



**Name of Property:** Harriet Beecher Stowe House  
**City, State:** Hartford, Connecticut  
**Period of Significance:** 1873-1896  
**NHL Criteria:** 2  
**NHL Theme:** II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements  
2. Reform movements  
**Previous Recognition:** 1970 National Register of Historic Places  
**National Historic Context:** XXXI. Social and Humanitarian Movements  
C. Women's Rights

**NHL Significance:**

- The Harriet Beecher Stowe House is nationally significant under NHL Criterion 2 as the longtime home of author Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896). Best known for writing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe rose to fame by championing the downtrodden.
- While Stowe is known to modern audiences for her antislavery work, she was widely recognized in her lifetime as a highly prolific and nationally significant reformer for a variety of causes above and beyond abolition. This nomination recognizes Stowe's more mature career as a reformer on issues relating to the family and women's roles.
- While living here, Stowe became engaged in the national debate over polygamy. Stowe's

deep religious convictions, Victorian notions of female purity and the sacred nature of motherhood shaped her opposition to polygamy. Because these same beliefs shaped her opposition to slavery, understanding Stowe's role in opposing polygamy provides insights into not only her role as a social reformer above and beyond the issue of slavery but also her opposition to slavery.

**Integrity:**

- After Harriet Beecher Stowe's death in 1896, the house was sold outside of the family. Subsequent owners throughout the early twentieth century made various changes to the building.
- In 1965, after acquisition of the property by the current owner, the house underwent a careful, well-documented restoration from 1965 to 1968. The object was to return the building to its 1873-1896 appearance while Stowe was living there.
- This restoration was accomplished using historic photographs taken both inside and outside the house, a careful examination of physical evidence in the house itself and a closely related house in Hartford, and a close reading of published and unpublished sources such as letters and journal entries.
- A formal Historic Structures Report (HSR) prepared in 2001 found few discrepancies between the 1965-1968 restoration and more current evidence uncovered while the HSR was being prepared.

**Owner of Property:** Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, Connecticut

**Acreage of Property:** 0.26 acres

**Origins of Nomination:** The owners approached the National Park Service about the potential for the site to meet the National Historic Landmarks criteria. The owners contracted with a consultant to prepare the nomination.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- Designation as an NHL would recognize a little-known aspect of Harriet Beecher Stowe's lifelong social activism.
- Designation as an NHL would recognize and expand upon Stowe's literary career above and beyond the writing of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the work for which she is most well-known.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known.

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** Designation. Dr. Mills moved, Dr. Murtagh seconded; unanimous approval.



**Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 11/08/12):**

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman, US Senator, Connecticut

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal, US Senator, Connecticut

The Honorable John B. Larson, US Congressman, Connecticut

Stephan Christiansen, Chair, Board of Trustees, Harriett Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, Connecticut

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**