



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Art Commission  
State House  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

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## 2016 Annual Report

*The State House Art Commission acquires, preserves, and interprets the art at the State House; advises and advocates for the preservation of the historic building; and through the collections educates and promotes the ideals of public service.*

On behalf of the members of the Art Commission, I respectfully submit our *Annual Report* for the year ending June 30, 2016. We began this year with a new three-year Strategic Plan and a revised Mission Statement. Both reflect our continuing commitment to preserving and promoting the Commonwealth's art collection and its 200+ year-old capitol. The Art Commission believes that the virtues of public service are well reflected in those who have been honored here. Our challenge is to make the art and artifacts accessible and the restoration of historic spaces responsive to today's needs for upgrading safety, security, energy usage, and efficiency of operations, while maintaining the highest standards of museum care and historic preservation.

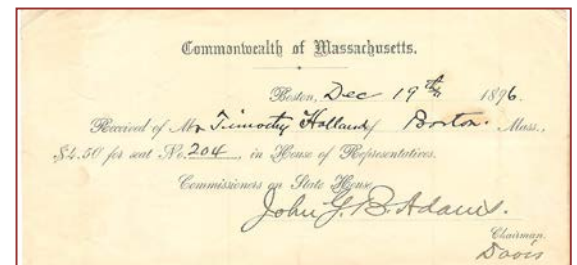
Our new Strategic Plan, 2016-19 (approved Dec. 14, 2015) continues the four goals we set in our previous three-year plan. These include reaffirming the Art Commission's advisory role and the State House Curator's far-ranging responsibilities; educating and inspiring the public and students on the significance of the historic art collection; advocating for historic preservation; and sustaining excellence in collections care and historic site maintenance and preservation. Our Mission Statement underscores our role as stewards of a great historic resource for future generations.

Our legislative mandate (G. L. Ch. 6, Sec. 20, revised in 2014) fortunately depends on the dedication and expertise of Susan Greendyke Lachevre, State House Curator and our one staff person, and the continuing support she receives from the Bureau of the State House (BSH). As a long-time member of the BSH team, she understands the complexity of operations and the skill and efficiency required of the small staff. The Art Commission members acknowledge with gratitude their collaboration and assistance. Such cooperative effort and thanks also extend to the staff of the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) with whom we work on the implementation of large scale renovation projects at the State House.

### Collections

The Curator's time is divided between the ongoing activities of the Commission and those renovation projects initiated by the legislative and executive branches. She also has supplemented and reformatted inventory documents to meet reporting requirements of the State Comptroller, and is currently revising the Art Commission's Internal Control Plan.

1. Governor William Dummer portrait frame. It is a pleasure to acknowledge Robert Bayard Severy, of Weymouth, for another generous donation which has allowed us to replace the frame for the portrait of Governor William Dummer (b. 1677- d. 1761), by Frederic Porter Vinton. The painting, in its original 19<sup>th</sup> century frame, was discovered to have fallen during the night several years ago. While the painting remained unharmed, the cast-plaster frame was shattered in several places. The Commission had hoped to have it repaired, but the damage was so extensive that it was deemed too time consuming and too expensive to pursue. Plans were made to commission a new frame that would incorporate many key elements found on the original including large grained oak, similar cove molding and decorative beading. Ramon Ramirez, Boston Art Framers, created the frame, and hand-rubbed the gilding to resemble the 19<sup>th</sup> century treatment. We are grateful to Mr. Severy's loyal support over the last twenty years for the Art Commission's conservation programs.
2. "Holland Chair." This is part of the suite of furniture from the former House (current Senate) Chamber from 1869 until 1895. Haley, Morse & Boyden, of Boston, manufactured the chair, reportedly from surplus mahogany procured by the Commonwealth during the Civil War. The suite was installed following a large scale renovation of the room in 1869. The arms were fashioned from pre-cut gun butts, and fitted together to form a continuous row of theater-type seating. The right arm of this chair is shaped, however, indicating that it was an aisle seat. Writing surfaces, storage baskets, shelves, and small drawers were supplied at each station to assist representatives, who, at the time, did not have individual offices at the State House. Of note are the interchangeable seats: a "winter" seat with its original burgundy velvet upholstery and a particularly rare and fragile "summer" seat that retains much of its original caning.



