



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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**SOLDIERS & SAILORS MEMORIAL BUILDING, WEST NEWBURY, APPROVED FOR
NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building in West Newbury for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at its March meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Soldiers & Sailors Building in the National Register will help to preserve an architecturally unique building that has served West Newbury as a gathering place and educational resource for more than 100 years.”

The Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building, 363 Main Street, is located in a low-density residential neighborhood, surrounded by large, 18th- and 19th-century houses on spacious lots. The building is an important example of Gothic Revival-style architecture in the town, and is also architecturally significant as the first known design by prominent architect Henry Watson Gore, Jr. The 1 ½-story, brick meeting hall has a distinctive, two-story, octagonal tower, and its windows feature dramatic, pointed, lancet-arch tops. The library was constructed in 1900, funded by a bequest made by shoemaker Moses Warren Edwards for a memorial hall to the town’s soldiers and sailors, and administered by Civil War veteran Dr. Orin Warren.

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The building eventually became a gathering place for the town's military veterans as the official home for West Newbury's Charles L. Carr American Legion Post from 1923 to 2015, serving veterans of every United States war since the Civil War. The building has also served educational purposes since its construction. Built to the specifications of a public library, for two decades the Soldiers & Sailors building served as a museum and meeting place for the West Newbury Natural History Club, and subsequently housed the West Newbury Public Library from 1927 to 1939.

Today, the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building retains many of its original interior finishes, including beaded wood wainscoting, open-beamed ceilings with wood-paneled coffers, and carved door and window casings. The building's most distinctive spaces, the two octagonal tower rooms with ornate fireplace mantels, are currently endangered by the failure of the tower's roof. In 2015, the town agreed to assume ownership of the building from the American Legion. The town intends to stabilize the structure, and to seek ways to preserve the building and extend its usefulness into the future.

The Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building is one of six historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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