

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools is in the midst of our annual membership renewal drive. Many thanks to those of you who have already renewed. If you have not yet done so, please remember to renew your support of the Alumni Association now.

In 2025, the Alumni Association contributed \$30,000 in scholarship funding as part of over \$90,000 awarded across all Summer School programs. Membership dues directly support this effort—and the need for scholarships is expected to increase in 2026. We need the support of all alumni. This year, we are making a special appeal to the alumni of Summer Schools 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, including those who received scholarships to attend. Your participation in the Alumni Association is vital to our ability to continue to provide scholarships to the students of the 2026 class and beyond.

If you have ever received a Summer School scholarship, you know how transformative that opportunity can be. This is your chance to pay it forward. Even if you were not a scholarship recipient, your membership still ensures that the next generation of preservationists, historians, and designers

has the same opportunity to explore, learn, and grow.

Your membership helps sustain the programs and people who shaped our shared experiences. You'll also enjoy:

- Access to the Alumni Association newsletter—now expanded and beautifully redesigned
- Invitations to exclusive tours, study trips, and events
- Ongoing connection to fellow alumni through our Facebook page and member network

You can help in two ways. First, please take a moment today to Renew Your Membership for 2026 with the form on the following page, or through the PayPal link. There is a special reduced membership fee of only \$30 a year for those 35 years of age and younger. Second, be sure to tell your friends, classmates, and colleagues about the Summer Schools. Word of mouth is the best advertising!

Thank you for your enduring support and commitment to preserving our shared heritage. Together, we keep the spirit of the Summer Schools alive.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SIBYL GROFF!

Ode to Sibyl McCormac Groff Upon Being 90

By Nancy McAleer Golden (Newport '98), with contributions from John Martine (London '79, Newport '07, and London '13) and David Lamdin (Newport '16, London '17, and Chicago '18)

I first met Sibyl, the “Spirited New Yorker,” at a Victorian Society (VSA) board meeting in Philadelphia, probably in the late 1970s. One of the huge benefits of being involved in the VSA is the life-long friendships one forms. We immediately hit it off because we both had lived in London during the “Swinging 60’s.” She may be small, but many of us call her “Mighty Mouse” because of her boundless energy.

Sibyl is the most dedicated and tireless supporter of the VSA summer schools. She was relentless in promoting the summer schools and recruited many students by constantly talking about the summer schools. She assisted many of the foreign students, a lot of the times putting them up in her apartment, hosting them in her generous way. Sibyl befriended two architectural scholars in Budapest, the Francks, who were responsible for their students attending the schools on full scholarship from the Alumni Association. The Francks also hosted the Alumni Study Tour to Budapest, which provided us with exclusive access to so much, including a private dinner in a “rent palace.” She also continued keeping in touch with foreign alumni and urging them to recruit applicants in their countries.

Sibyl was co-chair (along with John Martine) of the Education/Summer School Committee for many years. Back in the day when the Education Committee met in person for a full day, reviewing all the applications, Sibyl would host a dinner party at her apartment the evening before, and we would bring items to be auctioned off among ourselves with the

proceeds going to Alumni scholarships. This always occurred at the end of the evening after we all had too much wine, so the bidding was intense and the money accumulated for scholarships.



James Russiello (Newport '12; London '13) and Sibyl Groff, February 2026

Photo courtesy of James Russiello

She worked closely with Jim Buttrick on his successful \$100,000 Alumni Endowment Challenge, to which she made a significant donation. She researched organizations to manage the endowment and, with her experience as a former stockbroker, helped develop investment guidelines.

Several years ago, VSA honored Sibyl at one of the Annual Meetings for all her contributions and tireless support of the organization. Additionally, a Summer School scholarship fund is named in her honor in recognition for her many years of dedicated service to the Summer Schools, especially in

recruitment of foreign students, in helping keep those foreign students involved with the Alumni Association, and in helping raise scholarship funds.

She wrote a charming book about the evolution of Christmas in New York. *A New York Christmas: Ho-Ho-Ho at Gotham* coined the word and gave spirited walking tours of New York at Christmas dressed in red with a large candy cane for visibility. As a cultural historian, she led architectural tours of Rockefeller Center for years.



*Sibyl (far right) guiding a Christmas-time walking tour in New York City.
Photo courtesy of Nancy Golden*



