



**William Francis Galvin**  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Debra O'Malley  
Telephone: 617-727-9180

November 1, 2017

**SECRETARY GALVIN PRESENTS 2017 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD  
TO THE ANDREWS CHAPEL IN SWAMPSCOTT**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, announces the selection of the Andrews Chapel in Swampscott, to receive a 2017 Massachusetts Historical Commission Historic Preservation Award.

“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. The Andrews Chapel restoration has revitalized a treasured local landmark and allowed it to be actively used by the entire community.”

The Andrews Chapel is a nondenominational chapel located in Swampscott Cemetery, a 65-acre rural-plan cemetery with picturesque hillsides, a network of winding roads and paths, and mature trees. The cemetery was one of the town’s first priorities after its 1852 incorporation, and it remains the community’s only burial place. The chapel was built in 1923 as a memorial to Isaac Andrews, a selectman and town assessor during the early 1880s. The Andrews family donated the funds for the construction and had architect Charles Burgess design the chapel.

Built in the Gothic Revival style, the granite chapel is composed of a nave with a centrally located entry tower on its façade. The square tower dominates the façade and rises high above the nave. It has an open porch at its base, marked by pointed arches and corner buttresses, and rises through a belfry to a crenellated parapet and pyramidal roof. The interior is

-More-

distinguished by an exposed-truss rafter system and stuccoed walls ornamented by a decorative stencil pattern. Diamond-paned, amber-tinted windows illuminate the interior, which is furnished with wooden pews and an elevated central altar. The chapel, which dominates the surrounding area as the only built structure in the cemetery, was used historically primarily for funeral purposes.

Despite the fact that the Andrews Chapel was recognized as an important landmark in the cemetery and within the town, it had seen neglect, and time and the elements had taken a toll on the structure. By 2008, the chapel had fallen into a state of disrepair, with holes in the roof, water infiltration, missing windows, and significant sections of the lower walls and baseboards also missing. Action was taken in 2009 with the appointing of the Andrews Chapel Restoration Committee to oversee the restoration process.

The first priority of the committee was to make the structure watertight. Using town funding, work began repairing and replacing stones on the walls and tower and repairing holes in the slate roof. After the careful restoration of the exterior, the next step was an extensive interior restoration, but there was no longer any public funding available. Thinking creatively, the committee came up with a grassroots fundraising program to reach their goals. The committee partnered with the Essex County Community Foundation to collect donations online; numerous local businesses provided in-kind donations; and the naming rights to the pews, presider chairs, lectern, and windows were auctioned off.

The efforts of the community allowed for a full restoration of the interior, highlighted by the restoration of the pews, front doors, and all ten of the diamond-paned, stained-glass windows. Other work on the interior included repairs and replacement of interior walls and flooring damaged by water infiltration and pests, restoration of the distinctive stencil work, heating and electrical upgrades, and restoration of the original lighting. The front entry was also rebuilt with new granite steps and accessibility ramps matching the original Rockport quarry stone steps. The restoration and accessibility upgrades allow the whole community to enjoy this building's return to its former glory. The project demonstrates the impact a group of dedicated volunteers can have in the preservation of historic buildings.

This is the 39th year of MHC's Preservation Awards program. Projects are considered annually for awards in the categories of Rehabilitation and Restoration, Adaptive Reuse, Education and Outreach, Archaeology, Stewardship, and Landscape Preservation. Individuals are considered in the categories of Individual Lifetime Achievement and Local Preservationist. Secretary Galvin serves as the chair of the 17-member Massachusetts Historical Commission.

-More-

Secretary Galvin will present the awards at an afternoon ceremony on November 2, 2017, at the Massachusetts Archives Building at 220 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. The Andrews Chapel in Swampscott is one of 11 projects to be honored.

-End-