



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

Dr. David Lanegran to Speak at Spring Lecture

Dr. David Lanegran will be the speaker for our lecture on April 30, 2002. The title of his presentation is "Historic St. Paul in the Days of Cass Gilbert." He will draw parallels between Gilbert's projects and what St. Paul was like in general during that time. Although Gilbert did not design it, he oversaw the construction of Landmark Center which was built between 1892 and 1902. Dr. Lanegran will have slides of Landmark and will tell us about its history. He will also discuss examples of architecture used during those years in St. Paul.

Dr. Lanegran is the John S. Holl Professor of Geography and Dean of the Social Science Division and Department Chair at Macalester College, St. Paul, MN. He has received numerous academic honors and awards and was named one of ten outstanding College teachers of Geography by *Educational Change Magazine*. He has also received the Award for Excellence from the Minnesota Society of the American Institute of Architects.

Please join us for what is certain to be a very interesting evening. ■



David Lanegran, April Lecture Speaker

The lecture will be held at the University Club of St. Paul, at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, April 30, 2002. The Minnesota Humanities Commission sponsors the 2002 Lecture Series. Admission is free to members of the Cass Gilbert Society. There is a nominal charge for nonmembers. ■

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Mark Your Calendars

Please put these dates on your calendar so that you will be able to join us. The lectures begin at 7:00 PM and are held at the University Club of St. Paul, unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, April 30, 2002 - Lecture: David A. Lanegran, Ph.D.

Sunday, May 12, 2002 - Architectural Stroll, Minnetonka, 3 p.m.

Fall Lectures - To be announced

Message from the President

By Jean Velleu

I have had the pleasure of attending two presentations related to architecture within the last few weeks. I enjoyed them both, though they were very different

The first was a humorous and insightful talk by Charles Locks at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore in Calhoun Plaza. The new book *Cass Gilbert Life & Works*, edited by Barbara Christen and Stephen Flanders was for sale at the bookstore and the purpose of Charlie's talk was to increase the sale of books. Charlie, along with Tom Blanck is featured in the book since they researched and wrote the segment about Gilbert's residential architecture in St. Paul. What they wrote was presented by Tom Blanck at the Custom House in New York City in 1998 when papers were submitted by numerous scholars and historians about Cass Gilbert's work. Presenters discussed Gilbert projects from Brainerd to Helena, MT, to Texas back to Oberlin College and on to New York and Washington, D.C. The Minnesota Capitol was highly praised by many. One scholar came all the way from England, so you can see that our two home town researchers were in prestigious company. You may want to buy a copy of this new book which gives an overview of Gilbert's work. (Available from the CGS for \$40.00)

Charlie's talk began with a description of how he and Tom met at the St. Clair Broiler. Charlie a recent Macalester graduate in need of a job, was working behind the counter. He learned to classify his customers in three categories. They seemed to be about news, weather or sports. However, when Tom Blanck came in he did not fit into any of these categories, thus arousing Charlie's curiosity and from that meeting their scholarly pursuit began. Each foray they took meant stopping at every antique shop along the way in search of Cass Gilbert relics and others. Years of collaboration, learning and working together gave them both a keen interest in all things Cass Gilbert. Like detectives, they uncovered fascinating information examining all the work from Cass Gilbert's St. Paul office. It culminated in the writing for the New York Symposium and with the material now in the hands of the University of Minnesota press which they and we hope will soon be a catalogue featuring all residential homes designed by Cass Gilbert in St. Paul.

The second presentation was a dialogue between University of Minnesota architecture dean Thomas Fisher and architect Steven Holl, New York, who designed the dramatic addition to the university's Architecture Building, opening this spring. Holl was named architect of the year by *Time Magazine* in 2001. *Time* called his work "... More than beautiful. It's illuminating."

Tom Fisher asked Holl to describe how he creates visionary architecture in an age of developers and bottom liners.

Although Holl had some illuminating ideas he had no hard and fast answers.

- His aim for a building: "That the feeling is more intense from

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Call For Papers

The 37th Northern Great Plains History Conference

October 9 - 12, 2002

Holiday Inn Metrodome, Minneapolis, MN

Hosted by Augsburg College, Minneapolis

Proposals for papers or sessions in any area of history or history-related subjects are welcome.

The organizers for this year's NGPHC welcome sessions sponsored by as diverse a group of historians as possible. Papers and sessions based on innovative research methodologies and incorporating novel theoretical perspectives or utilizing inter-disciplinary approaches are particularly welcome. Because of the conference location topics related to urban history, labor history, historic preservation, transportation history, immigration and assimilation, and sports history are especially encouraged. Other topics are certainly welcome.