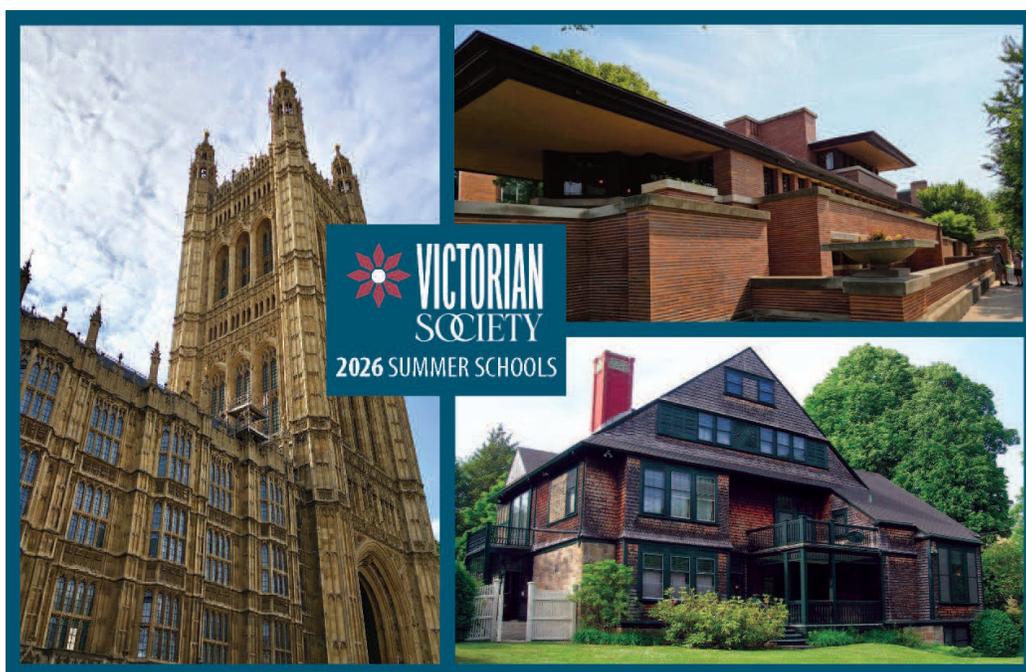
*Birthday party for Sibyl Groff (seated, wearing a light-colored hat), surrounded by family and friends, February 2026.
Photo by Kristy Askey. Photo provided courtesy of James Russiello.*

2026 VICTORIAN SOCIETY SUMMER SCHOOLS

The deadline for summer school applications has been extended until **Friday, March 13th!** Encourage your colleagues and friends to apply now for one of the VSA's three summer schools in 19th- and early 20th-century art, architecture, and design! They'll join graduate students, academics, architects and fellow enthusiasts in exploring early Modernism in Chicago, Gilded Age Newport, or 19th-century England. And don't forget the VSA (with the assistance of the Alumni Association) is able to offer full and partial scholarships for all three programs!

- **Newport** (May 29–June 7): ten days in the “Queen” of American resorts and environs studying four centuries of architecture, art, culture, and landscape – explore The Breakers, the Isaac Bell House, historic gardens and churches, stunning Tiffany and La Farge windows and much more!
- **Chicago** (June 9–16): explore the roots of American Modernism, with guided visits of H. H. Richardson's Glessner House, Adler & Sullivan's Auditorium Theatre, Burnham & Root's Rookery Building, Oak Park, the decorative arts collection at Crab Tree Farm, and America's first planned industrial community of Pullman.
- **London** (June 27–July 12): study the art and architecture of London and beyond, including the great British industrial cities of Manchester and Liverpool, along with idyllic country estates and gardens in Surrey and the Cotswolds. In celebration of the 50th anniversary, the program will also include a new tour of Cardiff and Wales, and a Victorian concert in London's Wigmore Hall.

More information and online applications can be found at <https://victoriansociety.org/summer-schools/>. Any questions about the programs can be directed to Summer Schools Administrator Anne Mallek, at admin@vsasummerschools.org.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

VSA Spring Study Tour Dates

The VSA has announced the dates and destination for the 2026 Spring Study Tour: SAVE THE DATES of May 20 to 23 for a visit to Quebec City, Canada! Trip cost, registration and hotel information will be emailed and posted to the VSA website shortly.

March 13 Event Honoring Historian William S. Peterson and William Morris' Kelmscott Press at the Library of Congress

Join members of the Chesapeake Chapter of the American Printing History Association (APHA), the William Morris Society, and other bibliophiles for an address and display celebrating the typographic adventure of the Kelmscott Press and its preeminent historian and bibliographer, William S. Peterson. The event will take place on Friday, March 13th from 3–5 pm in the Rare Book Classroom (First Floor, room LJ 129) in the Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. William S. Peterson, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Maryland, is best-known for his work on William Morris, writing numerous publications on Morris and Kelmscott Press. Casey Smith, Executive Director of the Frederick Book Arts Center in Frederick, Maryland, will present a talk, "The Kelmscott Press in America: 150 Years of Adoration, Emulation, Condemnation, and Complication," which will consider the hows and whys of Kelmscott's influence in America over the past 130 years. Mr. Smith's talk will be followed by a special display of Kelmscott Press books from the Library of Congress' collection.

NEWS

Architectural Historian **Susan Hellman** (Newport '15, Chicago '16) recently retired as the Principal Planner for the City of Alexandria, Virginia, after a long career spent in public service, including as the director of Carlyle House and with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Michael S. Hall (Newport '15) was promoted last July to Deputy Director at London's Benjamin Franklin House, where he has worked in 2021: "It's an honor to help lead the world's only surviving home of Benjamin Franklin, working with our brilliant team and trustees to sustain and grow this remarkable historic site and educational charity. I'm especially excited to advance our plans for the U.S. 250th anniversary and to expand our public programming. Here's to bringing history and innovation to life for an even bigger audience."

