



ESSEX NATIONAL
HERITAGE AREA

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Essex National Heritage Commission Holds Annual Fall Meeting at the Smith Barn at Brooksby Farm in Peabody, MA

New Commissioners Welcomed, Special Awards Given Out and Regional Initiatives Discussed

November 13, 2012 (Salem, MA) -- The Essex National Heritage Commission (Essex Heritage) welcomed over 100 business and community leaders from around Essex County to its Annual Fall meeting, on Thursday, November 8. The meeting was sponsored by the Peabody Historical Society and held at its Smith Barn at Brooksby Farm in Peabody. The business portion of the session focused on the importance of sustaining the region through youth engagement, partnership projects and regional support. Members elected new members of the Commission and announced the recipients of the Essex Heritage Awards.

Attendees were welcomed by Edward A. Bettencourt, Jr., Mayor of the City of Peabody, Mr. William Power, Executive Director of the Peabody Historical Society and Congressman John F. Tierney.

Essex Heritage is supported by a 150 member Board of Commissioners who live and/or work within Essex County and who serve as representatives of the communities, businesses, community organizations, educational institutions and historic, cultural and natural resources of the region. The following ten individuals were nominated and voted in to serve as Commissioners for a three-year term:

- Alan Berry, C.P. Berry Homes – English Commons at Topsfield
- Claudia Chuber, Peabody Essex Museum
- Phil Conway, Conway Cahill-Brodeur Funeral Home
- Patrick DeIulis, DeIulis Brothers Construction
- Tom Gould, Treadwell's Ice Cream
- Richard Hydren, Rowley Chamber of Commerce
- Mark Leonard, Eastern Bank
- James Rudolph, Rudolph Friedmann, LLP

- Julie Saviano, Andover Endodontics, Inc.
- Rosario Ubiera-Minaya, Salem Education Foundation

Other dignitaries in attendance included: former Peabody Mayor Michael Bonfanti; Tom Gould, Peabody City Councilor-at-large; former Congressman Michael Harrington; Wayne Marquis, Danvers Town Manager; Forrester Clark, former State Representative; Barry Pett with Senator Bruce Tarr; and Grace Harrington with Representative John Keenan.

Essex Heritage President Richard Yagjian offered his President's Report thanking organizations and individuals for their support of Essex Heritage. Mr. Yagjian spoke about the importance of regional sustainability and provided a report on the successes of Essex Heritage throughout the past six months including the successful summer Youth Jobs Corps providing 43 youngsters with jobs in our national parks, and the Caribbean Connection which was funded through the National Park Foundation as a way to engage Salem's Latino youth in the history and heritage resources in their neighborhood.

Congressman Tierney reported on efforts in DC to support Heritage Areas, and spoke about the important contributions the Essex National Heritage Commission makes to the quality of life of this region. "There are members who understand the importance of having an entity that can transcend city and town boundaries," said Congressman Tierney. "That can allow us to do bike paths and walking paths, and cultural and historical and educational events that really strengthen our economy. That draws people together and educates our students all at the same time...it has a huge impact."

Each year the Essex National Heritage Commission presents its Pioneer in Partnership Awards to individuals and organizations who exemplify the Commission's spirit of collaboration. The award recognizes those who build partnerships and celebrate the historic, cultural and natural resources of Essex County. Lindsay Diehl was recognized for her role at the Wenham Museum and a moment of silence was held to honor the passing of Glen Mairo from Essex Harmony. Awards were presented to Bread & Roses Centennial Committee, Captain Michael Rutstein of the Schooner *Fame*, Danvers Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Newburyport Powder House Restoration Committee and The House of Seven Gables.

Congressman Tierney provided special Congressional citations to Captain Michael Rutstein of the Schooner *Fame*, Danvers Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Newburyport Powder House Restoration Committee and The House of Seven Gables.

Congresswoman Tsongas provided a Congressional citation to the Bread & Roses Centennial Committee.

The Bread & Roses Centennial Committee was honored for their passionate work which brought international attention to the city of Lawrence. Captain Michael Rutstein is the Owner and Operator of Schooner *Fame* and was honored for providing the children of Salem with a wonderful opportunity to experience first-hand the adventures of sailing aboard a replica Salem privateer. The Danvers Rail Trail Advisory Committee was recognized for the Committee's leadership and commitment to developing the new popular recreational amenity that has instantly improved the quality of life in Danvers and the greater region. Newburyport Powder House Restoration Committee was honored for their perseverance and dedication to preserving one of New England's few remaining powder houses. And The House of Seven Gables was recognized for its collaboration with Essex Heritage to provide a unique learning opportunity for Salem's Latino youth to connect the city to their heritage.

A “State of the Heritage Area” report by Executive Director Annie Harris highlighted the local and national efforts to promote and encourage Heritage Areas. Ms. Harris described the national significance of this region, and talked about the importance of the Essex National Heritage Area in protecting our historic, natural and cultural treasures. Ms. Harris spoke about the unparalleled resources in this region - the first Puritan landing site at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester; our nation’s first museum at the Peabody Essex established by the East India Marine Society, and the oldest continuously operating boat shop – Lowell’s boat shop in Amesbury.

“The real importance of the Essex National Heritage Area lies not in our being first or best in historical events – but in what remains today,” said Annie C. Harris, Executive Director. “It is our mission to knit this region together, to help people make connections between their lives and these sites, and to engage the larger public in sustaining these places.”

Ms. Harris touched on the role of Essex Heritage facilitating partnerships between different entities and interests to promote regional sustainability. Ms. Harris provided an update on Essex Heritage’s flagship program Trails & Sails, and the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway, along with information about the Coastal Trails Coalition and the Border to Boston Trail projects, the Essex Heritage Youth Jobs Corps program and the Caribbean Connection program – engaging youth in the region to connect with and appreciate the historic and natural resources of Essex County. Ms. Harris concluded her report with a presentation on the efforts at the national level to provide a vision of the future of the National Park Service, which will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2016, and the national efforts to encourage local partnerships to play a greater role in historic interpretation. Ms. Harris then invited the Superintendent of Salem Maritime & Saugus Iron Works National Historic Sites, Mr. Michael Quijano-West to the podium for his remarks.

Superintendent Michael Quijano-West reviewed the partnership efforts between the national park and Essex Heritage which include: an interpretive film shown at the Visitors Center in Salem, support for the Coastal Byway, the annual photo contents, Saugus Founders Day, Salem Maritime Festival, Trails & Sails and the Caribbean Connection program. “On behalf of the park service I really want to thank Essex Heritage for everything that has been done both with us and throughout the region,” said Mr. Quijano-West. “Because this is an example of a fabulous partnership. And they have done a wonderful job.”

Mr. Yagjian concluded the morning’s business thanking the Smith Barn for their hospitality, and providing information about the new Essex Coastal Byway Guide – a remarkable guide to the history, culture and nature on the North Shore by renowned author Joel Brown, who was on hand to sign copies of his book.

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About Essex Heritage (Essex National Heritage Commission)

The Essex National Heritage Area encompasses the 34 cities and towns of Essex County, a 500 square mile region just north of Boston, Massachusetts. The county was officially designated a National Heritage Area by an Act of the U.S. Congress in 1996, in recognition of the important role that the county played in American history and the significant heritage resources that still exist in the region. The Act also authorized the establishment of the Essex National Heritage Commission as the non-profit steward of the Area. Working in collaboration with the National Park Service and other partners, Essex Heritage promotes public/private partnerships and develops and implements programs that preserve, promote and enhance regional awareness of the unique historic, cultural and natural resources found within the Area. For more information, visit the website at www.essexheritage.org or call (978) 740-0444.