



THE HERITAGE

An American Talent... Stanford White

The nineteenth century's premier architect Stanford White's impromptu decision to attend the rooftop garden theatre of Madison Square Garden on the night of June 25, 1906 began because of a simple complication. White had planned originally "to attend some business in Philadelphia, but his son had come to visit, he stayed in town." (Uruburu 279). They



Stanford White

dined at Café Martin, near the theatre, where Harry Kendall Thaw and his wife, Evelyn Nesbit also dined. Evelyn saw White there and was visibly shaken by seeing him. The theatrical presentation was the premiere performance of *Mam'zelle Champagne* which Thaw and Nesbit also attended. During the show's finale, Thaw approached White and fired three shots at White killing him instantly. "Part of his face was torn away, and the rest was blackened beyond recognition by powder burns." (Uruburu 282). "A stunned Lawrence White, who had just returned from another theatre, arrived at the Garden to see his father's body covered with a dressing gown." (Uruburu 286)

So was the end of Stanford White's life and brilliant architectural career. Just who was

Stanford White, you might ask and why does he matter to the Garrett-Jacobs Mansion.

Stanford White was born on November 9, 1852 in New York, New York. White's mother was Alexina Mease. His father, Richard Grant White, was a journalist, editor, and Shakespeare scholar. He "never achieved the financial success he thought was his

due, but he was able to provide his son with introductions to figures and access to America's cultural and intellectual elite." (White 6)

White had no formal architectural training when he began his career at the age of 18 as the principal assistant to Henry Hobson Richardson, the greatest American architect of the day. In 1878, with Richardson's encouragement, White embarked for a year and a half in Europe. When he returned to New York in September 1879, by invitation, he joined Charles Follen McKim and William Rutherford Mead to form McKim, Mead and White. The "partnership with McKim and Mead evolved into the largest and most famous architecture office in the world." (White 10).

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How Like Mrs. Garrett... The Heritage Dinner

The guests arrived dressed elegantly for dinner and were directed to the Drawing Room where specialty cocktails were served. A selection of approximately 65 guests, from the grand dames and their escorts to the younger set and those of us in between, mingled before being called for dinner. The magnificent Ballroom was set with tables brimming with beautiful glassware, lace table runners, candles, and roses in vases at every few places. Seated with a venerable couple from the county and two young couples, we were quick to delight in each others' company.

For starters, we were served a delicious creamed soup with Parmesan cheese followed by a spring-fresh salad. The waiters saw to it that our white wine glasses were filled with a Vidal-Fleury Cotes-du-Rhone, as next fresh halibut stuffed with crabmeat with a mousseline sauce appeared at our places, but not for long. A lush cabernet sauvignon, Chateau



Judith Proffitt, GJMEF, Trustee, Carl Eastwick, GJMEF President and Julie Eastwick, his wife

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"Heritage" is distributed to members and friends of The Garrett-Jacobs Mansion Endowment on a quarterly basis.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Garrett-Jacobs Mansion Endowment Fund is to preserve and restore the Mansion as a National Historic Landmark and to share the history, architectural and civic legacy of the Mansion for the benefit and education of the public.

New GJMEF Trustee...
Robert W. Crosby, P.E.

"I first became interested in the Mansion while attending meetings there as one of the engineering societies' members. It's an impressive gem of a building. It was one of the reasons that I joined the Engineers Club as a way to support keeping it the gem that it is. Having the opportunity to serve as a trustee is one more way that I can help ensure Baltimore doesn't lose this treasure."



Robert W. Crosby, P.E.

Robert W. Crosby, P.E. is Manager, Asset Records Management at Baltimore Gas & Electric Company where he is responsible for the timely updating and accuracy of the distribution system maps and associated records. He has 25 years' experience with BGE after having spent the prior 11 years with First Energy in Ohio. Prior to his current position, he has held leadership roles in the areas of system design, major accounts management, and energy conservation programs. Bob has a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from North Carolina State University, and an MBA from The Johns Hopkins University. He is a registered professional engineer in Maryland and Ohio and has been a member of The Engineers Club since 2000. He is active in the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), having served on several society-level committees and councils as well as the International Society's Board of Directors (1986-1989). He remains active in the Baltimore Chapter of ASHRAE also. Bob serves currently on the Board of Directors of Leadership Anne Arundel and Ready Chesapeake, a non-profit organization focused on promoting continuity planning for local businesses. Bob and his wife have three children and reside in Howard County.

