



Friends of Historic Second Church



THE HERALD

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ARCHITECT JOHN ADDISON *by Nate Lielasus*

When one thinks of the architects who shaped Historic Second Church, James Renwick and Howard Van Doren Shaw quickly come to mind, but what about John Addison? Like Renwick and Shaw, Addison was deeply involved in the design of Second Presbyterian Church and left his own lasting mark on its architecture.



John Addison was born in Brighouse, Yorkshire, England on April 28, 1847. He completed his education in his homeland and, when just 19, moved to New York where he settled in Brooklyn, married a young New Yorker, Henrietta Thompson, and quickly began a family. Addison found employment at the prestigious firm of Renwick & Sands.

By 1849 Renwick had designed Second Presbyterian's Gothic Revival "Spotted

Church" on the corner of Washington and Wabash and sent Asher Carter from New York to Chicago to finalize plans and oversee construction. When the church decided to relocate to a prosperous residential district south of downtown, they again asked Renwick to build them a church.

By this time, Asher Carter had retired from his Chicago-based firm. Renwick turned to John Addison to finish the new design. Renwick stayed in New York to manage his own practice and in 1872 Addison relocated to Chicago and took charge of the Second Presbyterian project.

Addison arrived to a city devastated by the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 but full of opportunities for a young architect. Renwick's Spotted Church was a gutted shell amongst utter ruin but the city was clearing away the wreckage and rapidly rebuilding on the ashes. Addison established a practice in the Otis Block at the corner of LaSalle and Madison streets (1873, demolished) and quickly picked up additional commissions while managing construction of Second Presbyterian.

Renwick specialized in churches and one of the first commissions John Addison received in Chicago was for a sacred space – St. Faiths Chapel for the Church of the Ascension (Elm street near LaSalle, 1874, extant). The church's former complex had been destroyed in the Fire and while the congregation lacked the funds to fully rebuild, construction of a chapel at the back of their lot was a step towards recovery. While on a much smaller scale than Second Presbyterian, the Chapel building, now known as St. Michael's Hall and tucked behind the later-built church building at 1133 N. LaSalle Drive, shares many qualities with Second Presbyterian. Both exhibit Renwick's influence and share similar design details, especially in their windows and buttresses and in the treatment of their rusticated stone walls, constructed of the same bituminous limestone quarried from Chicago's West Side.

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and Second Presbyterian proved to be fruitful patrons for Addison. Soon after Addison completed St. Faiths, he received another commission from the Episcopal

Church, the Cathedral Church of Saints Peter and Paul and Rectory at Washington Street near Peoria (both completed in 1879 and destroyed by fire in 1921). Through work at Second Presbyterian Addison was also introduced to Charles P. Kellogg, a member of the building committee. Mr. Kellogg hired Addison to design his mansion at 1923 S. Prairie Avenue (completed 1875, demolished).

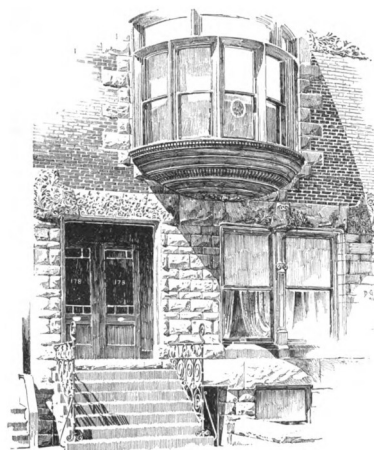
In 1884, ten years after Second Presbyterian was dedicated, the widow of George Armour offered to fund completion of the bell tower in memory of her husband and Addison was chosen for the job. The base of the tower was included in Renwick's design from 1874 but the tower was only depicted as a roughly sketched outline similar to the small tower of the Spotted Church (1849-1851, lost) and the towers of Renwick's Calvary Church in New York (Church, 1848, extant; towers, demolished). Addison designed a massive Norman Revival belfry. Sadly, his pyramidal slate-shingled steeple was removed in 1959 after being damaged in a windstorm.

