



CASS GILBERT SOCIETY

Organized to preserve the work of Minnesota's most important architect.

ETHAN ANTHONY TO SPEAK ON RALPH ADAMS CRAM AND CASS GILBERT, SEPTEMBER 15, 2008

Join the Cass Gilbert Society when architect **Ethan Anthony, AIA**, speaks about **Ralph Adams Cram and Cass Gilbert** on September 15, 2008, at 7 P.M. at the House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Avenue at Avon (east of Victoria), Saint Paul. Admission is free to members; there is a \$5 charge for nonmembers of the Cass Gilbert Society. A reception in the Kirk Parlor will follow the lecture. Parking is available in the lot at Summit and Grotto or Portland and Avon.

Ralph Adams Cram, a contemporary of Cass Gilbert, was esteemed for his American Gothic architecture. While much of his work was built along the East Coast of the United States, Cram worked throughout the United States. The House of Hope Presbyterian Church, completed in 1914, is a major work by the firm of Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson in Minnesota. The congregation is commissioning a new architecturally compatible building to be added to its existing complex. Anthony will talk about the workmanship and detail inherent in Gothic churches as well as explain the imagination and Christian spirit which are displayed in the process of their design.

Ethan Anthony, who holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of

Oregon, merged his architectural firm with the firm of Hoyle Doran and Berry (successor firm to Cram and Ferguson) in 1991. In 1997, Mr. Anthony changed the name to HDB/Cram and Ferguson to reflect the origins and traditions that he was reasserting in the practice. Mr. Anthony and the firm concentrate on the planning and design of new traditionally styled religious and academic buildings and restoration of historically significant buildings. Mr. Anthony has written a history of the work of the founder of the firm, *The Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram and His Office*, published by W.W. Norton in 2006. Copies will be available for sale and signing at the reception.



House of Hope Presbyterian Church
Photograph by Marjorie Pearson

SAVE THE DATE

September 28, 2008 Fall Tour (see story inside)

November 11, 2008 Annual meeting and lecture by Katherine Solomonson, Ph.D.,
College of Design, University of Minnesota (details in next *Newsletter*)

LIVING WITH CASS GILBERT: FALL TOUR, SEPTEMBER 28, 2008
THREE ARCHITECTS DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Visit three Cass Gilbert-designed houses in Saint Paul on September 28 between 2 and 5 P.M. Architects Gar Hargens, **548 Portland Avenue**, and Nicholas Marcucci, **552 Portland Avenue**, live in Portland Terrace, at the corner of Kent Street, a Gilbert commission from 1888. The row was built for attorney Leidum Sharpe, who lived with his family at 548 Portland, one of the end houses, and rented out the other four units. The house at 552 Portland is in the middle of the row. Architect Peter O'Brien, **505 Summit Avenue**, corner of Mackubin Street, owns the George W. Freeman House (1896), built for the president of the Gotzian Shoe Manufacturing Company. The impressive façade is of Minnesota limestone with Indiana limestone details. O'Brien has been restoring the house to Gilbert's original design, room by room, since 1990. The three architects will lead tours of their houses, beginning every half hour. Each tour will be limited to 20 participants at a time. Tour participants will move from house to house and can visit the houses in any order. Refreshments will be served on the porch at 505 Summit Avenue. The garden of the property on Summit Avenue west of the Freeman House will also be open for visitors. The cost is \$20 for Cass Gilbert Society members and \$25 for nonmembers. Tickets will be available at each of the houses.



548 Portland Avenue
Photograph by Marjorie Pearson



552 Portland Avenue
Photograph by Marjorie Pearson



Freeman House
at 505 Summit Avenue
Minnesota Historical Society Collections

CAROLYN KOMPELIEN RETIRES AS MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL SITE MANAGER



Carolyn Kompelien
Photograph by Marjorie Pearson

Carolyn Kompelien retired on June 1, 2008, after twenty-eight years on the staff of the Minnesota Historical Society at the Minnesota State Capitol. She was site manager for twenty years, overseeing several phases of the Capitol's ongoing preservation program.

