



# CASS GILBERT SOCIETY

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

## PATTY DEAN TO SPEAK ON CASS GILBERT IN MONTANA ON FEBRUARY 28, 2006

Patty Dean, formerly on the staff of the Minnesota Historical Society, and now a resident of Helena, Montana, where she grew up, will present **“Unique and Handsome”**: **Cass Gilbert’s Designs for the Montana Club** on Tuesday, February 28, 2006, at the University Club, 420 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, at 7:00 P.M. Ms. Dean was a participant in the recent Cass Gilbert Society tour to Montana. Dinner and a presentation at the Montana Club were among the tour’s highlights. She will give us further information about Cass Gilbert’s work for the Montana Club and place it into the context of his other Montana designs.

Gilbert with his partner James Knox Taylor began to work in Montana early in his career. Geoffrey Blodgett vividly depicts Gilbert’s journey to Helena to meet with Albert J. Seligman: “Despite the westward momentum of the iron horse, getting across Montana to its capital could still be a frontier adventure. In March 1887 Cass headed for Helena by train toward the end of the hardest winter in anyone’s memory. Ice chunks in the flooded Missouri River blocked the tracks near Bismarck, North Dakota.

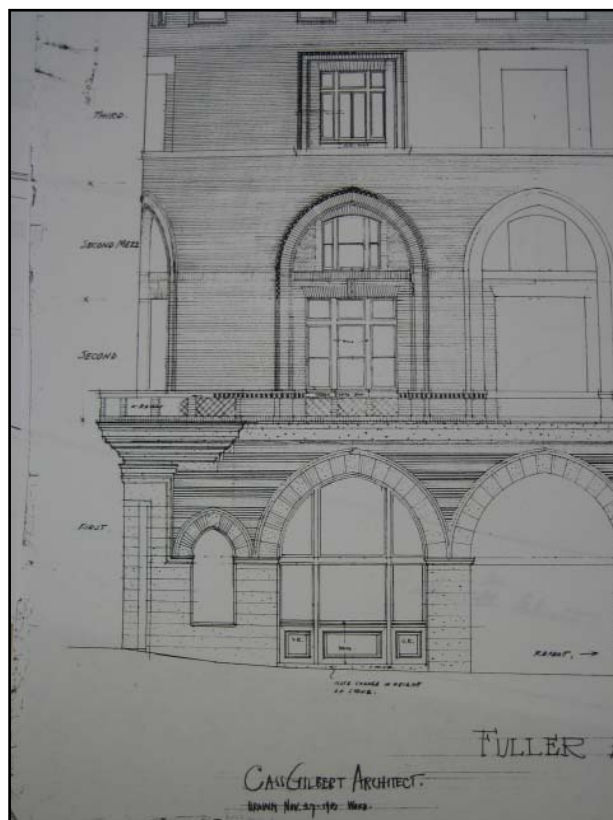
Cass and his fellow passengers crossed the river by boat to climb into a cluster of old stagecoaches on the other side. . . . Suddenly the driver lost control of his churning team. The coach spilled over, and Cass and the driver were thrown into the fresh snow. . . . Cass got up unhurt and ran to help the other passengers. . . . Survivors caught the next train west, and Cass met his appointments in Helena two days later. Territorial newspapers carried the dramatic tale.” (*Cass Gilbert: The Early Years*, p. 78)

We anticipate that we will be joined by members of the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (MNSAH), who are planning their own tour to Montana in July.

Admission is free to Society members. There is a nominal charge for nonmembers. Refreshments will be served after the lecture. Support for Cass Gilbert Society lectures is provided in part by the Minnesota Humanities Commission.

Detail of the Fuller Avenue elevation of the  
1903 Montana Club in Helena, by Cass  
Gilbert.

Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Marjorie Pearson

This, the first *Newsletter* of 2006, follows the celebration of the Minnesota State Capitol's centennial year. The Cass Gilbert Society was an active participant in the celebration, from financial assistance with the installation of the portraits of Cass and Julia Gilbert outside the vestibule of the Supreme Court chamber, to coordination with the symposium on the Capitol held at the University of Minnesota School of Architecture in October, to fundraising for the documentary on Cass Gilbert produced by Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) for distribution to schools throughout the state. Please see our website

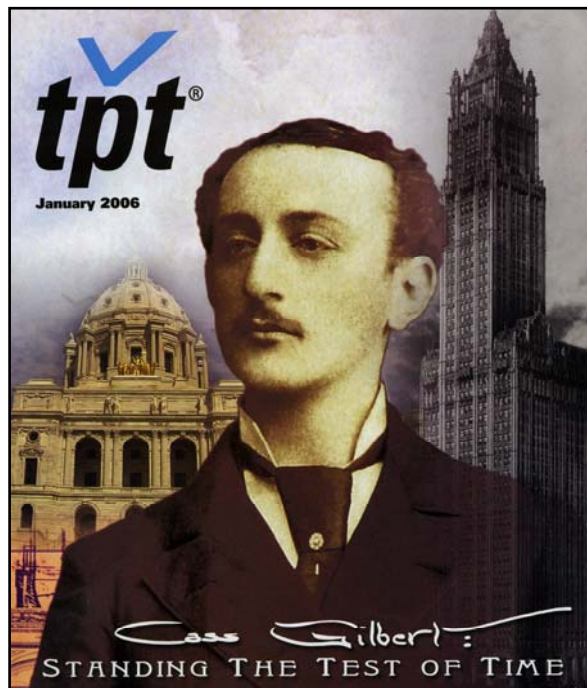
[www.cassgilbertsociety.org](http://www.cassgilbertsociety.org) for a link to the TPT website and a copy of the teacher's guide. A 30-minute version of the documentary was broadcast locally on January 9 and 15.

Our thanks to the following donors who helped provide funds to match a major grant from the John R. Cross Fund: The Katherine B. Anderson Fund, Rolf T. Anderson, Donald J. Bergmann, William R. Bisanz, Linda Bjorklund, Belfry Building LLC, Richard and Catherine Black, Betsy

H. Bradley, Frank R. Braun, Peter Butler, Darlene J. Carroll, Barbara Christen, Janet Cleary, Sally Seabury Cole, Mary Sue Comfort, Mary Michael Connolly, Helen Post Curry, Gail Fenske, Ellen J. Fridinger, Marsha and Mark Gorman, Hess, Roise and Company, James G. Hirsh, Earl and Holly Joseph, Sarah K. Kinney, F. Alexandra Klas Foundation, Allan W. Klein, Eric and Laurel Lein, Perrin Lilly, Nicholas Marcucci, McDonald Family Foundation in honor of Patricia Johnston, Mary Ann McCoy, Sheila and Ray Meyer, Minnesota Humanities Commission, Donald Moe, C. F. Mold, Patricia A. Murphy, Marjorie Pearson, Vincent Platt and Carolyn Nayematsu, Charlotte Prentice, Ramsey Hill Association, Ramsey Hill Association Community Outreach Committee, Bill and Susan Sands, Cindy Stephani, Lou Sudheimer, Edith Thurber, Missy Thompson, Jean Velleu, Herb Vogel, Wendy Weimer, Joan Wilkocz, and Laurel Winsor.

*TPT Magazine*, January 2006, featuring Cass Gilbert.

Courtesy of Twin Cities Public Television  
Cover design by Denise Fick.



The Friends of the Capitol is organizing a campaign to encourage the state legislature to provide sufficient bonding funding to restore the building. See the insert for information on how you can help. The State Architect's Office has awarded a contract to the team of Hamel Green Abrahamson (HGA), Minneapolis, and Schooley Caldwell Associates (SCA), Columbus, Ohio, to

prepare a schematic design study for the restoration, but unless bonding funding is authorized, actual restoration work will not go forward. HGA has worked on many notable public buildings in Minnesota, while SCA has undertaken the restoration of several state capitols, including Ohio, Kansas, and Utah.

Several Cass Gilbert buildings in New York have been in the news. The Austin, Nichols and Company Warehouse was designated a New York City landmark on September 20, 2005. Such designations are subject to review by the New York City Council. In the face of strong owner opposition and active lobbying against the designation by the local council member, the City Council denied the designation by a vote of 43-6 with one abstention on November 20, 2005. Then Mayor Michael Bloomberg vetoed the City Council action stating that the members of the landmarks commission "are the experts charged with determining what buildings are worthy of landmarks designation." Nonetheless, the City Council overrode the mayor's veto.

