



CASS GILBERT SOCIETY

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

150th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION FOR CASS GILBERT

The Cass Gilbert Society will host a celebration to honor this nationally recognized architect whose buildings are an important part of Minnesota history.

The **150th birthday celebration** will be held on **Saturday, November 21, 2009**, and feature a free tour of the **Minnesota State Capitol**. Guides from the Minnesota State Historical Society will focus on the Cass Gilbert story and the architectural details of the capitol. The free tours, which begin at 2pm, require reservations by calling 651-296-2881. A LEGO™ model of the capitol will be on display to delight visitors young and old.

An exhibit highlighting buildings designed by Cass Gilbert over 50 years will be on display in the North Corridor of the capitol building and will continue to be available for public view for two weeks following the celebration.

Festivities will include a birthday cake that will be served in the capitol's Rathskeller at 3:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

The celebration will continue on **Sunday, November 22, 2009**, with a **champagne reception** at the Gilbert Building, 413 Wacouta

Street, St. Paul, Minnesota, between 4 and 6 p.m. Welcoming remarks and a birthday toast will be made at 4:30 p.m. Tours will be given of the building at 5 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. This event, which is also free, is being sponsored by Charlie Neimeyer, Edina Realty, and the McCullough Companies.

For more information contact Cindy Stephani at 612-719-8419.

You're Invited



Cass Gilbert 1859-1934
150th Birthday Celebration

Saturday, November 21, 2009

Birthday Celebration
@
The Minnesota State Capitol

Tours at 2:00 p.m.

By the Minnesota Historical Society
Reservations required Call 651-296-2881
Sponsored by The Cass Gilbert Society

"150 Years of Cass Gilbert"
Exhibit in the North Corridor
November 21 - December 5

LEGO Model of the Capitol also on exhibit.
Birthday Cake in the Rathskeller at 3:30 p.m.
Served by the Great Grandchildren of Cass Gilbert:
Helen Post Curry and Chuck Post

Celebrate

The 150th Birthday of Cass Gilbert

Sunday, November 22, 2009

Champagne Reception
The Gilbert Building
413 Wacouta St., St. Paul, MN

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Birthday Toast at 4:30 p.m.
Tours of the Gilbert Building
at 5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Sponsored by
Charlie Neimeyer, Edina Realty

The Homes of Cass Gilbert by Marjorie Pearson

The homes in which architects chose to live, especially if they have designed them for themselves, are a subject of interest and fascination. The homes of Cass Gilbert are no exception.

Gilbert's first independent work was the house commissioned by his mother, Elizabeth Gilbert, and built in 1882-1883 at 471 Ashland Avenue. Gilbert lived in the house with his mother until he married Julia Finch in 1887. He rented the property out after his mother's death in 1897 and sold it several years later.

Following their marriage, Cass and Julia moved into one of the corner units of the Albion Hotel at 165 North Western Avenue at Selby Avenue. In an effort to save money, they simply had the apartment painted white, an effect in keeping with the contemporary Aesthetic Movement in interior design. They then moved to 550 Portland Avenue, part of Portland Terrace, a row of five houses designed by Gilbert in 1888.

In 1890, Gilbert built his "modest" house at 1 Heather Place, then called Floral Street. Gilbert's Shingle-style design has been greatly altered. A tuck-under garage has been added, the shingles have been removed and replaced with stucco and half timbering, and some windows have been replaced. Others are the original leaded glass. The brownstone-faced first story, unusual in St. Paul, looks to East Coast precedents. Gilbert and his family lived on Heather Place until they moved to New York City in 1900 after Gilbert gained the commission for the U.S. Custom House.



Elizabeth Gilbert House (top left) *Photo: Marjorie Pearson*



Albion Hotel (top right) *Photo: Minnesota Historical Society*

550 Portland Avenue (bottom left) *Photo: Jean Vellen*

1 Heather Place before remodeling (bottom right)
Photo: Minnesota Historical Society



Once in New York City, the family lived in several locations in Manhattan, none of them of Gilbert's design. Finally in 1925, Cass and Julia acquired an 1895 rowhouse at 1 East 94th Street, in the Carnegie Hill neighborhood. Gilbert redesigned the house, giving it a new, more fashionable, yet restrained limestone facade set at the property line with a ground-floor entrance. He raised the side and rear walls to add a studio to the building. The current garage opening was added in 1954.

Meanwhile, in 1907, Cass and Julia acquired the eighteenth-century Cannonball House in Ridgefield, Connecticut, to be used as a country retreat. Gilbert improved the house over the years and added a handsome garden house in 1915.



1 East 94th Street, New York City (upper left)
Before Gilbert remodeled it, the house looked like
the house to its right. *Photo: Marjorie Pearson*

Cannonball House, Ridgefield, Conn. (upper right)
Photo: Ellen Fridinger



The Garden House at the Cannonball House,
Ridgefield, Conn. (lower left) *Photo: Marjorie Pearson*

CASS GILBERT SOCIETY, INC.
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Place
Stamp
Here

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

Membership is recorded by calendar year, from January through December. Your membership expiration date is noted on your Newsletter mailing label. It is not too early to renew your membership for 2010 or to join the Society for the first time. Please call 651-644-8836 for more information, or print out the form from the website, www.cassgilbertsociety.org. Renewal notices will be sent out before the end of the year.

Do you know that **2009** is the Sesquicentennial of Cass Gilbert's birth? The Cass Gilbert Society is celebrating Gilbert's birthday on November 21 and 22. **November 24** is the actual day.