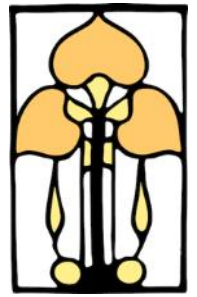


FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

THE HERALD

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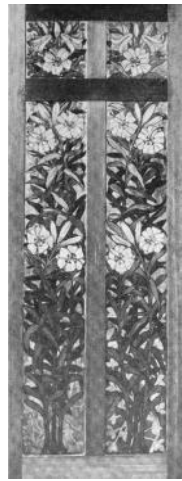
Summer 2018



JOSEPH TWYMAN AND THE MORRIS ROOM *by Nate Lielasus*

The windows of St. Cecilia and St. Margaret in the narthex of Second Presbyterian church flanking the main entrance door are wonderful examples of the English Arts and Crafts movement straight from the studios of Morris & Company at Merton Abbey Mills. They are perfectly at home in Shaw's masterful Arts and Crafts design of the church. How the windows came to Chicago, and how they ended up at Second Presbyterian, is a bit of a mystery. However, it is known that before they came to Second Presbyterian they were installed in a famous room in the city that was as steeped in the English Arts and Crafts movement as Second Presbyterian Church. Before arriving at Second Presbyterian, the windows were on display in a showroom at the Tobey Furniture Company in downtown Chicago.

In 1902, the Morris Room opened on the fourth floor of the Tobey Furniture Company, located at the Southeast corner of Washington Street and Wabash Avenue just South across Washington Street from the location of the pre-Great Chicago Fire home of Second Presbyterian Church. The Morris Room was unveiled to immediate popular acclaim. Created as a tribute to the designer, William Morris, the opening of the room was an expression of the burgeoning Arts and Crafts movement in Chicago. It was also a showroom for Arts and Crafts furniture, fabrics and wallpaper that discerning consumers could purchase for their homes.



Millwork of the
Lilies

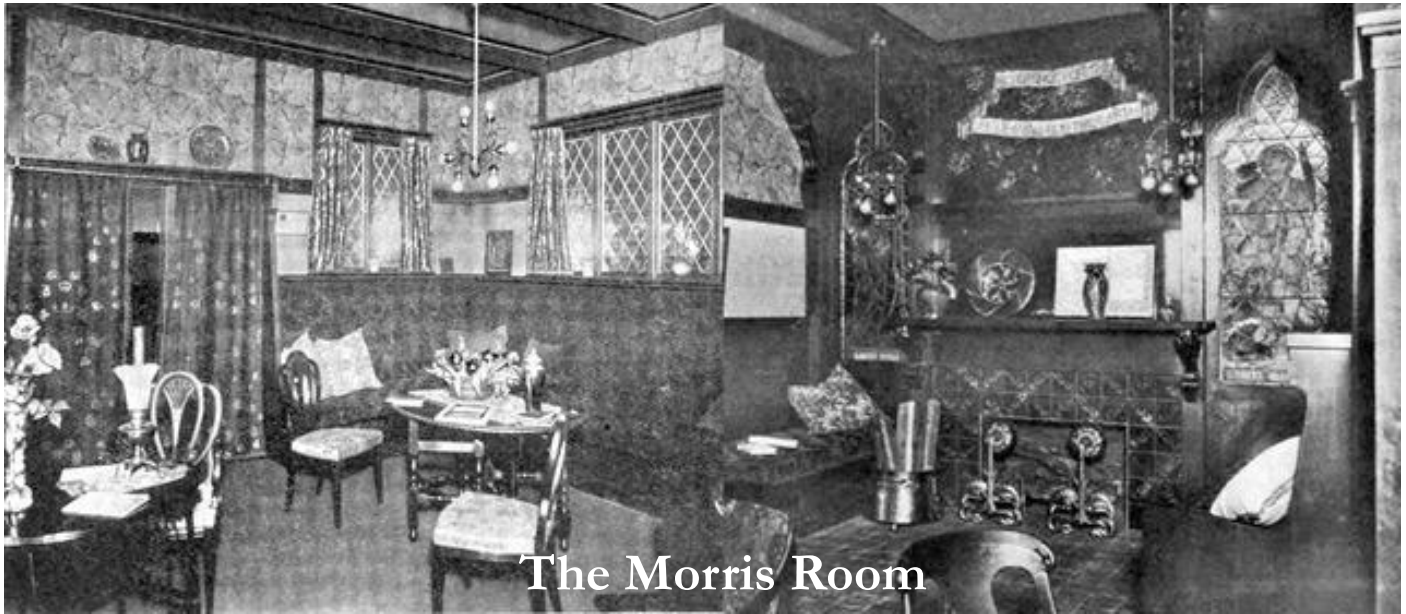
At the turn of the century, Chicago was the center of the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. In a 1904 Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics regarding the revival of handicrafts in America, it was noted that "Chicago was one of the first cities in America to feel the influence of the present arts and crafts movement, which is there manifested in a greater variety of ways than in any other city in the country." The Chicago Arts and Crafts Society was founded at Hull House 1897 to provide training and occupation for poor immigrants. Other organizations in the city that promoted the Arts and Crafts movement included the Industrial Art League, founded 1899, the Longwood Art Industry and the South Park Workshop, in addition to numerous workshops.

