Our former print newsletter, *The Glessner Journal*, is no longer being produced. In place of that publication, we started issuing an e-newsletter in April 2020. Since we do not have an email address for you (or you indicated your preference for a print copy), we are summarizing some of the highlights of the issues published from mid-November through early February. We hope you enjoy reading through the articles and will go online to read our blog articles and other web content and look at our YouTube videos. The e-newsletter is currently being issued via email on the first and third Wednesday of each month. If you would like to start receiving our e-newsletter, please send your email address to William Tyre at wtyre@glessnerhouse.org.

**$50,000 grant received from State of Illinois**

Glessner House has been awarded a $50,000 Business Interruption Grant from the State of Illinois. The grant utilizes funds provided to the state through the CARES Act to assist businesses and non-profit organizations that have experienced a significant decline in revenue since March 2020 due to the pandemic. Funds will be used to cover staff salaries, utilities, and other operational expenses.

The grant comes at an ideal moment, on the heels of the American Alliance of Museums issuing its second report on the impact of COVID-19 on U.S. museums, which included these sobering statistics:
- Nearly 30% of museums have not reopened since the pandemic started;
- One-third of museum directors noted there was a "significant risk" that their museums would close permanently by fall 2021;
- 53% of museums have had to furlough or lay off staff, and approximately 30% of staff are currently out of work;
- Museums have lost 35% of their revenue in 2020, and anticipate losing an additional 28% of their revenue in 2021.

We are grateful to currently be in much better shape than many other museums, due to the BIG funding, our Payroll Protection Program funding, and most especially the INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY OF OUR SUPPORTERS! We simply could not do it without you. Thank you one and all!

**Second round of Payroll Protection Program funding received**

The COVID-19 relief bill signed into law on December 27, 2020, provided for a second round of Payroll Protection Program forgivable loans, designed to help small businesses and non-profits cover payroll expenses during this period of closure and reduced revenues. Glessner House was first in line submitting our application to Lakeside Bank, and we were notified on January 27 that we had been approved for $49,295 (the full amount of our request), which represents 2-1/2 months of salaries, benefits, and payroll expenses. We are grateful for this second round of funding, which will ensure that we can keep our hard-working staff at full salary, as they continue planning out 2021 and our gradual phase-in of normal operations. Special thanks to our friends at Lakeside Bank for their assistance!
House tours to resume March 3

Tours of Glessner House will resume on Wednesday March 3. For the present time, we will maintain our reduced schedule of tours on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday at 11:30am, 1:00pm, and 2:30pm. To ensure the safety of our guests and docents and to comply with state and city COVID-19 guidelines, tours will be limited to four people and everyone will be required to wear a face mask and observe proper social distancing.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and can be obtained on our website. Members need to enter their code at check out to receive their complimentary tour. We look forward to welcoming people back to the house!

Booker T. Washington in Chicago: Exhorter for Black prosperity; Pacifier of White anxieties
Sunday, February 28 at 2:00pm
Free admission, advance registration required on website

Often condemned by northern Blacks for acquiescing to southern white racism, Booker T. Washington assumed a different stance in the North, especially when dealing with wealthy and influential whites. Hence, he earned his title of being the “Wizard.” In Chicago, where he was given to employing militant tones to Black audiences, offering pliant messages to White philanthropists, and delivering contradictory, but effective messages on race, to mixed groups.

This online presentation will be given by Dr. Christopher R. Reed, professor emeritus of history at Roosevelt University, and recognized as “the Dean of Black Chicago History.” Co-sponsored by Friends of Historic Second Church, Second Presbyterian Church, and Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Church.

Behind-the-Scenes Architecture Tours resume April 17

Have you already taken a regular tour, and are looking for something different? This exclusive tour explores the significant architecture of Glessner House. Controversial at the time of its completion in 1887, it foreshadowed the development of modern residential architecture, and architect H. H. Richardson had a profound impact on architects to follow, including Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. This special two-hour tour will focus on the architecture from basement to attic. Attendees will see areas not included on public tours as well as objects rarely shown, including Richardson's original sketch.

