

The Capitol Preservation Committee is an independent Commonwealth Committee established by the General Assembly. It was created in 1982 for the purpose of coordinating and overseeing programs to restore, preserve, and maintain the Pennsylvania State Capitol and its historic contents for future use.



A Brief History of the Lieutenant, Governor's Suite



Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee
Room 630 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Phone: 717-783-6484

Fax: 717-772-0742

Web: <http://cpc.state.pa.us>



A Brief History of the
Lieutenant,
Governor's
Suite



© 2006, Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee
Publication by: Ruthann Hubbert-Kemper, Richard E. Saiers,
and Amanda J. DeLorenzo.

Capitol Preservation Committee Members

Paul I. Clymer, *Representative*
CHAIRMAN

John R. Bowie, *Governor's Appointee*
VICE CHAIRMAN

Thomas B. Darr, *Supreme Court Appointee*
SECRETARY

David G. Argall, *House of Representatives*
TREASURER

Louis J. Appell, Jr., *Governor's Appointee*

Gibson E. Armstrong, *Senator*

Fred Belardi, *Representative*

James P. Creedon, *Secretary Department of General Services*

Barbara Franco, *Executive Director, Historical and Museum Commission*

Beatrice Garvan, *Governor's Appointee*

Michael A. O'Pake, *Senator*

P. Michael Sturla, *Representative*

Patricia H. Vance, *Senator*

John N. Wozniak, *Senator*

Ruthann Hubbert-Kemper, *Executive Director*

About the Capitol Preservation Committee

The Capitol Preservation Committee was created in 1982 by the General Assembly with the mission of directing programs to conserve, preserve, and restore the Pennsylvania State Capitol and its historic contents, maintaining it for future generations. In addition, a preservation trust fund was established to receive and utilize monies derived through contributions from private citizens, corporations, and foundations. Proceeds help with procuring historic artifacts and maintaining existing collections of artistic works that are significant to the Pennsylvania Capitol Building.





1893 Chicago World's Fair. The architectural styles represented here influenced the design of the Pennsylvania State Capitol.



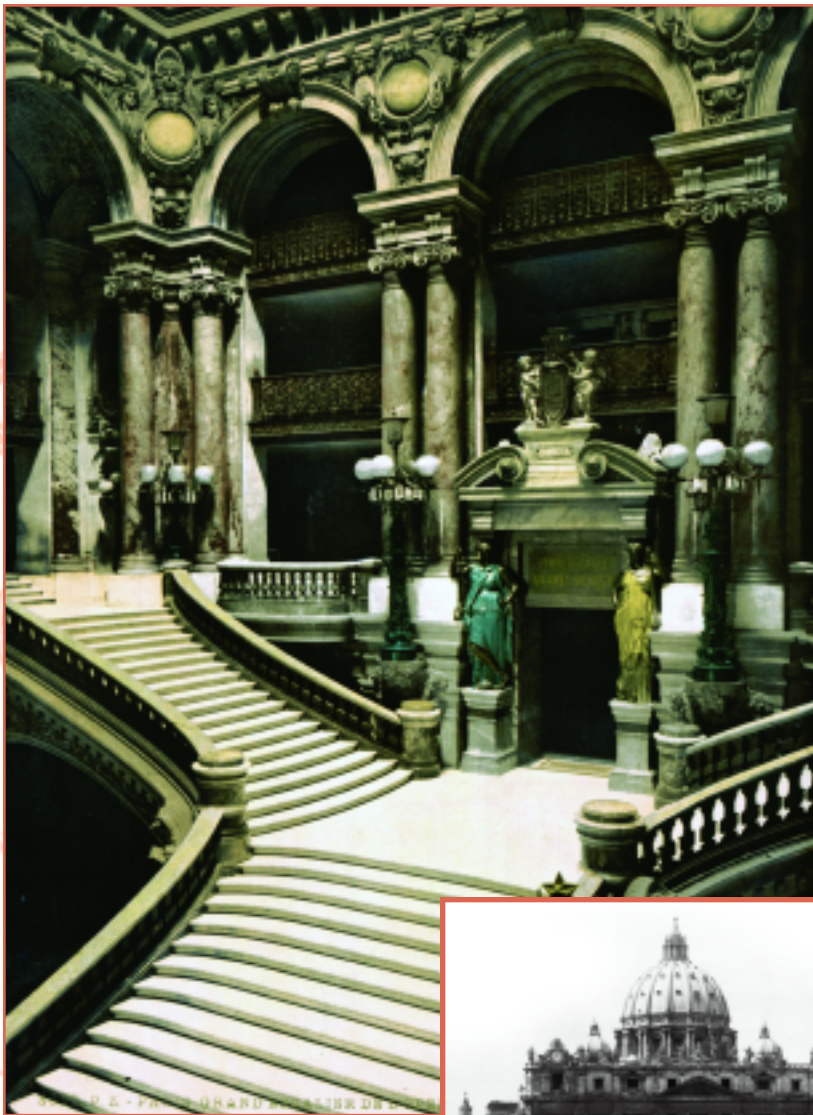
Rendering of the State Capitol Building by Architect Joseph M. Huston.

