

**THE ARTS
& CRAFTS
MESSENGER**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
COLORADO ARTS & CRAFTS SOCIETY

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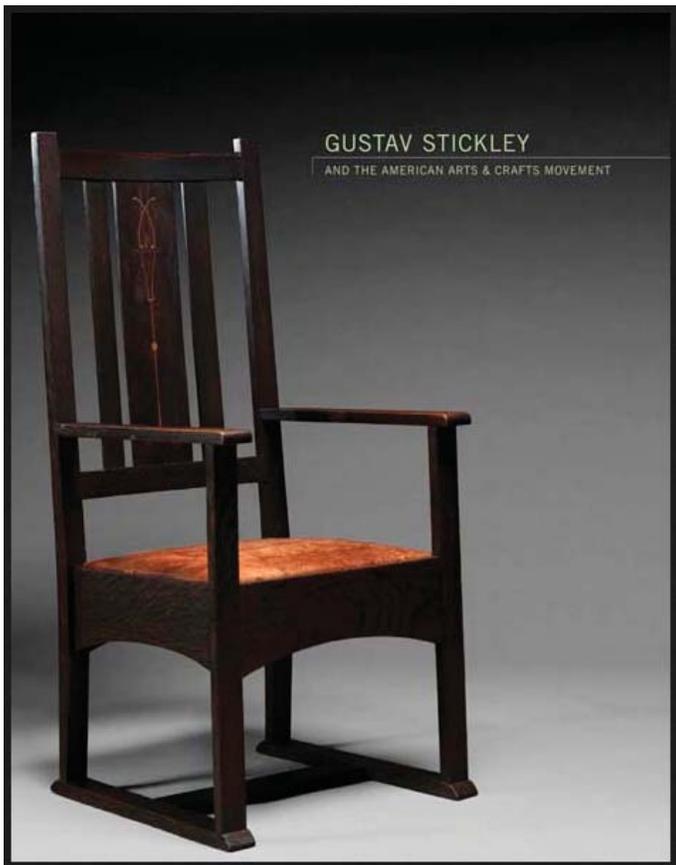
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SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2013
Boettcher Mansion at 6:00 pm
900 Colorow Road Golden, CO 80401

CACCS Annual Meeting & Symposium

Featuring Guest Speaker Beverly Brandt



Our annual meeting will be held on January 26th at The Boettcher Mansion. Please come join us to hear Author, Beverly Brandt speak about her latest book, *Gustav Stickley and the American Arts & Crafts Movement* (2010).

Beverly Brandt is an award-winning Professor in The Design School at Arizona State University, where she teaches courses on design history, theory, and criticism. She received her Ph.D. from Boston University in 1985. Her dissertation and subsequent publications have focused upon the Arts & Crafts Movement, specifically The Society of Arts & Crafts in Boston. She has contributed essays to *The Encyclopedia of Arts & Crafts*; *The Ideal Home, Innovation and Derivation*, *The Substance of Style*, *The Craftsman* on CD-ROM, *Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement*, and *Country Houses and Collections: An Anthology*. Her recent monograph, *The Craftsman & the Critic: Defining Usefulness and Beauty in Arts and Crafts-Era Boston*, received funding from the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium, the Craft Research Fund, and the Hildegard Streuffert Endowment, and is in nearly 200 research libraries worldwide.

Dinner will be catered by The Pines at Genesee. The price will be \$45 for members and \$55 for non-members. RSVP by 1/18/13 to Cynthia at (720) 497-7632.

SCOTTISH STAINED GLASS

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Would you like to donate to a great cause, and receive a beautiful antique Scottish stained glass window in the process?

Project C.U.R.E. is a highly esteemed charity that ships unused and reusable medical supplies to health clinics in need all over the world. These supplies include anything from bandages all the way up to large equipment and beds. Project C.U.R.E. has been highly praised because of their low overhead costs; only 2% of all donation go to administrative costs. This means that 98 cents out of every dollar donated goes straight to their program to help hospitals globally. To learn more about this important charity, go to www.projectcure.org.