The Minnesota State Capitol is unique among the state historic sites that are under the preservation jurisdiction of the Minnesota Historical Society, serving as both the seat of the state government and a museum of

architecture and art that performs an important educational function.

Kompelien has a background in education. When she came to the Capitol, it was to further the Society's education programs there. A few years into her tenure, Governor Rudy Perpich launched a major restoration program. The restoration of the Senate Chamber was begun a few months after she was appointed site manager. In addition to Charles Nelson, Historical Architect in the State Historic Preservation Office, she worked closely with Robert Hershkovitz and Thomas O'Sullivan on conservation issues. Restoration of the House Chamber was begun two years later. In contrast, to the Senate which delegated its authority, the House formed a committee and voted on every decision.

Kompelien noted that the role of the Minnesota Historical Society changed and was enlarged during the ongoing restoration process. The Society was a partner with the State Department of Administration from the beginning, rather than being brought in at the end to weigh in on decisions that had already been made. This was particularly apparent when the quadrangle was

restored under the direction of Hershkovitz in 1994-1995. Another major achievement was the restoration of the long-neglected Rathskeller in the Capitol basement.

Another important responsibility has been oversight of the expanded educational program, which is under the direct supervision of the assistant site manager. The wide-ranging program offers general and specialized tours, as well as a host of special programs and training for teachers and students.

Although Kompelien has stepped down from her position, she is acutely aware of the ongoing needs for

preservation and restoration of the glorious Cass Gilbert building, while meeting the challenges of upgrading infrastructure and fulfilling the space needs of the tenants in the twenty-first century. Everyone agrees that the Capitol, the people's house, needs to be a working building, but balancing competing interests will not be an easy task.

Kompelien has been spending time in her garden since June 1 and enjoying a Minnesota summer. She has not yet made a decision on what comes next, but we know that she will be following the news from the Capitol with keen interest.

A NEW CASS GILBERT LANDMARK

On July 15, 2008, the **R. C. Williams Company Warehouse**, 259 Tenth Avenue, New York, received landmark status from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission as part of the newly designated West Chelsea Historic District. This ten-story reinforced concrete warehouse was built for a wholesale grocery company and completed in 1928. Stylistically it has similarities to the U.S. Army Terminal and the

Austin, Nichols and Company Warehouse, both in Brooklyn. The location was chosen in part in anticipation of the elevated and electrified freight line, known as the High Line (opened 1933), that would serve warehouses along the west side of Manhattan.

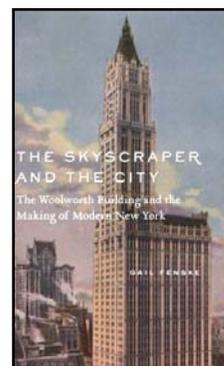
R. C. Williams Company Warehouse
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission



PUBLICATION NEWS

Gail Fenske's much anticipated book on the **Woolworth Building** was published on August 1, 2008, by the University of Chicago Press. *The Skyscraper and the City: The Woolworth Building and the Making of Modern New York* expands and refines the content and analysis of Fenske's Ph.D. dissertation.

Patty Dean's article on **Cass Gilbert's Montana Club**, available online in the Drumlummon Views, has been printed in a handsomely illustrated offprint available for \$6.50 through the Drumlummon Institute, <http://www.drumlummon.org/html/Unique-Handsome.html>.



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Our Mission

To preserve our cultural heritage through advancing scholarship in and appreciation of Cass Gilbert's influence on American architecture.

The Cass Gilbert Society, Inc., is a non-profit tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Membership is recorded by calendar year, from January through December. Your membership expiration date is noted on your Newsletter mailing label. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2008 or want to join the Society, please use the enclosed form to do so or print out the form from the website, www.cassgilbertsociety.org.

IN THE NEWS

The Theater de la Jeune Lune, located at 105 North First Street in the Minneapolis Warehouse District, announced that it would be closing at the end of June and selling its Cass Gilbert-designed warehouse building to satisfy its debts. The theater, which has owned the building since 1992, was widely praised for its innovative re-use of this historic building. Because it is within a locally designated historic district and a National Register historic district, any work proposed for the building will be subject to review by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.