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County Clerk announces Archives Day 2017 M. Claire French Award Winner

The Honorable Gerry Scharfenberger, Ph.D., Middletown Mayor, wins award

MANALAPAN, NJ – Monmouth County Clerk Christine Giordano Hanlon is pleased to announce that The Honorable Gerry Scharfenberger, Ph.D. of Middletown is the winner of the M. Claire French Award for 2017. The award will be presented at Monmouth County Archives and History Day on Saturday, Oct. 14 at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters.

“Gerry Scharfenberger, an Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Monmouth University, exemplifies the important aspects of the M. Claire French Award through his dedication to the maintenance and preservation of various historic sites in Monmouth County,” said Hanlon. “It is my honor to present the award to such a deserving community leader and educator.”

Scharfenberger has been an active member of the Middletown Landmarks Commission since 1996. He has been responsible for the review of alterations and additions to properties within historic districts, as well as assisting with and designating historic districts within Middletown



Dr. Gerry Scharfenberger

Township. Dr. Scharfenberger has volunteered on many archaeological projects in Monmouth County to retrieve historical data before destruction of sites that had no funding for archaeology. He is also the founder and head of the Friends of the Macleod-Rice House, an organization founded to raise funds to save and restore the historic, circa 1893 Macleod-Rice House in Middletown.

As a member of the Township Committee, he crafted an ordinance creating a Historic Preservation committee and helped to create a municipal Historic Preservation Award to recognize and encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings in the Township.

Dr. Scharfenberger has dedicated countless volunteer hours to numerous projects around the county at some of the most important historic sites including the Monmouth Battlefield, Camp Vreedenburgh, Sandy Hook and other sites. He has also undertaken a major project to clean and maintain Middletown's 38 historic cemeteries.

The M. Claire French Award for Leadership in Historic Preservation recognizes outstanding achievements of an elected official, government employee, public servant or civic organization in supporting historic preservation in Monmouth County through education, development, planning, rehabilitation, advocacy, community leadership or other means.

Created in 2015, the award is named after M. Claire French, Hanlon's predecessor, who was County Clerk from 1997 until her retirement on April 1, 2015. During French's 18-year tenure, she oversaw the modernization of the Clerk's Office, including digitizing County records and the electronic reporting of election results, as well as the expansion of the Office's services with the Monmouth County Connection Office in Neptune Township.

The M. Claire French Award Committee members are Clerk Hanlon, former Clerk M. Claire French, Hon. Robert Clifton of Matawan and Hon. Susan Kiley of Hazlet.

For more information on Archives and History Day, visit the Monmouth County Clerk's Office website at www.VisitMonmouth.com/CountyClerk, contact the Monmouth County Archives Division at 732-308-3771 or email CountyClerk@co.monmouth.nj.us.

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