History of the Capitol Design

The onset of the twentieth-century was infused with a sense of vigor and modernity that previous centuries had not seen. America was transforming itself into an industrialized nation, and Pennsylvania was a giant of industry. State legislators recognized the need to create a **STATE CAPITOL BUILDING** that would appropriately represent the Commonwealth. The legislature issued a design competition calling for a new capitol that would incorporate the existing structure along with the additions of a dome, a granite exterior, and an interior similar to the recently finished **LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**.

Many of the prerequisites for the design were inspired by the architectural forms seen at the **1893 CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR**, where all aspects of America were on display. Dubbed the “White City,” thousands of exhibits were housed in fourteen main buildings designed in the **BEAUX-ARTS** style that organized the fair into a shining, utopian city. The buildings recalled many classical structures found in Europe, transplanted onto the shores of Lake Michigan.

The fair had such an impact on the nation's identity that it would become the new aesthetic statement for many large-scale architectural projects throughout the nation. The Capitol at Harrisburg is one such example of this influence.



Grand staircase of Paris Opera House by Charles Garnier.



St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.



The Capitol design competition in 1901 produced many entries, but one in particular caught the attention of the executive committee. A young Philadelphia architect named **JOSEPH HUSTON** submitted a design proposal that fulfilled the aesthetic desires of his public client and established him as an accredited practitioner of the **AMERICAN RENAISSANCE STYLE**.

Huston was unwavering in his ambition to design a building that was a complete synthesis of art and architecture, and yet could fulfill the needs of the state government. Huston's design for the Capitol was influenced by many architectural forms. The greatest influence was from the **ITALIAN RENAISSANCE** and the designs of **ANDREA PALLADIO** (1508–80) and **ST. PETER'S BASILICA** (1503) in Rome. Major architectural influences were **GARNIER'S PARIS OPERA HOUSE** (1862), and English manor houses.

Upholding the spirit of the Italian Renaissance, Huston commissioned several painters, sculptors, and craftsmen to capture the rich history of both the Commonwealth and America in the architectural details of the Capitol building.



Architect Joseph M. Huston, ca. 1906.

The Lieutenant Governor's Suite Design History

THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S SUITE occupies rooms 200, 202, and 203 on the western side of the second floor of the Main Capitol. It consists of a private office, a reception room, and staff office. The staff office was designed in 1906 as a **LADIES' LOUNGE** and was in later decades used as part of this suite. Huston designed the Lieutenant Governor's suite in the **ENGLISH RENAISSANCE STYLE**. Entering through the reception room, an entrance to the Lieutenant Governor's private office is to the right, and an entrance to the staff offices is to the left. A highly grained green marble from Connemara, Ireland was used for the fireplace in the room that was also used for the wainscot in the Senate Chamber. A mahogany over-mantle contains a beveled glass mirror that is supported by gilded carved brackets and a pediment in which is centered the Seal of the State of Pennsylvania. It is richly carved and overlaid in gold leaf.

Furniture for this reception room contained a custom designed table with matching chairs padded with tooled leather. The large ornate table



View of Lieutenant Governor's reception room, circa 1906.



View of the Lieutenant Governor's private office shortly after completion in 1906.

serves a useful purpose in a nearby conference room, however, several of the chairs from the original set still are used in the room.

A mahogany-paneled wainscot rises three-quarters the height of the wall. The remaining portion of the wall was originally to be covered in leather murals created by **HENRY BUSSE**, an artist who specialized in tooled leather, a craft he learned at the Hamburg Industrial Art School, Hamburg, Germany prior to his immigration to Philadelphia. One of Busse's leather masterpieces that survives was created for Capitol architect Joseph Huston's home "Oaks Cloister," in Philadelphia.

The ceiling is divided into three oblong coffers framed with dental and egg and dart decorative molding. The entire ceiling was covered in aluminum leaf and glazed with a tinted shellac to resemble burnished antique gold.



