



Mary Beth Betts to Speak at Fall Lecture

Dr. Mary Beth Betts, Director of Research at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, will speak at the upcoming Cass Gilbert Society lecture. Dr. Betts's talk, "Cass Gilbert's Architectural Aesthetics 1890-1934," will focus on the role of drawings in the Cass Gilbert office and how drawing shaped Gilbert's aesthetics during the course of his career.

Dr. Betts was architectural curator at the New-York Historical Society where she played a major role in cataloging, curating, and conserving the Cass Gilbert collection of drawings, blueprints, photographs, and correspondence. In her current position, she has been involved in the ongoing preservation of major Cass Gilbert buildings in New York City. She has been a contributor to two recent publications on Cass Gilbert: *Cass Gilbert, Life and Work: Architect of the Public Domain* (W. W. Norton and Co., 2001), a collection of essays based on the



symposium "Cass Gilbert, Life and Work: From Regional to National Architect," held in New York City, November 1998, and *Inventing the Skyline: The Architecture of Cass Gilbert* (Columbia University Press, 2000), published in conjunction with a major exhibition of Gilbert's work at the New York Historical Society. □

The lecture will be held at the University Club of St. Paul, at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, September 24, 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. The Club is located at 420 Summit Avenue.

Tuesday, September 24, 2002 - Lecture: Mary Beth Betts

October 16-20, 2002 - CGS New York Trip

Tuesday, November 12, 2002 - Lecture: Carol Highsmith

Message from the President

By Jean Velleu

Our activities were quieter during these summer months. In fact, the CG Board did not meet in July, but interesting things were happening behind the scenes which I want to tell you about.

The newly appointed Commission for Celebration 2005 has been meeting and brain-storming ambitious and wonderful ideas to honor Cass Gilbert and our beautiful Capitol in 2005. To their credit they have talked about including all Minnesotans in the 100th Birthday Party. They hope to have the activities last a whole year and lead up to the one big bash at the Capitol. One inventive person suggested we have all young people draw straws to see who would win the opportunity to release an eagle from the Capitol steps! That's just one of the many good ideas. You will be hearing a lot more, so stay tuned. We are fortunate to have such a beautiful Capitol and have Cass Gilbert to thank for insisting every detail be right. I have appointed a Committee to determine what the Cass Gilbert Society will do for the big event. If you have any ideas, call me at 651-298-1127.

A call and visit came from Richard Carlson representing St. Clement's church. He presented the Cass Gilbert Society with four prints of St. Clement's in a sepia tone suitable for framing. These were copies of original sketches done recently by an architect in their congregation and have incredible detail in both interior and exterior renditions. These have also been reduced to note card size and may be available for sale at our lectures. However, the real prize was a copy of a large original drawing which appears to be by Cass Gilbert's own hand. It is not signed and more research is needed but the early concept drawing had those familiar water color touches we all have seen on Cass Gilbert's work. This drawing will be presented to the Minnesota Historical Society for proper restoration and care. The church will maintain a copy. Richard hopes our history sleuths are able to confirm the artist as Cass Gilbert.

In early August a young woman named Ann Marie Alexander called from New York City. Ann Marie is the marketing person for a newly designated historic building at 130 West 30th Street (between 6th and 7th Avenue) in Manhattan. You guessed it! The building was designated a Cass Gilbert, so the new owner, who is converting the highly freized building from commercial to living spaces, wants to use Cass Gilbert Tower or Cass Gilbert Plaza for the name of the building. The 100,000 square foot space will be converted to 45 units and each new resident will be given a membership in the Cass Gilbert Society when they move in. When I told Ann Marie some of us were coming to New York in October she invited us to tour the new spaces. So we have

CASS GILBERT IN THE NEWS

The *Star-Tribune* reported on July 5, 2002, that Paul Clifford Larson discovered Gilbert had designed a short-lived baseball park with his partner James Knox Taylor. Built in 1888, it stood for a year or two at State and Eaton Streets on the West Side, before it succumbed to construction flaws and seasonal flooding.

The *New York Times* reported on August 24, 2002, that the New York City Opera, which is considering relocating from Lincoln Center to lower Manhattan, has been looking at the site of the Cass Gilbert-designed office building at 90 West Street. Heavily damaged during the World Trade Center attacks and still sheathed in a protective covering, the building is estimated to require \$50 million to \$100 million to restore. Apparently City Opera would construct a new facility on the site. Because the building is a New York City Landmark, any demolition proposal will require a series of public hearings and extensive review. ☐

MEMBER NEWS

Three members of the Cass Gilbert Society were recipients of Saint Paul Heritage Preservation awards on May 14, 2002. Jean Velleu, our president, received an award as a "volunteer individual who has made an excellent contribution to heritage preservation in Saint Paul." Ray and Sheila Meyer received an award for the restoration of their Queen Anne-style residence on Portland Avenue. ☐

(continued)

another site to add to our list of Cass Gilbert buildings in New York City.