Left: House Chamber, 1894, prior to the move to the current chamber. Center: The Holland chair during conservation at Robert Mussey Associates, Boston. Right: Receipt for the purchase of chair no. 204 by Timothy Holland, donated with the chair.

Representative Timothy F. Holland, of Roxbury, was the last occupant of seat 204. When the House moved to new chambers in the Brigham extension in 1895, the legislature passed a Resolve allowing representatives to purchase and take their assigned chairs. Number 204 descended to Holland's grandchildren, George and Marianne Holland, who donated it to the Commonwealth in 2014. The chair was restored this year, courtesy of Speaker Robert De Leo, and will be placed on display outside the House Chamber, along with the "Monitor's Chair" from the same suite of furniture. We are most appreciative to the Hollands for donating this piece of history back to the State House.

3. Governor John Endecott portrait. With conservation of the original, c. 1665 portrait completed last June, the Art Commission has been investigating options for its display; a location near the State House 18<sup>th</sup> century copy portrait appeared to be most appropriate. Since the Grand Staircase area is so heavily trafficked, however, museum-grade, light-filtering plexi-glass has been fitted to the portrait and plans made for its installation outside Great Hall. Endecott's original 17<sup>th</sup> century chair and a text panel describing the history of the painting and the extensive conservation process will be included.

4. Rostrum chairs. At the request of the Speaker, the Art Commission also oversaw the conservation, repair and re-upholstery of the Speaker's chairs from the House rostrum. The architect Charles Brigham commissioned these tall, carved mahogany chairs as part of the suite of furniture designed for the new House Chamber which opened in 1895. Nicks, dings, and other small damages to the carved legs and arms were minimized, the original springs re-tied, and the chairs re-covered in black leather.



5. Exterior Sculpture Maintenance. Daedalus, Inc., of Watertown, conducted annual cleaning and maintenance of all exterior bronze statues and plaques as part of their long-term preservation. Now in its thirtieth year, this crucial program has resulted in stemming the corrosion process that plagues public monuments, protecting them from the triple threat of acid rain, urban pollution, and the effects of the sea air.
6. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston extended its courtesy loan program of fine paintings from its collection to Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito. Working with Executive staff and MFA curators and registrars, the Curator coordinated the return of several former loans and assisted in the selection of replacements from the museum's extensive holdings. These are installed throughout the Executive suite where they are admired and enjoyed by staff and countless visitors every day. On behalf of the administration, the Art Commission thanks the trustees of the Museum for their on-going consideration and generosity.
7. 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Flag. On June 29, past and present members of the Massachusetts National Guard presented Governor Baker with a c. 1957 ceremonial flag honoring the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry regiment. The regiment, which has its origins in the 9<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteers during the Civil War, was active in the Spanish-American War and World Wars I and II, until it was deactivated in 1993. The framed silk flag was installed in the inner stairwell of the Executive Suite, and will be invested in the State House flag collection.

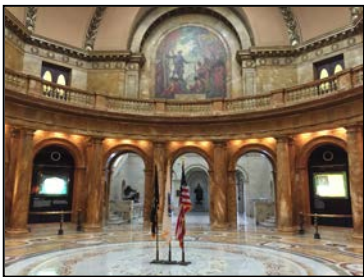
### **Architectural Renovations: Senate Chamber and Lobby Renovation and Restoration**

Board member and preservation architect Chris Hussey attends the weekly meetings with the Curator and team assembled to study needed renovations, accommodations and upgrades required in the Senate Chamber and adjacent lobby. Apart from the overall preservation needs of the largely wood and plaster room, several elements of the project are of particular concern to the Art Commission, including the conservation of art, artifacts, furniture, and lighting. For the impact on abutting stained glass installations, and other larger architectural features, they have recommended expert consultation be

sought. Susan has worked with the architects to protect artworks during exploratory work, and has helped to identify drawings and plans in the State Library that will assist in structural and engineering assessment. Work has progressed to the design development phase and will continue throughout the summer months in preparation for an expected early winter bid.

