



The Alumni Association extends best wishes for a happy holiday season and best wishes for a healthy new year!

The Alumni Association's annual membership renewal season is underway. Please look for your renewal statement and respond promptly to avoid extra work for our all-volunteer staff and additional administrative expenses. Thanks to all those who have already renewed for 2020. A membership form is also attached.

In this issue, we feature several reports from students who attended the 2019 Chicago Summer School and a link to a special video from our favorite professor.

Many thanks to our members who have faithfully supported our efforts over the years to raise money for scholarships to the Summer Schools. Thanks to your support, we were able to support 2019 students with \$23,250 in scholarship funds. Our efforts to establish an Endowment Fund based on Jim Buttrick's \$100,000 matching grant has been wonderfully supported. To date, we have received \$55,095 in cash and \$28,100 in pledges. With your continued support, we hope to meet Jim's \$100,000 challenge early in 2020.



Andrea Crivello (Chicago 2019)

It was an incredible whirlwind of academic adventure in the Windy City of Chicago! I found myself propelled into an ideal marriage of lectures at the SAIC, coordinated around relevant site visits and tours of a comprehensive mix of institutions.

Our first day set the bar high with a lecture discussing the origins of Chicago, through to the present, that flowed seamlessly into an invigorating walk with fellow students through the Chicago Loop. Our course advisors animatedly pointed out key buildings, building technology, and influential architects. The history of the Chicago World's Fair was captivating, both the history of the past, and context to the present. Our day ended graciously being hosted by the Cliff Dwellers Club which boasted spectacular views and allowed for meaningful conversations getting to know course mates.



In the days that followed there was a balance of taking in the industrious excitement of Chicago balanced with more quiet days taking in the tranquility of sites like Crab Tree Farm and Graceland Cemetery. Among the memorable experiences were visits to the Auditorium Building and Rookery each with its own architectural magnificence.

The private tours of the Fine Arts Building, and the impressionist wing of the Art Institute allowed for a richer experience with critical thought and analysis.

Among the most impressive sites were Robie House, and the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio. It was engaging to see the parallels with vernacular architecture lecture by Richard Guy Wilson.



Visiting private homes and seeing less trafficked neighborhoods of Frank Lloyd Wright architecture gave an extra layer and understanding of different ways he achieved his signature style. With visits to sites like Jackson Park, we were able to discuss the difference between active and passive design features, and the role of Frederick Law Olmsted's living legacies.

I also appreciated visits to several Chapels, and Unity Temple. Regardless of religious affiliations, they are works of art in themselves, and important to the history of Victorian architecture. Ending our course with a boat tour by the CAC on the Chicago River was a visual sensation and brilliant way of bringing everything full circle.



Something that impressed me most was at our farewell dinner when our advisors gave each student a personalized gift that spoke volumes about how much they listened and got to know students in a thoughtful way in such a limited amount of time. Having personable, passionate colleagues, course leaders, lecturers, and guides makes a profound difference in the overall learning environment and experience. It was very apparent to me how the Victorian Society in America has careful stewardship of their programs and all who help fulfill or represent them.



Being from New York, perhaps the biggest take away for me is that I will never look at another building the same way, and I am a better person for it! Placing Chicago's Gold Coast with that of Long Island's, while comparing and contrasting historic contexts for the historic site I work for was an inspiring and rewarding process.

One of the biggest take aways in relation to my work was Frederick Law Olmsted and, as mentioned above, intellectually discussing the concept of active versus passive landscapes, one of which he developed at the historic site I help to represent. We are currently developing a cultural landscape report to restore certain areas of the grounds at Planting Fields, so seeing successful examples in Chicago was very informative.



Another topic I very much appreciated actively studying while partaking in VSA Chicago was the lecture on building technology which lead to a bonus lecture about Ragdale. Our site visit would have been lacking interesting context if we had not received that lecture.

Gaining new knowledge about buildings, especially historic Burnham and Root buildings, will help my working relationship with the development team at Planting Fields and allow me to better fulfill my role as a curator and an archival informant to site specific restoration projects.