In keeping with NGPHC tradition of encouraging student participation, several sessions featuring the work of graduate students will be offered, and a number of sessions will be reserved for outstanding undergraduate papers. Instructors who are leading honors or departmental seminars in the 2001-2002 academic year are invited to encourage their most promising students to submit proposals for these sessions. Students are, however, also free to submit paper and panel proposals which would follow the more traditional conference format.

All paper and panel proposals must be submitted by April 5, 2002. Send one page abstract and a short *curriculum vitae* by mail or e-mail to:

Chris Kimball, Academic Vice President
Augsburg College 2211 Riverside Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55454
Conference voicemail: 612-330-1056
ngph@augsborg.edu.

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the interior than the exterior ... since we're in buildings 95% of the time."

- There is value in creating places that endure. "Architecture is like a piece of music that keeps playing, playing and playing."
- Architecture is about experience, not form. It's "... the body moving in space. It's texture, materials, detail. These are part of a universal language (that transcends cultures)."
- The city is the most important human artifact, and it can coexist with the landscape, which is the most important natural artifact."
- When teaching architecture: "It's important to foster inspiration but also to teach about light, shape and proportions. "These are hidden things, like the harmony of the human body. They need to be taught."
- Holl enjoys not having an identifiable style: With each new project "this is a fresh moment, a fresh site, a fresh way into it. That's what keeps it exciting." ☐

4th Annual Cass Gilbert Society Architectural Stroll

Mother's Day, May 12, 2002 — 3:00 PM



St. Martin's by the Lake Episcopal Church, Minnetonka Beach, MN, will be the meeting point for the 4th Annual Cass Gilbert Stroll. The church is located about 30 minutes west of Minneapolis:

Interstate 94 to 394 to Highway 15 (just passed Wayzata)

Follow Highway 15 to Lafayette Bay—2801 Westwood Road

Following our visit to the church, we will take a short walk to the Bedell Residence, 3022 Shoreline Drive. After touring these early Gilbert projects (1887), we are invited to coffee at the home of Julie Belle White Newman and John Newman, a short distance from the church.

Please join us for an afternoon of Cass Gilbert architecture and history.

Register today for the walking tour. Complete the form, attach your check and mail to the address below. For additional information contact: Mary Michael Connolly, 612-377-7927.

The cost of this event is \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers; make your check payable to the Cass Gilbert Society Inc. Pre-registration is encouraged.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone:(_____) _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Mail to: The Cass Gilbert Society, Inc., 550 Portland Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

New York Trip Update

October 17- 20, 2002



Save these dates now on your calendar so you can join us for our trip to New York. We will establish a group rate at a central hotel. Participants, however, will be required to make their own hotel and airline reservations. Please call 651-298-1127 for more information.

Tentative list of Cass Gilbert sites to be visited with New York City guides:

U. S. Custom House
Woolworth Building
90 West Building at Ground Zero

New York Life Building
Federal Courts Building
Army Terminal, Brooklyn

Estimated cost of trip per person: \$1,100.

Yes, I/we want to travel to tour Cass Gilbert sites in NYC October 17, 18, 19, 20.

I/we will make my own flight arrangements.

I/we will be staying with friends in NYC.

I/we would welcome participating in a group rate at a centrally located hotel.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone:(_____) _____

Mail to: The Cass Gilbert Society, Inc., 550 Portland Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Special Sites Provide *Lagniappes* for Lecture-goers

The Cass Gilbert Society lectures have, since their inception three years ago, been presented at only two sites, both in St. Paul, in the heart of the area where Gilbert launched his now-celebrated architectural career.

Attendees at the lectures often remark that they feel like they are getting a "bonus" in having the chance to visit two buildings, each of which, in its own right, has interesting architectural features or histories (though not designed by Gilbert).

The majority of the lectures have been (and will continue to be) at the University Club (420 Summit Avenue), across from Summit Lookout Park, where the New York Life eagle is to be installed later this year. Other lectures have been presented at The Commodore (79 Western Avenue), one-time residential hotel, now operated as a condominium establishment. The Commodore still has its famous bar, an elegant little room noted for its authentic and well-preserved moderne design and furnishings.

John Rupp, a corporate member of the Cass Gilbert Society has made these landmark sites available for the lectures, at no cost to the Society. ■

Of Note

Correction

Appointments to Governor's State Capitol 2005 Commission

Some changes have come to our attention since we printed the list of the appointments to the Governor's State Capitol 2005 Commission in the last issue of the newsletter. Here is the corrected list of members to the Commission, we regret the confusion.

Commission Members:

Joanne Benson	Dr. Anita Pampusch
Diane Berthel	Peter Rodosovich
Cay Shea Hellervik	Bill Sands (Chair)
Hubert "Skip" Humphrey III	David Fisher (<i>Ex officio</i>)
John Labosky	Representative Ted Winter
George Latimer	Representative Jim Knoblach
Rick Nelson	Senator Len Price
	Senator Cal Larson

Cass Gilbert As Planner

On February 5, 2002, Dr. Barbara Christen spoke at the Commodore Hotel to the Cass Gilbert Society on Gilbert's work as a planner and his designs for the Minnesota State Capitol approaches and the University of Minnesota campus.