Red Numidian fireplace in the Lieutenant Governor's private office.

The adjoining room to the north is the **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S PRIVATE OFFICE** (room 200). It was an even more elaborate composition than the reception room. Its coffered ceiling is divided into three sections, as in the reception room; however, it is more elaborately embellished with layers of decorative molding in bas-relief within each coffer.

The main architectural feature of the private office is a fireplace with a rose red **NUMIDIAN NORTH AFRICAN MARBLE** surround and mantel.

Above the mantel, rising to the height of the ceiling, is a Palladian-inspired over-mantel made of mahogany, containing a custom-designed clock with a dial of the Pennsylvania Coat of Arms in polished brass manufactured by the E. Howard Clock Company of Boston, Massachusetts. A beveled glass door showcases the pendulum and weights. As in the reception room, mahogany wainscot rises to three-quarters the height of the wall. The remaining portion of the wall was originally covered with canvas and painted with a decorative glazed finish. This area now contains portraits of previous Lieutenant Governors, an alteration circa 1928. The Lieutenant Governor's office furniture was custom designed exclusively for the room and included an ornate mahogany desk and leather covered

club chairs and sofa, all designed in the Renaissance-Revival style.

Room 203 serves today as a staff office to the Lieutenant Governor's suite. In 1906 when the Capitol was completed, there were only two rooms in the Capitol designed specifically for women. Huston appears to have paid special attention to this room. The style he chose was decidedly less Beaux-Arts in style than the rest of the building. Drawing inspiration from the sophisticated **LOUIS QUINZE STYLE** of French interior decoration (1723–74), the room was very feminine.



The Ladies' Lounge, one of only two rooms in the Capitol designed for women, ca. 1906.



Detail of Venus and Two Loves, by Donald MacGregor.

Architectural ornament in the room consists of paneled walls flanked by pilasters enhanced with delicate, golden floral carvings. Huston had specified paintings by **MARY CASSATT** for the room, which never came to fruition due to financial reasons. However, Cassatt made the paintings and sold them privately, one of which is now owned by the Westmoreland Museum of Art. Huston specified **GOBELIN TYPE TAPESTRIES** for the panel inserts. No documentation exists that provides information on what type of wall fabric was employed; however, several decades later the panels were covered with inexpensive masonite and a coat of paint.



Mary Cassatt's painting for the Ladies' Lounge.

Decorative plaster molding surrounding the doors depicts garlands of fruit bound with ribbons. A moulded cartouche is embellished with gold leaf in the room's four corners where Ionic capitals hold an entablature. The walls were painted green and dotted with gold leaf, enhancing the decorative surfaces. The fireplace surround and mantel are of white Italian marble. Rising only one-third the height of the wall, it is carved with sinuous, curving lines and elaborate scrolls.

The main decorative feature of the room is the ceiling. A circular mural measuring 14-feet in diameter, entitled **VENUS AND TWO LOVES**, was painted by Philadelphia artist **DONALD MACGREGOR**. It portrays the goddess Venus with two cherubs in a field of blue and white clouds. The entire mural is framed by elaborate painted arabesques, ornamental molding encrusted with floral swags, fleur-de-lis, and rosettes covered in gold leaf.

These decorative motifs were depicted throughout the room to include the furniture, carpet, and drapery. In keeping with the Louis Quinze style, the furniture was decorated with carved roses. Settees, chairs, and a folding screen were upholstered with embroidered **FLORA AND FAUNA IMAGERY**. The furniture in the room was arranged for ease of conversation in an intimate setting. An area rug, made in Berlin, Germany containing a scrolled floral design was centered over the finished oak herringbone patterned floor boards.



Detail of painted arabesque surrounding the ceiling mural.

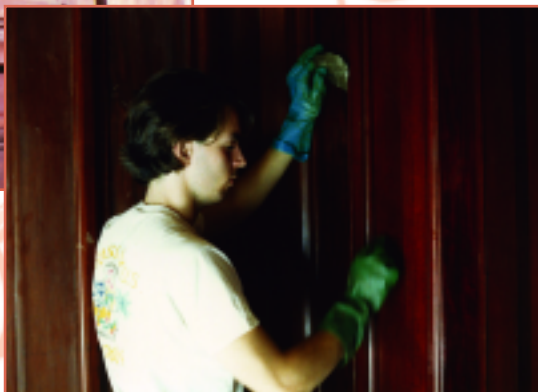
Restoration of the Lieutenant Governor's Suite

In 1988 the Capitol Preservation Committee's **CONSERVATORS BEGAN THE RESTORATION** of the Lieutenant Governor's suite. Over the years the rooms had endured water infiltration, which damaged the woodwork, decorative finishes, and mural.

