levy, Bedrock Construction

If you are a builder/developer in historic neighborhoods of Salem watch and learn – Jay and Neal Levy do it right. Originally, they approached the Historic Commission with their “Plan A”, but after listening to feedback from the Commission they returned with a “Plan B” that required restoring what was, at one time, a variety store from the inside out. Leaving the envelope of the building intact they replaced the structure and modernized the interior. Key to the economic success of restoring 66 derby street was the construction of a new, highly contextual single family home on the vacant lot adjacent the site. This new construction fit the scale and massing of nearby buildings and strengthens the streetscape on this block. Jay and Neal, through their work with the historic Commission and their architect, David Jaquith, added two highly sought after single family homes in an area of town dense with condos.

Ropes House, 18 Felt Street

George Whattendorf, of GVW Inc. and Heidi Whattendorf of HJ Contracting

This house was once one of the few homes in north Salem in the time when the area was filled with farms and orchards. As the area developed the pieces of the land were sold off, until this grand house was sited in the middle of a neighborhood, acting as a tie to the history of the place. Neglected for decades, the restoration of the house took a monumental effort. First, by the community who rallied to ask the Whattendorfs to save the house. Listening to the neighbors, the developer undertook restoration of the windows, siding, the grounds, porches, and historic details of the interior. A good preservation award project, like this one, does more than make an old building “look pretty”; it allows the place to carry its story into the next century.

Jessica Herbert Advocacy for the Ropes House, 18 Felt Street

As was mentioned, from an advocacy standpoint this project was a delight to watch as it brought the community together is asking for consideration of history. It had the attention of many, but none so dedicated as was Jessica Herbert and for that Historic Salem selected her to receive an award for advocacy in connection to this project.



John H. Carr, Jr. Lifetime of Preservation Advocacy

On May 16th John and Carol Carr celebrated their 40th year living on River Street. John Carr has been involved in nearly every preservation effort in Salem in that time, but he is most proud of his work advocating for the street on which he lives. When he moved to River Street the houses were rundown, abandoned, one had no interior plumbing, and many had absentee landlords who cared little for the quality of the neighborhood. John's work on this street included getting the National Register status extended from Andover Street to River Street. This, among other benefits, allowed resident to utilize grant money available during the bicentennial year. During the past four decades, a time when preservation moved from passé to prestigious, John was there to work alongside neighbors who understood the value of their historic homes, and to shepard those who needed some stronger "guidance". Now River Street is famed for Halloween festivities, Christmas décor, and summer flowers. It boasts brick sidewalks with the first inlaid mariners compass rose in Salem (the 2nd is in front of the Bowditch House, HSI headquarters). John is proud of his work on this street that is now majority owner occupied with young families. A sampling of John's other claims to fame are two decades on the Historic Commission, with a hand in the formation of every historic district in the city, and the drafting of the cities demolition delay ordinance. He drafted the carriage house zoning amendment. Fittingly, these very Preservation Awards were first granted by the Historic Commission under the leadership of John Carr and Jane Guy. John has served on the board of Historic Salem. He worked with a few Salem residents for 10 years on making Leslie's Retreat park a reality. He had a hand in projects on Carpenter Street, Lynn Street, the former Gainsborough Studios on Essex Street. And like any good preservationist he has had fought the good fight on unsuccessful efforts, understanding that it is not the sure victory that is important, but the preservation of the history and character, and the caring about the place you live, that matters. Although we informally call this award the "Lifetime Achievement" award John is not planning to cap his efforts as he looks forward to upcoming projects, which I'm not going to mention, leaving to John the element of surprise. Preservation in Salem owes a lot to Mr. Carr.