

Historic masonry repair
at the Minnesota Capitol.
Photo courtesy HGA.

MINNESOTA CHAPTER
OF THE SOCIETY OF
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

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275 MARKET STREET
SUITE 54
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55405



PLEASE JOIN US **Wed 16 March** **Restoration** MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL

MNSA WITH RESPECT TO ARCHITECTURE | FEBRUARY 2016

Historic stencil restoration at the Minnesota Capitol. Photo courtesy HGA.



**MNSAH Annual Meeting
Minnesota Humanities Center, St. Paul
Wednesday, March 16, 2016**

**The Minnesota State Capitol
Restoration Project**

Michael Bjornberg, keynote speaker

Michael Bjornberg standing at the base of the State Capitol dome. Photo courtesy HGA.



The Minnesota Capitol, a Renaissance Revival masterpiece of the Beaux-Arts school, boasts one of the largest self-supporting marble domes in the world, second only to Saint Peter's in Rome.

The keynote speaker at MNSAH's 2016 annual meeting is Michael Bjornberg, a Senior Project Manager, Historical Architect, and Preservation Specialist for the architectural and engineering firm of Hammel, Green & Abrahamson (HGA) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His presentation will focus on his current project, the comprehensive three-year repair, restoration, and update of the Minnesota State Capitol.

Restoration

THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL

The Minnesota State Capitol under wraps during the restoration process. Photo courtesy HGA.

The Capitol, which opened in 1905, was designed by Saint Paul architect Cass Gilbert, who went on to achieve national fame with the design of well-known buildings including the Woolworth Building in New York City and the United States Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C. The Minnesota Capitol, a Renaissance Revival masterpiece of the Beaux-Arts school, boasts one of the largest self-supported marble domes in the world, second only to Saint Peter's in Rome. It features twenty-three different types of stone, including sixteen varieties of marble from around the world and granite and limestone from Minnesota, as well as murals and paintings gracing the chambers and hallways, which were created by some of the finest artists of the early twentieth century. It is considered to be among the nation's finest state capitols and the finest example of the integration of art and architecture in the country.

The restoration project – slated for completion in 2017 – has presented many challenges. In addition to addressing the deterioration normal in a 110-year-old building, all systems must be updated to meet modern standards. The historic and architectural significance of the building, combined with it being a working public facility, required that architectural, artistic, historic, technical, creative, and political factors be balanced. All of these factors have contributed to establishing the parameters for the project, which is nearing the half-way point, some areas being nearly completed while others are just through the demolition phase. The presentation will provide background about the original building and review the evolution of the restoration, the goal of which is to secure this very special building for the next one hundred years.



In addition to his responsibilities at HGA, Michael Bjornberg is vice president and a member of the board of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM), a professor in practice at the University of Minnesota's School of Design, and an advisor for the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Historic Resources Group. He has over thirty years of experience working on many types of buildings across the United States and has specifically developed an expertise in restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures and sites. He has worked on the restoration of historic buildings throughout the country, including the football stadium, school of architecture, and Golden Dome at the University of Notre Dame, and locally the Saint Paul Union Depot, Historic Fort Snelling, the University of Minnesota's Coffman Union, and the American Swedish Institute.

the details

DATE AND PLACE

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Minnesota Humanities Center
987 Ivy Avenue East
St. Paul, MN 55106
651-772-4242

6:00 Reception
6:30 Dinner
7:15 Gebhard Awards
7:30 Annual Meeting
8:00 Lecture
9:00 Adjourn

Note: The annual meeting will feature the presentation of the David Stanley Gebhard Award, which is presented biennially for the best book and article on Minnesota's built environment. It will take place in the Commons (dining room) prior to the annual meeting, which will be in the Library.

COST

\$40 for MNSAH members
\$45 for nonmembers

REGISTRATION

Deadline: Thursday, March 3, 2016

Note: Members who wish to attend the annual meeting and the lecture, but not dinner, may do so at no cost. Please send in the registration form or contact Lock Bounds at 651-659-9932 or lockbounds@yahoo.com if you plan to attend only the meeting and presentations.