The reception room still maintained its original function, but all the architectural and decorative elements and lighting fixtures of the room were in need of restoration. One issue that presented itself early on in the restoration involved the **REFINISHING OF THE MAHOGANY WAINSCOTING** in rooms 200 and 201. Certain areas had endured so much dehydration and light exposure that the



Mahogany woodwork door entablature and corbel undergoing restoration.



Conservator refinishing woodwork.



The reception room after restoration.

original red stain had been bleached and the wood was cracked in places with severe crazing of the varnished finish. The original finish was additionally compromised by the unfortunate use of a multitude of inappropriate cleaning and polishing products. After a variety of delicate sanding and finishing techniques were employed, the conservation team devised a **SUPERFICIAL TREATMENT** for the woodwork that would rehydrate and protect the wood. This treatment was temporary, due to the brief period allocated for restoration regarding the office usage needs of the Lieutenant Governor. In 2000 a comprehensive wood restoration project was implemented and all the mahogany finishes were completed.

In the reception room, conservators found only fragments of the elaborate 1906 **TOOLED LEATHER** originally installed above the wainscot. During the 1960s the leather was removed and replaced with masonite paneling. The conservation team substituted

LINCRUSTA, an embossed composition wall covering similar in scale and texture to the leather, to replace it. It was pasted to the wall and aluminum leaf was applied, followed by polycromed colors and glazing to match the leather scrap pieces discovered during the removal of the masonite. With this new material, conservators were able to provide a similar appearance of the walls' original leather.

The coffered ceiling had seen a series of non-historic finishes to both the cornice molding and the panels. **SAMPLE ANALYSIS** revealed that the original surface was also covered with aluminum leaf that was coated with a gold tinted shellac glaze. Conservators replicated the finishes to regain the 1906 appearance.



Ceiling after application of aluminum leaf while awaiting glaze.



A conservator polishes the Connemara marble fireplace surround.



Light sconce in Lieutenant Governor's office.

The Irish Connemara green **MARBLE FIREPLACE** surround was cleaned and polished, and the brass andirons were cleaned and relacquered. Carpet and draperies were fabricated from designs documented to the suite's period. Original furniture was also found, restored, and placed in the room. The mahogany **OVER-MANTEL** had received repeated coatings of varnish and stain mixtures that left the wood dark and discolored. The wood was restored and the over-painted carvings were also treated to remove all non-historic finishes and gold leafed.

A later phase of restoration for the private office room 200 included the removal of the **HISTORIC PORTRAITS OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS**. The portraits were created at various periods and by different artists. Little documentation was located on the reverse sides when the paintings



Conservator begins cleaning chandelier in suite.

were removed for conservation. Each oil on canvas painting is stretched on wood and inserted into a customized wall support. Twenty-two portrait spaces are available making it improbable to hang new paintings without removing the oldest portraits. As a result, as each new painting is hung, the historic painting is removed and re-hung in a conference room located beside the Senate Chamber.

Paint analysis was conducted on all the room's architectural plaster elements and all decorative canvas surfaces to determine the original finish. The use of **HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS** provided



*Lieutenant Governor Walter Lyon,
in office 1895–1899.*



*Lieutenant Governor Daniel B.
Strickler, in office 1947–1951.
Portrait by Harry S. Moskowitz.*



The Lieutenant Governor's private office after completion of restoration.

additional documentation to aid in the restoration of the suite. The coffered ceiling was restored to its original color scheme of warm sienna reds with amber tones followed by a glazed finish on all the decorative plaster elements.

The red Numidian **MARBLE FIREPLACE** and mahogany over-mantel were also conservation cleaned and polished. Custom designed chairs and a matching sofa originally documented to the suite that had decades ago been removed from the Capitol's inventory were found in a downtown private office building in Harrisburg. When found, they were restored and replaced in the room. The historic desk was located at the State Farm Show building and was restored and placed back in the room. **DRAPERIES** for the suite were fabricated to replicate the period using documentation from photographs and written descriptions of the drapes used in the Capitol in 1906. Photographs taken when the Capitol was initially completed were used to replicate the Wilton woven carpet in the room.

The final phase of restoration took place in the staff office, historically known as the **LADIES' LOUNGE**. A condition assessment revealed



Paint is carefully removed to reveal foliate mural surround.