## Education/Outreach

1. **State House Mobile App.** The Art Commission has been working closely with the office of Legislative Information Services and the State House ADA coordinator over the past year to develop a mobile app that will provide navigation aids and a tour of the capitol and its collections. The Chair and Curator are collaborating on the design and providing photographs and information on ten historic spaces and over fifty works of art throughout the building and grounds. Using the principle of universal access, we are trying to reach the widest possible audience, thus the app will include descriptive content and professionally recorded audio that may be used as an alternative to “voice-over” commands for each entry. This will be the first of its kind for a state capitol, combining accessibility features such as navigation routes for mobility challenges and directions for the visually impaired through geo-locators, along with guided tours of this historic building. It is expected this app will launch in late 2016.

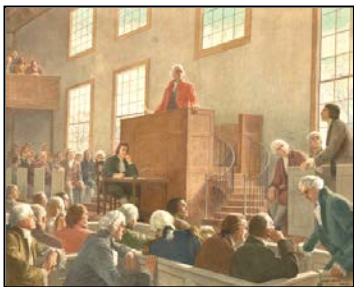


### Memorial Hall

*Veteran's memorial hall designed by Charles Brigham, 1900  
50 feet in diameter*

*Memorial Hall was created to pay tribute to Massachusetts veterans of the Civil War. Deemed the centerpiece of the State House extension, the circular room is jewel-like in its rich decoration and interplay of color. The walls are constructed entirely of yellow Italian Siena marble, and light from a magnificent stained glass window displaying the seals of the original thirteen colonies pours onto an intricate mosaic floor.*

*Sixteen massive pillars support a second story perimeter balcony, and frame four arched doorways and eight semi-circular niches that for many years held the torn and tattered battle flags from this and later conflicts. Reproductions from the State House Flag Collection now appear on the glass-front cases to remind viewers of the extraordinary service and sacrifice of its citizens. Murals illustrating significant events in Massachusetts history adorn the gallery. This hall is reserved for veteran's services and other solemn occasions.*



### John Hancock Proposing the Bill of Rights to the Federal Constitution, 1788

*A strong majority of delegates to the Massachusetts convention on the Federal Constitution initially opposed its ratification for fear of a strong central government and the lack of a bill of rights. To meet this opposition, Governor John Hancock, who was president of the convention, submitted amendments, prepared by Theophilus Parsons, not as conditions of ratification, but as recommendations to be considered by the first congress.*

*This mural shows Hancock addressing delegates from the pulpit of the Meeting House in Long Lane (now Federal Street). Framed by a wall of tall windows which flood the room with light, he looks to the far right where a man has risen to comment. A large crowd sits in pews on the floor and in a second floor gallery to the left, listening intently or conversing quietly about the proceedings.*

*The conciliatory amendments gained the support of John Adams and other prominent delegates, and the constitution was ratified. Some of these early proposals would become the basis of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution.*

2. GAR exhibit, Doric Hall, January – April 2016. We were pleased to work with the Office of the Secretary of State to mark the conclusion of the Sesqui-Centennial observance of the Civil War. The exhibit featured the organization of the Grand Army of the Republic, the association of union veterans of the Civil War and the first veterans' services organization in the country. Developed by Ian Delahanty, post-doctoral researcher and professor of American history, Boston College, with items from the collection of the GAR Memorial, Room 27, this introduced viewers to the scope and wide-reaching impact and influence of the GAR in both caring for and celebrating the survivors of our nation's bloodiest conflict.
3. Summer intern. Meghan Eckelberger, a junior at Bridgewater State College, was assigned to our office from the Governor's summer internship program. She began on May 24, working two days a week (her last day with the Art Commission was August 6), examining objects and confirming previous inventories with a goal to creating comprehensive, cross referenced spreadsheets of the artifact collections in the GAR Memorial Room. We are grateful for her care in handling the collections, and the speed and thoroughness with which she completed this project.
4. Tours and research assistance: Upon request the Curator continues to provide tours for those interested in an in-depth discussion of the history and evolution of the building and the development of the State House art collection. Our office continues to address a never-ending flow of requests for information on the collections, the building, and our policies and procedures for taking care of them, and remains a resource for personnel and the public.