Third Saturday of each month at 10:00am; $25 per person/$20 for members; purchase tickets online
Thank you to our donors!

On behalf of the board, staff, and Narcissus (shown at right; he does occasionally think about someone other than himself), we would like to thank all of our generous donors, old and new, for their gifts during the period October 1 through December 31, 2020. We were especially delighted with the incredible response to our Annual Fund, most welcome at the end of a difficult year for all!

Gifts also helped to fund two special projects - the installation of reproduction Peacock Feathers drapes in Fanny's Dressing Room (in memory of Alice J. Bryce, see below) and the restoration of George Glessner's bedroom (in memory of docent Karen Oliver).

A full list of donors can be viewed on the website,

**Peacock Feathers drapes installed in Fanny’s Dressing Room**

On January 16, new drapes were installed on the window in Fanny's former dressing room. The fabric, known as Peacock Feathers, features overlapping feathers on a dark blue background. The pattern was created by English designer Arthur Silver (1853-1896) and was marketed through the Regent Street shop of Liberty & Co., Ltd. in London. Liberty was known for promoting the Aesthetic style in England, and the peacock feather was a popular motif. Peacock Feathers was first produced in 1887 and was reproduced in 1975 for the Liberty exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Our drapery panels are made from the 1975 reprinted fabric. Many of the windows in Glessner house were hung with Morris & Co. drapes, but a few were not, so we are pleased to introduce this popular pattern produced in England at the same time as the Morris & Co. patterns that adorn other windows in the house.

The drapery panels were donated by Deneen Marie Bryce in memory of Carl Kannewurf, who had them made for his Evanston home. Donations received from Gwen Carrion, Kathy Cunningham, Francesca Peppiatt, Charlotte Tyre, and William Tyre, in memory of Deneen's mother, Alice J. Bryce, covered the cost of acquiring the brass drapery rod, finials, brackets, rings, tieback hooks, and tiebacks to complete the installation.
Richardson’s Brookline home threatened with demolition

On Tuesday, December 29, the Historic Preservation Commission for the Town of Brookline granted an 18-month demolition delay for Richardson’s home at 25 Cottage Street, as well as the adjoining houses to either side (one of which was the home of landscape architect John Charles Olmsted). The three properties were acquired by a developer in 2020, who immediately submitted an application for all to be demolished.

Nearly 300 letters, emails, and comments were received from across the country, all favoring the preservation of Richardson’s home. We are delighted by the outcome of the hearing, but realize the hardest part remains - finding a viable plan to preserve the house and its landscape.

Great Chicago Fire Gala postponed until September 10

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we have moved the date of our Great Chicago Fire Gala from May to September, in the hopes that life will have largely returned to "normal," and that we will be able to host a large gathering at Glessner House by that time.

Dinner, program, a few very special surprises, and an auction will be among the activities, and options will be available for our out-of-town supporters to join us remotely. Look for more details in early spring.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for the event, please contact our development manager, Francesca Peppiatt, at fpeppiatt@glessnerhouse.org.

2019 symposium papers published in Nineteenth Century magazine

The Fall 2020 issue of Nineteenth Century, the magazine of the Victorian Society in America (VSA), features two articles about Glessner House. “Mr. & Mrs. John J. Glessner Request the Pleasure . . .” by William Tyre, details the elaborate dinner parties that took place in the house. “Eighteen Hours with Mattie Williamson” by Justin Miller, shows all the work that went into these dinners behind-the-scenes with the Glessners’ cook. These two articles, along with “Dining Out in Nineteenth- and early Twentieth Century Chicago” by food historian Bruce Kraig, were presented at the Glessner House/VSA symposium on kitchens and dining held in November 2019.

Limited copies available, just $12.50 each ($11.25 for members). Purchase through our online store or call 312-326-1480.

