



# PORTLAND MAINE

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## NEWS RELEASE

City of Portland

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Portland Portraits Get Much Needed TLC

*City announces partnership to have historic paintings restored*

**PORTLAND, Maine** – Today, the City of Portland announced a partnership with the Maine Project for Fine Art Conservation (Project MEAC) to have more than a dozen city-owned portraits and paintings on canvas restored (photos attached). Project MEAC, a local non-profit operates a conservation laboratory in downtown Portland, providing services to individuals, businesses, collecting institutions and government entities. Over the course of the next few years, Project MEAC will work with local colleges, universities and Portland High Schools' students conserving the paintings including portraits of Portland Mayors George Wescott (1873-1874), Charles Libby (1882) and Fredericke Boothby as well as Cyrus H.K. Curtis, donor of the Kotzschmar Organ and Maine politician William Pitt Fessenden. The restoration and conservation costs will be funded by local sponsorships and donations coordinated by Project MEAC with no cost to the city. Upon completion the restored artwork will be displayed on the walls of City Hall along with a presentation illustrating the conservation process.

“These paintings are valuable pieces of the city’s history, several surviving not one but two fires at City Hall,” stated City of Portland Mayor Brennan. “The restoration project is not only a great opportunity for the city to reclaim a piece of its history, but a chance for Portland students learn about the field of art conservation.”

One of the portraits identified for restoration is that of William Pitt Fessenden and was located in storage in the City Hall attic. Fessenden served in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate before becoming the Secretary of the Treasury under President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. Fessenden was a leading antislavery member of the Whig (later the Republican) party and prior to his political career in Washington DC practiced law in Portland.

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