

MAHSEH NEWSLETTER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the Mahseh staff.

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FEBRUARY 2018

End of Winter, Spring around the Corner!



GREETINGS TO YOU FROM THE STAFF AT MAHSEH

January and February have been fairly busy at Mahseh. One group had to cancel and reschedule due to inclement weather. Our policy is if Fulton or Pulaski County is under a winter weather advisory a group can cancel and reschedule without losing their deposit. Now the lake is beginning to thaw and we are having some flooding. Crocuses and daffodils are cautiously peeking their shoots through the soggy mulch. Looking forward to spring, we will have a Ladies Tea June 2 @ 10 am.



In the
Spotlight

Church of the Heartland

Also known as COTH has campuses in Winamac, Starke County, Plymouth, Rochester, Logansport, Bourbon, and a Biker Church. They also have their own Bible College. The church has combined groups come to Mahseh for women's, men's, marriage and membership retreats. Below is a photo from last May when the women met at Mahseh. Their theme for the retreat was being anchored in Christ. The ladies were blessed with a beautiful sunset as they fellowshiped together, studied God's Word, did some crafts, and grew closer to the Lord. COTH has been coming to Mahseh since 2011.



We at Mahseh are honored to be a part of peoples' lives by providing Mahseh as a place to draw near to God and find refreshment for the soul.

COTH held their annual marriage retreat at Mahseh on February 16-17, 2018.

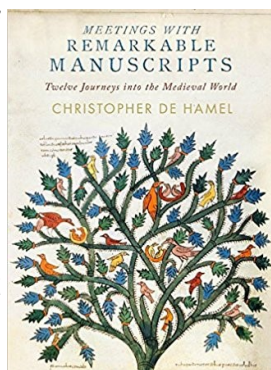


BOOK REVIEW:

MEETINGS WITH REMARKABLE MANUSCRIPTS

CHRISTOPHER DE HAMEL

From the editor's notes: "*Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* is a captivating examination of twelve illuminated manuscripts from the medieval period. Noted authority Christopher de Hamel invites the reader into intimate conversations with these texts to explore what they tell us about nearly a thousand years of medieval history—and about the modern world too. Part travel book, part detective story, part conversation with the reader, *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* allows us to experience some of the greatest works of art in our culture to give us a different perspective on history and how we come by knowledge."



At first glance, the idea of reading a book about books would be about as exciting, as my grandmother used to say, as "watching paint dry" (or really nerdy as my kids would say). Especially when the book is over 630 pages long with a detailed biography section. However, once the reading process begins, you are quickly swept up into a sense of living history. The author does a marvelous job of balancing out nuanced details of the construction of the books with fascinating character studies of the

people who commissioned these works of art and the succession of ownership of the volumes throughout the years.

The twelve volumes he selects for his in depth study range in age from *The Gospels of Saint Augustine* compiled in the late sixth century to *The Spinola Hours*, completed early in the sixteenth century. One of the first lessons you learn is this is not really a book about books, but rather a book about manuscripts. The difference being that, as you would surmise, prior to the invention of the printing press by *Johannes Guttenberg* in 1450 any “books” were in fact hand written, typically by very skilled calligraphers and illustrators and thus are called “manuscripts” (from the Greek source words for hand written).

Labor intensive, the early manuscripts were the products of monks who copied Holy Scripture and other religious themes. Over the years, ownership of these manuscripts went beyond the monastery and into the hands of nobility. By the turn of the first millennium, a competition began to develop between monarchs to accumulate ever more complicated illustrative works, however with an almost universal Christian theme.

Of particular interest are the examples of various “books of hours” selected for examination by De Hamel. These volumes were personalize books of devotional literature designed to be held and studied by the owner and promote spiritual awareness by the reader. Containing Psalms, excerpts from the Gospels and common prayers, the individual could read the verses and meditate upon them with the hope of capturing some of the longed for peace that was often absent in real medieval life. As quoted from page 534 of the book, “The Spinola Hours ends with many short prayers and readings...for private use before and after attending Mass. Simply as a catalog of the intimate hopes and fears of any private person five centuries ago, any Book of Hours is an extraordinary vivid historical document.”

At the heart of it, these manuscripts are really art work that can be held in your lap. It is also history that has come alive. Looking at the intricate illustrations, often about the everyday affairs of life, one feels transported back in time. There is certainly something about holding a document that was created contemporaneously with the subjects it illustrates to make you become a part of the narrative like no mere book can do.

The other fascinating part of the book is the vivid descriptions De Hamel provides of the twelve different museums that he visits to view and handle these treasures. As probably the most noted writer and authority on medieval manuscripts, he has access that no layman could hope to achieve. Some of his manuscripts have been removed for review only a half dozen times over the last century, so his descriptions of security and handling of these volumes is fascinating. The fact that anyone would be allowed to spend a whole day with priceless treasures such as the Irish *Book of Kells* almost reads like fiction. Yet, in this heavily illustrated book itself, he literally has the pictures to prove it.

This is certainly not a book for everyone, but it is a book with a broader interest than might first be assumed. If you are a lover of history, spirituality, travel or bibliography you will enjoy reading this latest addition to the Mahseh library. ~ Rob

MORE PICTURES of the church windows

We mentioned in the previous newsletter that Mahseh had purchased pews, seats, and stained glass windows from the Royal Center UMC built in 1915 which was demolished in December. The windows were made at the Kokomo Opalescent Glass factory which has been in business since 1888.

Rob and Debbie Ron & Alison

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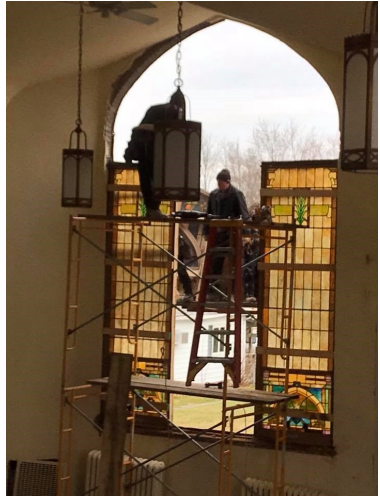
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The photos above show the Blueprint Construction crew removing the windows, very carefully! The photo at right and below is the church before demolition, and the one below right shows the empty balcony.

