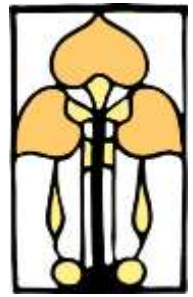


FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

THE HERALD

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RESTORATION OF SOUTHEAST ARCHWAY *by Nate Lielasus*

With work in the southeast corner of the sanctuary complete, the first preservation project of Friends of Historic Second Church's Restore a Treasured Chicago Jewel capital campaign can now be enjoyed. The primary focus of the project was the conservation of the Fredric Clay Bartlett mural delaminating from the east wall, but work also included repair of crumbling plaster and repainting walls in the original 1901 colors.



Until the recent work was completed, the mural, which is painted on canvas, had partially peeled off the plaster arch and one corner was suspended in mid-air. Like many of the murals in the church, the surface was dark and discolored with grime, including soot from a former coal-fired boiler that was located in the basement. The grime almost completely obscured the scene. A leak in the roof (repaired years ago) led to moisture damage. The mural had detached from the wall more than once – a previous effort to

reattach the mural resulted in 30 to 40 puncture holes from wide shank nails that were temporarily holding it in place.

At a gathering in the sanctuary to celebrate the building's elevation to a National Historic Landmark in 2013, Roosevelt Ferguson, a long time parishioner, told a story from earlier days when resources for building maintenance were slim. The slow leak in the roof over the archway led to icicles forming inside the building at the southeast corner. An icicle would grow slowly throughout the week until the heat was turned on Sunday morning. Eventually there would be a crash as it fell to the balcony floor below in front of *Tiffany's Christ Blessing the Little Children* window.

After the roof was repaired, the water damage remained. The recent delamination of the mural signaled an urgent need for attention. As one of the first large donations to the Restore a Treasured Chicago Jewel capital campaign, The Service Club of Chicago provided a \$9,000 grant for repair work. The grant application was written specifically for the restoration work undertaken with the funding request based on trade estimates.

The project began with the erection of scaffolding in the balcony and the mural being carefully pinned out of the way. Kelly Plastering repaired the damaged plaster. After the plaster work was complete, Amber Schabdach of The Conservation Center led conservation efforts on the mural. The first step was to repair the nail holes in the face of the mural

with tiny canvas patches. The patches were carefully cut to match the size and shape of the nail holes. The weave and weight of the patches were matched to the historic canvas and the edge fibers glued to the corresponding fibers of the mural. Japanese paper was adhered to the back of the patches to help secure them in place.

Once the holes were patched the mural was re-adhered to the plaster archway ceiling and the slow process of cleaning the painted surface began. Using a cotton swab on a stick – similar to a large handmade Q-Tip – Schabdach gently removed surface dust and grime with a mild cleaning solution. Several different solutions were tried but a buffered ammonium citrate solution worked the best. The surface grime was cleaned away to the extent that was safely possible without removing original paint. Because of the fragile condition of the mural, the cleaning had to be very gentle.

According to Schabdach, the acidic coal dust and years of moisture exposure created the perfect conditions for paint degradation. The wet-dry cycle not only made the paint more fragile but also helped drive soot into the paint, making it darker in tonality. Besides these unfavorable conditions, the mural was in fair condition and the conservation efforts proceeded smoothly. The two-week long cleaning process brightened colors and revealed details long obscured.

After the mural was cleaned, it was covered in a clear varnish that not only serves to protect the original paint but also provides a surface for



retouching missing or faded areas of the mural. Both the varnish and retouching can be removed in the future without damaging the mural. The retouching is done with conservation quality paints. Retouched areas of the mural include the nail hole patches, parts of the scriptural passage under the western angel group and parts of one angel wing on the east side of the arch where water damage had been extensive. The latter area had to be toned with a diluted paint, called a glaze, to restore it to a more original color.

Observing the mural up close, Schabdach noted similarities between the murals at Second Presbyterian and the Bartlett murals she recently cleaned at the University Club. Both used thin paint and simple, broad brushstrokes to fill large areas with fewer tight strokes making up the details. At Second Presbyterian, real gold leaf was used for the angel halos.

In a 1904 *House Beautiful* feature article, published not long after the completion of Shaw's and Bartlett's decorative interior, Virginia Robie compared the Bartlett murals favorably with the Byzantine frescos of the Old World. She described the richness of color – the “blue-greens, faded reds, and dull golds” and a relationship between the murals, lost today in the surface grime, where the colors

used closest to the altar were brightest “it being the painter's intention to have the color scheme grow warmer as it approached the ‘Heavenly Choir.’” The themes of the murals are music, abundance, praise, and worship with alternating compositions of paired kneeling angels and groups of figures. In the southeast corner the theme is abundance. On the east side of the archway two kneeling angels in red robes and green stoles (with “Boticelli faces”) hold an overflowing basket of fruit.

