



**William Francis Galvin**  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff  
Telephone: 617-727-9180

June 1, 2016

**SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2016 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD TO  
GLOUCESTER CITY HALL**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of Gloucester City Hall to receive a 2016 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

Secretary Galvin presented the award at a recent ceremony in the Massachusetts Archives Building, Dorchester. Gloucester City Hall is one of 12 projects, individuals, and organizations to be honored.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is proud to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of this year’s awardees,” said Secretary Galvin. “The projects the Commission is recognizing this year are particularly diverse and represent the many creative ways that significant historic resources are being preserved across the Commonwealth. Completion of this complex restoration project has saved a prominent part of Gloucester’s historic downtown.”

Constructed in 1870, Gloucester City Hall’s siting overlooking the harbor makes it a dominant feature of the city’s skyline. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the grand, brick structure shows characteristics of the Second Empire and Italianate styles and boasts a 148-foot tower. The prominent Boston architectural firm of Gridley J. F. Bryant and Louis P. Rogers designed the building, which, since its construction, has served continuously as the city’s center of government, housing administrative offices and a second-floor auditorium.

-more-

The building also houses a number of the community's treasures, including civic archival records dating to 1642, Works Progress Administration (WPA) murals, and a hand-lettered artwork listing the names of all Gloucester fishermen lost at sea.

The recently completed rehabilitation and restoration of Gloucester City Hall is the result of a ten-year effort, begun when former Mayor John Bell and the City Council established the City Hall Restoration Commission. The initial focus was on the building's roof and tower.

However, during the planning phase, the team discovered two seriously deteriorated roof trusses, forcing the city to vacate the building for a year while repairs were made, funded in part by an emergency Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant from MHC. After the completion of truss and roof repairs, further building assessment uncovered potentially dangerous deterioration in the visibly leaning tower. Emergency shoring repairs, followed by a new steel support system, stabilized the tower, and replacement of the copper roofing and flashing stopped water infiltration.

Multiple layers of paint were stripped from all wood siding, trim, and ornamental tower elements, which were repaired or replaced as needed. Historic paint analysis informed exterior repainting in a buff color to match the building's Nova Scotia sandstone trim. The clockworks and bell were restored. Shortly after the city adopted the Community Preservation Act, Phase II continued restoration of the tower, the building's four corner-mounted ventilator structures, and its cornice. Windows were restored and returned to the original paint scheme of black sash and sandstone-colored frames and moldings. Accessibility was improved.

WPA murals by Charles Allan Winter and other local artists, which depict Gloucester's origins, its renowned fishing industry, and themes of the arts and education, were all cleaned and restored.

-more-



*L to R: Steve Dexter, Janis Bell, Maggie Rosa, Secretary William F. Galvin, Mary Rhinelanders  
McCarl, Sandy Ronan, Steve Pardee*

**-End-**