"The Endowment Fund Board enthusiastically welcomes him and his talent." Carl E. Eastwick, new GJMEF President ■

The Heritage Dinner *from page 1*

Margaux was offered to accompany our main course, rosemary venison medallions with a Madeira sauce. My dinner companions and I thoroughly relished the leisurely dinner and enjoyed lively conversations as plates of petit fours and pistachio ice cream were brought around accompanied by coffee and tea. Men and ladies alike were invited into the Library for after dinner Madeiras, ports, and whiskeys and more convivial conversation.

As my car was brought around, I felt as though I was among the very interesting guests that Mrs. Garrett would have invited to one of her splendid and sought-after dinners.

Thank you to Judith Proffitt, GJMEF Trustee who wrote this article.

The Heritage Dinner with the Downton Abbey theme this April raised **\$7,600** for the Heritage Dinner Fund. The funds will be used for some suggested projects. They are reupholstering existing furnishings and some additional furniture for the Drawing Room, restoration of woodwork on the spiral staircase or Dining Room sconce restoration. ■

With good reason...
The Golf Outing



The ESB-GJMEF Joint Board of Directors' Golf Tournament is one of the most well-received tournaments year after year and with good reason. The Tournament offers two formats of play: Best of Balls and Captain's Choice. Golfers receive a \$100 credit towards golf equipment and/or apparel in the Titleist-Footjoy Tent, a cookout lunch prior to tee-off, plenty of on-course refreshments, and perhaps a cocktail afterward followed by a surf and turf dinner, where golfers are served preferred-temperature steak right off the grill, enjoy peel-and-eat shrimp, a build-it-yourself baked potato bar, and ice cream for dessert. See back page for contact information. ■

Stanford White from page 1

In 1884, White married twenty-two year-old Bessie Spring Smith who hailed from a socially-prominent Long Island family. A son, Lawrence Grant White was born in 1887.

Stanford White designed a long series of houses for the rich and numerous public, institutional, and religious buildings. He is known for designing Madison Square Garden II and Washington Square Arch. He designed and decorated the mansions for the Astors, Vanderbilts, and other high-society families. “He radiated confidence, delivered solutions that were ingenious and beautiful, and possessed a boundless imagination.” (White 112) Mead would later say “White could draw like a house on fire.” (White 8)



Stanford White was one of the “Court Architects” of his day. (Dehler 1) In 1884, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Garrett bought the town house next to their home at 11 West Mount Vernon Place. They engaged Stanford

White, who was well known in Baltimore, to combine them. “Mrs. Garrett may have had unerring social instincts, but she was less sure of herself in the role of client. The design took years to construct and entailed numerous changes for which Mrs. Garrett was not always willing to pay.” (White 164)

“The interiors reflected a wide range of styles. Within a few steps of the front door, visitors were transported from the mosaics of Pompeii past the baronial halls of Tudor England to the helical staircase of Blois. Mrs. Garrett could survey the entry hall from her lookout on the second floor, concealed behind a decorative wooden screen patterned on Moroccan *mashrabia*.” (White 164). The spiral staircase which winds to the third floor with its elliptical view of the large Tiffany

stained glass window dome is one of White’s masterpieces. “The grand staircase was outfitted by Herter Brothers of New York with the addition of several Tiffany stain-glass windows.” (Heimiller 4)

“McKim, Mead & White sent a final bill in March 1887, but in the early 1890s Mrs. Garrett developed a second wind. Her focus was on the double-height entry hall.” (White 166) “By 1905 White may have been too busy for another renovation project, but there is a possibility that he and his former client had simply worn each other out.” (White 170). John Russell Pope replaced him a year before his death; although, the reason is not known.

For all of Stanford White’s architectural brilliance, there was a dark personal side to him. He was a serial seducer of teenage girls. Evelyn Nesbit was one of those teenage girls, though she was no ordinary girl. She was pretty, a cover girl model, and a dancer. Evelyn realized eventually that Stanford would never divorce his wife. Then came Harry Kendall Thaw, a wealthy man, who pursued her for four years, before they married in April, 1905. After Evelyn married Harry, he became obsessed and jealous of her relationship with White—wanting to know the sordid details. From accounts, Harry was beyond neurotic. This leads to Thaw’s murder trial in 1907 and what became of the characters.



