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Hunt for Missing Capitol Furnishings Underway

(ST. PAUL, MN - July 13, 2017) The Cass Gilbert Society (CGS)'s project to find missing, original furniture and fixtures from the Minnesota State Capitol Building is off to a successful start. Since March, the project has uncovered artifacts all over the state.

Chairs, desks, and original wood windows have surfaced in Worthington, Cross Lake, St. Paul, and Stanchfield, for example. Some items live in the homes of former legislators; others are in county historical society collections. The goal of the project is not to return furnishings to the Capitol. Rather, CGS will trace the stories of "lost and found" items and publish them on their website (www.cassgilbertsociety.org). The final product will be a collection of stories and photographs - a virtual museum of sorts - that captures the legacy of the State Capitol Building, its occupants, and its design.

Of the roughly 1,600 pieces of furniture that Gilbert designed or selected for the Capitol interior, many have been in continuous use since 1905. Currently, about half are known to exist. While any furniture find is exciting, the Cass Gilbert Society is interested in finding a few particular styles. The RR Armchair, for example, was designed by Cass Gilbert for the House Retiring Room. Gilbert ordered eight chairs in 1905, but none of them remain in the Capitol. In addition to furniture, CGS seeks missing architectural fragments, interior photographs, and light fixtures.

CGS invites anyone with knowledge of Capitol Building furnishings to contact Project Manager Natalie Heneghan at natalie.heneghan@cassgilbertsociety.org. Follow the project's progress on Cass Gilbert Society's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cassgilbertsociety/>. This project has been financed with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society. It runs through the end of 2017.

About the Cass Gilbert Society

The Cass Gilbert Society's mission is to preserve and enhance the nation's cultural heritage through advancing scholarship and appreciation of Cass Gilbert's contribution to American architecture. Its research and documentation of Gilbert's buildings, not only in Minnesota, but throughout the U.S., have served as important resources for the public, scholars, and preservationists.