



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

Governor Charles D. Baker
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
EEA Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
DCR Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DCR SELECTS CURATORS FOR TWO HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN MAUDSLAY STATE PARK

BOSTON – September 22, 2015 - Continuing to foster public-private partnerships that preserve historically significant properties, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) recently selected curators for two of Maudslay State Park's historic properties. Mr. Thomas Wester was selected as the curator for the Coachman's House and Outbuildings, and Mr. Charles Brett and Ms. Charlotte D'Angelo were selected as the curators for the Bell Farmhouse and Barn.

Under DCR's Historic Curatorship Program, curators are selected through an open and competitive process and agree to rehabilitate, manage, and maintain historic properties in exchange for a long-term lease. The program has resulted in very successful partnerships at other locations throughout the state, including:

- The Bradley Palmer Mansion located at Bradley Palmer State Park;
- The Walter Baker Administration Building in Dorchester; and
- Bascom Lodge located at Mt. Greylock State Reservation.

"With state government working together with private organizations to accomplish shared goals, like the protection of properties at Maudslay State Park, the public will benefit for years to come," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "The Baker-Polito Administration continues to encourage and foster such unique opportunities to preserve the past for future generations."

Maudslay State Park was once the elegant 'Maudsleigh', a sprawling 480-acre estate on the south bank of the Merrimack River, developed by the Moseley family at the turn of the century. The park retains much of its integrity from this period, evidenced by its graceful carriage paths, formal gardens, and carefully designed landscape. The Bell House represents the pre-estate agricultural history of the park and is an intact example of a vernacular Italianate farmhouse. The Shingle Style Coachman's House and Outbuildings was the estate's recreational core where the Moseleys boated and enjoyed equestrian activities.

"The Historic Curatorship program fosters a public/private partnership that benefits both the Commonwealth and the curator," **said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez**. "Preservation of the properties ensures the future maintenance of these important historic resources and also provides long-term benefits to park visitors and nearby residents alike."

In winter 2015, DCR solicited proposals for the reuse and lease of the two properties. In 2011, the Coachman's House property lost its stately shingle-style stable to a catastrophic fire. New curator Mr. Thomas Wester has proposed to preserve the remaining four buildings and designed landscape as a single family residence and a rotating program and event space for local non-profits. DCR estimates the preservation and maintenance of this turn-of-the century complex at approximately \$1.5 million, which would allow the curator to receive a 50 year lease. Damaged for years by animals, the elements, and vandalism, the buildings have fallen into great disrepair, and the partnership between DCR and Mr. Wester represents the best chance for the site to be preserved for future generations.

The curators recently selected to rehabilitate and reuse the Bell Farmhouse and Barn, Mr. Charles Brett and Ms. Charlotte D'Angelo, have proposed to utilize it as a single family residence, and will invite school groups and others to tour the house and grounds. The value of the estimated investment to the late 19th-century house is approximately \$450,000, which would provide the curators with a 20 year lease for their rehabilitation and maintenance of the property.

Established in 1994, the Historic Curatorship Program matches some of the Commonwealth's unused but historically significant buildings with parties interested in rehabilitating and maintaining the property in exchange of a long-term lease. To date, 19 properties have been rehabilitated or are currently under rehabilitation through the program, with more than \$16 million in private funds leveraged toward the long-term preservation of these important resources. For more information regarding the Historic Curatorship Program, please visit the program's [website](#) or call 617-626-1361.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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