

# *friends* OF SAINT-GAUDENS

CORNISH | NEW HAMPSHIRE | SPRING / SUMMER 2014

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## DEAR FRIENDS,

This issue brings you exciting news about efforts to preserve and enhance two of Saint-Gaudens' great monumental public sculptures: the *Sherman* in Grand Army Plaza at the southeast corner of Central Park, and *Diana*, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

At the park preparations are underway for the opening of the season on Saturday May 24th. In addition to contemporary exhibitions in the Picture Gallery, a series of eleven Sunday afternoon concerts between Memorial and Labor Day, sculpture workshops and other traditional events, this year there will be two special offerings. On May 27, June 3 and 10, there will be talks on climate change and its effects on the park. And, prior to the concert on July 13, there will be a ceremony to award the Saint-Gaudens Medal to James Atkinson. (See inside)

As always, we welcome you to the park to enjoy the array of artistic and natural treasures here. We also encourage you to see the *Sherman* and *Diana*, as well as other works around the country (and in France, Great Britain, Ireland and Mexico) by the great sculptor.

Sincerely,

Byron Bell  
President of the  
Board of Trustees  
Saint-Gaudens Memorial

Rick Kendall  
Superintendent  
Saint-Gaudens NHS  
A National Park for the Arts

## SHERMAN MONUMENT CONSERVED



Completed *Sherman Monument* seen at night, 2014.

Henry J. Duffy, Curator, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

At the southeast corner of Central Park in New York City is the last great equestrian statue by Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Dedicated on Memorial Day in 1903, the *Sherman Monument* depicts the famous Civil War general sitting astride a fiery horse, being led forward by an allegorical figure of Victory. Saint-Gaudens was uncharacteristically pleased with the result, feeling that this was among his finest sculptures.

Following the Civil War, General Sherman was named General of the Army by President Ulysses Grant in 1869. After leaving public life, he moved to New York City, where he lived until his death in 1891. Saint-Gaudens and Charles Beaman were among those who were present right after the General's death, and Saint-Gaudens obtained a

death mask and cast of the hands for use in later sculptures. It was in the same year, 1891, that the New York Chamber of Commerce commissioned the sculptor to create a monument.

Saint-Gaudens preferred to place the piece next to the Grant Mausoleum on Riverside Drive, but the Grant family

(“*Sherman Monument Conserved...*” cont. on page 2)



Dedication of *Sherman Monument*, Memorial Day, 1903.

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hesitated to have another monument there. After discussion, the current site was chosen, and work began. Saint-Gaudens carried the piece with him from 1892 until 1903. Work was completed in New York, Paris and Cornish, with the gilding occurring just before the final dedication. Exhibited in Paris and Buffalo, New York, *Sherman Monument* was already much anticipated when it was installed in Central Park.

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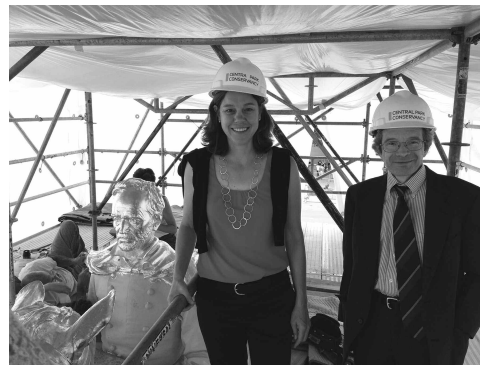
**Saint-Gaudens was uncharacteristically pleased with the result, feeling that this was among his finest sculptures.**

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One of the features that was striking about the monument was its gilding, done because Saint-Gaudens was concerned about public bronze sculpture allowed to weather to a light green.