Scottish Stained Glass owner Martin Faith has known and admired Project C.U.R.E. and its President, Doug Jackson for many years. Recently, Martin decided to support Project C.U.R.E.'s mission by the donation his extensive collection of antique Scottish windows to this admirable cause. This collection consists of over 150 antique pieces, ranging in value from \$400-\$20,000. Each beautiful piece is hand-built and over 100 years old.

These antiques are original pieces from Scotland, designed and fabricated between 1870-1914. They feature a wide

range of styles, from floral designs to art nouveau, art deco and traditional Scottish crests with simple, clean lines. With such a large collection to choose from, you can be sure to find the right piece for your home that will be cherished for years to come... and donate to a great cause at the same time! Each antique piece is unique and made from materials that simply cannot be replicated today.

So far, Scottish Stained Glass has raised enough money to send a 40-foot container to the hospital in Belize. The container will ship next February and Martin will be able to see first-hand the impact these efforts have made. He would like to thank the members of the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society for their continued support, and to let us know that there are still some beautiful stained glass pieces available in exchange for your donation. We hope to exhibit these at our "Gathering of the Guilds."

The funds you donate through the purchase of Martin's Scottish Stained Glass will allow hospitals around the world to receive much needed medical supplies. So please buy a window and save a life!

For more information on how you can get involved, please go to www.scottishstainedglass.com or call Martin Faith at 303.766.3811.



An Arts and Crafts Excursion to THE BRYN ATHYN CATHEDRAL

By Dennis Barrett

In July, for the first time, I visited the Bryn Athyn Cathedral in the suburbs of my native Philadelphia. In rolling wooded hills to the north of the city, as if transplanted whole from medieval France, stands a proud Gothic Cathedral! A product of the early 20th century, it was built from local granite, with internal oaken buttresses from trees on the site, and stained glass of rare brilliance.

It was the industrialist John Pitcairn who conceived the idea and financed the building, and his son Raymond who oversaw the design and construction. And it was based on the teachings of the New Church, a sect founded by the latter-day followers of Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).

As I toured the cathedral complex with a kindly, enthusiastic and loquacious tour guide, I kept returning to the question of why this edifice is touted as a prime product of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. The timing is right, of course. The nave was built between 1913 and 1918, and construction was finished by 1928, though windows and interior furnishing continued for another two decades. It rejects Victorian styles of ornamentation in favor of simpler, and especially nature-based forms; and it rejects ornamentation churned out by soul-numbing factories in favor of art produced by artisans. But then I remembered the Pre-Raphaelites, who in the mid-nineteenth century went back to the Gothic for their inspiration, and heavily influenced both John Ruskin and William Morris.



artisans worked in close proximity and in thoroughgoing collaboration. In fact, there appears to be no one architect of record.

Pitcairn may have imported some of his artists from Europe; we know that he both commissioned a translation of a 12th-century French text on stained glass, and sent his master glass artists abroad to study methods, and then had them experiment extensively with color recipes before ever starting to create the hand-blown windows. I was impressed by the blue light filtering through the East window, but my guide drew attention to the glowing yellows, which he said were the hardest to achieve. I could sense the pride the workers must have felt in their creations; I wanted to stop and fondle the quarter-sawn oak on the end of each pew.

An intriguing feature of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral is the ever-so-subtle departures from vertical and horizontal straight lines. The walls are slightly bowed, just a difference of about 12 inches in width from front to back of the nave. In the room on the north side of the nave, there are two arches (see photo, left) of slightly differing heights; on the opposite wall a gallery supported on either side by corbels, and these are of slightly different lengths. These and many similar features are by no means imperfections. They are variously explained as “giving a sense of life and movement to the building,” or “representing the unpredictable path of human growth.” Our guide said something to the effect that perfection consists in variety, diversity – and pointed to the cabinet of 49 keys to the cathedral complex: each one has a different blade, of course, to fit into a unique lock, but equally, every one has a different



Well, it turns out that the builders of the Bryn Athyn Cathedral weren't just inspired by Gothic forms; they went right back to a medieval *modus operandi*. Workshops for stone, wood, metal, and stained glass were built on site, and the cathedral sprang up in their midst, as the skilled



