



# HISTORIC SALEM INC

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## Historic Salem, Inc. Presents the 2019 Preservation Awards

### **1870 Mary & Michael Donahue House, 126 Derby Street Renovation**

The Classical-revival style Mary and Michael Donahue House was originally constructed in 1870, with the storefront added in 1900 and the full 3<sup>rd</sup> floor in 1912. Little changed in the next 100 years and when Ben Carlson, a builder and local landlord, purchased the building in 2018 the storefront remained a notable feature of the run-down looking building – though it had been used as a residential space for many years. Mr. Carlson recognized that the once run-down building was ideally suited, both in location and layout, to provide middle income condos close to downtown. Originally, he proposed a new, altered storefront – while restoring the upper windows and repairing the wood cladding. At the urging of the Historic Commission the owner devised a plan to retain and restore the existing wooden storefront. To accommodate the need for ventilation and access for the first story unit, a new wood window was approved for the building elevation that overlooks a small corner park. The result is a restoration project that truly respects the building’s evolution from residential to commercial and back, with the option of future commercial use as the building, and Essex Street, evolve.

We celebrate this renovation with a Historic Salem Preservation Award, presented to Ben Carlson.

### **The Gove House, 254 Lafayette Street Exterior Restoration**

There is a high bar when it comes to evaluating a nomination for an exterior paint job. Painting is a necessary maintenance item for many homes and it can be done without much consideration. The work done at 254 Lafayette Street exceeded this high standard and sets an excellent example for an exterior renovation. Where layers of paint once hid trim details it is now removed, where unimaginative beiges covered all surfaces indiscriminately, careful consideration has now been made to showcase different materials and designs. The overall effect is a celebration of the Victorian style of the house, flaunting all the decoration and delight that the building possesses. For this building in the Lafayette historic district it is notable that the owners approached the Historic Commission with a well-thought out paint scheme in place, seeking to showcase the building style, not trying to skirt by with the minimum effort. The high bar for a quality paint job is only met when true care and effort is made to celebrate the building.

We celebrate this restoration with a Historic Salem Preservation Award, presented to Renaissance Condominium Association.



## **90 Washington Street Exterior Restoration**

We do not take lightly Salem’s claim to four centuries of architecture. However, the architecture from the most recent century is often less loved than it deserves. Not so in this project renovating 90 Washington Street that restored this 72 year-old “youngster” of an international style building. The minimal architectural styling meant that restoration design and construction needed to carefully maintain and emphasize the simple lines and materials. This was done with repointing, window restorations and storefront simplification. The addition to the rear of the building is an example of how new and existing can work in harmony to contribute to Salem’s architectural heritage. The renovation work allowed for a lively tenant, the City of Salem, to use the interior spaces and for the three store fronts to add vibrant activity to Washington Street.

We celebrate this restoration with a Historic Salem Preservation Award, presented to Nine Zero Washington LLC, Jewett Construction, and Winter Street Architects.

## **Salem Alliance for the Environment – Advocacy & Education Related to Historic Infrastructure**

As part of Salem Alliance for the Environment’s work to protect the health and efficient use of resources in Salem they have been advocating, researching and pushing for understanding, accurate reporting, and repair of natural gas leaks throughout Salem. While preservation often focuses on the visible – and what is “pretty” – it is an honor to recognize the equally important efforts to maintain and repair the unseen aspects of our historic city. With infrastructure of all kinds surpassing 100 years of service there continues to be a need for information gathering, decision-making and prioritization of funds and efforts to ensure our current resources remain serviceable. This principle is applicable to preservation at any level. SAFE’s work is motivated by environmental concerns, with life and health concerns the driving force. A lesson to all preservationists that we would all be well served to consider how sustainability, functionality and resource management are connected to the care and viability of our historic cities.

We celebrate this advocacy and education with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Salem Alliance for the Environment.



## **Donna Seger's Streets of Salem Essays, Education & Advocacy**

In a city full of history - and historians - Donna Seger's "Streets of Salem" blog has risen to the top as an accessible online resource for a range and depth of information about Salem's history, filtered through an intelligent, well-researched world-view. Posts range from passionate, persuasive essays to joyful celebrations of ephemera – and are written not as a lofty professor, but as if she can't help but share her excitement, anger or delight about information she has discovered. Her educational efforts provide an important basis for preservation's power – it is the stories and our individual and collective love of place that precede any preservation work.

A side note – Donna restarted the Preservation Award program about 15 years ago after it had gone dormant for a time – so this award is a particularly meaningful one.

We celebrate this advocacy and education with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Donna Seger.