In the park, the monument, seen against the trees, would have faded in view and importance if allowed to weather and the gilding both preserved the metal and also anchored the piece on the street corner. With time, the gilding faded, and by the early twentieth century it was nearly gone. In 1989 New York City and the Central Park Conservancy mounted a campaign to regild the piece. While protecting and conserving the bronze, the color was considered bright by many, and was eventually toned. By 2013, the sculpture needed attention again, and the Central Park Conservancy engaged Mark Rabinowitz, Executive Vice President and Senior Conservator of Conservation Solutions and Michael Kramer and the Gilder's Studio to clean and gild the sculpture.

In late August of 2013 Marie Warsh, Director of Preservation Planning at the Central Park Conservancy invited Saint-



Thayer Tolles and Henry Duffy with General Sherman. Inspecting the gilding, summer 2013.

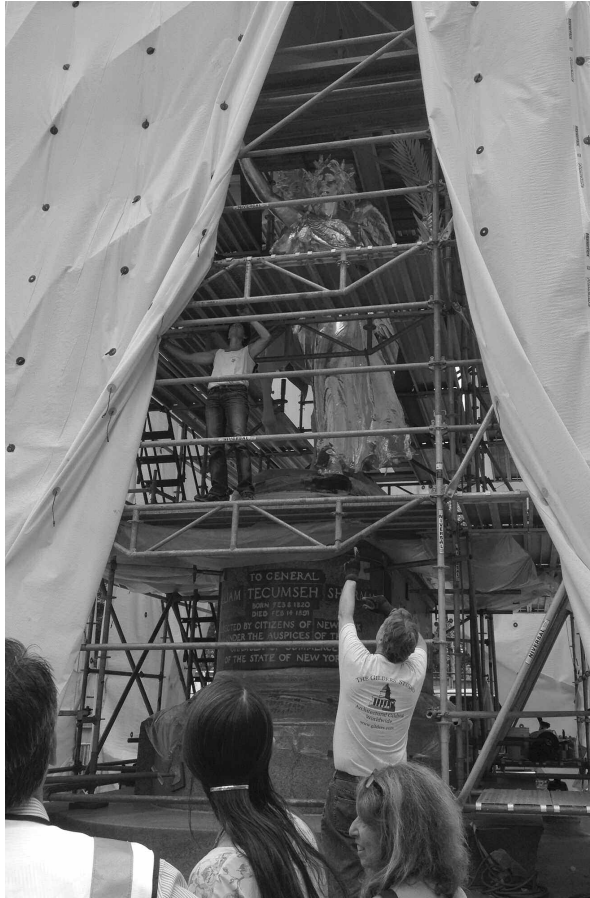
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*Sherman* under wraps. The monument was surrounded by a protective scaffold and tarpaulin during the cleaning and gilding.

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Gaudens National Historic Site Curator Henry Duffy to join Thayer Tolles, Marica F. Vilcek Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (and Saint-Gaudens Memorial Trustee); Mark Rabinowitz, conservator; and members of the Conservancy Chris Nolan, Vice President of Planning, Design and Construction, and Matthew Reiley, Associate Director of Conservation and Preservation to meet in New York to assess the gilding and determine a proper tone for the piece.



Toning samples were checked both in full sunlight and in shadow. Here sample boards are held next to the monument.

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**Saint-Gaudens worked on the tone himself, desiring not a bright finish but a muted shade that would make the piece glow.**

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Conservator Mark Rabinowitz stands next to two gilded study heads. The final toned sample is on the left and the untuned one on the right.

The process of determining the right tone began much earlier with discussions of what was known about Saint-Gaudens and gilding. Smaller reliefs and sculptures were assessed, as was research discovered during the regilding of the plaster *Shaw Memorial* now on loan from the park to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. On site, in New York, last summer, the group re-viewed sample boards of different colors, and then experimented on full-sized casts of the horse's head. The process proved interesting and not straight-forward, as too little tone washed out in bright sunlight, and too much looked murky and muddy in shadows. The final color combined burnt sienna, burnt umber and lamp black in solution. Originally the

group tried application of this tone in shadowed areas alone, but the effect was invisible to the eye at a distance. The final discovery was that an overall tonality actually heightens the detail of the sculpture, bringing out the tiny details of the coat, and textiles that are not seen generally. The great size of the monument, standing twenty-five feet high, and the distance from which it is seen, made the tonality key to a full enjoyment of the piece. It is also known that Saint-Gaudens worked on the tone himself, desiring not a bright finish but a muted shade that would make the piece glow.