MENU

Beef Bourguignon with sauté of mushrooms and pearl onions and served with a rich wine sauce over egg noodles;
or
Butternut Squash and Wild Mushroom Lasagna served with parmesan bread.

Dinners will be accompanied by a garden salad tossed with house vinaigrette, bread, and dessert.

DIRECTIONS

From Interstate 35E, exit on Maryland Avenue, and proceed east 1.7 miles to Earl Street. Turn left, and go four blocks to Ivy Avenue East. Turn left, and the Humanities Center will be on your right.



Linda Mack being interviewed by Jane Hession with videographer Bill Olexy. Photo courtesy Frank Martin.

MNSAH is making significant progress in the Modern Masters project. We are conducting videotaped oral history interviews with Minnesota architects who were leaders in modern design after WWII. They are typified by George Rafferty, FAIA, one of the longest practicing architects in Minnesota. We interviewed him and his son, Craig Rafferty, FAIA. We are also interviewing architects of the following generation who worked with leading modernists such as the late Thomas Hodne and James Stageberg. We have interviewed writers who covered architecture and modernism, including Bette Hammel and Linda Mack.

Since November 2015, we have been conducting eight planned interviews for this phase. The interviewees are:
George Rafferty, FAIA, and Craig Rafferty, FAIA
Fred Bentz, FAIA, and Milo Thompson, FAIA
Linda Mack, Journalist
Gar Hargens, AIA, with regard to his work with Winston and Elizabeth Close and his own work
William Beyer, FAIA, and Thomas Meyer, FAIA, with regard to their work with Thomas Hodne and James Stageberg
David Salmela, FAIA
Bette Hammel, Writer
Mike McGuire, Architect

This winter, we will work with our videographers, Lisa Blackstone and Bill Olexy, to review each of the roughly 90-minute interviews to identify key passages for inclusion in 15-minute edited versions. For all interviews, the full version and transcript are intended for the historical record. The summary with added images will be posted on the Internet on a dedicated site.

This project is funded by a grant from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. We are documenting each stage of our first-year process for the final grant report this spring. We intend to reapply for future funding to continue the interview process for two more years. Special thanks to our interviewers: Rolf Anderson, Carol Ahlgren, Tom Fisher, Jane Hession, Judy Kurtz, and Frank Martin.

MNSAH – OUR PURPOSE IS TO:

- Broaden awareness of our architectural heritage
- Promote research and provide a forum for the exchange of ideas related to architectural history
- Offer opportunities to personally experience significant architectural sites, structures, and landscapes
- Promote the preservation and recording of important architecture
- Cooperate with learned and professional societies in the pursuit of common objectives
- Seek financial support from individuals, philanthropic organizations, and foundations in the furtherance of chapter objectives
- Act as an agent for the safekeeping and distribution of funds given to it for these purposes

MNSAH's Fall Tour of vernacular stone buildings in St. Paul's West Seventh Street neighborhood was so popular that two sheep broke out from their yard to join the event!
Photo courtesy Rolf Anderson.



MNSAH NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND BYLAW CHANGE

MNSAH members who attend the annual meeting on March 16, 2016, will vote on the following slate of officers and board members submitted by the nominating committee (Rolf Anderson, Anita Hawks, and Gary Reetz). New board nominations may come from the floor.

PRESIDENT	<i>Kristin Anderson</i>
VICE PRESIDENT	<i>Dennis Gimmestad</i>
TREASURER	<i>Rolf Anderson</i>
SECRETARY	<i>Deb Ford</i>
AT LARGE	<i>Barbara Bezat</i>
	<i>Robert Frame</i>
	<i>Jo Davison</i>
	<i>Gary Reetz</i>
	<i>Anita Hawks</i>
	<i>Scott Rohr</i>

All officers are nominated for a one-year term. New board members Barbara Bezat, Robert Frame, and Scott Rohr (see bios below) will serve for a two-year term. Board members Kristin Anderson, Rolf Anderson, Jo Davison, Gary Reetz, and Anita Hawks are nominated for an additional two-year term. The remaining board members will be serving the second year of the two-year term to which they were elected in 2015.