SEND IN YOUR NEWS!

We like to keep in touch with all our alumni and to share your news with fellow alumni. If you have news about your current position, academic studies, or research project; an upcoming publication, lecture, or organizational event; a recent award or recognition; or other related news items, please e-mail it to Lori Thursby, the Alumni Newsletter editor, at news@vsaalumni.org.

2025 VICTORIAN SOCIETY SUMMER SCHOOLS SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT ESSAYS

VSA Chicago Summer School, June 2025

Scholarship Reflective Essay

—Erin Dowding

“And, we’re walking...” Sally Sexton Kalmbach beckoned in the form of fact and order to my group as we moved through the Impressionist galleries of the Art Institute of Chicago. With information that felt both like insider gossip and well researched scholarship, Kalmbach swiftly lectured us on the role of patronage during the Victorian era and how women such as Bertha Palmer brought the poetic works of Renoir and Monet to the city. We stood in a tight circle around Sally, staring at the collection of [Monet’s] *Stacks of Wheat* paintings that Potter acquired in 1891, the beauty of the variation of a theme was clear. It was only midafternoon on our first day together for the 2025 VSA Chicago Summer School but the significance of a well-curated syllabus under the guidance of thoughtful and passionate historians, scholars, working architects, and historic preservationists was already apparent in how it would bring together themes, concepts, and examples of Chicago’s undeniable role in the making of modern America. The week was already off to a packed and thrilling start.



Above: Crab Tree Farm.
Below: Tour of The Rookery.



Prior to coming to the Chicago Summer School, I would not have called myself a Victorian. I am a modernist. I am a PhD student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison focusing on design history, primarily on textiles in the built environment. Yet, it is the Victorian era, and Chicago specifically, that birthed so much of the architecture, studio craft, furniture, and decorative arts that I investigate in my scholarship. I applied for the Louis Sullivan of it all, for the post-fire blank slate of a city Chicago was, and for Oak Park and the emergence of Frank Lloyd Wright’s American grammar of architectural form. I applied to look at the start, and at a city that was at the crossroads of trade, held a defining World’s Fair, opened up the West, and rose to new heights at the turn of the century when the Arts and Crafts movement gave way to skyscrapers. I came with an open mind and spent Thursday through Tuesday riveted and awestruck at the city of Chicago, its place in American history, and the vast and varied beauty presented each day.

Each day of the Chicago Summer School was a gift in its wealth of access, the knowledge presented, and the expansiveness of what we saw and learned. Whether downtown, by bus to the outer neighborhoods, or through walking tours in historic neighborhoods, a

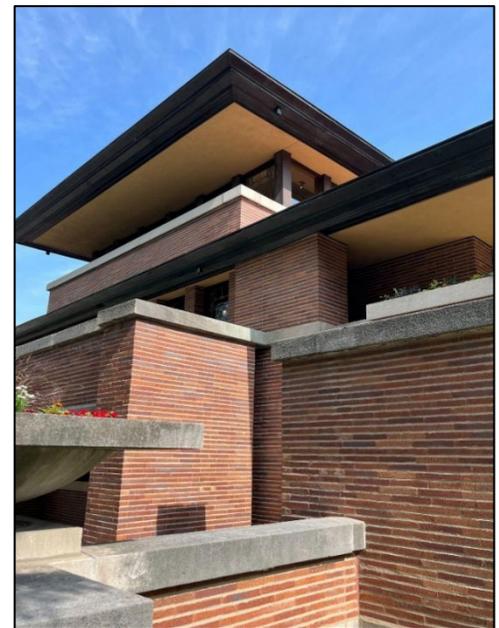


Details of the interior of the Glessner House.

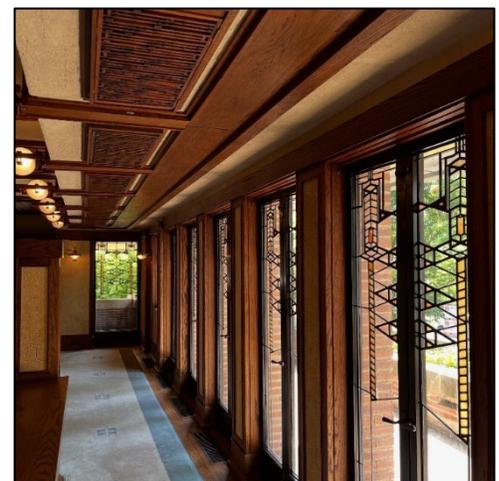
Exterior of the Glessner House.