At his bustling practice, Addison designed numerous houses, flats and apartment buildings. For many years, he worked in partnership with August Fiedler on homes for the wealthy. As his stature grew, Addison took on commissions for hotels and office buildings.

In 1884 John Addison was invited by Gen. A. C. Ducat to

enter a private competition for the design of a ten-story office building in downtown Chicago for the Home Insurance Company. William Le Baron Jenney, who ended up winning the competition with his groundbreaking entry, and F. Bauman were also competitors. Though Addison lost the commission he soon had his own office-building project - the Hansen Building (1885, demolished), a five-story terra cotta structure at Dearborn and Washington Streets. The Hansen was a well-designed Chicago style office tower with crisp brick piers expressing verticality and a heavy stone base grounding the building.

In 1887 John Addison built a home for his family at 178 Dearborn (now 706 N Dearborn Street, extant). The house is a mix of elements - a wonderful oriel window bulges from the stone façade while a pasted-on pediment seems too delicate for the Romanesque base.



FRONT IN DEARBORN AVENUE.
John Addison, Architect.

Detail illustration of Addison house from an 1895 issue of *Harper's*

In 1890 John Addison became president of the Chicago Chapter

of the American Institute of Architects and later was named president of the state chapter when the two organizations merged. He was active in the Iroquois Club, serving as vice president for many years and, in 1894, completed a project for their clubhouse.

Addison was known amongst his contemporaries for his passion for baseball. Addison helped form the Brotherhood of Professional Base-Ball Players, the sports first professional player's union. In the Baseball War, members of the Brotherhood, which included over half of the players in the National League, were led by John Montgomery Ward to leave the National League and form the Player's League. The League lasted for a single season in 1890 during which John Addison was vice-president of the league and owner of the Chicago Pirates, rivals of Chicago's National League team, the White Stockings. After 1890 the league disbanded and the Pirates were bought out by the Colts, the team that later became the Cubs. As part of the sale, Addison received stock in the National League's New York Giants.

John Addison retired in 1913 and died of kidney failure on Jan 25, 1932 at the age of 84. He is buried in Rosehill Cemetery next to his wife and four of their children in a leafy plot of Section K near the lake. While not widely remembered today, Addison left a lasting mark on the built environment and culture of Chicago.

CHURCH DOORS – OUR WINDOW TO THE WORLD

First impressions matter. That is why Friends will undertake to repair and repaint three exterior doorways that have not received care in decades. Two pairs of doors are on the south side and one on the north side of the church. The paint on the surface of these doors is peeling or missing altogether, allowing the elements to distress the underlying wood. After extensive scraping and surface repair, the doors will be repainted in the color originally selected by James Renwick when the church was built in 1874. The work done previously by Friends on the east-facing library door in 2013 and the beautiful front doors in 2010 attests to the difference this preservation project will make in the appearance of the church exterior and the welcome it will convey to the public. The total cost of the project is \$5,000. Donations are now being accepted. If you would like to make a gift, please mark your contribution “Door Project.”



DOCENT TRAINING

If you love great art and architecture and would enjoy sharing it with others, now is the time to sign up for 2014 docent training. Friends of Historic Second Church will conduct the five-night docent training program on Thursdays April 24, May 1, May 8, May 22 and May 29 beginning at 6:30 pm each evening. Training takes place in the sanctuary of the church, 1936 South Michigan Avenue.

Topics discussed will include the Arts and Crafts movement, the church's American and English stained glass windows, the Pre-Raphaelite murals, Gothic Revival architecture, architects James Renwick and Howard Van Doren Shaw, artists Frederic Clay Bartlett and Louis Comfort Tiffany and preservation philosophy and techniques. Please visit www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org and click “Become a Docent” under *Get Involved*, and download the application form. Completed applications can be emailed to historic2ndchurch@yahoo.com. Call 800-657-0687 for additional information.



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

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 world-wide audience about its historical and cultural significance, and share those resources with the community.

At left: Michael Burlingham, author and great-grandson of Louis Comfort Tiffany, visited Second Presbyterian Church on November 15, 2013 during his participation in a Tiffany symposium sponsored by the Driehaus Museum.