World’s Columbian Exposition items loaned to St. Louis museum

Eighteen items from the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 were loaned to the Field House Museum for their current exhibit documenting the experiences of the "children's poet" Eugene Field and his family during the fair. Roswell Field (Eugene's father) purchased the home at 634 South Broadway in 1850 and is remembered today as the attorney who argued the Dred Scott case before the Supreme Court. The house was saved from demolition in 1934 and has operated as a historic house museum since 1936, making it the oldest house museum in St. Louis. The exhibit runs through June.
Secrets of Glessner House
Part 12: The Beamed Ceilings
The beamed ceilings, found in several of the main rooms of the house, are some of the most distinctive features in the Glessners' home. In this installment of Secrets, learn why some of the beams are cracked, what caused the noticeable sag in the main hall ceiling beams, and how you can tell which beams are solid timber and which conceal rolled iron beams.

Secrets of Glessner House
Part 13: Richardson’s Monogram
Have you ever noticed Richardson’s distinctive monogram carved into the engaged second-floor granite column directly above the front door? In our newest Secrets video, learn how the monogram came to be placed here, and which other buildings by Richardson also bear his mark.

Secrets of Glessner House
Part 14: Abingdon Abbey
The Glessners’ photograph of this building at Abingdon Abbey in England strongly influenced the design of their house. But why did they have the photo in the first place (they never visited England) and what exactly is the history of the building depicted? Take a deep dive into this mystery as we explore Abingdon Abbey and its impact on Richardson and his design for the Glessners’ home.
TAKE A DEEP DIVE INTO A TOPIC OF YOUR CHOICE WITH THESE RECENT ARTICLES ON THE GLESSNER HOUSE BLOG
Visit glessnerhouse.blogspot.com

A Toast to the Glessners: Christmas 1924

On Christmas Day 1924, architect Hermann V. von Holst (shown at right), a close friend of the Glessners, wrote and delivered a touching and heartfelt toast celebrating the beautiful spirit that the Glessners shared with all those around them. His words are every bit as moving as "God Bless Us, Everyone!" and "Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." We just purchased the original toast on eBay and wanted to share it with all of you.

Chicago’s Century of Architectural Progress

Exactly 90 years ago, the Chicago Tribune ran a four-part series documenting Chicago's architectural history in its first 100 years. In this installment of the blog, we'll look at part two, which covered the period from the Great Chicago Fire in 1871 until the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Thirteen sites were selected, including two by H. H. Richardson, but sadly only four survive today. Learn the history and fate of the sites judged in 1930-31 to be the best examples of Chicago's architecture from the last decades of the 19th century.

Chicago’s Forgotten World’s Fair: The American Negro Exposition of 1940

To honor Black History Month, we look back at Chicago's forgotten World's Fair - the American Negro Exposition of 1940, which took place at the Chicago Coliseum, located just a few blocks from Glessner House on Wabash Avenue at 15th Street. The fair received hundreds of endorsements from businesses and governmental agencies, and two appropriations of $75,000 each from the State of Illinois and U.S. government. Learn about the planning for the fair, what attendees saw, and a long-forgotten piece of the Exposition which just recently came to light.
John Glessner had several encounters with Woodrow Wilson through the years, the first in November 1902, when Wilson, newly installed president of Princeton University, was guest of honor at a dinner sponsored by the Commercial Club of Chicago. In April 1908 the Glessners attended a small supper in honor of Wilson held at the home of Cyrus McCormick.

Immediately after Wilson, then governor of New Jersey, received the presidential nomination at the 1912 Democratic National Convention, John Glessner sent a note of congratulations, acknowledged with the following note on July 9:

"My dear Sir: I beg to acknowledge with the warmest appreciation your kind message of congratulations. Such evidence of generous feeling gives me great gratification. Cordially yours, Woodrow Wilson."