new layer of the ways in which Chicago's art, architecture, and influence on the world we see today that was rooted in the Victorian period was unveiled. It was thrilling. An early morning trip to Graceland Cemetery to look at landscape design, the graces of the architects and people of influence we'd been exploring, and how neighborhoods were shaped and demarcated was a moment of contemplation and reflection. This was followed by a trip to Crab Tree Farm in Lake Bluff that came as a complete surprise and was so thoroughly breathtaking in its dedication to Arts and Crafts furniture and decorative arts. Knowing that this tour would have been impossible to do on my own made each moment on the farm invaluable. To end the trip at Glessner House, after a private tour, information given from guides who relished in sharing their knowledge, with dinner and celebration, was a perfect cap to the week. Amid the William Morris-clad walls and gorgeous wood details, the house is a gem and the extreme privilege of being able to spend a week feeling honored, respected, and trusted was not lost at this moment. The days had been long, tours and conversation, buildings and history thick with layers of nuanced relationships, all of us in our group from different backgrounds and interests. Yet I ended the week invigorated and inspired by all that the Victorian period, specifically in Chicago, created in defining an American style and history that began to break free from Europe.

The highlight of the trip, for me and my research pursuits, was the abundance of Frank Lloyd Wright works. As a student in Madison, Wisconsin, I spent the Spring 2025 semester in a course entirely on Frank Lloyd Wright, taught by Anna

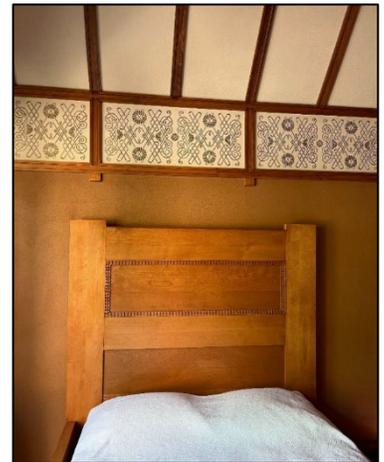


Robie House, Exterior (above) and Interior hallway (below).



Andrzejewski. During the term we visited Wright's domestic and public buildings and thought critically about the role Wright plays in history and what we can learn from his buildings today. This trip filled in gaps for me and let me look and learn at Wright's early professional career, his work with Adler & Sullivan, his growth as a designer, and at the ways in which his Chicago-area structures both fit the idea of the world Wright had, and contradict it. The Robie House, Frank Lloyd Wright's Home and Studio, and the Winslow House were naturally standouts, and the Unity Temple was inspiring. The Rookery, the Auditorium, and the James Charnley House all were useful in my explorations into the consistency and evolutions of Wright as an architect. To go to all of these places with John Waters of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy deepened the experience in ways that are still paying off as I continue my research on Wright, his interiors, his collaborations, and his legacy.

Over schnitzel and spaetzle at The Berghoff on the second to last night of the trip, with murals of the Chicago World's Fair on the walls around me and the tables of the restaurant filled with architectural students, international tourists, and locals alike, I sat already in appreciation for the remarkable days the VSA Chicago Summer School had brought me. The group of professionals, preservationists, graduate students, historians, and scholars that were strangers at the start now sit as friends, colleagues, and, hopefully, collaborators in the future.



Above: Interior details of the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio.



Exterior of Unity Temple.



Interior of Unity Temple.



Interior detail of Unity Temple.

VSA Chicago Summer School Essay
—John-Duane Kingsley

My experience with the Chicago Summer School provided an unparalleled opportunity to immerse myself in the history of Chicago with leading scholars and preservationists dedicated to preserving its heritage. As a heritage professional working as an individual consultant, it was gratifying to connect with fellow professionals and gain a different perspective on my current project, furnishing "[The Moorings](#)," [a 1910 Italian Renaissance-style mansion] designed by Charles Adams Platt. I now have a more diverse national network to draw from for this and future projects.

In terms of course content, I was impressed by the breadth of what we covered: civic, industrial, ecclesiastical, urban, suburban, grand and small scale domestic and vernacular architecture. This felt like a thorough cross-section of the region's history and provided diversified perspectives and environments to juxtapose and give a complete picture of Victorian Chicago.

As for personal highlights [of the Chicago Summer School], it was the visit to Crab Tree Farm. As a design historian, the opportunity to intimately view Stickley pieces and interiors designed to reflect Stickley's aesthetic was an incredible connoisseurship opportunity.

Visiting Pullman was also valuable, not only for the history/importance of the company, but also for the unique community of amateur preservationists that has formed to save individual structures. It was also interesting to see a cross-section of society's housing in one area to give a sense of the scale of living during that time. It was also a compelling contrast to see the work of preservation architects like Gunny Harbo versus private citizens revitalizing their homes and community. I look forward to returning in five



John-Duane Kingsley is a historic interiors consultant working out of Metro Detroit.

or more years to see what incredible transformations await.

I've never had the opportunity to visit so many Frank Lloyd Wright structures within such a short time frame. I left with a much more thorough understanding of his work than I had before.