On the west side the red and green garmented angels hold a basket of flowers. A tree surmounts the angels on each side and the two trees grow together at the apex of the archway. Below the western angels is a scriptural

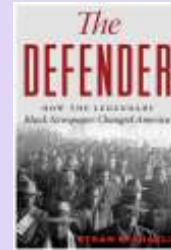


verse: *Thou visiteth the earth and watereth. Thou greatly enriches it with the river of God, which is full of water. Thou prepares them corn when Thou has so provided for it.*

Of the twelve archway murals, only a few have been cleaned – the only other fully cleaned archway mural is at the Peace Window which was cleaned by Dr. Margaret Nowosielska, then with The Conservation Center. The Conservation Center also partially cleaned the archway mural at the Angel in the Lilies window.

2017 EVENING LECTURE SERIES

The Defender: How the Legendary Black Newspaper Changed America From the Age of the Pullman Porters to the Age of Obama



Join Friends on Thursday February 23, for first lecture of 2017 featuring *The Defender* named one of the 100 Notable Books of 2016 by the editors of The New York Times Book Review. It is the definitive and compelling history of the famous Chicago newspaper, headquartered for many years at 2400 S. Michigan Avenue. Author Ethan Michaeli, who worked at *The Defender* from 1991 to 1996, explores how the newspaper had a broad and significant impact on American life, from encouraging the Great Migration to helping break down barriers of racial segregation. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing. Co-sponsored by Glessner House Museum

Lectures are \$10, are held at Second Presbyterian Church, and begin at 7:00 pm, preceded by a reception with light refreshments and free tours

In the 1990s, Grammar of Ornament cleaned the west half of the mural by the Pastoral Window.

The Bartlett murals are a wonderful artistic treasure of the church hidden in plain sight. With only a few cleaned, much work remains to completely reveal their artistry. The newly restored southeast archway returns to the sanctuary another original piece of Bartlett and Shaw's rich decorative scheme.

HELP US REACH THE FINISH LINE!

Friends' first capital campaign is moving toward its goal of \$500,000. With gifts large and small, from nearly 70 donors, we have reached 75% of our target. You learned in this newsletter's lead article about one aspect of the campaign – the conservation of the southeast corner of the balcony and the repair and restoration of the Bartlett mural. The heart of the campaign is the restoration of the Tiffany Studios "Peace" window and the repair and repainting of plaster on the first floor of the Sanctuary. Can you imagine seeing the stained glass professionals on scaffolding, carefully removing each panel of this beautiful window and then meticulously cleaning and repairing each piece of Tiffany glass and its surrounding lead frame? With your support that will happen in 2017. You can help us reach our goal by mailing a contribution to Friends of Historic Second Church, 1936 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616 or by going to our website www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org and clicking on Donate on the Home page and then selecting the Capital Campaign for a PayPal donation. Thank you.

FRIENDS 2017 EVENING LECTURE SERIES

On April 26, Judy Koessel, owner of an 1890s house in Riverside, will talk about what happened when she asked the question, "Who painted the mural on my dining room ceiling?" What started as a simple question became a detective story as one question led to another and she became immersed in the career of William de Leftwich Dodge and the many murals that he produced throughout the country, including one for the **Dome of the Administration Building at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.**

On June 21, Ginger Frere, MLIS, Newberry Scholar-In-Residence will present a lecture entitled "The Great Chicago Fire." As part of our Annual Celebration of Chicago History, Ms. Frere will bathe the Chicago Fire in a light as of one of the most disastrous events for Chicago, but when the light goes out the citizens of Chicago reshaped and rebuilt their city to develop it into one of the most prominent of today. From tragedy, we find the White City and beyond.

On September 27, Howard Tiffen will present a lecture entitled "On the Trail of William Morris."

All lectures are \$10, are held at Second Presbyterian Church, and begin at 7:00pm, preceded by a reception with light refreshments and free tours at 6:00pm.

DOCENT ENRICHMENT

Docent Bill Denis provided a tour of his family's Decorators Supply Corp for fellow docents as part of a docent enrichment event. The company, dating back to 1883, created cast ornamental plaster moldings showcased in the Columbian Exposition of 1893 and today continues to make artistic decorative elements of plaster and wood.