Rebuilding the Lieutenant Governor's Suite



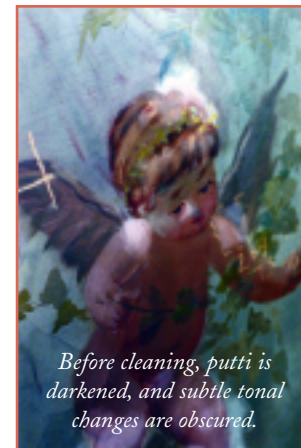
Conservators apply bronze powder to architectural elements using an airbrush.



Cornice molding enhanced with the application of gold leaf.



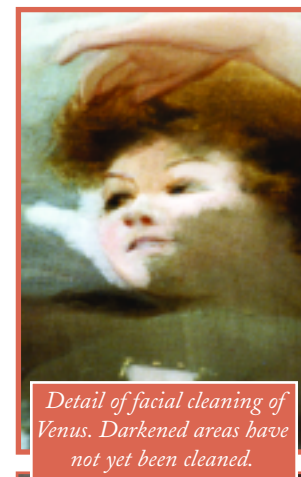
Rotten canvas has been removed and replaced. A conservator carefully in-paints the new section to match the rest of the mural.



Before cleaning, putti is darkened, and subtle tonal changes are obscured.

many of the architectural elements were in need of conservation and much of the ornamentation had been damaged due to **MOISTURE INFILTRATION**. The ceiling mural was covered in dirt and suffered from water damage. The **TROMPE L'OEIL** foliate design surrounding the mural had been obliterated by several coats of multicolored paint. The paint layers were carefully removed and the design was recreated. The architrave's decorative moldings were severely deteriorated due to decades of water damage from deteriorated cast iron drain lines that had since been replaced.

Conservators began by conducting paint analysis and removing the over-paint on the walls and ceiling in isolated areas. During this process a discovery was made revealing that the historic wall finish had been a rich green color with a gold leaf emulsion that was air brushed over the



Detail of facial cleaning of Venus. Darkened areas have not yet been cleaned.



After cleaning, Venus has lightened considerably, highlighted by soft hues and delicate brushwork.



Conservator applies a historically-accurate green paint to wall surfaces and architectural elements.



A pilaster is primed and historic paint is added.



Plaster elements decayed due to moisture infiltration.



Conservators assess conditions of architectural elements.

surface. The conservation team matched the original color and repainted using a decorator's sprayer at a reduced pressure. Decorative molding around the doors and ceiling was primed and gold leafed.

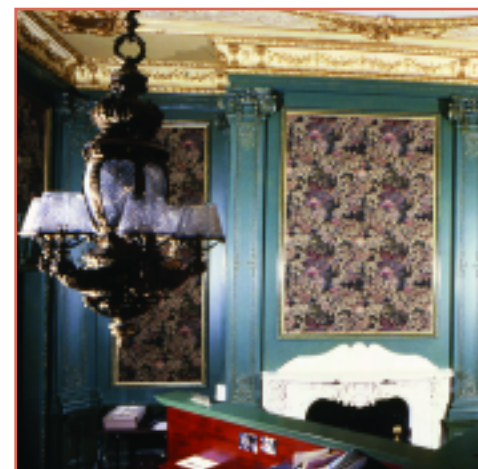
The ceiling mural, *VENUS AND TWO LOVES*, was the most complicated restoration in the room. Rotten canvas had to be removed where severe water damage occurred and replaced with new canvas using the same size, weight, and threads-per-inch. The entire painting was cleaned using various emulsion cleaners and surface soil removal agents. In-painting and retouching was necessary and a special **CONSERVATION VARNISH** was applied to the surface as a protectant.

Architect Joseph Huston had specified tapestries in the style of Gobelin to be inset in the wall panels. When the more recent masonite was removed from these areas only wooden lathe remained. Any fabric that may have been installed was long gone. A curatorial decision was made to place a recreated Gobelin tapestry material that matched the historic paint scheme in the panel inserts to compliment the room's appearance.

Since the room historically contained a Berlin area rug, the **HERRING-BONE OAK** patterned wood floor was restored and a new Karastan rug was placed on the floor. The conservation team designed a custom desk unit that was



Artisan recreates pattern of mural surround.



Tapestry installation complete.

finished to match the walls, to accommodate the operational functions of the Lieutenant Governor's staff. The Lieutenant Governor's suite is now fully compatible with modern conveniences while preserving the grandeur and artistry of the past.



Final restoration of room is complete.