In terms of the trip logistics, food, presenters, and navigation, I was incredibly impressed. Our class owed a great deal to Diane [Dillon], Tina [Strauss], John Simonelli, and Richard Guy Wilson for their exceptional hospitality, kindness, and passion for their respective subjects. Throughout the whole experience, I felt that we were in very capable hands, which allowed me to focus on learning and absorbing material without worry about what was coming next. By the close of the trip, I was amazed at what we accomplished in just a week, which is a testament to good scheduling and time management. The timing of site visits allowed enough space to get the depth of information I wanted without being overwhelmed and tired from it. The guides at each site were compelling and passionate about their subjects. As someone who has developed docent training programs, it was great to see a cross-section of delivery styles and personalities. My personal favorite was Sally [Sexton Kalmbach]. With great respect for both individuals, it was like Ethel Merman led tours of art and architecture. She had a great crowd presence and captivating storytelling style.

Victorian Summer School in London Scholarship Essay

—Anna Flinchbaugh



Anna Flinchbaugh is a PhD candidate at the University of Southern California, and works on the intersections of gender, labor and materiality in decorative arts and textiles.

The Victorian Society in America's Summer School in London makes invaluable contributions to more robust scholarship through a combination of immersive activities. My ongoing research on Lily Yeats' embroidery provides one immediate example of how this occurs. Lily Yeats was an Anglo-Irish artist who made crucial contributions to the Celtic Revival through her work with two different craft workshops, the Dun Emer Guild and Cuala Industries. Yeats' career took form in the tensile pulls between different values and goals. Her father's decision to exchange his legal profession for the struggles of an aspiring portrait artist drew her family to the emergent artists' enclave of Bedford Park. It also drove them into serious financial precarity. Despite this immediate need, Lily's father was hesitant to allow his daughters into the workforce. Lily navigated this tension by locating a suitably feminine and genteel source of income: for approximately six years, she worked under May Morris in the Morris & Co. embroidery workshop. For the majority of her time working there, this workshop operated out of No. 8 Hammersmith Terrace, just next door to the Walker family home at No. 7. Yeats' career was fundamentally shaped by the communities in both Bedford Park and Hammersmith. These were in turn, as

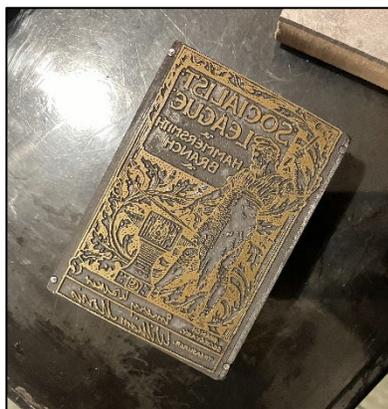
Winston Churchill reminds us, shaped by the built environments in each neighborhood.

Over the two weeks of the London Summer School, we visited the two termini of Yeats' commute. John Scott's remarks about the vibrant social scene in Bedford Park were driven home by the extant community spaces, including the Tabard and Bedford Park Club. The importance of these structures to the housing development scheme helped to explain how a distressed family from Sligo, Ireland, became integral to avant-garde arts movements and progressive social groups in both England and Ireland. In Hammersmith, we snaked single-file up the narrow staircase to access the four floors of the Walker family's house. As this house shared the same essential footprint of No. 8 Hammersmith Terrace, this experience made visceral the claustrophobia and social frictions that eventually led Yeats to seek alternative employment and return to Ireland.



Moreover, our travels also brought us into contact with one of Yeats' most singular and substantial contributions to the embroidery workshop's output: William Morris' bed hangings at Kelmscott Manor. Although the curtains were designed by May Morris, several sources credit Yeats with executing

the majority of the embroidery. This was arduous work, made even more unpleasant to Yeats through its association with a social arrangement that she found stressful and distasteful. During the Summer School visit to Kelmscott Manor, we were able to examine the hangings at close range, taking in the yards and yards of



elaborate stitching; we also understood the very close range at which Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, and Jane Morris were conducting their affairs. Lily Yeats's discomfort was made visceral. Between these three sites—Hammersmith, Bedford Park, and Kelmscott Manor—I gained a much fuller picture of this arc in Lily Yeats' career, spanning from spectacular production to quotidian frustrations. In my research as an art historian, I am committed to seeing works

of art as just that—work. My arguments are informed by attention to the labor conditions under which artists, craftspeople, and manufacturers operated, as well as the underlying value structures that determine how those various identities were assigned. The London Summer School provided not only access to an incredible range of works of

art but also immersive information about the contexts of their creation and display. Through lectures, walking tours, and site visits, the program illuminated the relationships between different Victorian sites and makers. Gaining a richer, immediately embodied sense of these relationships has already provided valuable insights for my scholarship and will, I am sure, continue to do so for many years.

Same Story Different Century: The Stained Glass Ceiling & Women's Place in the Trades **—Marley Jane Anderson**

Growing up in a conservative rural farming community, the roles available to women always felt clearly defined and carefully patrolled. Aspirations beyond the boundaries of home, church, or caretaking were often met with criticism. As someone drawn to the arts, architecture, and history, I often felt like I was reaching for something I couldn't quite name, and certainly didn't see reflected around me.



Marley Jane Anderson is a preservationist and fine artist focused on materials conservation and revitalization in undervalued communities and landmarks.