The Morris Room was conceived by Joseph Twyman, decorator for the Tobey Furniture Company. Joseph Twyman was born on October 8, 1842 in Ramsgate, England. He spent his early life in England, but immigrated to the United States, arriving in Chicago in 1870. He worked for a time with wallpaper merchant J. McGrath, who was a distributor of Morris & Co. wallpaper, from 1873 until 1885.

Twyman co-founded the Morris Society (1903-1905) in Chicago and was a furniture designer, decorator and lecturer.

The Tobey Furniture Company was founded in 1856 by two brothers, Charles and Frank Tobey, and quickly grew into a successful enterprise. Tobey's success was partly due to extensive advertising and building up a brand name. General manager, George Clingman expanded the company's Mission and Arts and Crafts offerings through original designs and partnerships with other designers, such as Stickley, whose work was sold under the Tobey brand. George Clingman hired Joseph Twyman, who encouraged Tobey to develop additional Arts and Crafts designs. In 1901, the Tobey Furniture Company introduced a line of "New Furniture in Weathered Oak," designed principally by George Clingman. In 1902, Tobey unveiled the "Russmore" line geared for the more budget-oriented consumer.

The Morris Room was designed as a series of vignettes of domestic English country life. Overall, the room had the feel of a comfortable sitting room. Built-in cabinets and woodwork trim, all stained green, wrapped the room. Door and millwork panels were stenciled with roses, thistles and lilies. The walls were covered in blue green tile below the picture molding and Morris & Co. acanthus wallpaper, in browns and golds, above. The ceiling was beamed and the doors were heavily draped in Morris & Co. textiles. The Hammersmith rugs lay on the floor.



The Morris Room

There were several different furniture groupings. At one end of the room, was a built-in banquette wrapped around a table with leaded windows above. At the opposite end, was a raised inglenook with built-in benches flanking a fireplace with a Morris & Co. tile surround. On either side of the chimney breast were the windows of St. Cecilia and St. Margaret. A stenciled panel over the mantel piece read, "Reverence for the life of man upon the earth."



When it opened, the Morris Room was a sensation. House Beautiful published an in-depth article by Isabel McDougall with multiple photographs exalting the design of the room. In it, McDougall wrote: "Morris paper on the walls, Morris textiles used in the floor coverings, and hangings, furniture from Morris's own workshop, supplemented by a few pieces of the eighteenth-century mahogany he loved and brought into use once

more, metal-work, pottery, glass, by his companions and associates - the whole brought together and given its proper setting by a lifelong disciple, who had himself watched many of the weaves run off the looms of Merton Abbey, and knew the great English artist before his fame reached across the ocean." The Tobey Furniture Company widely advertised the room as a must-see on any trip to Chicago.