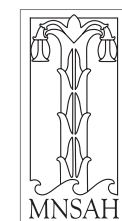
Barbara Bezat is the former archivist at Northwest Architectural Archives at the University of Minnesota, retiring at the end of 2014 after 24 years. During her tenure she assisted innumerable researchers, scholars, instructors, students, architects, engineers, and property owners in tapping the resources of the archive. Barb promoted and cultivated the growth of the collections by engaging the preservation community, and shepherded the digitization of the collections.

Robert Frame is Senior Historian in the Minneapolis office of Mead & Hunt Engineers, where he specializes in historic bridge survey and rehabilitation projects. In previous lives, he was executive director of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, associate curator of the James J. Hill Papers, chair of the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, and an architectural historian with the State Historic Preservation Office. In addition to historic bridges, Bob also has worked extensively with grain elevators and flour mills and is completing a history of Minnesota flour milling for the University of Minnesota Press. He lives in the 1859 Shilliger-Brings House featured on the 2015 MNSAH Fall Tour.

Scott Rohr has worked as a musician, in the publishing industry, and currently, as co-owner of The Yarnery on Grand Avenue in Saint Paul. His first experience with MNSAH was presenting a performance lecture to our members, exploring architectural references in the piano music of Malcolm Williamson, Claude Debussy, and François Couperin at a MNSAH Sponsor Event. Scott has also served as a Gebhard Award judge.

All MNSAH members present at the annual meeting will also vote on the following bylaw change:

ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS SECTION 1
Board Members shall serve a term of two (2) years ... Terms are renewable for five (5) consecutive terms for a maximum total of ten (10) years.



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Over the past two years, MNSAH has been involved in several efforts to advocate for the preservation of a number of historic properties. Three of our initiatives are described below in order to share our efforts with our members. The goals and objectives of each initiative vary, although they all align with our mission to advocate for the preservation of the built environment.



14th Street Southeast. Photo courtesy Preserve Historic Dinkytown.

DINKYTOWN For nearly two years MNSAH has been supporting the effort to preserve Dinkytown, an historic area near the University of Minnesota that has been facing intense development pressure. High-rise construction is dramatically changing the landscape in many areas surrounding the University and has resulted in the demolition of many existing buildings. We actively supported the efforts of Preserve Historic Dinkytown (PHD), a non-profit that formed specifically for the purpose of advocating on behalf of Dinkytown. We attended many meetings, prepared letters, and offered advice.

After a developer applied for demolition permits in 2014 to remove three buildings within the core area of Dinkytown in order to build a large hotel, the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) requested a study to determine if Dinkytown qualifies for historic designation. The study concluded that Dinkytown qualifies as a local historic district for both its history and architecture. Dinkytown served as a significant neighborhood commercial

district and in time became an important center for student and cultural activity. Bob Dylan lived in Dinkytown and his time there is said to have had a meaningful impact on his musical style. Dinkytown was also an important location during the era of student activism. Perhaps Dinkytown is best known for its eclectic Bohemian feel that gives it such a unique and well known sense of place. It is clearly one of the most distinctive destinations in the city. But even though Dinkytown was determined eligible for historic designation, political support was required to achieve this designation.

MNSAH attended a meeting of the Minneapolis HPC and spoke in support of designation. The HPC concurred and voted to designate Dinkytown as a local historic district. The study recommended designation for 29 buildings. Next, the Zoning and Planning Commission had to approve designation. At this point, council member Jacob Frey, who represents Dinkytown, requested reducing the size of the district by removing six buildings from the proposed district. In July 2015, the city council proceeded to approve the smaller district for designation. The good news is that the majority of Dinkytown's buildings will be saved and this important area will be preserved.

Twice we called on MNSAH members to write to the Minneapolis City Council to express your support for the preservation of Dinkytown. You have been heard!!