My interest in historic art and craft traditions began at home: with an artistic father, one grandmother who practiced glass arts and another who passed down traditional handicrafts, and regular attendance at a church affectionately nicknamed "The Stained Glass Church," home to one of the only figural stained glass window collections in the area. But it was in the classroom that this interest flourished. As an undergraduate, I focused on the lives and legacies of women artists, and how cultural perception shaped not just how women were represented, but how they were remembered, or forgotten, by art history. That interest deepened in graduate school, where I shifted toward hands-on preservation rooted in overlooked and under-resourced communities.

I began working in stained glass conservation, decorative painting, architectural research and archiving, and preservation planning, fields that brought me into direct contact with the labor behind the built environment and the complexly uneven reality of gender representation I, and many other crafts- and tradeswomen, experience in today's preservation workforce.

While women have made notable strides in architecture, design, and conservation, there are still many hands-on trade studios that remain dominated by multigenerational patrilineal firms. In these spaces, women are frequently funneled into administrative roles or relegated to entry-level bench work with limited pathways for advancement. The barriers aren't always explicit, they often masquerade as the quiet assumption that women lack the physical strength, technical knowledge, or long-term commitment to succeed in the trades. For someone who wants nothing more than to learn, grow, and contribute to preserving our shared cultural heritage, the invisibility can be palpable.

Attending the Victorian Society in America's London Summer School, made possible through a generous scholarship, was a transformative opportunity that expanded my historical perspective and gave me a sense of solidarity I hadn't expected to come away with. In the homes, chapels, and gardens we visited, I encountered the work of women who helped shape the Victorian era, through the architectural contributions of the Monk sisters at St. James the Less in Pimlico, the collaborative and creative architectural designs and decorative schemes of Mary Seton Watts, and Gertrude Jekyll's holistic approach to architecture and landscape design. Equally important was the work of May Morris, whose embroidery and design leadership at Morris & Co. revealed just how

central women were to the commercial and artistic success of the movement. These women were not exceptions or footnotes. They were leaders, experts, and visionaries. Yet, even now, the work of women like May Morris, Mary Watts (wife of George Frederic Watts), and Kate Faulkner (sister of Charles Faulkner of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co.) is often minimized or obscured. That quiet erasure of Victorian women's contributions mirrors what I see today in the decorative and historic trades: women are present, skilled, and essential, but often under-credited or pushed to the margins.

The VSA London Summer School not only gave me new historical perspectives, but also something I didn't realize I'd been missing: a sense of belonging. For the first time, I was surrounded by others—especially other women—who are actively claiming space and pulling out a chair at a table I had long assumed wasn't mine to sit at and have been either too naive, uneducated, or timid to take. It was the undeniable presence of possibility, paired with generous support, that reshaped my sense of direction and affirmed the work I want to pursue. I came home with the deep conviction that I am not alone in this effort. There is a lineage—visible or not—of women who have always contributed to the built environment not just as muses or caretakers, but as makers, designers, and stewards.

Women's place in historic and decorative trade spaces is not conditional, deferred, or newly invented. We belong here not because we're breaking new ground, but because we are continuing a foundation that has always been there. I am deeply grateful to the Victorian Society in America and in the UK for the opportunity to affirm my place in this story and help ensure there is space for the next generation of craftswomen to stand, work, and be recognized.

VSA London Summer School Essay
—Annika Kumwembe

Annika Kumwembe is an electrical engineering PhD student, whose interests include playing the electric guitar, reading, writing, and cooking.

The charming architecture of Victorian England has spoken so much to me without saying any words, particularly Kelmscott Manor. From the beautiful colors and patterns that the Victorians dearly loved, to the artful and personal furnishings put into each and every room. You can nearly imagine the family going to and from each of the rooms, planning their meals, and even their next trips.



The main person that I truly felt that I had gotten to know was William Morris, and he is definitely an important cog to the machine of architecture and design in this era. He at first wanted to become an architect, but then became a designer, bringing life to many Victorian homes and continues to do so. His most famous design, Strawberry Thief, was, and is, used in many different pieces. In order to make his various designs, he used intricate techniques in order to dye the fabrics. But making designs on textiles was not his only work.

Morris was a multifaceted figure in the Victorian era. He was not only a designer, but was also an artist, writer, printer, and social activist. Morris wrote books that leaned more into fantasy, and in addition to writing these books, he also did printing. Printing was also one of his passions that stuck with me more than anything else. When we entered the Kelmscott House, we were able to see a room dedicated to his print work. This print work was elaborate and extremely gorgeous, with each section starting with bold letters and the text being surrounded by a thick-patterned border. Oddly enough, he is generally mostly known for his contributions to poetry over most of his other endeavors.

Morris, on top of being a multifaceted man, also had many issues in his personal life. Because of what we learned about his personal life, I believe I was able to picture his family truly living in Kelmscott Manor, which made the visit even more interesting. William Morris married his wife Jane, who was an embroiderer. They soon had two daughters, May, and Jane Alice. Soon after, Morris leased Kelmscott Manor with another artist, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Kelmscott Manor was his respite, and a place for his family to also enjoy.