Two of the other lectures that were especially enticing while complementing our site visits were those on department stores in Victorian society, and the lecture on Oscar Wilde. This experience would not have been possible without being a scholarship recipient. I am immensely appreciative and grateful for my experience and to all of the efforts of those involved with the funding and all components of the Victorian Society of America and their summer program. I will be singing praises whenever I can!



L. Bates Jaffe (Chicago 2019)

My time at the Chicago session of the Victorian Society of America's summer school program was particularly interesting for me, as I self-identify as a Modernist, yet chose to write my graduate thesis on Victoriana. I have always had an interest in the tastes, norms, and mores of Victorian society, but the process of writing my thesis brought my attention more closely to the aesthetics at the heart of the period.

It was a unique opportunity then, to attend the summer school, with not only its focus on Victorian society, but the bridge into early Modernism during our "American Roots of Modernism" tour. I saw this course as a chance to bridge my two areas of interest and passion, and the opportunity to draw together what were two disparate fields into a cohesive body of knowledge proved invaluable.

I again find myself in a unique position, having already started a position in the design department of an auction house, in that I can reflect on the impact that the summer school has had on my career, rather than speculating. I am fortunate, not only because of my personal passion for the topic but for my current research assignment, for the heavy focus on the work of Frank Lloyd Wright during the summer school.

In my current focus on the chairs of Wright, I am able to trace mentally the trajectory of his aesthetic and decide for upcoming auctions the appropriate venues for particular pieces. Unfortunately, for reasons of confidentiality, I cannot speak explicitly on the direct application of my knowledge gained during the program to my current research project.



I can say however, how incredible it is to look at a particular chair being assessed, or sought for auction, and have been in the home for which it was designed. The context truly gives me a sense of a circuit of knowledge being connected. The visits to Wright's home and studio make examining his drawing and sketches all the more rich, having been in the room where he created many of them.

My current position is fixed-term, and as I look forward to several opportunities in the decorative arts, my knowledge is greatly broadened by my time at the Victorian Summer School. I cannot think how it could have any impact but to enrich and encourage my future endeavors.

Katherine Koltiska (Chicago 2019)

As a student of nineteenth-century art and architecture, I am both thrilled and honored that I was able to participate in the Victorian Society in America's Summer School in Chicago. Furthermore, as a graduate student and young professional, I am grateful for the generous scholarship that made it possible for me to attend.

I enjoyed the experience of getting to walk through the locations on which I have read so much scholarship. One of my favorite parts of the program was our tour through the grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition. The physical experience of walking the paths, moving from one section of the fair to the next, and seeing the legacy of historic buildings in the distance, I began to more fully understand the spatial relationship between parts. I was pleased to gain a personal sense of the passage of the individual visitor through the astounding natural and architectural scale of the White City.



Participating in the Summer School has helped me to develop as a researcher, broadening my knowledge base and giving me valuable context for my dissertation work on art collectors in the Gilded Age Midwest. The Gold Coast, for instance, houses extant



examples of the kind of mansions I study on Cleveland's famed Millionaire's Row. I very much appreciated getting to walk along the lake shore, past the rows of historic city houses, through the residential neighborhoods, and into the opulent homes of the Victorian millionaires. This experience continued as we were led through the Art Institute, regaled with stories of the vivacious collectors whose personal collections came to be such a central feature of the institution.

The most satisfying moment of the program was one for which I was not at all prepared. We were led into what was once Marshall Field's department store, not knowing exactly what we were going to look at; we walked through the aisles, came to the cosmetics counters, and were casually encouraged to look up.

