

Local SLC authors' book studies the life and work of renowned Utah Capitol architect Richard Kletting.

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"In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy," wrote the poet William Blake. A little of each took place at Memory Grove's Memorial House on November 19 in celebration of a new book by historians Allen Roberts and Nan Weber about famed architect Richard Kletting (1858-1943).

For Roberts and Weber, the event was a long-awaited harvest. For others, the arrival of *Richard K. A. Kletting: Utah Architect and Renaissance Man* might be the start of an instructive seed time to enjoy over the holiday season.

Combining their talents, the duo devoted a total of 10 years to put their book together, although their interest and study goes back even further. Roberts, a retired architect, said the book draws from research he worked on 50 years ago.

"Each one of us were working on [studies of Kletting] for several years before we got together," Weber related to *City Weekly*.

The project fills a long-neglected area of study. While Kletting is renowned for his designs of landmark structures like the Utah State Capitol and the original Saltair pavilion, comparatively little has been written on Kletting's life or on the breadth of his output, which encompasses public buildings, churches, schools, private residences and even landscaping.

At over 800 pages—with 1400 photos and illustrations—Roberts' and Weber's book goes a long way to get arms around the hundreds of Kletting originals that have graced—and in many cases, still grace—the Intermountain West.

"I haven't seen something like this since the phone book!" laughed attendee Greg Forbush.

Amid the live music, visitors enjoyed refreshments and the warmth of a burning fire as they congratulated the authors, bought copies and mingled. Some, like Eric Rogers, intend to use the book as a means of appreciating the beauty and history of Salt Lake City's built environment.

"I'm going to plan out my walks in the neighborhood to see some of these houses," he said.

For others, like Robert Rampton, the event was another opportunity to support the study of state history, which he lamented is often avoided if it is not presented in an "entertaining and interesting" manner.

"I've got teenage grandchildren," Rampton remarked. "I'd have to drag them to events like this." Even so, he remains optimistic about the power that stories, lives and artifacts from history can have upon any generation, provided that such can be brought to public attention.

And only then can Utahns take action.

For such priceless historical architecture as those by Richard Kletting, there are structures like the chateausque Dinwoodey House (411 E. 100 South) which cry out for preservation before they are lost to neglect.

Others, like the Gibbs-Thomas House (137 N. West Temple), stand remarkably intact but nevertheless could use additional protections, in Roberts' estimation.

Such buildings, he stressed, among so many others, are "one of a kind." He hopes their new book may plant some seeds so that Utah architecture will be enjoyed for many seasons ahead.