Unfortunately, leasing with Rossetti may have not been in his favor, since Jane Morris and Rossetti's relationship put a strain on Jane's marriage with Morris. When I first learned about the affairs of Jane Morris and Rossetti, I was quite surprised. But when you enter the Kelmscott Manor, you could almost feel how intense and strained it made the Morris' marriage.



Annika Kumwembe and London Summer School Director Kit Wedd

Upon entering Kelmscott Manor, you will see multiple rooms, including a dining area and an entertainment area for guests. But once you go upstairs, it gets quite interesting. In front of you, you will see that Jane has a separate bedroom, which may have been normal for the time. But as you enter William Morris' room, you see his lavishly decorated bed and cases of books, and then you see steps that lead to another area of the room, the studio. And in the corner of that studio, there would have been a small bed, meant for Rosetti. Which means that in order to do anything while Morris was at the home, Rosetti would have to first pass Morris to go anywhere else. This made the story come to life.

Apart from his strained marriage, Morris was also well traveled. He had traveled to Iceland for months at a time and became well acquainted with the community. In Kelmscott Manor, we also got to see a goodbye gift that was made by Icelanders in order to wish him a safe trip and to one day return. Morris had learned Icelandic and was able to translate multiple Icelandic books, and was deeply influenced by Icelandic literature, which shows in his art and even in his own books and poems. During his time in Iceland, he got to explore the landscape and collect pieces that he liked. He even brought back to England an Icelandic pony, and named it Mouse. In the Kelmscott Manor, you are able to see little tributes to Mouse, such as a photo in his daughters' bedroom area. Morris' time in Iceland also influenced his socialist ideas, which may explain his lifelong dedication to his politics.

Apart from his political ideas and other arts, his dedication to preserving historical buildings is part of what enabled us to visit his "heaven on earth," Kelmscott Manor. He founded the Society for the Protection of

Ancient Buildings along with other preservationists. He wanted the art, culture, and uniqueness of what older buildings had to be kept alive and be used for future generations instead of just being torn down and replaced. Currently, the Society works by preserving and repairing historic buildings just like Kelmscott Manor.



Getting to acquire this much knowledge about a person who was involved in the Arts and Crafts movement during the Victorian era truly made the experience at Kelmscott Manor a lot more influential. Throughout the London Summer School, we were able to learn about many different people through the multiple lectures that we went to and by conversations with tour guides. Getting to learn more about William Morris, taught me a lot about Victorian London and its influence on the rest of England.

The Crossness Pumping Station: An Emblem of Power and Possibility

—Heather Nickels

Twenty-six kilometers from central London-- the London embodied in guide books and travel promotional material-- is an “off-the-beaten-path” destination worthy of the time and attention of locals and tourists alike. The Crossness Pumping Station in the southeast London borough of Bexley is unlike anything else I have seen in the English capital: once on the grounds of the facility, almost immediately it feels like stepping back into time. As I arrived at the unassuming facility with other Victorian architecture enthusiasts and experts, first by bus, then by a small repurposed train with vintage cars that had been repurposed for visitors use, I found myself impressed at the fully-immersive nature of the visit, starting from outside of the actual grounds until our departure back to the city center.

Standing only meters away from the building, its revolutionary origins came into view. Introduced to the Crossness Pumping Station by a thorough introductory film and led around by an incredibly-informative guide, the ambitions, as well as the external circumstances, behind its creation came into view. In its heyday between its opening in 1865 and the early decades of the twentieth centuries, the Crossness Pumping Station represented a critical cog in the public health revolution of London, one that was long overdue. In spite of its revolutionary impact on the lives of the working class and the wealthy, any fame or reverence towards the space evaporated halfway through the last century. Surpassed by the more “up-to-date” methods for sewage treatment, the technology behind the Crossness Pumping Station became totally obsolete. By the 1950s, the facility had fallen into serious



Heather Nickels is an independent curator, writer, and doctoral candidate in Art History and Archaeology, with a focus on African American art and artists, representations of race, Black European Studies, and African Diaspora.

disrepair, and was effectively abandoned to nature and individuals living in difficult circumstances.

Thanks to the work of architectural historians, enthusiasts, and concerned-citizens, the Crossness Pumping Station received historic landmark status in 1987, protected under the governing body of the Crossness Engines Trust. While I had seen photos of the refurbished section of the station on Google Maps, when I first entered the engine hall, I found myself in complete awe. The color, so vibrant and rich, perhaps even a bit gaudy, paired with the scale of the space was all-consuming. Vast and almost cathedral-like, with soaring iron beams and a detailed lattice of Victorian cast-iron work, the Crossness Pumping Station embodies both utilitarianism and fixation with grandeur typical of the Victorian period.