The two-story portion of the Handicraft Guild complex will be demolished. The three-story section at the right will be preserved. Photo courtesy Andrew Dipper.

HANDICRAFT GUILD The Handicraft Guild complex is located in downtown Minneapolis at the intersection of Marquette Avenue and South 10th Street. The complex consists of three components: the original 1907 building by William Channing Whitney, a 1914 addition by Hewitt and Brown, and a 1922 addition by Croft and Boerner. In this case, MNSAH's primary goal was to document the well-designed and finely-crafted 1914 and 1922 buildings, which are slated for demolition.

The 1907 building was used exclusively by the Guild, which is considered a very important organization in the Arts and Crafts movement. The building contained classrooms, studios, workshops, and an auditorium, as well as a salesroom and tea room. But the history of the 1914 and 1922 additions was less clear. There were commercial storefronts at street level and what appeared to be space for artist's studios on the second floor, where large monitors and skylights illuminate the interior. All three components were designated as historic by the City of Minneapolis. But when a prior owner challenged the designation, the courts only upheld the designation on the 1907 building, stating there was insufficient documentation about the additions.

Plans are now underway to demolish the 1914 and 1922 additions and build a high-rise apartment building. The 1907 building will serve as the lobby for the new building and provide space for other functions. When MNSAH became aware of this situation, we attended a meeting of the Minneapolis HPC and asked if the additions would be documented prior to demolition. City staff replied that because the additions did not retain historic designation, the City did not have the regulatory authority to request documentation from the property owner. MNSAH then offered to document the buildings, which was applauded by the HPC.

Historians Marcia Anderson, Barb Bezat, and I began by researching the complex to see if we could fill the gaps in its history. We also enlisted Bill Olexy to photograph both the exteriors and interiors of the buildings. We also conducted video interviews with some of the long-time tenants including Robert Black of Dahl Violin and Claire Givens and Andrew Dipper of Givens Violin. We were amazed to find that the upper floors of the 1907 building were filled with young artists who carried on the creative tradition of the Handicraft Guild up to the present day.

MNSAH also offered a tour to our members so they could experience the 1907 building before it is perhaps irrevocably changed, and before the 1914 and 1922 additions are demolished. Clearly, this is not the ideal outcome. We believe the entire complex should be preserved and restored. But based on the realities of the situation, we felt compelled to at least document the Handicraft Guild complex in order to provide an important record for future generations.



The Stone Saloon. Photo courtesy Tom Schroeder.

THE STONE SALOON On a more positive note, MNSAH also advocated for the Stone Saloon, which was one of the featured properties on MNSAH's 2015 Fall Tour in St. Paul's West 7th Street neighborhood. We supported the efforts of Tom Schroeder, who is the property owner. Tom's meticulous research revealed that the building is one of the city's earliest surviving examples of a mixed-use commercial/residential building. Constructed in 1857, it is the only surviving saloon building from the city's Territorial period. Tom is restoring the building back to its original appearance. We supported Tom's efforts to locally designate the Stone Saloon as an historic building, along with four other stone buildings in the area. We sent a letter in support of designation and also voiced our support at a meeting of the St. Paul HPC. We also voiced our support for granting a "historic use variance" to allow the Stone Saloon to return to its original use and re-open as a neighborhood tap house and microbrewery serving German-style lager beer. We also sent a letter of support to the St. Paul Zoning Committee, which also had to approve the request.

I'm pleased to report that the Stone Saloon has been designated as an historic building and the "historic use variance" has been approved. Tom has invited MNSAH back to the Stone Saloon once it reopens. We look forward to returning to this remarkable building as well as raising a beer in celebration.

CONCLUSION I think you'll agree from these three cases that advocacy can be a complex undertaking. Advocacy can be challenging and time-consuming, and there's often an emotional component as the outcomes can range from a great success to a considerable disappointment. But even difficult situations may teach us something or yield certain positive results. MNSAH will continue our advocacy efforts as we work to preserve historic properties for the education and enjoyment of future generations.