First up, Harry Kendall Thaw’s first trial in 1907 ended with seven votes for guilty five for not guilty by reason of insanity---a hung jury. The second trial in 1908 moved faster. “Harry was acquitted by reason of insanity and sent to the Matteawan Asylum for the Criminally Insane in Fishkill, New York.” (Uruburu 358) Harry escaped from the asylum to Canada and was brought back. He was released from the asylum in 1915. Harry died of a heart attack in 1947.

Next, Evelyn divorced Harry in 1915. “A year later she married her dance partner, Jack Clifford” (Uruburu 368) They divorced. She never married again. Evelyn Nesbit’s life remained forever tainted and troubled because

of her relationships with White and Thaw and her own long problematic life. In 1954, she did sell her story to Twentieth Century-Fox. She was hired as a consultant for the film “*The Girl on the Red Velvet Swing*” starring Ray Milland.” (Uruburu 368) “She died in 1967 of natural causes” (Uruburu 371) She was 82 years old.



Works Cited:

- Dehler, Katharine B. *Our Heritage*, Baltimore: Engineering Society for the Benefit of the Restoration Fund, 1993.
- Heimuller, Edward. report title unknown, Baltimore, date unknown.
- Uruburu, Paula. *American Eve*, New York: Riverhead Books, 2008
- White, Samuel G.; White, Elizabeth. *Stanford White Architect*. New York: Random House, 2008. ■

Calendar of Events

Thursday, September 10, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Unified Jazz Ensemble



Featuring Victoria Vox who specializes in the ukulele and mouth trumpet. Tickets are \$15 on line through unifiedjazz.com or \$20 at the door.

Friday, October 2, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 3, 3:00 p.m.

Baltimore Concert Opera *Giuseppe Verdi's Aida*



Tickets are \$27.50/\$38.50/\$49.50/\$60.50/\$71.50. Members receive 10% off. See baltimoreconcertopera.com or e-mail J Bitner at J@ESB.org. ■



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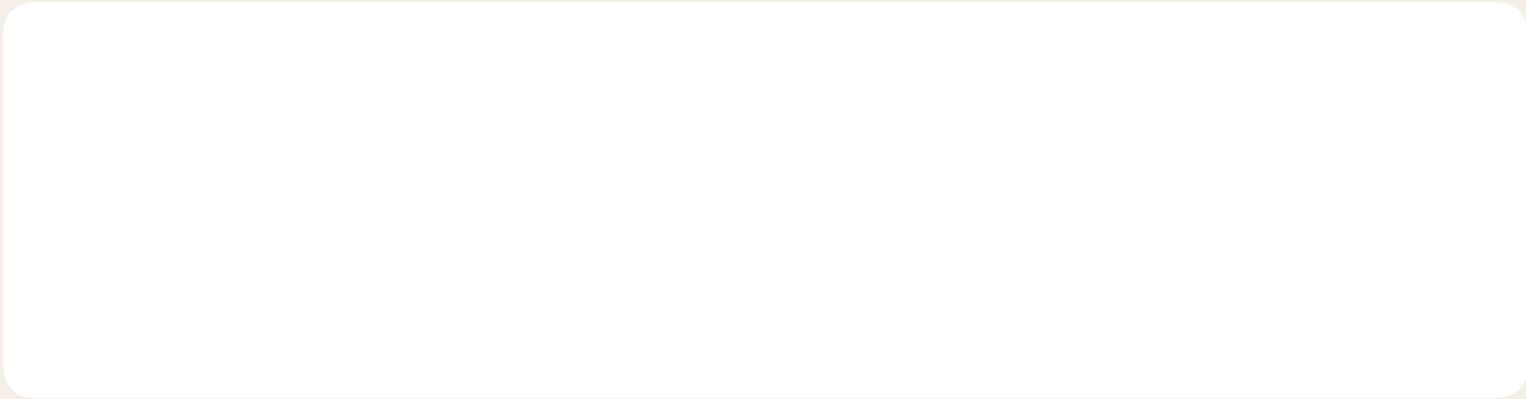
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