Though not as widely known as some of London’s other landmarks, the Crossness Pumping Station maintains a critical role in the history of London, public health, innovative historic technological advancements, and environmental concerns. Not particularly accessible to other attractions and destinations in London, particularly the more popular sites for tourists such as the Tate Britain or Tate Modern, the National Gallery of Art, Soho, the V&A, St. Pancras, Brick Lane, or Shoreditch-- and only open for limited hours, any interested visitors must plan ahead well

in-advance. A relatively quiet part of the city today, you can imagine the low and constant hum of the gargantuan steam engines in full operation, tirelessly pumping away millions of gallons of waste from London's streets. In order to address the rampant and recurring cholera outbreaks of the 19th century, it is hard to not also see the space as one of ultimate salvation; like religious, hallowed-halls, the Crossness Pumping Station, aside from its architectural similarities to a church, also saved people from certain death and

agony. After realizing this place helped to redirect the city's sewage away from the river that had once been, and continues to be, the lifeblood of London, but which also contained the source of deadly disease, it feels like the embodiment of progress, of ingenuity, and of saving grace. It continues to sit with me that without these early technological feats (along with other sources), the London we know today—clean, functional, and sanitary—the place that I love, might not have been possible.

SUPPORT THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY SUMMER SCHOOLS

Stock Donation

A donation of long-term appreciated stocks directly to the Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools can help you save on capital gains taxes. At the same time, you can deduct the full market value of the gift, subject to certain annual limits, potentially saving on the net investment income tax. Compared with donating cash, or selling your appreciated stock and contributing the after-tax proceeds, you may potentially increase your gift and tax donation.

Stock gifted to the Alumni Association will go into our Endowment Fund, which is managed by eCIO. To donate stock from your current custodian to the Alumni Association, please share the following information with your broker in order to complete the electronic transfer successfully:

Charles Schwab Delivery Instructions: Delivery to DTC Clearing 0164

Client Name: THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA

Custodial Account Number: 4159-0651

Please notify Alumni Association President David Lamdin at dalamdin@gmail.com when a stock donation is being made. If you have any questions on how to make the donation, please contact eCIO (Investment Advisor) at (608) 291-4646.

Planned Giving: The Heritage Society of the Alumni Association

The **Heritage Society of the Alumni Association** supports our efforts to provide student scholarships for future Victorian Society Summer Schools. The Alumni Association is humbled to have an extraordinary group of supporters who feel so strongly about our primary mission to raise funds for student scholarships that they have generously included the Alumni Association in their estate planning. You are invited to join this special group of Alumni by making a planned gift such as a bequest in your will or beneficiary designations of IRAs or retirement plans.

Hank Dunlop (Boston '78; London '81, and Newport '88) has joined the Heritage Society of the Alumni Association with a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) designation from his IRA. **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** (Newport '91). **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**. **Robert Rettig** (London '06) recently advised us that he had made provision in his estate planning documents for both the VSA and the Alumni Association. These very generous alumni members have made thoughtful gifts and designations to help ensure that current and future generations of students will be able to attend the educational opportunities presented by the VSA Summer Schools.

You can join these members of the Heritage Society of the Alumni Association and support the mission of the Alumni Association while maximizing the benefits of a deferred gift. Your gift becomes part of your estate planning to protect valuable assets from income, capital gains, and/or estate taxes.

Requests by Will or Living Trust

This common estate planning technique allows you to retain control of your assets during your lifetime and avoid estate taxes. GIFTS OF LIFE INSURANCE, CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES, CHARITABLE LEAD TRUSTS, CHARITABLE REMAINDER ANNUITY TRUSTS, CHARITABLE REMAINDER UNITRUSTS, and a POOLED INCOME FUND are some of the other estate planning techniques you can discuss with your financial advisor to provide funds to the Alumni Association for scholarships to future Summer School students.

To include the **Alumni Association** in your will or trust, the following is suggested wording to take to your attorney: "After fulfilling other provisions, I give, devise and bequeath _____% of the residue and remainder of my estate (or \$_____ if a specific amount) to the Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools, a 501(c)(3) organization, to

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY SUMMER SCHOOLS A Chapter of the Victorian Society in America

CHAPTER OFFICERS

David Lamdin
President
Arlington, VA

Richard Brandi
Vice President
San Francisco, CA

James Russiello
Treasurer
New York, NY

Lori Thursby
Corresponding Secretary
Charlottesville, VA

Christine Dalton
Membership Secretary
Mt. Dora, FL

DIRECTORS

Nancy McAleer Golden
Santa Barbara, CA

John A. Martine
Pittsburgh, PA

Kristen N. Matulewicz,
Wilmington, DE

Kenneth H. P'Pool
Clinton, MS

Kenneth C. Turino
Nahant, MA

benefit the Alumni Association (tax ID # 23-1710978), located at 2 Kings Hwy West, Suite 108, Haddonfield, NJ 08033.

It is crucial that the **Alumni Association** be identified as your gift will, otherwise it will go to the national VSA organization with whom we share EIN **23-1710978**.

Please let us know about your estate plans if you decide to join the **Heritage Society of the Alumni Association** by contacting Alumni Association President David Lamdin at dalamdin@gmail.com.