### **Members of the Art Commission**

Since 1910 the volunteer board has been composed of professionals involved in historic preservation and public art. Currently, members are appointed by the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House under *General Laws, chapter 6, section 20*. I am happy to take note at this time of their impressive qualifications.

#### **Dennis Fiori, Concord**

President of the Massachusetts Historical Society since 2006, Dennis Fiori has over thirty-five years' experience at libraries, museums, and cultural organizations. Prior to joining the MHS, he served for eleven years as director and CEO of the Maryland Historical Society, and for twelve years director of the Concord Museum. He was also deputy director for Programs at the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Washington D.C., and deputy director of the Maine Arts Commission. His extensive volunteer service has included roles with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Peabody Essex Museum, American Association for State and Local History, CV Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, Washington College, Chestertown, MD, WYPR, Baltimore affiliate of National Public Radio, and Heritage Preservation.

#### **Christopher Hussey, Brookline**

Chris Hussey, AIA, Emeritus, is a registered architect in Massachusetts with more than fifty years of experience, forty-four as a partner and managing principal in architectural firms. He retired as principal of Cyma 2 Inc. in 2005, but continued in that practice until 2012, working on projects that included over twenty that received either Massachusetts Historic Commission Preservation Grants or Federal Preservation Tax Credits. Active in a number of historic organizations including Pilgrim Hall Museum as



Annual Report of the State House Art Commission, 2016

past president and trustee emeritus, Colonial Society of Massachusetts, and Fellow, Massachusetts Historical Society, he currently sits on the Town of Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals.

**Jacqueline D. Lane, Sandwich**

Principle, the Sagamore Group, specializing in marketing, development and strategic planning for not-for-profits, Jacqueline Lane currently is the director of NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)/ Cape Cod. She has served on boards and steering committees of many Cape-area cultural institutions, including the Thornton-Burgess Society, Heritage Museum and Gardens, Sandwich Glass Museum, Cape Cod Museum of Art, and the YMCA of Cape Cod. She brings additional years of volunteer experience at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Cape Cod Conservatory, and Bourne Society for Historic Preservation.

**Mary Leen, Charlestown**

Mary Leen has been associate director of the MIT Museum since 1994. She has long experience in museums and historical societies, including the New England Historic Genealogical Society and the Bostonian Society. She also spent nine years in university fundraising with a focus on individual and foundation giving. She has served on the boards of the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries, Ellis Neighborhood Association, Gibson House Museum, New England Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, South End Historical Society, and Victorian Society in America/New England Chapter, and as chair of the New England Museum Association's College & University Museums Professional Affinity Group.

**Paula Morse, Boston**

A member since 1984, and Chair since 2004, Paula Morse brings nearly fifty years of experience to the board in the care of collections and as an advocate for the preservation of historic properties. She has worked in the archival and curatorial departments of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Department of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Special Collections at the Mugar Memorial Library, Boston University, and the Hull Lifesaving Museum. She has been a member of the Cohasset Community Preservation Committee, the Cohasset Historic Commission, and the Cohasset Historical Society - as co-president and chair of the Collections Committee, and is a Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

In conclusion, I wish to take notice that if we look like we are carrying out our legislative mandate in the best fashion, it is because Susan Greendyke Lachevre, State House Curator, is so professional in all that she does, not only for the Commonwealth but also in the support she gives to the board. I know I speak for the Commission members in expressing my admiration for her.

Sincerely,

Paula Morse, Chair