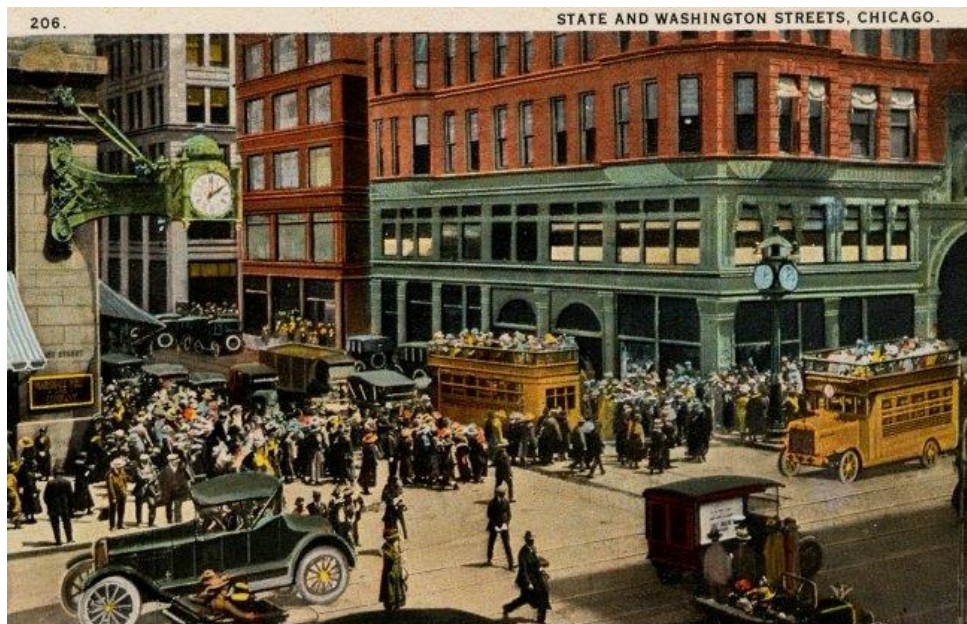




Struck by the glittering assemblage of Tiffany tesserae, we let out gasps and exclamations. In that instant, dazzled by the opulence, I truly felt the interplay between visual indulgence and consumer indulgence. In feeding the eyes so spectacularly, this building was instilling in its visitor a hunger for any of the commodities within. Although I had known this concept on an intellectual level, I understood it more fully as I stood immersed within the artwork. Because my dissertation centers around nineteenth-century consumption of art, moments such as the one I experienced in Marshall Field's are not only enjoyable but also incredibly useful.

In researching nineteenth-century Midwestern collectors, I have been seeking to understand the experience of the visitor who is welcomed into the collector's gallery. Since returning from the program, I have begun to consider the experience of the collector himself, as he enters into the commercial spaces in which he is dazzled by the items for purchase. What must it have been like to make choices, taking away only a portion of the available products? Armed with this curiosity, I feel that I can more fully consider the material in a way that will excite both me and my readers.

This program has given me knowledge and experience and renewed in me the sense of enthusiasm and purpose I need to complete my degree in Art History and become a museum curator. I am grateful that the Victorian Society in America has so generously offered such intellectual, emotional, and financial support.

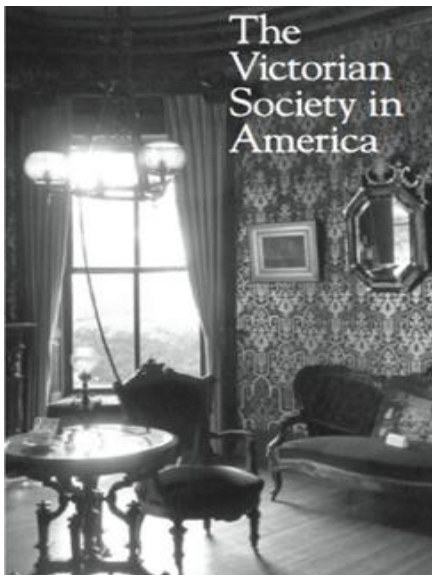




Can't get enough of those Prof Richard Guy Wilson lectures? Here is a rare video recording from 2015. Have a sharp eye? See if you can spot some Alumni in the audience.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?325004-1/discussion-gilded-age-american-renaissance-palaces>

AN INVITATION TO JOIN



Since 1966, the **Victorian Society in America** has fostered an appreciation of this country's 19th century heritage through its preservation efforts, publications, and its Summer Schools in London, Newport, and Chicago. There are many outstanding benefits of a Victorian Society membership including supporting the Summer Schools, attending symposia, study weekends, and the annual meeting and tour in a location with a distinguished Victorian heritage, helping preserve historic structures, and receiving its scholarly publication ***Nineteenth Century*** and ***The Victorian Quarterly*** newsletter.