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NEW BOARD MEMBERS

At its February Board of Directors meeting, Friends of Historic Second Church welcomed two new board members, both of whom have been actively volunteering for Friends for several years beginning as docents. Chicago native **Mary Bucaro** earned a Juris Doctorate from Loyola School of Law and for most of her legal career was a prosecutor. She served as an Assistant Cook County State's Attorney for 15 years, after which she worked for Illinois Attorney Lisa Madigan as an Assistant Attorney General. Her admiration for interesting architecture made her an instant admirer of Second Presbyterian Church. In 2011 she became a member of Friends, in 2012 a docent, and in 2013 a key organizer of Friends' National Historic Landmark celebration events. **Nate Lielasus**, AIA, is a Chicago-based architect with Northworks Architects and Planners. He is a member of Landmarks Illinois, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, AIA Chicago, and a co-chair of the AIA Chicago Residential Knowledge Community. Nate received bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from Tulane University and a Certificate in Vernacular Architecture from Oxford Brookes University which he earned during a study year abroad in Oxford, England. Nate has written about architecture and history for the Save Prentice Coalition's "More than Mies" blog, and the Friends of Historic Second Church newsletter *The Herald*, and has given talks on these topics at AIA Chicago and at Second Presbyterian Church for Friends. Nate's partner and fellow docent, John Cramer, is a historic preservation consultant.

BOARD MEMBER TO LECTURE AT AIA CHICAGO

Nate Lielasus, AIA, Friends board member and author of three Friends newsletter articles, will be presenting his research during a lunchtime lecture to be held at the offices of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The lecture, entitled, "The Spotted Stone, Quarried in Chicago," will focus on a type of bituminous limestone quarried in the city and used in the construction of several significant buildings in the Midwest, including Second Presbyterian Church. The two types of limestone most commonly associated with the Chicago area are Joliet-Lemont limestone, used in the historic Chicago Water Tower, and Bedford limestone, still currently quarried in Indiana. Largely unknown today, the bituminous limestone found in Chicago was one of the few (if not the only) stone quarried within the city and used in the construction of buildings here.

The lecture will take place on Thursday, March 13 from 12:00 to 1:00pm at AIA Chicago, 35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 250. Admission is free to AIA members and \$15 for non-members. Register at: <https://www.aiachicago.org/events.asp>.

2014 LECTURE SERIES BEGINS MARCH 27

Friends announces the speakers for its 2014 series. The first lecture of the year, entitled "Shaw in England and the Reconstruction of Second Presbyterian," will be presented by Nate Lielasus, AIA. The lecture is scheduled for Thursday March 27.

On Thursday May 15, Friends will host its first book signing when author Susan O'Connor Davis will present excerpts from her book, *Historic Hyde Park*, published in 2013 by the University of Chicago Press. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing.

In October (date to be determined), art historian Dr. Debra Mancoff will present a lecture on her recent research on the Arts and Crafts movement. This lecture is co-sponsored by Glessner House Museum.

All lectures will be held at Second Presbyterian Church at 7:00pm, with tours, a reception, and light refreshments beginning at 6:00pm. Suggested donation for each lecture is \$5. Sign up for Friends email list to receive reminders about these lectures and all of our events at <http://www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org/contact.html>.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Restoration projects at Chicago’s only National Historic Landmark church are proceeding with the return of original paint colors, murals glowing in muted tones with the removal of 100 years of dust and dirt, and light fixtures cleaned and gleaming. Friends of Historic Second Church invites you to join this exciting journey to restore Second Presbyterian Church to its 1901 glory by becoming a member today. For our current members, we thank you for your past support and ask you to consider renewing your membership. Your membership also helps support Friends’ educational programs such as docent-led tours and the annual lecture series. Be a part of Chicago history. Simply complete and mail the form below or renew online at www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org.

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.



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**Friends of Historic
Second Church
gratefully acknowledges
the following
memberships,
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February 28, 2014.**

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