



# CASS GILBERT SOCIETY

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

---

## **CASS GILBERT SOCIETY TOUR TO OWATONNA AND FARIBAULT, October 17, 2015**

Members and friends of the Cass Gilbert Society are invited to join a day-long tour of Owatonna and Faribault, Minnesota, to view works by Louis Sullivan, Cass Gilbert, and Clarence Johnston. The widely acclaimed National Farmers' Bank in Owatonna, built in 1907-1908, was the first of Sullivan's so-called "jewel-box" banks, built over a period of several years in the Midwest with the design assistance of George G. Elmslie. Commissioned by Carl Bennett, the bank president, the bank, now a branch of Wells Fargo, has been the pride of Owatonna since its opening. We will tour the bank and its immediate surroundings in downtown Owatonna with commentary from Marjorie Pearson, Ph.D., past president of the Cass Gilbert Society, and a representative of the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce.

The tour will then proceed to Faribault, home of Shattuck-St. Mary's School, which boasts a 1910 armory building designed by Cass Gilbert and several buildings and the signature Whitney Memorial entrance arch designed by Clarence Johnston in the 1920s. Tom Blanck and Marjorie Pearson will provide architectural commentary. Following the Shattuck visit we will be having lunch at The Depot Bar and Grill in Faribault.

We are also planning to view the Gothic Revival Episcopal Cathedral, designed by James Renwick and built in 1862-1869 for founding bishop Henry Whipple. Renwick is best known as the architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Gilbert was involved in some of the design work in the adjacent Romanesque Revival style guild hall. If time permits, we will stroll along Central Avenue, Faribault's Main Street. We will return to St. Paul between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m.

The tour is scheduled to leave from the Unity Church parking lot, southwest corner of Portland Avenue and St. Albans, St. Paul, at 8 a.m. Cars may be left in the lot. We will serve coffee and snacks on the bus. Tour cost: \$35 plus pay-you-own lunch expenses; limited to 30 people. Reserve by October 12 with Carolyn Nayematsu: [nayem001@umn.edu](mailto:nayem001@umn.edu), 651-699-7407 or 651-492-8752; then send your check to Cass Gilbert Society, P.O. Box 4066, St. Paul, Minnesota 55104.



(Left) National Farmers' Bank (now Wells Fargo), Owatonna. Photo: Renee Barnes.  
(Right) Whitney Memorial Arch, Shattuck-St. Mary's School, Faribault. Photo: MPR.

SAVE THE DATE: November 12, 2015 TED (Lentz) Talk. See Inside.

## REDISCOVERING THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL, November 12, 2015, 7 P.M.

University Club, 420 Summit Avenue, St. Paul. Free to members; \$5 for non-members.

Ted Lentz, FAIA, president of the Cass Gilbert Society and a public member of the Minnesota State Capitol Preservation Commission, will speak on the challenges of dealing with the Minnesota State Capitol. When the building reopens in late 2017, the Capitol will again stand in the front rank of America's public buildings. The Capitol renovation and restoration program, underway since 2011, continues with a well-structured program that enhances existing areas and rooms while creating terrific new spaces. No one gets everything, but all Minnesotans gain a building that serves the State better than ever before.

The presentation will develop three narratives: Design and Construction, 1896-1905; Preservation and Renovation, 2011-2017; Art and expanded public use at the Capitol, 1905-2017 and beyond. Over 20,000 square feet of new space, newly open to the public will be oriented to support and engage Minnesotans and out-of-state visitors in ways never before possible. The renewed Minnesota State Capitol—the People's House—is a great story with many heroes. Follow the Capitol restoration work online at <http://mn.gov/admin/capitol-restoration/>.

## MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL FURNISHINGS PROJECT

The Cass Gilbert Society is launching an educational campaign to increase the awareness and appreciation of the furnishings that Gilbert designed or selected for the Capitol. About half of the original 800 pieces remain in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society, and many will be put into use in the Capitol. The whereabouts of the others are unknown, but many are likely to still exist. The project will seek to locate some of the furnishings, to document stories about them, to share anecdotes about family connections, to discover details about their acquisition, and to encourage the preservation of these historical artifacts. Information will be assembled in a database and made available through the Cass Gilbert Society website. The initial concept for the project was presented by Carolyn Kompelien and Marjorie Pearson on September 19, 2014, at the annual conference of the American Association of State and Local History held in St. Paul. Fundraising for the project is proceeding under the leadership of Carolyn Kompelien and John Yust, vice president of the Cass Gilbert Society.



AASLH Conference Poster Session  
Carolyn Kompelien and Marjorie Pearson with Brian Pease,  
Site Manager, Minnesota State Capitol  
Photo: John Yust

We note with sadness the death of **Wendy Weimer**, third president of the Cass Gilbert Society, on February 17, 2015. A memorial service was held at St. Clement's Episcopal Church, St. Paul, on February 28, 2015. St. Clement's is one of the notable churches designed by Cass Gilbert in St. Paul. At the annual board dinner held on January 18, 2015, Wendy was presented a certificate of appreciation for her strong leadership as Cass Gilbert Society President between 2007 and 2010, and her continuing supportive presence. Wendy was a teacher and principal in Minneapolis Public Schools for 35 years, then served as a *Guardian Ad Litem* for Ramsey County. She is survived by son Allen Pillsbury Olvera and his wife Megan Becker and daughter Carolyn Olvera Ellis and her husband Ian Ellis and grandson Azael Olvera, as well as many friends and colleagues.



