



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Art Commission  
State House  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Paula Morse  
Chair

Donna DePrisco  
\*Christopher Hussey  
\*Jacqueline Lane  
Mary Leen  
Dawn Mahoney  
Alison Nolan  
\*Retired

Susan Greendyke Lachevre  
Curator

Mail: State House, Room 1  
Tel: 857-400-5517  
susan.greendyke@mass.gov

FY'21 ANNUAL REPORT

I respectfully submit the *Annual Report* of the State House Art Commission for the year ending June 30, 2021. FY'21 saw the continuation of our dedicated effort to monitor the collections on display and in storage while the State House remained closed to the public because of the pandemic. The Curator worked closely with the Bureau of the State House and the Division of Capital Asset Management on projects to insure protection and preservation of the historic building and its contents, not only during the protracted closure, but also on reopening and well into the future. On behalf of the board, I would like to particularly thank Tammy Kraus, Superintendent of the State House, for her support and encouragement of the Curator, and her staff for their assistance in the maintenance of the collection.

**Collections**

**Lexington Muskets.** In October 2020, the two muskets from the Battle of Lexington, bequeathed to the State House by Rev. Theodore Parker, grandson of Captain John Parker, in 1861, were reinstalled in the Senate Reading Room. The muskets, which hung for nearly ninety years high above the floor of the Senate Chamber, were removed during renovations and proposed for relocation to a more accessible place. The Curator worked with DCAMM planners to design and procure a secure display case from Proto Productions, Addison, IL. Delayed by plant closure during the pandemic, the six-foot long case was delivered after a nearly six-month delay and now shows these artifacts to their best advantage.





**John F. Kennedy Memorial relocation.** As part of the ongoing Water Infiltration Project at the State House, the Curator assisted in the planning for the move in November of the *John F. Kennedy Memorial* statue (installed in 1990), from the west wing plaza to the west lawn. Since 9-11, the statue could be visited only by appointment or on a scheduled tour. Now, reinstalled on a new pad much closer to Beacon Street, the statue will be easily seen by passersby at all times. New landscaping and lighting will be completed later this year.

**Liberty Bell treatment.** The Curator also helped to develop specs for the removal of the replica Liberty Bell from the Bulfinch porch, which is also non-ADA compliant and has been closed to the public since 2001. The bell was hoisted from the portico and safely placed on a truck on Beacon Street which transported it to Daedalus Inc., of Watertown. There, sculpture conservators are treating it and all supporting hardware in preparation for its reinstallation at a different location inside the State House (anticipated mid-2022), where it may be conveniently viewed by all visitors once again.

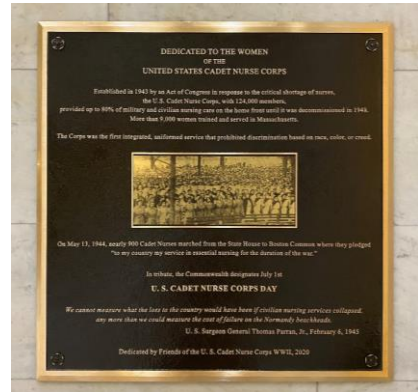


**Sculpture Maintenance.** Daedalus completed year three of its five-year contract to clean and maintain the exterior bronze monuments and plaques. Each year, eight full-size statues and eight plaques are washed of accretions, and their wax coating renewed. In addition, one statue is stripped of its protective acrylic coating, re-patinated and recoated. Repeated attention to these maintenance procedures protects the bronzes, some of which are among the oldest in Boston, from the continuing threat of corrosion from acid rain in their urban/sea-side environment.

**Vault/storage.** The Curator and Chief of the Special Collections Department of the State Library worked with building and security personnel to upgrade equipment and develop maintenance protocol and emergency response procedures for the archival storage areas at the State House. These added safety measures not only protect objects in storage, but also staff who monitor and work in these areas without the benefit of full staffing assistance. Air handling maintenance and testing of the fire protection system continues.

## New Acquisitions and Donations to the Art Commission

**Cadet Nurse Corps plaque.** Authorized under Acts 2020, ch. 105, an etched brass plaque honoring the United States Cadet Nurse Corps was installed in Nurses Hall in November 2020. This became the first tribute in the country to honor the thousands of volunteer nurses who provided nursing care for citizens during World War II, while professional nurses were deployed overseas. A 1944 newspaper image featured in the center of the plaque illustrates the oath taken by 900 nurses on Boston Common. Although the Cadet Nurse Corps Committee was unable to hold an official dedication, news of the installation was distributed via the national committee to former Cadet Nurses across the country.



A number of proposed memorials and related bills that address issues of inclusivity and under-representation at the State House are still in preliminary stages.

**Legislative memorabilia.** The Art Commission received several small pieces of memorabilia relating to the history of the General Court. George and Marianne Holland, donors of House chair #204 from the 1890s-era chamber (current Senate chamber), gave a legislative pin from 1895 that belonged to their grandfather Rep. Timothy F. Holland, first elected to represent Roxbury in 1894.



Robert and Wendy Zalatan donated a silver “Messenger 17” pin and a silk top hat with its original box that belonged to Austin T. Davis, former doorkeeper for the House of Representatives and Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms. First appointed a legislative page on January 1, 1909, the House recognized Davis, a World War I veteran, for fifty years of meritorious service on May 6, 1959 (House 2836).

## Public Outreach

The Curator continued to receive weekly requests for research and images for educational and scholarly use. Most of the art collection-related requests could be addressed from home. Others, such as those concerning the battle flag collection or objects in the GAR Memorial Room, required follow-up from the State House.

Many of the researchers located objects of interest for their projects through the Art Commission's website, with its indices to subjects, artists, battle flags and other State House collections. Shortly, the website will contain information on the collections in the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Room, which also serves as our office. For now, we are pleased to have added *The History and Legacy of the Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts*, a handsome booklet written for the Art Commission by Ian Delahanty, professor of history at Springfield State College. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/the-history-and-legacy-of-the-grand-army-of-the-republic-in-massachusetts-by-ian-delahanty/download>

*Women Subjects, Women Artists in the Massachusetts State House Art Collection* was also added to our website as part of our growing series of shorter publications that include booklets: *Art of the Civil War at the Massachusetts State House*, published for the sesquicentennial, and *Italy under the Golden Dome*, which recognizes the many subjects and artists of Italian descent represented in the collection. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/women-subjects-women-artists-in-the-massachusetts-state-house-art-collection/download>

Furthermore, in recognition of the upcoming celebrations for the Semi-quincentennial anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we plan to produce another small publication on those artworks and artifacts in the collection that pay tribute to Massachusetts patriots and events of or leading up to the War for Independence. It is our hope that we might have these new booklets printed for interested visitors when the building reopens.

### **The Art Commission and the Curator**

The board was kept informed with periodic reports from the Curator and the Chair. There are still two vacancies, to be appointed by the Senate President, on our seven-member commission. This presents an excellent opportunity for the Art Commission to become even more representative of the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's residents.

Finally, I am grateful for the privilege of speaking for the board in commending the Curator for her creativity and good will in dealing with the many challengers of the past year. Her professionalism is exemplary and, as I have said in previous annual reports, the Commonwealth is fortunate that she is so committed and dedicated to the work of the Art Commission.

Paula Morse  
Chair