Finally, a word should be given to one of the prime reasons the gilding failed in the first place. Pigeons, and a lot of them,

find the statue an ideal resting place. The constant scratching of their feet, and the acid of their droppings eat away at the thin gold of the surface. Many possible solutions were contemplated, and finally small spikes were installed in strategic places on the statue. Gilded like the surroundings, they are seen but not strongly seen on the monument, and may help discourage the birds from landing.

With care and attention, the renewed sculpture should last for many years to beautify and ennoble the corner of the park.



Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Diana* (1892-93). Sheet copper. h. 14 ft. 6 in. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of the New York Life Insurance Company, 1932 (1932-30-1). Photograph by Graydon Wood.

## “A GOLDEN MOMENT: PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART’S *DIANA* ALSO RECEIVES TREATMENT”

Thayer Tolles, Marica F. Vilcek  
Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture,  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In a serendipitous turn of events, 2013 also saw the Philadelphia Museum of Art embark on a major conservation effort to return *Diana* (1892-93) to its former gilded splendor. The thirteen-foot weathervane sculpture was originally on top of the main tower of the second Madison Square Garden from 1893 to 1925, when it was removed for the building’s razing.

During those years, the resplendent gilded surface applied to the riveted sheet copper form had worn away due to constant exposure to the elements. For the eight decades since it was installed in 1932 in the museum’s Great Stair Hall (left), visitors have encountered the iconic *Diana* with a dark green corroded surface, its appearance entirely unlike what Saint-Gaudens had originally intended. Although the sculpture was cleaned and repaired by Roman Bronze Works foundry in New York prior to its transport to Philadelphia, it was not regilded.

Thanks to a grant from the Bank of America Art Conservation Project, the conservation and regilding of *Diana* has been undertaken by a team of in-house conservators at the Philadelphia

Museum of Art led by Andrew Lins, Chair of Conservation, in collaboration with Kathleen Foster, the museum's Robert L. McNeil, Jr., Curator of American Art. In addition to examining gilded surfaces of other works by Saint-Gaudens, notably those at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the team corresponded closely with colleagues working on the *Sherman* restoration, comparing treatment plans and art historical and scientific research. Also informing the project was the loan of the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site's *Diana* statuette on a tripod base, highlighted in the installation "Gilding Diana" near the large-scale sculpture. The museum also relied on digital media to inform the public with an exemplary landing page about the project on its website (<http://www.philamuseum.org/conservation/21.html>). It features a slide show about *Diana*'s history as well as links to videos with Lins and conservator Adam Jenkins explaining the step-by-step process of the treatment.

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***Diana*'s conservation has involved a multi-phase approach including an extensive cleaning, x-ray, ultrasonic and borescope testing, and a comprehensive regilding and preservation treatment.**

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*Diana*'s conservation, which began in summer 2013 and is still underway, has involved a multi-phase approach. Following the construction of scaffolding around the sculpture in situ, conservators



Conservators Andrew Lins, Alisa Vignalo, and Adam Jenkins apply gold leaf to *Diana*'s head and arm, November 2013.  
Photograph by Kathleen Foster.

conducted extensive physical and scientific investigations to determine the course of treatment, even peering inside the sculpture down through the top of her head and up through the ball pedestal using a borescope. X-ray imaging and ultrasonic thickness testing were also performed to document the construction technique and the supporting armature. Tiny samples of existing gilding were analyzed using a scanning electron microscope (SEM) to determine the carat weight of the

