

[Sample Plaque]

Introduction

The Newburyport Preservation Trust (NPT) is a non-profit membership organization that brings together people from Newburyport and beyond who value the preservation of the city's period architecture, neighborhood ambiance, heritage landscapes, and authentic historic character.

Program Description

The NPT Historic House Plaque Program (HHPP) seeks to engage homeowners in displaying accurate, research-based information - **authenticated by professional title examiners** - about the early ownership of their homes.

Given the treasure trove of historic houses in Newburyport, the NPT strives to educate locals and visitors about the historic and architectural heritage of these significant structures, and to support the public appreciation and recognition of these historic resources.

Application Procedure

To participate in the Historic House Plaque Program, and to determine eligibility for a plaque, Newburyport property owners must submit an application, gather photocopies of required documentation, and meet with an HHPP coordinator who will collect relevant materials and review the application. Please do not submit original documents. Materials will not be returned.

Applications can be downloaded at <http://www.nbptpreservationtrust.org>, or

A hard copy can be requested from the: [Newburyport Preservation Trust](#)
Historic House Plaque Program
PO Box 184
Newburyport, MA 01950

If you have questions about the Historic House Plaque Program, or the application process, please email NPT at npt@nbptpreservationtrust.org

House Documentation

A professional title examiner/historic house researcher will research the recorded deeds associated with your property in an effort to determine the earliest documented owner and date of record. You will receive a copy of these historical deeds wherever possible.

Additionally, for its archives, the NPT is interested in any documentation or research you may have conducted or obtained regarding your home.

Please use this checklist to indicate **items** you are sharing with the Newburyport Preservation Trust.

Required Documents

- Copy of Deed *-received when you purchased or refinanced your house*
- Book and Page Number at Registry *-on your deed or property tax bill*

Required Photographs

- Copies of Photos of 4 sides of the building(s) and any distinguishing features

Requested Documents **if available** *Please do not submit original documents*

Please provide copies of any documents or facts about your house including relevant dates and sources. This supplementary information is for the NPT archives and not essential to the plaque research.

For example:

- Prior Deed Research
- Probate Records
- Previous Owners

Person(s) /Historic Events

- Names of any persons or groups related to historical events which happened on the property

Archeology/Geology or Historic Details

- Archeological or geological documentation about your property which impacts local history

Architectural Details

- Architectural or construction characteristics including the work of noted architects or builders

Existing Historical Recognition from any of the following:

- Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) <http://mhc-macris.net/>
- National Register of Historic Places <http://www.nps.gov/nr/index.htm>
- National Historic Landmark Status <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/>
- Newburyport Historic District <http://www.newburyporthistoricdistrict.org/>
- Newburyport Local Historic District <http://www.cityofnewburyport.com/fruit-street-local-historic-district-commission>

Other

Any other undocumented or anecdotal information you may have should be submitted separately in writing with the source provided.

Criteria for Acceptance

Professional researchers, with extensive experience at the Essex County Registry of Deeds, will conduct historical research of the property ownership in an attempt to discover the earliest documented owner and date. Property owners will receive a “chain of title” packet including a written summary and a hard copy of all deeds associated with the address that can be located.

Accuracy of information to be displayed on the plaque will be diligently researched. Depending on the age of the house and the complexity of its ownership history, research can take six months or more. In some cases, historical records may be confusing, unavailable, missing, or unverifiable. Occasionally, circumstantial, visual elements, anecdotal and/or hunches about possible names and dates conflict with recorded documentation. In the event that data presented by the homeowner conflicts with what researchers find, the discrepancy will be discussed with the homeowner. The NPT reserves the right to deny the granting of a house plaque, and to return the deposit if the review of the deed research is inconclusive or cannot be resolved.

House Plaque

The NPT has contracted with a professional sign vendor to create plaques for the HHPP. These plaques are uniform in design, size, and lettering. Plaques are 16 inches high by 24 inches wide and are constructed of wood. All plaques are painted white with black lettering. Holes for mounting are pre-drilled and screws are provided.

Information displayed includes the name of the earliest documented builder or owner, and the earliest recorded property date according to the research conducted. The NPT must approve the exact wording to be used on the plaque. See sample image on the application form. The confirmation of the name and date, validated under the auspices of the NPT, make these plaques unique among the many and various house signs currently on display throughout the city. Once mounted, these historic plaques provide an important link to Newburyport’s past and an opportunity for the homeowner to display pride in their historic home.

Fees

NPT Historic House Plaques cost \$150; collected in the form of a deposit at the time of the initial home visit. The installation of the plaque on the exterior of the structure will be the responsibility of the homeowner.

Regardless of documentation provided by the homeowner, all houses will be thoroughly researched to validate the chain of title and to discover the earliest documented owner and recorded date. **This research will be billed to the applicant at \$50 per hour, plus approximately \$25 in copying expense.** If the research exceeds \$1,000 (20 hours), the homeowner will be contacted with the option to authorize additional time. Homeowners are responsible for the cost of research regardless of the outcome.

Application Process

Once you have gathered copies of the required documentation, **please mail ONLY PAGE 4** of your completed application form to NPT. Other materials will be collected during the review visit. Upon receipt of your application, you will be contacted by the HHPP volunteer coordinator to schedule a home visit. Applications will be evaluated in the order received. Based on volume, the coordinator will estimate when a meeting can be scheduled to review your application, collect your materials, and answer any questions.

When your application is complete, you will be asked for a **\$150 deposit to reserve a plaque, and a commitment to pay for the required research.** Your information will then be provided to our research team. Based on the volume of HHPP research in the queue, the coordinator will give you an estimate of when you can expect results. This could take up to six months. Following the completion of the research, you will be contacted and a plaque order will be placed with the vendor.

Required Homeowner Information -- Please print

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Property Owner(s) as Appears on Deed: _____
(if different from applicant)

Book and Page # _____

Address of Historic House: _____
(Newburyport, Massachusetts)

Mailing Address if different: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

The section below will be completed during the application review meeting

Deposit: \$ _____

Signature: _____

Your signature constitutes authorization for NPT to research above address at the cost of \$50 per hour up to \$1,000 plus approx. \$25 expenses

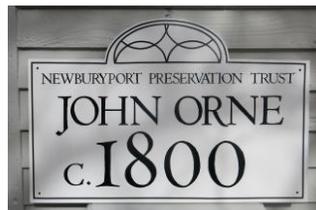
Date: _____

To apply to the Historic House Plaque Program, Please send a copy of this page to:

Newburyport Preservation Trust
Historic House Plaque Program
PO Box 184
Newburyport, MA 01950

Email questions to: npt@nbptpreservationtrust.org

Program Coordinator: Martha Muldoon
Researcher/Title Examiner: Jane Wild



Thank you for participating in the Newburyport Preservation Trust Historic House Plaque Program.