## **1889 Rectory and 1878 Convent for Saint James Parish, 161 Federal Street Renovation**

The former Rectory and Convent for St. James Parish were built in the late 1800s within in the midst of growth and expansion of St. James Parish – at the time the only English speaking Catholic Church in the city. The convent was surplus-ed in the 1970s, while the Rectory housed priests until quite recently. When Dan Botwinik, president of Cougar Properties first saw the interior of the former Rectory he was beguiled by the original fireplaces and wood work and acted quickly to purchase the building. Renovation was possible, in part, because of the use of Historic Tax Credits, the first such project that the team tackled, with the requisite learning curve. Then, in the midst of renovating the building into four-apartment units they were contacted by the broker for the Convent across the street. Applying lessons learned at the Rectory, the team undertook the significantly more challenging project. The Convent had been unoccupied for some time, with previous attempts to renovate stymied by environmental issues (now resolved). As a result of age and neglect the building needed major structural work to secure the building at the roof and at the foundation. Once these issues were solved the new units were constructed with original floors, fireplaces, doors and a reconstruction of a grand 6ft wide plaster medallion in the former atrium space.

In both buildings original exterior details were retained – including access through the grand front entrances, a key concern of the National Park Service review.

We celebrate this renovation with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Cougar Capital.



## **1832 Edward Melcher House at 32 Buffum Street Renovation**

Located on the beautiful tree-lined Buffum Street in North Salem, The Northfield Townhouses were carefully renovated in an effort to preserve and enhance the historic features of the 1832 Edward Melcher house. The rich new colors of the exterior add to the elegant historic feel of the building – with preserved original trim and 2 over 2 windows along the front façade. Solar panels, carefully placed to be out of view of the passerby, and many other energy conserving additions to the house reduce the carbon footprint of the home. And speaking of footprint, the original volume of the building was only subtly adjusted, hardly noticeable from the street, with the owners making the purposeful decision not to encroach on the generous side yard, maintaining the historic setting. Instead they created individual patio spaces surrounded by a custom-designed and built, period-inspired, cedar fence.

Lee & Jacqueline Dearborn of The Makers Guild, Inc., with consultation from Derby Square Architects in Salem, and the help from a host of highly skilled tradesmen, worked together to achieve this successful project. We celebrate this simple act of preserving and respecting the integrity of one of Salem’s historic buildings – and its far-reaching impact as an example in future projects.

We celebrate this renovation with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Lee and Jacqueline Dearborn.

## **13 Chestnut Street Craftsmanship – Fence**

In 2016 the Kiefer family began a redesign of their patio space at 13 Chestnut Street, partnering with landscape architect Cristina Campa of Marblehead. With limited outdoor space they wanted to add a gate that allowed flexible use of the driveway space and through the recommendation of their hairstylist they heard of a carpenter, who had received an HSI preservation award for a fence at 81 Essex Street – and soon after they hired Mark Pattison. As homeowner Jennifer says, “Mark was clearly passionate about historic preservation and excited about our ideas...Mark turned our vision into a work of art.” As with many of his projects Mark did a significant amount of research and innovation. He pieced together fragments of information on what a Greek-revival style fence would have looked like in Salem specifically and with no clear examples to rely on, Mark had to investigate style details and determine appropriate proportions to achieve a look that he could be proud of. The biggest logistical challenge was presented by the narrow driveway – and so Mark created custom hinges that allowed the fence to open without obstruction. In addition, he designed the pieces to avoid common joinery failures – you can see an example at the bar – while also being aware of the family’s needs, spacing the pickets narrow enough that a little foot couldn’t climb the barrier.



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We celebrate this craftsmanship with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Mark Pattison.

## **Epoch Preservation Gravestone Conservation and Education**

Rachel Meyer, who co-owns Epoch Preservation with her husband Josh, is very much aware of her place in the continuum of history. While doing her work to reset, repair and research gravestones throughout the area she consistently provides opportunities for community members to learn and contribute to the work. Despite being, herself, on the young side of conservation professionals she is often talking about introducing the work to the next generation, demystifying gravestone conservation and getting people involved and excited. In 2018 these efforts included several workshops on cleaning and simple stone resetting at Greenlawn and Broad Street cemeteries.

Epoch Preservation undertook work at each of the city's cemeteries including conserving 210 markers at Greenlawn cemetery, 37 at Broad Street and 8 at the often overlooked Quaker cemetery on upper Essex Street. Other work included crowd monitoring, triage repair to stones during October and various storms.

Rachel makes specific effort to restore the markers of those whose stories are not told as much. At Greenlawn that meant Greek, Polish, Syrian, and Armenian immigrants that immigrated here in the late 1800s to early 1900s. She also found and tended the grave of the first woman to register to vote in Salem, Jeanette LaBorde. Plans for the upcoming season include resetting stones from the African-American community.

Epoch Preservation is using their work to start conversations about history and remind people that history isn't just about a select few doing magnificent things, it is about all of us. We are all part of the story.

We celebrate this conservation and education with a Historic Salem Preservation Award presented to Epoch Preservation.