While many of the contents of the room were displays of products for purchase, including the furniture, fabrics, rugs, wallpaper and tile, some of the artifacts in the room were from Twyman's own collection and were added for artistic touch. Some may have been gathered when Twyman took a trip back to England in 1883 and travelled to Merton Abbey to meet William Morris. Twyman wrote an article about the trip for *The Inland Architect*, published in January 1904, in which he describes touring the facilities with Morris. Twyman wrote about Morris interacting with artisans as they worked, including on a painted window with "a figure of St. Cecilia gowned in sapphire blue and purpled shadows, all bedded in a bower of lemon leaves and fruits." The description perfectly matches the St. Cecilia window installed at the Morris Room and later at Second Presbyterian. In "A Vestibule of Song": Morris and Burne-Jones in

Chicago" published in *The Journal of William Morris Studies*, Winter 2014, Elizabeth Helsinger offers an intriguing theory on the provenance of the St. Cecilia window. Helsinger suggests the window Twyman saw at Merton Abbey may have been intended for Whitelands Ladies Training College, Chelsea, but was purchased by Twyman and brought back to Chicago while a replacement was fabricated for the school.

Joseph Twyman died in Chicago on June 13, 1904. After his death, the Morris Society put together an exhibition of Twyman's work at the Art Institute of Chicago and many publications, including the *Architectural Record*, wrote tributes. There was discussion of preserving the Morris Room as a permanent memorial to the man who had pulled it all together but the efforts eventually went nowhere.

Franklin Darius Gray, former president of the National Safe Deposit Company, acquired the windows and donated them to the church in 1903. The window of St. Cecilia became a memorial to his wife, Ann Olive Phelps Gray. The window of St. Margaret became a memorial for Franklin Darius Gray after his death in 1905.

CHICAGO'S HISTORIC MOTOR ROW



Wednesday June 20, 2018

5:30 p.m.—6:00 p.m.

Docent Tours

6:00 p.m.

Chicago's Motor Row

Presentation by

Dennis McClendon

Reception to Follow

During the Golden Age of Automobiles, Chicago's Motor Row was the center of the city's car culture. At its peak over 100 makes of automobiles were sold in opulent showrooms on South Michigan Avenue. The dealership buildings were built to grab attention with their creative architectural design. Many of these buildings still stand paying tribute to when automobiles first came to Chicago.

Free Admission

RSVP to:

2ndpresbyterianfriends.org/visit/events
and follow the link to the Eventbrite page

Or email: historic2ndchurch@yahoo.com

CONGRATULATIONS



Friends of Historic Second Church congratulates long-term docent John Cramer (docent class of 2011) for his recent designation

by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of "40 Under 40: People Saving Places." This prestigious national award recognizes young professionals who have had a significant impact in the field of Historic Preservation. John is a senior associate in the Midwest Office of MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC and graduated from the Historic Preservation program of SAIC. John serves on Friends' Fund-raising Committee and recently assumed the role of Docent Training Coordinator.

Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and contributions from February 9, 2018-May 20, 2018.

\$10,000 - \$50,000

Donnelley Foundation

\$5,000-\$9,999

Marshall Field V

\$3,000-\$4,999

Jeff & Linda Miller

\$1,000 - \$2,999

Jeff & Annette Adams

Howard & Jane Tiffen

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Richard Mach

Priscilla Mims

John Newman

In Memory of Gary Schuetz

Darlene Pollard

Dean Rapp

Hilda Robinson

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Thelma L. Schwartz

Janet Smucker

Miss Sprite

KM Stelletello

Susana Steppan

Lois Stratemeier

Sharon Sylvester

Mary Tamminga

In-Kind

Jim Jackson

Bill Morse

THE TIFFANY PEACE WINDOW RETURNS

Drum roll please! After a year of painstaking conservation work at the Venturella Studio in New York, the 1903 Tiffany Peace window will return to us in early July. The re-installation work will begin on July 3rd and last for three or four days. Other work will be done in the area



**Hope Angel
After Cleaning**

surrounding the window during this time. A new protective covering will be placed on the exterior of the window and any necessary masonry work will be addressed. After the window is installed the plaster surrounding the window will be repaired and the entire archway will be painted in Shaw's original colors.

