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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

## Award given for work to repair, preserve 284-year-old stone mile marker in Allston

Posted by Matt Rocheleau July 17, 2013 02:15 PM

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A photo of the restored rock taken this month.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

This rock is on a roll.

A 284-year-old historic stone mile marker in Allston, repaired after a serious accident two summers ago, recently received an award.

The honor from the Boston Preservation Alliance was given to honor the effort to repair and restore the Colonial-era rock.

The \$15,581 [preservation project](#), led by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, was completed last summer.

In July 2011, a truck backed into and [severed](#) the historic boulder on Harvard Avenue. The rock got a [temporary fix](#) but remained cracked. It sat caged in by steel police barriers for the 17 months.

In December, the mile marker was repositioned about two feet further into the sidewalk, away from the street. Gum and graffiti were washed off and a specially-matching mortar was used to stitch up and seal the rock's laceration.

The rock was also given some permanent protection. Two bollards were installed on either side of the stone after a new concrete sidewalk slab was poured around the marker.

Conservation experts from the state transportation department and workers with contractor Daedalus completed the project.

"The Brighton mile marker project is not only an example of a small object raising awareness of history and historic preservation, but a trigger for larger work," said a statement from Boston Preservation Alliance executive director Greg Galer. "MassDOT is undertaking an inventory of mile markers throughout the state and developing a preservation program for them."

The state transportation department oversees the Allston stone and others like it.

The rock – which reads "Boston 6 miles" – is known as "Marker #6." It is one of four remaining in Boston and one of 47 known statewide out of at least 99 that once existed.

The markers are part of a group of stones installed along a mail delivery system connecting the Hub and New York City.

The rocks, installed along the Upper Boston Post Road, which is now Route 20, became a standardized means of measuring distance between Springfield and Boston in 1767, when the Bay State was still an English colony. But some, like the Harvard Avenue milestone, were installed before then.

Each stone had a mileage figure carved into it to mark its distance from a stone near City Hall in downtown Boston. Over time, some of the rocks are believed to have been lost or moved because of factors including damage and development.

The stone on Harvard Avenue "disappeared and was believed to be lost, but it was eventually found and reset," according to a copy of a historic survey report from 1941 that Charlie Vasiliades of the Brighton-Allston Historical Society e-mailed to Boston.com.

Carved into the stone is "1729," the year it was installed. Below that marking, the initials "PD" are engraved. The letters stand for Judge Paul Dudley, who became Chief Justice of the Province of Massachusetts Bay in 1745. He installed some other mile markers around Boston.

Benjamin Franklin also planted some of the mile markers in Massachusetts.

All of the boulders, which vary in dimension and weight, were listed as a group in the National Register of Historic Places in the early 1970s after a law was passed the decade prior directing the state to restore and maintain the heavy, informative rocks.

Stones are known to have been located in: Cambridge, Watertown, Waltham, Weston, Wayland, Sudbury, Marlborough, Northborough, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Leicester, Spencer, East Brookfield, Brookfield, West Brookfield, Warren, Palmer, and Wilbraham.

The stones range in height from one to five feet; in width from 18 inches to

three feet; and in depth from four inches to more than one foot.

*E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).*

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(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

A photo taken in Dec. 2012, of the milestone on Harvard Avenue as crews began work to permanently fix and free the historic sidewalk rock. The rock was wrapped and covered to protect it while crews worked around it.



(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

A photo of the milestone days after it was severed on July 28, 2011, when a truck backed into it.

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