

# MAYFLOWER II ADDED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

03. November, 2020 | Posted by [Michael Quinlin](#)



[Plimoth Patuxet Museums](#) (formerly Plimoth Plantation) is proud to announce that *Mayflower II*, its historic tall ship, has been named to the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of the Nation's historic structures and places worthy of preservation.

Plimoth Patuxet Museums Executive Director Ellie Donovan said, "This recognition affirms that *Mayflower II* is a unique and irreplaceable historic resource significant to the Commonwealth and the Nation. We are grateful to the [National Parks Service](#), the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and all who supported our nomination to the National Register."

In September, the [Massachusetts Historical Commission](#) (MHC) unanimously approved *Mayflower II's* nomination following a process that spanned five years and resulted in a 70-page document detailing the ship's history, the 17th-century stories it represents, and the recently-completed restoration. The nomination was compiled by Plimoth Patuxet through consultation with MHC staff and the Public Archaeology Lab as well as endorsement from the Town of Plymouth.

The MHC deemed *Mayflower II* historically significant for its association with the founding story of the United States and as a full-scale ship that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a 17th-century English merchant vessel. Designed by renowned naval architect William A. Baker, the ship also was acknowledged for starting a trend of building reproduction vessels.

[Governor Charlie Baker](#) said, "The *Mayflower II* is a key cultural and economic asset to the Commonwealth, drawing thousands of visitors each year to learn about Massachusetts' rich history and role in the founding of our Nation. I am pleased to see this vessel recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, ensuring its preservation for generations to come."

Built in Brixham, Devon, England from 1955 to 1957, *Mayflower II* memorializes renewed international alliances during World War II. The reproduction vessel arrived to Plymouth under sail on June 13, 1957 to great fanfare and 25,000 spectators. Since then, under Plimoth Plantation's stewardship, millions of visitors have crossed her decks to learn about the Pilgrims' journey.

Despite routine maintenance, the ship succumbed to the deterioration process expected of any organic material exposed to natural elements over the course of sixty years. Plimoth's leadership decided to preserve the vessel and, in 2015, embarked on a collaboration with Mystic Seaport Museum to stabilize the ship and make her seaworthy once again. Skilled shipwrights and artisans from Mystic and Plimoth fully restored the ship according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation. Nearly 70% of the ship's timbers, planking, structural frames, knees, and beams were replaced, using six types of wood from eight states and as far away as Denmark.

Fundraising for the restoration continues, with \$1.9 million still to raise. The museum aims to exceed that and establish a fund for *Mayflower's* future maintenance in order to preserve and interpret this remarkable ship for another 60 years. Two other Baker-designed vessels in the museum's maritime collection- the shallop and ship's boat - will be added to the National Register once they return to the water next year. The shallop was built at Plymouth Marine Railways in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1957 and is currently being restored at Lowell's Boat Shop.

#### [About Plimoth Patuxet Museums](#)

Through powerful personal experiences of history, Plimoth Patuxet Museums tell the stories of the Wampanoag people and the English colonists who created a new society - in collaboration and in conflict - in the 1600s. Major exhibits include *Mayflower II*, the historic Patuxet Wampanoag Homesite, the 17th-Century English Village, and the Plimoth Grist Mill. Located less than an hour's drive south of Boston, and 15 minutes north of Cape Cod, the Museum is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week. A private, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational institution, the Museum is supported by admission fees, donations, memberships, and revenue from a variety of educational programming, dining and gift shops. Plimoth Patuxet is a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate and receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, private foundations, corporations, and local businesses. For more information, visit [www.plimoth.org](http://www.plimoth.org).