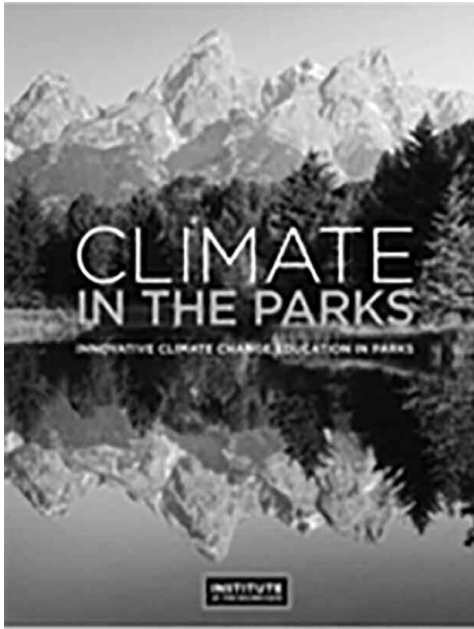
original gold leaf in order to use the same in this regilding campaign. Using the assembled information, the team then removed the familiar dark green corrosion, accumulated grime, remnants of earlier primer, and old retouching that had masked repairs. With the clean metal exposed, they treated surface deformations and structural weaknesses.

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**The sculpture's transformation is remarkable, the result a landmark example of a highly informed collaboration between art historians, conservators, and scientists.**

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Next they coated the sculpture with a yellow paint containing a corrosion inhibitor, followed by a layer of size. When the size dried to just the right degree of tackiness, they meticulously applied 180 square feet of gold leaf to the statue (right). *Diana*'s surface, now radiantly bright, has not yet been toned pending further discussion with in-house and outside experts about the desired final appearance. Even in its not-quite-complete state, the sculpture's transformation is remarkable, the result a landmark example of a highly informed collaboration between art historians, conservators, and scientists that, in conjunction with the *Sherman* project, will inform any future treatments of gilded sculpture by Saint-Gaudens and other artists of his time.



## CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

**The National Park Service is doing a great deal to identify the impacts of climate change on park resources and plan for a future that could be very different from the present we are currently experiencing.**

As national parks are static boundaries on a map, they are especially susceptible to climate change impacts—we can't move the sequoia trees of Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, nor can we move the park boundaries to follow pikas to higher, cooler ground. We can't follow Glacier National Park's glaciers up into the cooler climes of Canada, nor can we lift the low ground that will be inundated by sea level rise in the Everglades. Because parks stand to be greatly impacted by climate change, the National Park Service is taking our role in adaptation and mitigation of climate change very seriously.

Though we have no glaciers and will not be impacted by rising sea levels,

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**Saint-Gaudens NHS is on the front lines for understanding what impacts climate change may have on cultural resources such as landscapes and historic structures.**

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Saint-Gaudens NHS is on the front lines for understanding what impacts climate change may have on cultural resources like cultural landscapes and historic structures. As we have looked into the potential impacts of climate change on park resources, we have discovered that many of the impacts from climate change that we could expect at the park are already being seen in our resources, though further study will be necessary to confirm that climate change is indeed the smoking gun for such impacts.

Perhaps the most obvious potential impacts of climate change on the park are changes to our cultural landscape. The park has a cultural landscape of outstanding integrity, consisting of gardens, hedges, and trees. Climate change has been moving the bloom schedule of New England gardens earlier and earlier in the spring; historically, many New England towns would have "Lilac Festivals" which coincided with Memorial Day weekend. Today, there is no guarantee that lilacs will still be in flower by Memorial Day. Bloom schedules are marching earlier and earlier in the year; 2012 and 2013 were very early years, though it looks like 2013 will be a later (or more normal) year on the bloom calendar. Heavy winters have

also traditionally served as climatic pesticides, freezing out certain pests that are not cold tolerant. With milder winters, many of those species are marching north—particularly problematic is the hemlock woolly adelgid, an insect that could decimate the park's hedges. The adelgid has now been found in New Hampshire; with milder winters, it seems only a matter of time before they find their way to the park.



The Ravine Dam should only have one outlet, but now has two due to a breach during flooding.