On Friday, January 20, 2006, *New York Times* reporter David Dunlap authored a story on public access, or lack thereof, to various designated interior landmarks in lower Manhattan, including two Cass Gilbert-designed buildings. He could barely get in the door of the Woolworth Building, but he was able to visit the U.S. Custom House, now the home of the National Museum of the American Indian, after passing through a metal detector.

If you are reading this *Newsletter* and not yet a member of the Cass Gilbert Society, please join us. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2006, please do so using the enclosed form.

**Thanks to the following members who have renewed for 2006:**

Patricia Anderson  
Donald Bergmann  
Marion K. Bjorklund  
Tom Blank and Linda Bjorklund  
Betsy Bradley  
Darlene Carroll  
Sally Cole  
Eva and John Cross  
Mary Michael Connolly  
Helen Curry  
Gail Fenske  
Steven Flanders  
Ellen Fridinger  
Marsha and Mark Gorman  
Jim and Debra Hirsh  
Sharon Irish  
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F. Alexandra Klas  
Allan Klein and Harriet Lansing  
John and Colles Larkin  
Patty McCartin and Paul Lutio  
Mary Ann McCoy  
Patricia McDonald

Nick Marcucci and Ann Schroder  
Nancy Martin  
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Julian Plante  
Vincent Platt and Carolyn Nayematsu  
Cathy Gilbert-Rogers  
Charlene Roise, Hess, Roise and Company  
Charles Stander  
Cindy Stephani  
Edith Thurber  
Jean Velleu and Jim Law  
Herb Vogel  
Wendy Weimer  
Joan Wilkosz  
Laurel Winsor

**Welcome to the following new members who have joined since the listing in the last *Newsletter*:**

Bonnie and Brian Alton  
Michael J. Bjornberg, Hamel Green and  
Abrahamson, Inc.  
Robert Fowler  
Great Harvest Bread Company  
Jim Groskopf  
Peter Hall and Kathy McNay

Ginny Housum  
John McNeil  
Jack and Gretchen Sjöholm  
Sheila Smith  
Lou Sudheimer  
Dr. Connie Vance

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www.cassgilbertsociety.org



The  
**minnesota**  
**humanities**  
COMMISSION

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**

Marjorie Pearson, *President*  
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Betsy H. Bradley, *Secretary*  
Vincent Platt, *Treasurer*  
Mary Michael Connolly, *Member at Large*  
Bonnie J. Alton  
James Groskopf  
Cindy Stephani  
Jean Velleu, *President Emerita*  
Joan Wilkosz  
Linda Bjorklund, *Fundraising*  
Jim Hirsh, *Legal Advisor*  
Lana Mahoney, *Programs*

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Cass Gilbert Society member Herb Grika provided us with a photograph of a cast for a bronze bas relief plaque by sculptor Walter Russell. The plaque to honor Cass Gilbert was to be placed in the Woolworth Building in 1931. Last November, we were contacted by a New York resident who had found a version of the plaque in his mother's possessions. She had been the proprietor of a millinery shop in the Woolworth Building in the 1930s. He did not know how she had come by the plaque, but he forwarded a photograph. Here are images of both for comparison.



Photo courtesy of Herb Grika

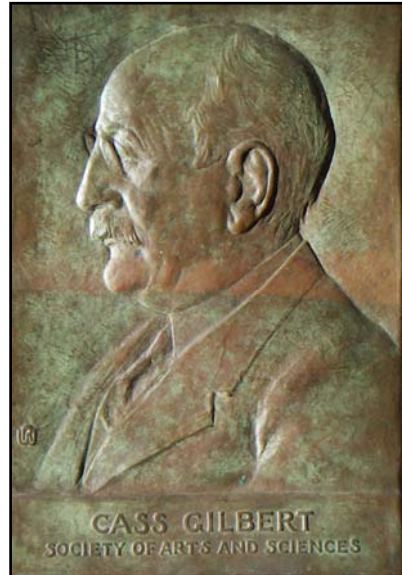


Photo courtesy of Andrew  
Martin



## Membership Form – 2006

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to become a **new member** of the Cass Gilbert Society \*

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to **renew** my membership for **2006**.

\_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 / Household or \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 /Business made out to Cass Gilbert Society, Inc.

**My Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Gift Recipient** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

\* 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., P.O. Box 4066, St. Paul, MN  
55104-4066***