



Friends of Historic Second Church

THE HERALD

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THE WINDOWS OF HOWARD VAN DOREN SHAW

by William Tyre

Set amongst the spectacular windows by Tiffany, Burne-Jones and others, are a series of windows that are often overlooked by visitors to the church. These windows, the work of Shaw in collaboration with the firm of Giannini & Hilgart, represent significant examples of Arts & Crafts glass design, and as such are the most harmonious with the overall design of the church sanctuary.

GIANNINI & HILGART

The firm of Giannini & Hilgart was founded in Chicago in 1899



Figure 1. Photo by Martin Cheung

by Orlando Giannini (1861-1928) and Fritz Hilgart (1869-1942). Giannini, who was born in Cincinnati, originally worked as a sculptor like his father before turning to mural painting and the designs of mosaics and stained glass. Among his earliest commissions was a series of three wall murals for the home of Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park. Hilgart was born in Germany and trained as a glass cutter there before emigrating to the United States. Together, the firm created stained glass windows and mosaics for numerous Prairie School architects including Frank Lloyd Wright. Hugh Garden, one of the architects who worked with the firm later wrote that Giannini was the designer while Hilgart managed the shop, cut the glass, and did the construction. In addition to windows and mosaics, the firm also produced glass lampshades for Teco pottery lamps, which were very popular at the turn of the 20th century. Giannini left the partnership in 1907 and moved to California but the firm continued to operate. Giannini & Hilgart still exists in Chicago under different ownership.

THE WINDOWS

When the redesigned sanctuary reopened in late 1901, eight of



Figure 2. A section of the Oriel Window. Photo by Martin Cheung

the twelve main windows along the north and south sides of the sanctuary would have contained windows designed by Shaw and executed by Giannini & Hilgart. Although seven of these windows were eventually removed and discarded when the present memorial windows were installed, one window at the northeast corner of the sanctuary has survived intact (fig. 1). The understated window, set into the original 1870s wood tracery, features large expanses of opalescent glass with individual panels of stylized plants and flowers set at regular intervals. Below the balcony are smaller double hung windows set into groupings of three beneath each of the main windows. These smaller windows also consist of opalescent glass and individual

panels of stylized foliage.

Other examples of the collaboration of Shaw and Giannini & Hilgart include the large windows in the vestibules to the north and south of the narthex executed in clear and white glass; windows featuring



Fig. 3

stylized tulips set into the doorways between Fellowship Hall and the North Parlor; and the beautiful oriel window in the former pastor's office (fig. 2), featuring designs of stylized wheat below and vines above.

Arguably, the most striking of all the windows is the stunning light screen set into three panels between the narthex and sanctuary (fig. 3). The design of the screen features meandering grape vines on a trellis-like background that conveys a feeling of Japanese design popular at the time and used in selected locations elsewhere in the sanctuary. Of particular interest in the design is the thickness of the lead coming which forms the vines. Arts & Crafts windows were the first to use the coming as part of the design and not simply as the structure of the window. The thick vines contrast with the finely detailed coming around

the bunches of grapes, creating a very realistic design.

BLANCHE OSTERTAG

Ostertag was a multi-talented artist who produced a significant and varied output including book illustrations, etchings, monotypes, pastels, and paintings. She studied in Paris and upon her return to Chicago, occupied a studio in the Fine Arts Building (the same building where church muralist Frederic Clay Bartlett had his studio). In 1899, she was credited with the design of a beautiful glass mosaic fireplace incorporating wisteria vines for the Husser House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The fireplace was executed by Giannini, just before forming his partnership with Hilgart. Soon after, Ostertag created numerous illustrations advertising linens and other wares for Carson, Pirie, Scott & Co. She was paid \$25.00 in 1901 for design work at Second Presbyterian, although the exact work is not identified. Due to her collaboration with Giannini, it has been assumed her design work at the church was for windows, possibly the grapevine light screen, but as of yet, no information has surfaced to conclusively link her to this particular window.