Join in the excitement. Stop by after August 1st on a sunny day and see the window sparkle and entrance as Louis Comfort Tiffany envisioned it should.



**Hope Angel
Before Cleaning**

COLBY CHAIR REPAIR

Friends of Historic Second Church extends a warm thank you to Bill Morse of Seat Weavers for volunteering to repair four of the cane back chairs usually situated at the back of the sanctuary. Mr. Morse is removing the broken canes and installing new pressed cane backs. He will arrange for the new caning to be stained and sealed by Isaac's Upholstery in Geneva. Mr. Morse also volunteered to pick up the chairs from the church, take them to his Elgin-based business for work, and deliver them back again.



**New caning partially installed
in a Colby chair.**

The chairs are part of the furniture acquired from John A. Colby & Sons furniture company by Howard Van Doren Shaw when he was rebuilding and redecorating the sanctuary in 1901. They are classic examples of Windsor sack-back arm chairs and were probably stock pieces from Colby's line of Colonial reproduction furniture (see *The Herald*, Volume IX, Number 2, Summer 2015 at www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org). Friends has inventoried eight of the matching chairs found throughout the church, many of which are broken and need re-gluing and other repairs. The four sturdiest chairs are the ones Mr. Morse is re-caning.

Bill and Bridget Morse visited Second Presbyterian Church during Open House Chicago in October 2017. At the time, Mr. Morse expressed his desire to use his skills to assist an historic church. His work will allow the chairs to return to their home at the back of the sanctuary by the end of May.

TITANIC IN MUSIC AND STORY

A special afternoon commemorating the 106th anniversary of the sinking of RMS Titanic (April 15, 1912) took place in the sanctuary of Second Presbyterian Church on Sunday, April 15 as 170 guests were enthralled by the riveting stories and diverse music shared by John W. W. Sherer. Seated at the historic four-manual Austin organ, Sherer, organist and director of music at Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago, performed music from 1912, music heard aboard Titanic, and music written to honor those lost in the tragedy. His stories, interspersed with the music, were both amazing and tragic as the saga of the fateful voyage, resulting in the loss of 1,500 lives, unfolded. An elegant reception preceding the performance featured selected items from the last menu served to first class passengers. Period attired was donned by several of the guests and a ship's wheel provided a perfect prop for photo opportunities.



SUPPORT FRIENDS WITH AMAZONSMILE

Friends has joined AmazonSmile, a website which allows non-profit organizations to receive donations from a 0.5% portion of sales made on the popular shopping website. To donate via AmazonSmile, visit: <http://smile.amazon.com/> and select Friends of Historic Second Church at the prompt.



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Facebook**

BECOME A MEMBER

Members are always the first to know and be invited to all programs and events. As a member, you help fund restoration projects as well as lectures, special tours and events, this newsletter and more. Be a part of it all by becoming a member and supporting the restoration of Chicago's only National Historic Landmark Church. Complete the form below or go online to www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org to join.

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.+)

Arts & 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.

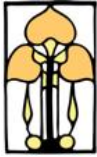
If you wish to discuss sponsoring a restoration project, contact Friends of Historic Second Church at 1-800-657-0687.

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Second Presbyterian and the South Loop: A Century of Perspective

Saturday, September 15, 2018

10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m., neighborhood walking tour

Admission \$20

Rediscovering Chicago's Legendary Artist Edgar Miller

Tuesday, September 25, 2018, lecture and reception

7:00 p.m.

Admission \$10

Basement to Belfry: Halloween Edition

Saturday, October 27, 2018, church tour

10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Admission \$20

The World's Columbian Exposition in Music and Story

Sunday, October 28, 2018, music, stories, and reception

3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

Admission \$25

**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.