According to Dr. Christen, Gilbert regarded himself as much a planner as an architect and his work on the two Minnesota projects revealed his interest in master plans. A number of experiences in the late nineteenth century helped catalyze Gilbert's interest. He had been introduced to large-scale planning at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893. While at the firm of McKim, Mead & White, he had been exposed to the urbanism of its designs for the Rhode Island State House in Providence that envisioned a grand boulevard linking the state house and the railroad station. In 1900 Gilbert was invited by Glenn Brown, the Secretary of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), to submit a plan for Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the AIA convention and the centennial celebration of the establishment of the capital city. Gilbert drew inspiration from the original L'Enfant plan, devising a series of grand boulevards to link the White House and the Capitol. In Christen's view, Gilbert's plan embodied his talent to create a grand unified design while incorporating disparate existing elements. Many of his ideas were subsequently adopted for the McMillan Plan of Washington.

The original Minnesota Capitol guidelines only called for a Boulevard and driveway in front of the building. At the impetus of the Women's Civic League, the Minnesota Capitol Commissioners asked Gilbert to develop a plan for a park-like mall connecting the old and new capitols. In 1903, Gilbert produced a widely published "ideal plan" for the capitol approaches that called for an approach to the south leading to a Soldiers' Memorial; an approach to the west leading to the Cathedral and Summit Avenue; an approach to the northwest leading towards Como Park; as well as the approach to the east that would connect to the old state capitol. Realizing that there were concerns about cost, Gilbert urged that the design be carried out in stages. Despite initial positive response, the lack of political and financial support left the project moribund by 1905.

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Membership Renewal Time!

Annual Memberships Expired December 31, 2001

If you haven't done it yet, it is time to renew your membership for 2002. Our membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st of each year. How can you tell if you have renewed or not? It's easy. *If there is a blue dot on your mailing label, you have not renewed and this will be your LAST newsletter.* Make the newsletter editor happy and renew today so that you continue to receive our quarterly newsletter.

Please use the form below to renew, and mail it ASAP to the address on the form so that your name remains on our mailing list. You will notice that not only can you renew using this form, but you can also become a new member, make an additional tax deductible contribution, or give a gift membership. Remember: members attend our lectures for free.

If you have membership call 651-298-1127.

Membership Renewal Form—2002



- I would like to become a **new member** of the Cass Gilbert Society *
- I would like to **renew** my membership
- I would like to make a **tax deductible contribution** of \$ _____
- I am a member but would like a **gift membership** for a friend, listed below

Enclosed is my check for _____ \$25 / Household or _____ \$50.00 / Business made out to Cass Gilbert Society, Inc.

Member's Name _____	Gift Recipient _____
Address _____	Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (_____) _____	Telephone (_____) _____

* CGS is a non-profit tax exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Send Check and form to: Cass Gilbert Society, Inc., 550 Portland Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102



CASS GILBERT SOCIETY, INC.

550 Portland Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-298-1127

Our Mission

To preserve and enhance the nation's cultural heritage through advancing scholarship 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 and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Board Members

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- Marjorie Pearson, *Vice President*
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- Donald Woods

Jean Velleu

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Between 1907 and 1910, at the behest of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota, Gilbert developed a series of campus plans. These portrayed the ideal of a campus acropolis that envisioned architecture as an inspiration to the students and as a transmitter of educational values. From the first, Gilbert's plan had a core of open space somewhat like that at the University of Virginia with an anchor building similar to the Low Library at Columbia University. When the Board called for an architectural competition for the campus plan in 1908, Gilbert had advance notice of the requirements. He submitted a bird's-eye view and a plan that further developed his 1907 scheme with links to the railroad on the northeast and parks and terraces down to the river on the south. He tried to devise various options to link his new campus with the nineteenth century campus off University Avenue. Gilbert finally took an idea from landscape architect Warren Manning that shifted the major buildings north of Washington Avenue, covered over the railroad tracks, and made an auditorium, flanked by a museum and a library, the focal point. The area south of Washington Avenue was to remain open with a vista down to the river. The scheme was never realized because of money, politics, and timing. Ultimately the Board of Regents did not understand and did not want to pay for large-scale planning.

Despite the failure of his master plans in Minnesota, Gilbert was able to apply the lessons that he had learned to campus plans at the University of Texas in Austin and at Oberlin College, Ohio, while the handsome renderings of the various schemes proved inspirational to many of his fellow architects and planners. ■

- Marjorie Pearson