The windows of Shaw, in collaboration with Giannini & Hilgart, are one more important component of the extraordinary Arts & Crafts interior at Second Presbyterian Church. Although often passed over in favor of the more elaborate designs of Tiffany and others, they are significant in their own right and add another rich layer to the art and architecture of the church.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE



A special Christmas card featuring an original work of art courtesy of artist Jack Simmerling is now on sale. Simmerling sketched the old growth walnut front doors of the church which date to James Renwick, Jr.'s original exterior of the church completed between 1872 and 1874. This card is the fifth in a series created by Friends to aid in raising funds to support restoration work. A package of 10 cards with envelopes sells for \$12. Please order today to share your Christmas greetings via this beautiful card.

Second Presbyterian Public Tour Schedule:

Wednesdays
1:00-3:00pm, Free

Saturdays
1:00-3:00pm
Suggested donation \$5.00

Sundays
(after worship service)
12:15pm, Free

OPEN HOUSE CHICAGO

Despite pouring rain on Saturday morning and a threatened tornado on Sunday afternoon, a steady stream of guests toured Historic Second Church during the Chicago Architecture Foundation's

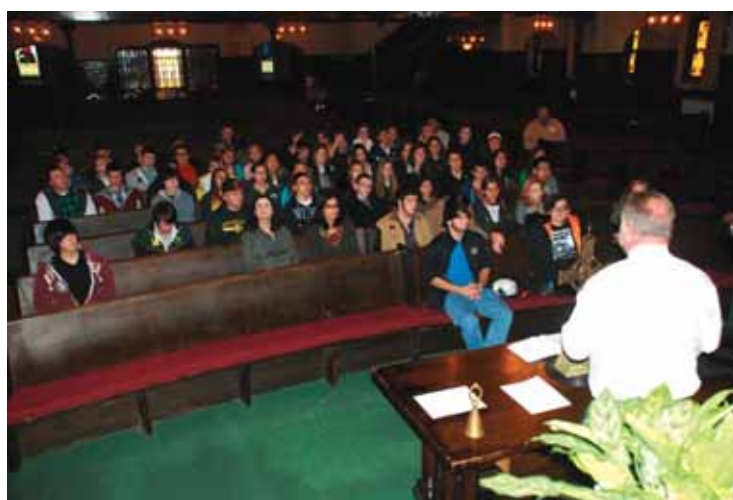


Open House Chicago (OHC) on October 13 and 14. Normal church activities limited tour times to 9:00 – 1:00 pm on Saturday and 12:30 – 5:00 pm on Sunday, not 9:00 – 5:00 pm as with other sites. Yet a total of 664 guests took the “glass tour” developed specifically for Open House Chicago with access to windows not normally visible to the public. Friends’ docents focused on the history and construction of stained glass and pointed out different glass techniques found in the diverse glass collection at the church.



Friends of Historic Second Church was especially happy to welcome and provide a tour for the Chicago Architecture Foundation's Board of Trustees and Lynn Osmond, President and CEO.

Open House Chicago is an annual free behind-the-scenes weekend festival that provides access to many of Chicago's greatest places and spaces. The Prairie District, which includes the church, was one of the new neighborhoods added in 2012, the second year of the event. A total of over 150 sites were open to the public. For a complete recap of the event, visit www.OpenHouseChicago.org.



Glenbrook North High School students in Michael Rast's World Religions class enjoyed hearing Rev. David Neff speak about Presbyterianism and then taking a tour of Historic Second Church.