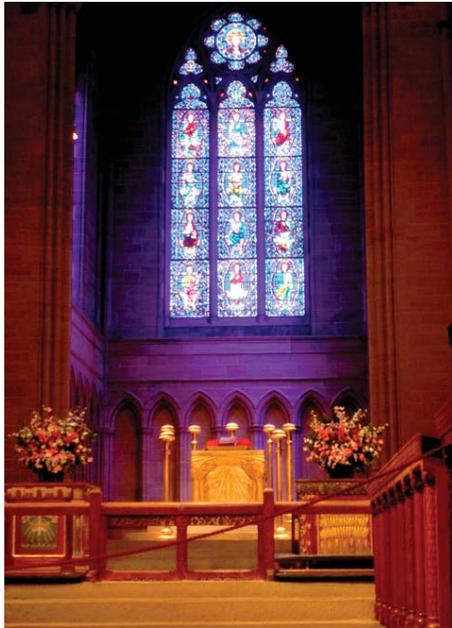
bow, the head part which you turn. Perfection lies in diversity.

With some trepidation, I asked what in Swedenborg's teachings might be expressed in the architecture of the Cathedral. I did not delve deeply, but found a few ideas somewhat satisfying.

Swedenborg worked in two distinct phases. He was, until the age of 56, a successful scientist, engineer, and inventor, working in fields as diverse as metallurgy and neurophysiology. Then after a 'spiritual awakening' in 1744, he thought and wrote as a theologian, working from the Lutheran tradition but, as he said, "appointed by the Lord to reform Christianity." So while his theology is idealistic and mystical, largely deriving from spiritual visions he saw, there is often the shadow of his earlier completely practical nature. Where reformers of the day, Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, stressed salvation by God's grace through faith alone (sola fides), Swedenborg held that the purpose of faith must be to lead one to a life of charity (in the all-encompassing sense of charity, sometimes simply translated as love, of 1 Corinthians 13: "and now abideth faith, hope, and charity. But the greatest of these.."). Faith without works didn't count. "To receive the life of heaven," Swedenborg said, "a person must live in the world and engage in its business and employments."

In describing the works of Ernest Trobridge, a self-proclaimed Swedenborgian architect in London in the 1920s, the Brent Museum said "his designs boasted a heady union of symbolism and utility..."

And this description seems to apply equally well to the Cathedral. Swedenborg found symbolism everywhere. He believed that his primary source, the Bible, describes a human's transformation from a materialistic to a spiritual being. Thus the creation myth in Genesis is not really concerned with the creation of the earth, as I would read it, but rather with man's spiritual re-birth or regeneration,



in six steps represented by the six days of creation. In the Cathedral, symbols lurk everywhere. Seven heroic candlesticks (bearing oil lamps, not candles!) surround the altar, as seven is a weighty number in many religious traditions (but there is no cross in the cathedral; the crucifixion of Christ is not so significant to the Swedenborgians as to other Christian faiths.) The important theme of humans' ascent throughout their lives into ever more spiritual realms is represented in the magnificent stained glass. The Cathedral describes it thus:

Old Testament windows in the nave clerestory include figures of Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, David and others, not merely as illustrations of Bible stories [as they would be in the medieval cathedral] but also for what they represent. Paired with an angel messenger, they represent the manner in which the Lord speaks to us today in Old Testament language.

(Continued on page 7)



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IAC'S PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE CELEBRATES "WORKSHOP OF WORLD"

BY CYNTHIA SHAW

Once you attend an Initiatives in Art & Culture conference, it's nearly impossible to kick the habit. After jumping on the bandwagon of this traveling symposium back in 2003, I was hooked. Having been part of past entourages (visiting Oakland, St. Louis, Buffalo, Minneapolis, San Diego, Cincinnati, Seattle, New York and Seattle over the last decade), I also had the privilege of helping founder and director Lisa Koenigsberg plan last year's conference in Denver. This September, however, I was looking forward to simply moseying around Philly while trying to imagine it as host of the 1876 Centennial International Exposition (significant for introducing Henry Hobson Richardson's Shingle Style as the first purely American architectural style).

On opening day, as I left the Pennsylvania countryside (where I had hiked a knob on the Appalachian Trail and toured a series of covered bridges the day before), the shock of the early morning rush hour traffic helped me transition quickly from a rural to urban mindset. My downtown destination was the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (a.k.a. PAFA, built by Furness & Hewitt



1871-76), a resplendent High Victorian Gothic landmark serving as our venue for the next two days. After a little coffee and conversation, we all settled in for the impending immersion into the local Arts and Crafts heritage, after which there would be no turning back for the duration of the conference!