For more information or to join go to www.victoriansociety.org

THE 2020 VSA SUMMER SCHOOLS

We invite you to study architecture, art, landscape and preservation at one of our internationally-acclaimed Summer Schools in Newport, Chicago and London. You will enjoy lectures by leading scholars, private tours of historic sites, engaging social experiences, and opportunities to get behind the scenes at museums and galleries. Open to graduate students, academics, architects and the general public.

The Summer Schools are academically rigorous and physically demanding. A typical day includes lectures and tours by leading scholars, considerable walking, periods of standing and engaging social experiences. These intensive programs are action-packed with little free time. Tuition costs include expert instruction, shared accommodation, some meals, tours, and admissions. Competitive scholarships are available for all three programs.

Word of mouth is the best form of advertising for the Summer Schools. Please share the attached 2020 Summer Schools brochure with those who you think might benefit from attendance.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AND DONORS

The Alumni Association acknowledge those members at the Supporter level and above listed below for their generosity. We also give special thanks to those members and friends who have made donations in support of specific scholarships and to our Jim Buttrick Challenge grant. Your generosity is much appreciated!

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Contributor list July 1, 2018 through November 3, 2019. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of our contributor lists, but errors may occur. Please contact Membership Secretary Sara Durkacs at (718) 499-8254 or at membership@vsaalumni.org with any errors or omissions.

Heritage Society

The Heritage Society of the Alumni Association was established to allow the Alumni Association to recognize those who have made thoughtful provisions in their planned giving documents, wills, trust, and bequests. These provisions will help to ensure that the Alumni Association will continue to have the resources necessary to fulfill its missions in support of the VSA.

We are extremely grateful to the following members and friends who so thoughtfully and generously included the Alumni Association in their wills or trusts. Their gifts will make a lasting difference to deserving scholars for years to come.

John C. Freed, a longtime VSA and Alumni Association supporter made provisions for a \$10,000 bequest to the Alumni Association in memory of his partner, **Paul Duchscherer**.

Paul Duchscherer very thoughtfully made provisions in his trust for a \$10,000 bequest to the Alumni Association as well as designating the Alumni Association as the beneficiary of all future royalties from his many books and other publications.

The Bob and Carole Chapman Fund very generously awarded a grant of \$10,000 to the Alumni Association Chapter in memory of **Carole Chapman**.

Darrell Lemke & Maryellen Trautman

Including the Alumni Association in your estate plans is an effortless way to support the Schools. Please consider this sample language:

I give and devise to the Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools all (or state percentage) of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, both real and personal, to be used for its general support (or for the support of a specific fund or program).

If you are interested in and require further details about including the Alumni Association in your will or trust, please contact President David Lamdin at (703) 243-2350 or at dalamdin@aol.com.



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION of the VICTORIAN SOCIETY SUMMER SCHOOLS

\$100,000 BUTTRICK CHALLENGE GRANT

The Alumni Association is very excited to announce the creation of an Endowment Fund to support the VSA Summer Schools. We received a very generous matching grant from Jim Buttrick (Newport 1999, London 2000). Jim will donate a total of up to \$100,000 to match dollar-for-dollar donations large or small to the Endowment Fund. These donations must be “new” money received before December 31, 2020. The Endowment Funds will be separately invested for the long term with a small percentage of the value of the fund used each year as needed for summer schools scholarships and operations.

As a supporter of the VSA, you understand the importance that the Schools have played in the lives of those fortunate enough to attend. Students consistently report on how the schools have enriched their lives with the connections made, the first-rate lecturers, and a broadened appreciation of the built environment. The Endowment Fund will provide an ongoing income stream to make the Summer Schools stronger and be our legacy for future Victorians. Please consider a generous contribution.

For additional information contact: David Lamdin 703-243-2350

dalamdin@aol.com



Prof. Richard Guy Wilson with students at the Newport Summer School

Please complete and return the form below to help meet the Buttrick Challenge

I, _____, am including a check for \$_____ payable to the “**Alumni Association**”. Memo: for the Buttrick Challenge Grant. **AND/OR**

I, _____, pledge \$_____ to the Alumni Association for the Buttrick Challenge Grant to be paid before December 31, 2020.

Send to: **Alumni Association, VSA**
24 Wilkins Ave 1st Floor
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

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