WELL DESERVED RECOGNITION

Friends of Historic Second Church gave special recognition to the work of its dedicated docents by hosting a reception honoring them on Sunday, November 4. Board member William Tyre graciously opened his newly restored historic Pullman home to the group. Tyre's home is part of a group of twelve brick row houses known as “Arcade Row” built in 1881 in the original Town of Pullman. Docents enjoyed touring the multi-level home and hearing Tyre discuss his home, his restoration work, and the history of the neighborhood. Docents volunteer year round to give both individual and group tours to the many visitors who come to Historic Second Church. Through October 2012, tour guests for the year already outnumber those for all of 2011 by almost 500 guests. Open House Chicago (see previous article) boosted the October statistics to 823, the highest number ever for a one month period. Those who take tours frequently comment on the knowledge of the docents and the friendliness of the experience. Friends salutes its fantastic docents!

SECOND CHURCH HOSTS DESIGN PROGRAM FOR TEENS

Friends has partnered with Second Presbyterian Church and arts organization Voice of the City to host a pilot educational program for teens.

Architecture & Design: Learning in the Built Environment allows teens to actively participate with architects and designers, to study familiar neighborhood places, and to make recommendations for improvements that can be implemented by local organizations and city departments. Projects include collaborations with community and school gardens, and other neighborhood initiatives that request design submissions.

Voice of the City was founded

on the principles of connection: connection between artistic disciplines, between artists and local community, and connection between arts organizations and neighborhood organizations to build capacity through shared resources.

Second Presbyterian was selected to host the program because of its Chicago historical context, and for the opportunity to study aspects of architecture like preservation, restoration, and the Arts & Crafts movement. The Architecture & Design program runs from October to December, 2012. Follow the teens' work and review past projects at www.archiasm.blogspot.com.

KUDOS TO KATY

Friends bids a fond farewell to Katy Gallagher who has served as Friends' part-time Historic Preservation Manager since September 2010. Katy is a familiar and welcome face to all who visit the church. She has ably handled the business of running the Friends' organization: she has provided valuable guidance and insight into our preservation projects, worked closely with our contractors, organized our lectures, written copy and laid out the newsletter and much, much more. We wish her well as she embarks on a new job in the preservation field. The good news is that she intends to volunteer as a docent for Friends. Best wishes, Katy.

HELP TO RESTORE A CORNER OF THE SANCTUARY

Friends has embarked on an exciting project to repair and repaint a deteriorating area in the northwest corner of the sanctuary. The repair and repainting of the northwest sanctuary corner will be the visual capstone of the recently completed Finishes Analysis project, which uncovered the original appearance of the church interior including plaster, painted surfaces, and stenciled motifs.

The cost to patch the walls, ceiling, and plaster ornament beneath the balcony and to paint the area in its original color is \$4,280. In September, Friends was awarded a \$1,000 matching grant from Landmarks Illinois' Preservation Heritage Fund to kickstart the project. With \$555 already in hand, and a generous \$1,000 gift from an anonymous donor, Friends will need to raise \$1,725 to complete the work. Be a part of this first finishes project.

Donate online:

www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org/support/donate

Send donations to:

Friends of Historic Second Church
1936 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL. 60616



SUPPORT FRIENDS' SECOND ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Preservation of the “crown jewel of the Arts and Crafts Movement” is underway. Friends’ plans in 2013 are ambitious. To serve our preservation mission, we are planning to restore a corner of the sanctuary to its original appearance following the recommendations of the finishes analysis. Additionally, we hope to undertake the restoration of the Peace window, our first major Tiffany window conservation effort. In serving our education mission, we will again offer three lectures on intriguing arts topics, and we will further research the history of the people and art of Second Presbyterian Church. And finally we will seek to increase our outreach to the community with programming and service. Please join us in this work. We hope you will support Friends in 2013 as we continue to protect and share this “jewel” with an ever-growing audience. Donate online at www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org, or send donations to: Friends of Historic Second Church, 1936 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60616.

Annual Membership Levels and Benefits

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.



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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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.

Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and in kind contributions from July 1 through November 15, 2012.

In Kind:

Barbara Crawford
Ruth Sharpe

\$10,000-\$24,999:

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(for Sanctuary Paint and Plaster Project)
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