Following Lisa's welcoming remarks, we delved into Michael J. Lewis' talk on Frank Furness and the Academy, restored to its original ornamental luster during the 1976 Bicentennial (exactly 100 years after it first opened in time for the Exposition). Best known for its vibrant exterior of stone and brick (and innovative use of reverse-painted stained glass windows), the building continues to shine like a vintage gem pinned to the heart of the city. With this as our backdrop, local consultant Robert Edwards went on to paint an illuminating portrait of Philadelphia c. 1876-1926, when it was renowned as a mecca for industrial art and design education.

Next, Richard Guy Wilson (always my favorite) credited Edward Bok, editor of the influential (and locally published) *Ladies' Home Journal* magazine with raising decorating and domestic arts to a new level for women. Professor Wilson also introduced us to Milton Medary, a leading period architect whose designs were published by Bok and for whom he created a carillon ("singing tower") in central Florida the late 1920s. This set the stage for our Sunday visit to Medary's soaring Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge, built 1903-17 in the Gothic Revival style.

NOTE: As we broke for lunch, fellow CACS member Kelly Graves and I dashed down the street to visit the Masonic Temple. As luck would have it, we were given a full-blown tour of the mysterious and stunning interior, which words cannot describe (see image below).



As one whom loves learning about the (for long overlooked) feminine contributions to the Movement, I appreciated Nina d'Angeli Walls' acknowledgment of the impact the Philadelphia School of Design for Women had on cultivating gender-specific art education during the period 1876-1932. Stained glass expert Julie Sloan then drew our attention to the work of Nichola D'Ascezo and Violet Oakley and other local talent who excelled in this medium. Finally, Anna O. Marley told the poignant tale about the Red Rose Girls' (Jesse Willcox Smith, Elizabeth Shippen Green and Violet Oakley). After studying under the legendary illustrator Howard Pyle at the local Drexel Institute of Art, these pioneering women went on to share a home and studio in a former inn along the prestigious "Main Line" where they created heartwarming imagery for children's books and periodicals.

Friday morning's curriculum included Anne Verplanck's paper on Quaker influence on architecture (which she confirmed was more Colonial Revival than Arts and Crafts); Vance A. Koehler's presentation on Henry Chapman Mercer and his Moravian Pottery & Tile Works (a prelude to our Saturday field trip); Jeffrey Cohen's talk on Wilson Eyre (a local architect discussed in Vincent Scully's 1955

study, *The Shingle Style*); and Peter A. Renzetti's lecture on Samuel Yellin (a wrought-iron mastersmith, whose work we saw enhancing a variety of buildings throughout the four-day conference).

We then sped by train out to Rose Valley, an 80-acre property purchased by architect William Price and his colleagues in 1901 (and developed in 1912). Inspired by William Morris's novel, *News from Nowhere*, the group



intended to establish a utopian community that would produce furniture, pottery and other handcrafted items inside an abandoned mill. Although the project never succeeded financially, Price's cluster of red-tile-roofed homes (see above) continues to exude a collective ambience. The evening culminated with a reception at Schoen Haus (Price's renovation of an 1862 Italianate villa based on an Andrew Jackson Downing pattern-book house).

Saturday's itinerary took us back out "in the field", where we visited the Bryn Athyn Historic District, an early Swedenborgian community encompassing a cathedral begun by Ralph Adams Cram (see Dennis Barrett's own article on this medieval masterpiece). We also toured two Beaux Arts-style residences for the Pitcairn family (the founders of Pittsburgh Plate Glass): Cairnwood, built 1892-95 by Carrere & Hastings and landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted's firm, and Glencairn, designed from 1928-39.

