



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.

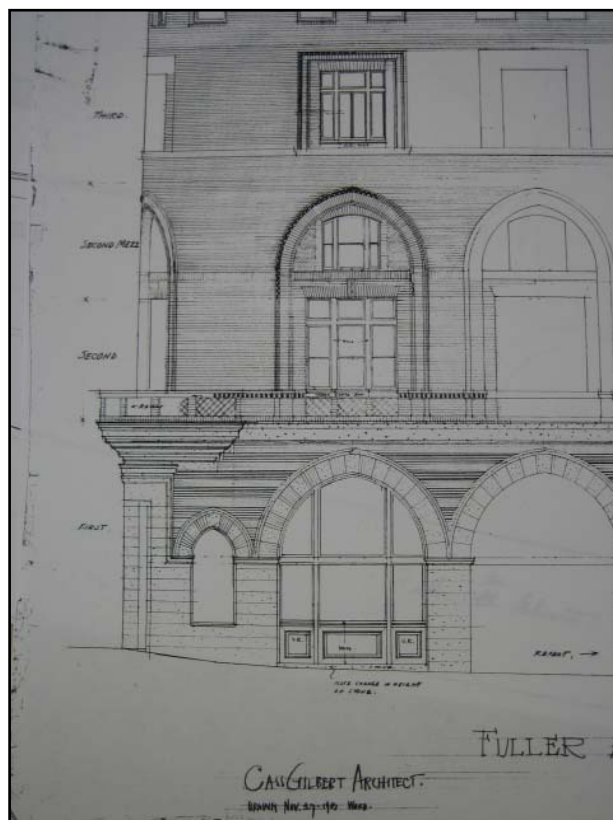
Cass and his fellow passengers crossed the river by boat to climb into a cluster of old stagecoaches on the other side. . . . Suddenly the driver lost control of his churning team. The coach spilled over, and Cass and the driver were thrown into the fresh snow. . . . Cass got up unhurt and ran to help 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

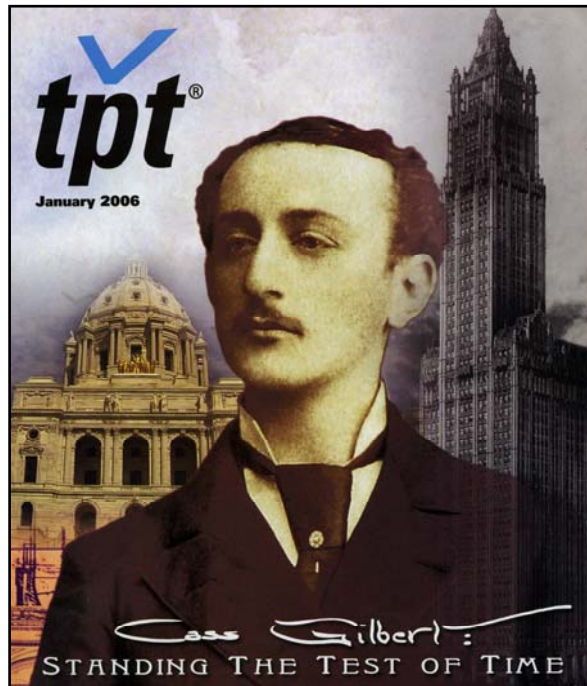
www.cassgilbertsociety.org for a link to the TPT website and a copy of the teacher's guide. A 30-minute version of the documentary was broadcast locally on January 9 and 15.

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
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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

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



The
minnesota
humanities
COMMISSION

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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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Jean Velleu, *President Emerita*
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Linda Bjorklund, *Fundraising*
Jim Hirsh, *Legal Advisor*
Lana Mahoney, *Programs*

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

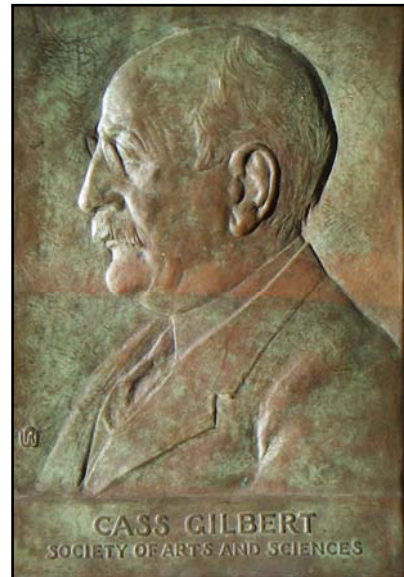


Photo courtesy of Andrew
Martin

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 _____

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* 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***