CHURCH'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

A free "Classic Movie Night" featuring Chicago's own Etta Moten Barnett is scheduled for Friday, February 17 with a showing of *Flying Down to Rio* (1933). Etta Moten Barnett, an active church member for many years, was famous for her title role in *Gershwin's Porgy and Bess*, and was featured in several films in the 1930s and 1940s. This is a Black History Month Event presented in celebration of the 175th anniversary of Second Presbyterian Church. Free popcorn and soft drinks will be served.

Second Presbyterian Church was organized on June 1, 1842 and has been a functioning house of worship continuously for one hundred seventy-five years. Since the sanctuary of the church contains 175 angels depicted in murals, stained glass windows, carved wood and molded plaster, the church has chosen "In the Company of Angels" as the theme for the year-long celebration. Several community events are being planned along with a hand-made quilt featuring 175 angels and a memorial booklet. The church re-dedication service will occur on Sunday, June 4, 2017. Check the church website for details: www.2ndpresbyterian.org.

Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and contributions from October 9, 2016-January 26, 2017.

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BECOME A MEMBER

You don't want to miss Friends exciting activities planned for 2017. Join Friends now and you will partner in the restoration work planned for the Tiffany "Peace" window. Join now and participate in our 2017 lecture series and walking tours. Join now and receive our newsletter, "The Herald," with interesting research on the art and architecture of the church and the Arts and Crafts movement. Friends' preservation work is made possible by people like you: our members and supporters. Complete the membership form included in this newsletter or look for our membership mailing in your mailbox in April.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

All members receive the newsletter *The Herald* and are recognized as donors in the newsletter.

Tiffany Circle: \$40 Individual; \$55 Family; \$25 Student/Senior (62 yrs. +)

Benefits include: Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends' merchandise.

Arts & Crafts Circle: \$100 and above

Benefits include: Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends' merchandise, and invitations to special members-only tours and programs.

I/we wish to become a member of Friends of Historic Second Church or renew a current membership.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for membership at the following level:

____ Tiffany Circle: \$40 Individual; \$55 Family; \$25 Student/Senior (62 yrs. +)

____ Art & Crafts Circle: \$100 and above

____ Yes ____ No You may acknowledge my contribution in Friends' publications.

____ Yes ____ No I prefer to receive my newsletter by e-mail.

____ Yes ____ No I am interested in volunteering for Friends' activities.

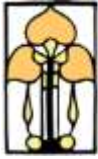
If you wish to discuss sponsoring a restoration project, contact Friends of Historic Second Church at 1-800-657-0687.

Please return completed form with check made payable to:

Friends of Historic Second Church 1936 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616.

Or renew online at www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org.

Memberships and gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Friends of Historic Second Church is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.



FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

1936 S. Michigan Ave.

Chicago, IL 60616

Phone: 1-800-657-0687

E-mail: historic2ndchurch@yahoo.com

Web: www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org

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Contributors: Ann Belletire, Heather Kendall,
Nate Lielas, Linda Miller, and William Tyre.

2017 DOCENT TRAINING

A wonderful way to learn about the world-class art and architecture of Second Presbyterian Church is to join the upcoming Docent Training Class of 2017. Trainees who certify will become official docents for Friends of Historic Second Church, sharing their love of history, art and architecture with guests from around the world or down the street. Training sessions will occur at 6:30 pm on Thursdays, April 20, 27 and May 4; and on Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 am – noon.

A partial list of topics to be examined includes: the Arts and Crafts movement; architects James Renwick, Jr. and Howard Van Doren Shaw; Gothic Revival architecture; artists Frederic Clay Bartlett and Louis Comfort Tiffany; the church's stained glass windows (both American and English); preservation philosophy and techniques; and a review of completed restoration projects. Please visit www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org and click "Become a Docent" under "Get Involved" to download the application form. Completed applications may be emailed to historic2ndchurch@yahoo.com. Call (800) 657-0687 for additional information. There is a materials fee of \$10 (which can be waived for students).

The volunteer commitment for active docents is two hours per month. Docents enjoy free docent enrichment events that allow access and tours of interesting spaces and places. Casual social events occur on a regular basis.

Second
Presbyterian
Public Tour
Schedule:

Wednesdays:
1:00-3:00pm

Saturdays:
11:00-3:00pm

Sundays:
12:15pm
(after
worship
service)

Or call
800-657-0687
to arrange a
private tour

Mission Statement

The mission of Friends of Historic Second Church is to preserve and restore the art and architecture of Chicago's Landmark Second Presbyterian Church, educate a worldwide audience about its historical and cultural significance, and share those resources with the community.

Friends of Historic Second Church is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.