

## NEWS RELEASE



### **Discovering the Elusive Hugo Huber Opens on April 1**

March 2, 2010 – Akron, Ohio – Stan Hywet announces the opening of *Discovering the Elusive Hugo Huber*, on display in the Manor House from April 1 – October 31, 2010. This exhibit is one of the first to take an in-depth look at the life and work of Hugo Huber, a key member of the New York design community at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the man who created the detailed interiors of the Manor House at Stan Hywet. Huber was well-known in his day and one of the earliest professionals in the field of interior decorating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century—yet until now his accomplishments have been largely forgotten.

“I love a mystery. One look at this house shows you the immense talent and genius of Huber,” notes Holli Limbach, certified interior designer and guest curator of the exhibit.” On display in the Great Hall are vintage advertisements, photos, receipts, correspondence and other documents which tell the story of Huber’s design work and his close personal relationship with F.A. and Gertrude Seiberling. Since it was common for the designer to be on-site for a large project, the Reception Room is being transformed into what would have been a typical early 20<sup>th</sup> century “onsite construction office.” Vignettes throughout the Manor House feature other elements of Huber’s impeccable style, and while Stan Hywet stands as one of his most significant design accomplishments, other important interiors designed by Huber are featured in this exhibit, including Heurich House in Washington, DC, the St. Joseph County (Indiana) Courthouse and the interiors of the NY Democratic Club.

Prior to the emergence of the interior decorator, it was typically an architect who, through his complete set of working drawings and specifications, set forth in detail an interior environment and décor that harmonized with the architecture. Growing prosperity after the Civil War until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century dictated larger and more complex residences, with interiors becoming distinct from exteriors. The gap widened between the roles of the architect and interior decorator —setting the stage for the emergence of the professional interior decorator of the 1880s and 1890s.

The Seiberlings probably met Hugo Huber about 1910, and before they hired Charles Schneider as the architect of Stan Hywet Hall. Quality design and fine craftsmanship were key components of an H.F. Huber interior; the Seiberlings trusted him to design an interior that would fit the needs of their family’s lifestyle. They remained friends with Huber and his wife Augusta long after the Estate was completed. “Gertrude Seiberling and Hugo Huber possessed the same creative soul,” notes Limbach.

Born in 1869 in New York City to a close-knit German immigrant family, Huber began his decorative career in 1887 while still in college. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, H.F. Huber & Co. had

become one of New York's first American full-service interior decorating firms to design, execute and install complete high-end residential, commercial and hospitality interiors.

Guest curator is Holli Limbach a NCIDQ certified interior designer. The research by Ms. Limbach is the basis of her master's thesis in Clothing, Textiles and Interiors, to be awarded in May 2010 from the University of Akron. *Discovering the Elusive Hugo Huber* is included with all tours of the Manor House.

###

**CONTACT:**

Katie Campbell, Vice President of Marketing, 330-315-3235 or [kcampbell@stanhywet.org](mailto:kcampbell@stanhywet.org)

Donna L. Spiegler, Communications Manager, 330-315-3294 or [dspiegler@stanhywet.org](mailto:dspiegler@stanhywet.org)