That afternoon, we sojourned on to Doylestown to tour the Moravian Tile Works and neighboring Fonthill, both



conceived and created by Henry Chapman Mercer. Intrigued – and later obsessed – by the artistic possibilities of concrete construction, Mercer experimented with a tile-concrete roof for a kiln house at his pottery. Its success prompted him to start planning his dream home, cast almost exclusively of concrete (whose outstanding

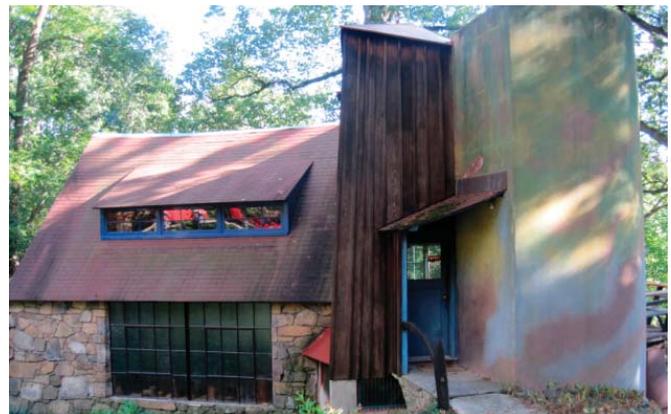


properties included being malleable, fireproof and tile-compatible). After climbing all 32 flights of stairs inside Fonthill, (including one created just for his beloved Chesapeake Bay Retriever), the evening reception at the Levitties residence in Chestnut Hill was a welcome respite.

On Sunday, select guests enjoyed a continental breakfast at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, where Curator Bruce Laverty showed highlights of the collection. We then streamed through the ground floor of the Curtis Publishing Company to pay homage to a stunning mosaic mural created by Maxfield Parrish with Tiffany Studios. Next, we toured the Mask and Wig Club (an 1834 church remodeled in 1894 by Wilson Eyre, with decorations by Parrish), and passed by Eyre's 1890 Clarence Bloomfield Moore House.

Busses then whisked us away to Bryn Mawr College, the first institution of higher education to offer graduate degrees to women. Designed in the Gothic style, the campus was originally landscaped by the venerable firm of Olmsted & Vaux. After Jeff Groff's lecture on "Life in the Main Line Country House", we enjoyed a picnic lunch and then took off to Valley Forge to visit the Washington Memorial Chapel (1903-17 by Field & Medary), with stained glass by Nicola D'Ascenzo, ironwork by Yellin and woodwork by Edward Maene.

For me, the best was saved for last: The Wharton Esherick Museum, a tribute to the "dean of American craftsmen". Esherick (1887-1970) started out as a painter but found his passion creating their frames instead and devoted the rest of his life to woodworking. His handcrafted residence and studio (begun in 1926, see image below) is now a National Historic Landmark filled with more than 200 of his organic works. Next door is the 1956 workshop he co-designed with his friend and architect Louis Kahn.



(Continued from page 4)

New Testament windows in the chancel clerestory show a changing relationship between humans and the Divine, as the Lord lives within us and teaches directly about Himself.

The east window in the inner sanctuary, showing the Lord Jesus Christ and the twelve apostles, is derived from the visions of John as written in the book of Revelations. This represents a fuller understanding of Christianity and a fuller relationship between God and humans.

Emmanuel Swedenborg founded no church in his time; his extensive writings constituted his immediate legacy. But in his lifetime, and in the 2.5 centuries since, these written works have touched a wide variety of influential thinkers: Kant, Goethe, William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry James, Daniel Burnham, and D.T. Suzuki, to name a few. In England, 15 years after his death, his devotees did band together to form a church. Its membership has ebbed and flowed through the years, and it has been divided by doctrinal splits; today it numbers about 30,000 adherents, most in the United States, with largest groups headquartered in Bryn Athyn - near a true Arts and Crafts treasure. 🍷



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Potluck Recap

On November 2, CACS held its Movie, Potluck, and Silent Auction. Thank you to everyone who contributed a dish or silent auction item. We had a wonderful variety of both, and all were quickly snapped up with delight. During dessert, we enjoyed the PBS Special, Elbert Hubbard: An American Original. The movie gave insight into the motivations, passions, and legacy of this prominent Arts & Crafts period figure. The night allowed CACS members to combine socializing, shopping, and snacking. We'll continue to look for similar opportunities in the coming year.

The Arts & Crafts Messenger, the newsletter of the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, is published quarterly for the society's members as part of their membership contribution. Send comments to julie.leidel@gmail.com. All articles are ©2012 the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, with rights reverting to the authors after publication.

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