Tour Opportunities During FORUM 2018

By Paula Mohr

What says the “Midwest” more than Prairie School architecture and a trip to the rural countryside? FORUM attendees will have an opportunity to register for one of two special tour options on Thursday, July 19. Here are some highlights:

PRESERVATION IN RURAL AMERICA: BUS TOUR TO GREENFIELD AND WINTerset
This tour will look at the exciting preservation work being done in two rural communities near Des Moines. A stop in Greenfield will include the E.E. Warren Opera House (recipient of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s 2013 National Preservation Honor Award) and the Hotel Greenfield. This project, the result of a $6.2 million rehabilitation, was accomplished by a community with a population under 2,000. Today, the opera house is a vibrant venue for live performances, events, and hosts a gallery for Iowa artists.

We will then travel to nearby Winterset which received national exposure with the publication of the book The Bridges of Madison County and the movie of the same name. At the recently-rehabilitated Iowa Theatre, we will have a panel discussion focusing on the particular challenges and opportunities for rural communities. We’ll make a stop at a one-room school and one of the county’s iconic covered bridges. Participants can also choose to visit either the John Wayne Birthplace & Museum or the Iowa Quilt Museum on their own.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND PRAIRIE SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE IN MASON CITY
Condé Nast named Mason City, Iowa, with its collection of Prairie School buildings, one of the world’s 20 best cities for architecture lovers. This all-day bus tour to Mason City will focus on the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his disciples. A highlight will be a tour of the 1911 Historic Park Inn Hotel and City National Bank Building, the world’s last remaining hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Lunch will be served in Wright’s Banking Room where the architects who led the restoration project will talk about their approach to the project and some of the unexpected surprises during construction. Other tour stops will include Wright’s Stockman House (based on the famous Fireproof House) and the Architectural Interpretative Center. Finally, participants will have a special opportunity to tour two private residences designed by Prairie School architects Walter Burley Griffin and William Drummond located in the Rock Crest-Rock Glen neighborhood.
Winterset Courthouse Square.

Credit: Madison County Chamber of Commerce

Hogback Covered Bridge.

Credit: Madison County Chamber of Commerce

Frank Lloyd Wright’s Stockman House.

Credit: Iowa State Historic Preservation Office

Frank Lloyd Wright’s historic Park Inn Hotel and City National Bank Building in Mason City.

Credit: Bergland & Cram

Melson House, Mason City.

Credit: Historic American Buildings Survey (Library of Congress)