In addition to impacts to our cultural landscape, climate change may have significant impacts on park structures. Whereas winter snows used to fall in November or December and stay on the ground until the spring melt, the recent trend has been for snow to fall and then melt and then fall again and melt with this cycle occurring several times throughout the winter season. This increase in the frequency of freeze/thaw cycles has the potential to damage historic masonry at an accelerated rate and can also damage outdoor monuments. We may see more damage to brick buildings and pathways as a result. Changes in wind patterns may



lead to more wind-driven rains that can find their way into old masonry joints leading to interior water damage of brick structures. Additionally, there is a greater likelihood of extreme weather events which may damage structures; such an event happened in July of 2013 when a microburst thunderstorm dropped more than 2 inches of rain on the park in a matter of hours, leading to the breaching of the historic Blow-Me-Up Dam in the park.

If there is a positive aspect to the impacts that we are expecting to see at the park, it is that they are directly relatable to impacts that our visitors may experience at their own homes. Changing environments for sequoia trees, melting glaciers, and rising sea levels seem very abstract to our everyday lives; however, nearly all of us live in a building and many of us have yards, gardens, or green space that we identify with. The impacts we expect to see at Saint-Gaudens are the same impacts that you can expect to see in your own homes and yards. Connecting our plight to millions of people in the same situation can help raise awareness to the impacts that climate change may cause and perhaps mobilize an appropriate response.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

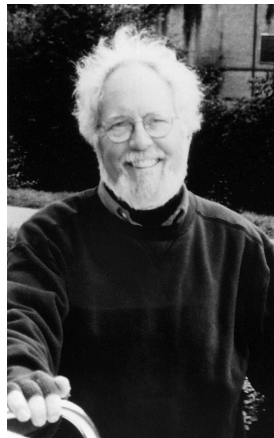
### SPEAKER SERIES AT THE PARK

Tuesday MAY 27 | Tuesday JUNE 3 | Tuesday JUNE 10

In May and June, the park will be hosting a speaker series on climate change. Experts from a variety of different organizations will be speaking on the subject at the park.

## SAINT-GAUDENS MEDAL TO BE AWARDED TO JAMES B. ATKINSON

**The Saint-Gaudens Medal is intended to honor individuals and/or institutions who, through their talents and beneficence, have made a distinguished contribution to the arts in America in the high tradition of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.**



James B. Atkinson.

The Medal itself was designed by artist, sculptor and former Trustee Robert W. White, grandson of Saint-Gaudens' sometime collaborator, Stanford White.

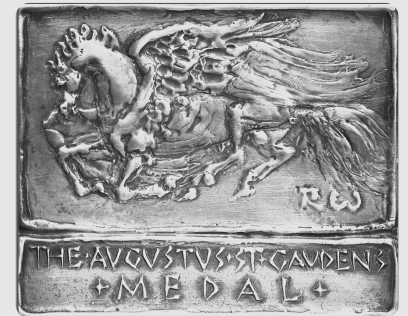
The Medal has only been

awarded eight times (six times in its present form). The last time was in 2005, when it was given to Earl A. Powell, Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC which restored the plaster *Shaw Memorial* formerly at the park, and exhibits it on long-term loan.

James Atkinson is a historian and scholar, collector and donor, a Friend, and a some-time portrayer of the great Saint-Gaudens himself, along with his wife Gretchen Holm as Gussie. His talents and generosity have been enormously beneficial to the park – its special projects and its collections – and to public knowledge about Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony. Mr. Atkinson is author (with the late Virginia Colby) of the outstanding book “Footprints of the Past,” a definitive encyclopedia of Cornish Colony artists. He has been

a colleague and collaborator with park staff in his capacity as president of the Cornish Historical Society. He has been a prodigious collector of Cornish Colony art and historical material and has made the park beneficiary of a significant portion of his collection of art, including etchings by Stephen Parrish, significantly expanding its Cornish Colony collection. He and Ms. Holm will also be remembered by many for their portrayals of Mr. and Mrs. Saint-Gaudens that appear in re-enactment scenes in the PBS film *Augustus Saint-Gaudens: Master of American Sculpture* as well as in the interpretive film about Saint-Gaudens shown at the park.