We have an enthusiastic delegation going to New York City to tour Cass Gilbert sites. If you are still waiting to sign up and have any questions about the trip please call me. We will be guided around by expert professionals in NYC who will determine which sites will be most accessible and beneficial for us to see on Thursday and Friday, October 17th and 18th. See details about the trip in this newsletter or refer to the special folder mailed to our members recently. The deadline to sign up is October 4, 2002.

In spite of budget problems that everyone faced this year, the Minnesota Humanities Commission again funded the Cass Gilbert Society with continued support for our lecture series. Our first speaker to be funded will be Mary Beth Betts who watched over Cass Gilbert drawings at the New York Historical Society before moving to the Landmarks Preservation Commission. We are honored to have her take time from her busy schedule to come to St. Paul. I hope you will come to hear her speak on September 24 at the University Club. ☐

We are going to New York City!! October 16 -- 20, 2002

Yes, after all the months of planning and talking about it, we are going to New York this fall to visit Cass Gilbert's buildings and learn more about his work in New York. We hope you can join us.

Here is the plan:

1. Everyone is responsible for getting to New York — you need to make your own plane reservation.
2. You need to make your own hotel reservation. The headquarters hotel for the Cass Gilbert Society tour will be the **New Yorker Hotel**, 481 Eighth Avenue at 34th Street. If you want to join us at the New Yorker Hotel call: 800-764-4680: www.nyhotel.com. Identify yourself as a Cass Gilbert Society Member when making your reservation.
3. Our schedule:

October 16 — arrive in NYC (evening)
 October 17 — tour — 9 a.m. meeting in lobby—New Yorker Hotel
 October 18 — tour — 9 a.m. meeting in lobby—New Yorker Hotel
 October 19 — to be scheduled/or on your own
 October 20 — on your own/return home

NOTE: We will meet each morning in the lobby of the New Yorker Hotel at 9:00 a.m. to begin our tour. Below is a list of potential sites. Our tour guides will make the final selections based on timing and availability. We will stop for lunch along the way.

- **United States Custom House at Bowling Green**
(Now: *George Gustav Heye Center of the National Museum of the American Indian*)
 - **90 West Street Building**
(*Across from WTC Site*)
 - **Gilbert's Foley Square Court House**
(*Second Judicial Court of the United States*)
 - **New York County Lawyers Association Building**
(*Versey St. across from St. Paul's Church*)
 - **Auditorim for the American Academy of Arts and Letters on Audubon Terrace**
 - **Brooklyn US Army Supply Base**
 - **New York Historical Society**
 - **Broadway Chambers Building**
 - **Woolworth Building**
 - **New Cass Gilbert Designation by Landmark Preservation in NYC**
(*130 West 30th Street, between 6th and 7th*)
4. Notify Jean Velleu (651-298-1127) by October 4th if you will be joining us; or call if you have questions.

See you in New York!

CASS GILBERT SOCIETY, INC.

550 Portland Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102



Our Mission

To preserve and enhance the nation's cultural heritage through advancing scholarship and appreciation of Cass Gilbert's influence on American architecture.

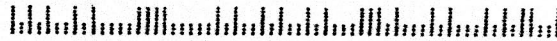
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Membership News

- By becoming a Cass Gilbert Society member you will receive our quarterly newsletter as well as any special mailings, and you will also enjoy free admission to our lecture series. Please use the form below and mail your check today.
- CGS membership extends from January-December. The fees are: \$25.00 per year/household, \$50.00 per year/business. If you have membership questions please call Sheila Meyer (651) 222-4364.

Membership Form



Yes, I would like to become a member of the Cass Gilbert Society.*

I would like to renew my membership; I would like to gift CHS this amount \$ _____

I am a member but would like a gift membership for a friend, listed below

Enclosed is my check for \$25/Household or \$50/Business made out to Cass Gilbert Society, Inc.

Member's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Name of friend for whom a gift membership is made _____

Address _____

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Send check and form to: Cass Gilbert Society, 550 Portland Avenue. St. Paul, MN 55102