On January 11, 1913, Wilson arrived in Chicago and was met by a small reception committee of the Commercial Club at the Englewood station. The Chicago Tribune reported that "he smiled at the small crowd which stood a short distance away and small parts of the smile were wafted between the shoulders and arms of the fifty policemen under Chief McWeeny, half a dozen members of the reception committee and a dozen plain clothes men." He was escorted into a waiting automobile and transported to the home of David B. Jones, 1435 N. Astor Street (now the home of Gov. J. B. Pritzker).

That evening, he was welcomed at a banquet hosted by the Commercial Club at the Blackstone Hotel. Frances Glessner and Frances Glessner Lee secured tickets to sit in the gallery to hear Wilson's address after dinner; a total of 354 men and 120 ladies listened to Wilson's speech.

John Glessner recorded the following in the journal:

"Gov. Wilson's address was interesting and well expressed and very adroit. While the newspapers had said he would explain his policy regarding 'The Business Future in the U.S.' we all knew he would not go on record or be specific... It was a notable gathering at the dinner - the persons of substance and importance and achievement."

The Glessners had the opportunity to hear President Wilson speak again on January 31, 1916 when he addressed The Industrial Club of Chicago at the Auditorium Theatre.

The photo above shows, in addition to Glessner and Wilson: Adolph J. Sabath, congressman from Chicago's fifth district from 1907 until his death in 1952; Clyde M. Carr, president of Joseph T. Ryerson & Son Steel Co. and president of the Commercial Club; and Charles L. Strobel, president of Strobel Steel Construction and an engineer that helped develop steel frame construction in Chicago.
Tiffany Studios, best known for its leaded-glass windows, lamps, and vases, also produced a wide variety of decorative objects for the home, which it termed “fancy goods.” Among the most popular of these goods were items made for use on the desk, created in twenty different patterns. A pen holder and stamp box, both in the Pine Needle pattern, sit on Frances Glessner’s desk in her bedroom – but one is by Tiffany, and the other is not.

Tiffany’s production of fancy goods began in 1897 when he added a foundry for making metal objects to his Corona glass factory in Queens, New York. Cast objects were usually made of bronze, and many feature an antiqued or patinated green finish, achieved by placing the object in a chemical bath. The earliest desk sets, comprised of at least six pieces, were produced in the Grapevine and Pine Needle motifs, both of which incorporated etched metal and glass. The motif was created by applying an acid which ate through the thin metal sheets to create the filigree pattern. (Tiffany used a similar process to create his flashed glass). The metal is backed with pieces of slag glass, with green and white marbled glass used for the Glessner pieces.

The pen tray, which was made by Tiffany Studios, sits on bun feet, measures 9-3/4” long by 2-7/8” wide, and is designed to hold three pens, held apart by the three ridges in the two metal supports. The stamp box, which is not by Tiffany Studios, sits on ball feet, measures 4-5/8” wide by 3-1/4” long and is hinged. The box also features beading along the inner and outer edges of the lid, and along the base. These details were found on Tiffany pieces, but the clue is that the stamp box bears no maker’s mark. The pen tray is clearly stamped “Tiffany Studios 1004.” A company known as Riviere Studios produced items in the Pine Needle pattern which were nearly identical to those made by Tiffany, but the pieces do not bear a maker’s mark. Since the stamp box is not marked, it is safe to assume it is a Riviere Studios copy of an actual Tiffany box.