All are invited for presentation of the Medal to Mr. Atkinson on Sunday, July 13 at 2:00pm at the Little Studio, followed by the concert, *Occasional Music for Early Winds and Plucked Strings*.



The Saint-Gaudens Medal designed by Trustee Robert W. White. c.1992.



## Become a *friend* OF SAINT - GAUDENS

All members receive a twice-yearly newsletter and announcements of exhibits, lectures, concerts & other programs.

- ☐ Individual \$ 50
- ☐ Family \$ 75
- ☐ Supporter \$ 100
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### Gifts are tax-deductible

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**Saint-Gaudens Memorial  
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914-944-1608 [www.sgnhs.org](http://www.sgnhs.org)

## 2014 SUMMER CONCERTS

Concerts are on Sundays @ 2pm. For details on concerts and exhibits visit [www.sgnhs.org](http://www.sgnhs.org)

- JUNE 22 *Marching from Broadway to L.A., Family Picnic Hamper Day*  
Pre-concert activities 11:00 – 1:30 pm
- JUNE 29 *Classically Modern—Basque Dances to Beatles, Larry Nowlan Memorial Concert*
- JULY 6 *Masterworks by Brahms, Bernstein, Arnold, Debussy, Littleton Coin Company Concert*
- JULY 13 *Occasional Music for Early Winds and Plucked Strings*
- JULY 20 *Grade "A" Fancy—Sweet A Cappella Jazz, Robert Meyers Memorial Concert*
- JULY 27 *Three Tenors—Popular Arias and Canzone Napolitana, Kendall at Hanover Concert*
- AUGUST 3 *Between Worlds, Native American Inspirations*
- AUGUST 10 *European Masters for Eight Hands, Bea Richardson and Chuck Bradway Concert*
- AUGUST 17 *Pictures at an Exhibition, 9th Annual Rosamond Edmondson Memorial Concert*
- AUGUST 24 *An Afternoon in Paris and Vienna, Dedicated to Judy Platt*
- AUGUST 31 *Celebrating the Great American Song Book*

## 2014 EXHIBITIONS IN THE PICTURE GALLERY

MAY 24 - JULY 6  
**Elaine Bradford:**  
***Ceremonial Concealment***  
Reception Saturday, May 24  
4:30 – 6:00 pm  
Artist's Talk at 5 pm

JULY 12 - AUGUST 31  
**Jane Marsching: *Test Site***  
2013 Saint-Gaudens Fellow  
Reception Saturday, July 12  
4:00 pm  
Artist's Talk at 4:15 pm

SEPT 6 - OCT 26  
**Heather Dewey-Hagborg:**  
***Stranger Visions***  
Opening Saturday, September 6  
4:30 – 6:00 pm  
Artist's Talk at 5 pm

## 2014 EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

TUESDAYS, MAY 27, JUNE 3, & 10 – **CLIMATE CHANGE SPEAKER SERIES** – 6:00 pm

SATURDAYS, MAY – OCTOBER – **SCULPTURE WORKSHOPS**

The sculptor-in-residence offers a range of sculpture classes most Saturday afternoons throughout the summer. For detailed information go to [www.nps.gov/saga](http://www.nps.gov/saga)

SEPTEMBER 13 – **STAR PARTY** – 8:00 – 10:00 pm (rain/cloud date 9/14)

SEPTEMBER 27 – **SCULPTURAL VISIONS**

11:00 am – 4:30 pm (rain/cloud date 9/14) *Free admission all day.*



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National Historic Site

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit corporation chartered to advise and support the National Historic Site and sponsor programs and activities that promote public awareness of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, his work and sculpture in general.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site  
The site is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service  
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[www.nps.gov/saga](http://www.nps.gov/saga)