Wendy in Havana, January 2010

## CASS GILBERT SOCIETY NEWS

The Cass Gilbert Society Board held its annual dinner at Dixie's Restaurant on January 18, 2015. Special guests included retired State Supreme Court Justice Paul Anderson and State Representative Diane Loeffler. Both (along with Senator David Senjem) are chairing the Art Subcommittee of the Minnesota State Capitol Preservation Commission. In addition to Wendy Weimer, certificates of appreciation were presented to Herb Grika for outstanding service between 1998 and 2014 in recording Cass Gilbert Society lectures and tours; Nick Marcucci for his service on the Cass Gilbert Society Board between 2007 and 2014 including assistance with website development and planning for the 2011 Detroit tour; and John Guenther, FAIA, for outstanding support in planning and guiding the 2013 St. Louis tour and for three successful 2014 lectures on Cass Gilbert and his contemporaries, Bernard Maybeck and Harvey Ellis. The board for 2015 consists of Ted Lentz, President; John Yust, Vice President; Carolyn Nayematsu and Vincent Platt, Co-treasurers; Marjorie Pearson, Board Meeting Chair; Carolyn Kompelien, Sonja Mason, Cindy Stephani, Jean Velleu, Art Weeks, Linda Bjorklund, Fundraising; Nathan Buttleman, General Counsel.

The Cass Gilbert Society has continued its successful partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society on a group of tours on August 15, 2015, featuring the work of Cass Gilbert. Cindy Stephani led two tours that visited the Pioneer-Endicott Building (1889); the Finch House (1890), 839 Osceola Avenue; the Humbird-Wedelsteadt House (1899), 937 Summit Avenue; Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church (1886); the Ames House (J.N. Tilton, 1886; Thomas Holyoke, 1899, 1913), 501 Grand Hill. Marjorie Pearson led the third tour that also included lunch at the Hadley House (1895), 123 Farrington Street.

We have also embarked on an exciting collaboration with Twin Cities Public Television and the Almanac program. Reporter Mary Lahammer is producing "**Connecting with Cass,**" a group of segments that feature various Cass Gilbert buildings in St. Paul. Programs to date have featured houses on the August 15 tour, the chapel at Roselawn Cemetery, and several churches. All Almanac programs are archived at the station website, [www.tpt.org](http://www.tpt.org); look for Almanac in the program tab.

## OTHER CASS GILBERT NEWS

The **Keeler Tavern Museum**, Ridgefield, Connecticut, presented "Cass Gilbert Perspectives: The Architect in Full" on Sunday, September 27, 2015. Dr. Barbara S. Christen spoke on "Giving for the Future: Cass Gilbert's Philanthropy." An exhibit by photographer Carol Highsmith, "Through the Artist's Lens: Cass Gilbert's Architecture" opened on the same day.

The **Friends of the Historic Virginia Street Church** have recently formed to promote the long-term preservation of the building. The group has been awarded a \$10,000 Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage (Legacy) grant to hire a qualified architect to assess the conditions of the church building.

Cass Gilbert's **First National State Bank Building, 810 Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey**, has been converted to a Hotel Indigo, part of the InterContinental Hotels Group. The bank building, one of several buildings in Newark designed by Gilbert, was completed in 1912. The restoration by the Hanini Group including the terra cotta exterior of the building and the original cornice, which has been incorporated into a rooftop restaurant. The existing marble stairway on the first and second floors has been restored, and the original ground floor vault has been preserved through its conversion into a pizza oven. On October 26, 2014, the Newark Preservation and Landmarks Committee presented the Hanini Group the Donald T. Dust award for restoration and adaptive reuse of the structure. The hotel opened in mid-November 2014. See:

<https://www.ihg.com/hotelindigo/hotels/us/en/newark/ewrbs/hoteldetail>

CASS GILBERT SOCIETY, INC.  
P.O. Box 4066  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104-4066  
www.cassgilbertsociety.org

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.

#### **Officers and Board**

Ted Lentz, *President*

John Yust, *Vice President*

Vacant, *Secretary*

Carolyn Nayematsu, *Co-Treasurer*

Vincent Platt, *Co-Treasurer*

Carolyn Kompelien

Sonja Mason

Marjorie Pearson, *President Emerita/Newsletter*

Jean Velleu, *President Emerita*

Art Weeks

Linda Bjorklund, *Fundraising*

Nathan Stone Buttleman, *Counsel*

#### **A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR**

It has been over a year since that last issue of the *Newsletter* appeared. We have generally mailed *Newsletters* as a way of informing members about upcoming Society events.

The Society has established a Facebook page, administered by board member Sonja Mason, as a means of posting more timely information about items of interest to Society members. Click on the Facebook logo from the Cass Gilbert Society homepage:

[www.cassgilbertsociety.org](http://www.cassgilbertsociety.org).

We are also seeking to use email more efficiently as a way of providing more timely notices. *Please provide us an email address when you send in your membership dues, so we can add you to our emailing list.*

Do not fear; the *Newsletter* will continue to be mailed to Society members and other interested parties.



Find us on Facebook.

October 2015

#### **RENEW YOUR SUPPORT FOR 2015-2016**

Please use the enclosed form to renew your Cass Gilbert Society support in 2015. Our records are maintained on a calendar year basis, with the expiration date noted on your address label. **We encourage you to provide your email address.** It will be used to send out announcements between the publication dates of the Newsletters.

You can show your support at various levels and any contributions above the basic level are much appreciated. Your support ensures that you will receive our Newsletter via U.S. mail, free admission to lectures, reduced fees for local tours, and eligibility to participate in regional tours. Your contributions are the major source of funding for operating expenses for our all-volunteer organization. You may also support us through **GiveMn.org.**