Although fancy goods were considered stock items by Tiffany Studios and were relatively inexpensive compared to lamps and vases, distribution was still carefully controlled. In New York, items could only be obtained at the Tiffany Studios retail outlet or at Tiffany & Co; in Chicago, they were retailed exclusively through Marshall Field & Co., which is where Frances Glessner most likely acquired her pen tray. Tiffany continued to expand its line of merchandise that was appropriate for gifts, adding picture frames, calendar holders, planters, mirrors, ash trays, clocks, dishes, and more, in patterns to match the desk sets, or in their own unique designs. Production was greatly reduced during World War I, and no pieces bearing the Tiffany Studios stamp were made after 1918. New pieces were produced under the Tiffany Furnaces name; the furnaces and foundry were closed permanently in 1938.
One of the most prominent objects on display in the house is the large framed portrait of architect Henry Hobson Richardson, hung in the main hall by the staircase. It is one of the few items to have remained in the house continuously since 1887, the deed to Armour Institute in 1938 specifically noting that the portrait must always remain on display. The portrait is a monochromatic copy of the original oil painting produced with the heliotype process, which involves printing from a plate coated with gelatin. The portrait was in process in February 1886 when the Glessners visited the Boston studio of English artist Hubert von Herkomer as noted in Frances Glessner's journal, "After luncheon we went to see Hubert Herkomer the artist. We had a letter to him from Mr. Shepley. He left the room full of people and sat and talked with us. There we saw the portrait he has painted of Mr. Richardson. We had a note and little picture (present to me) and his wife's epitaph sent to us today by him." Two months later, the Glessners purchased two small watercolors from Herkomer, which are displayed in the parlor over the music cabinet.

The original oil painting, which measures 44.5" x 56.25" was placed over the fireplace in the main parlor of Richardson's Brookline home; it remained there until the family sold the house in 2000. It was purchased by the National Portrait Gallery in 2009, where it is on permanent display in East Gallery 120.

John Glessner recorded the acquisition of the portrait in his 1923 The Story of a House: "This portrait was painted under peculiar circumstances. Herkomer had designed for himself a house in [Bushey, Hertfordshire, England], and was not satisfied with the elevation. Coming to this country with some pictures, he called on Richardson with the request that he be permitted to paint his portrait. "But I haven't money to pay for it," objected Richardson. "You don't need to pay money for it," said Herkomer. "If you will sketch an elevation for my house I'll paint your portrait." And that was all the contract. The elevation was drawn, the portrait was painted. Herkomer showed us the work and promised to etch it and give me the first signed proof, and Richardson agreed to sign also, but alas the great architect died and his widow was unwilling that the portrait be taken to England to be etched. So I lost my double-signed proof; but Mrs. Richardson had the portrait photographed . . . two copies printed and the plate destroyed. This is one of those two copies, and now hangs in the hall." (The whereabouts of the second copy is unknown).

The portrait shows Richardson seated in his study, surrounded by favorite objects. His straight on pose and the large size of the canvas draw in the viewer. The Glessners' copy is smaller, measuring 28" x 35.25" and is mounted in a simple oak frame which is screwed into the paneling of the main hall. Around 1925, John Glessner inserted a small note from Richardson into the lower left hand corner, apparently to substitute for the original signature promised for the etching that never came to be. The photo shown above was taken by Richard Nickel about 1966.
Ongoing ways to support and engage with Glessner House

Face masks will be a part of our daily lives for the foreseeable future. For a donation of $25 or more to the Glessner House COVID-19 Relief Fund, you will receive your own Morris face mask, which combines safety and style into one. To make your donation and receive your face mask (we will select the pattern for you), simply mail a check made payable to “Glessner House” or make your donation online. Your mask will ship within 24 hours of the receipt of your donation. Masks will also be available in our shop during all regular tours once we reopen on March 3.

Take a virtual tour of the house online! The link is permanently posted at the top of our home page.

Make a gift to our annual fund to provide ongoing operating support. Or become a member or renew your membership to receive valuable benefits and show your support for Glessner House.

Our online store offers a variety of publications that provide perfect reading material to learn more about Glessner House in addition to the new items noted above. Browse our shop online today.

Select Glessner House as your charity of choice while shopping on Amazon. Select Glessner House on the AmazonSmile page, and then continue shopping as you normally would.

Our best wishes for the new year! We continue to wish everyone peace and good health and look forward to being with you soon!

Bill Tyre, Executive Director & Curator

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