



# RIVER CITY SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

P.O. BOX 565, MASON CITY, IA

WINTER 2015 E-NEWSLETTER

We value your support  
**PLEASE RENEW**  
Your Membership

## TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

RCSHP memberships are based on the calendar year, so your membership expires on December 31<sup>st</sup> and needs to be renewed annually. The easiest way to renew is to go to our website and charge it to your credit card: [CLICK HERE](#). This will save us the postage and printing costs of mailing you a renewal notice. Revenue generated from membership fees represents a significant 15% of our limited budget. If you would like to pay by check you can mail it to: RCSHP, P.O. Box 565, Mason City, IA 50402. Single Membership \$25, Dual Membership \$40, Corporate Membership \$100. A FLW Reciprocal Membership for \$125 will allow free admission to 30 FLW sites throughout the country. RCSHP is an all-volunteer organization that depends on membership, tour and gift shop revenue, and grants along with your generous donations to keep our doors open and maintain our buildings.

## COMING EVENTS

Thursday, December 10, 2015

### HOLIDAY WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION



**Description:** Meet and get to know other local RCSHP members and become more involved in our organization. A social time starting at 5PM serving wine and hors d'oeuvres, precede the showing of a film on Wright's personal photographer, Pedro Guerrero at

6:30PM. The gift shop will also be open for your holiday shopping pleasure. Members get a 10% discount on non-consignment items.

**Location:** The McCoy Architectural Interpretive Center

**Time:** 5-7:30pm

**RSVP:** not necessary

**Admission:** Open to RCSHP Members and their guests.

**Cost:** FREE, donations appreciated.

Tuesday, January 19, 2016

### PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEER COFFEE

We will be sharing coffee and refreshments with interesting, curious, dedicated and enthusiastic people who are interested in learning about becoming volunteers at the Stockman House. This is an informal, introductory get-together to learn what cashier and docent opportunities are available. If you enjoy meeting new people, contributing to the community and learning new skills, plan to join us and bring a friend. Actual training begins in the spring. We hope you will share this information with other people who might be interested. For more information, please contact Nancy Sweetman, 641-423-9231, [nkksweetman@mchsi.com](mailto:nkksweetman@mchsi.com) or Sandy Ringstrom, 815-529-0747, [sandy@ringstrom.us](mailto:sandy@ringstrom.us).

**Location:** The McCoy Architectural Interpretive Center  
520 1<sup>st</sup> St NE, Mason City

**Time:** 10 am

**RSVP:** not necessary

**Admission:** Open to the prospective volunteers

Tues & Thurs, February 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, & 25, 2016

### LIFELONG LEARNING LECTURES

These lectures are a part of NIACC's Spring 2016 Lifelong Learning Institute program and are open to the public at no charge. Dr. Robert E. McCoy will be presenting a series of six lectures at the AIC on the following topics:

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

*The Development of Frank Lloyd Wright's Style up to 1908.*

Thursday, February 11, 2016

*The Stockman House: Its Significance as the Prairie School Challenge to the "Four Square".*

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

*The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin and his wife, Marion Mahony.*

Thursday, February 18, 2016

*Prairie School Architecture in Mason City's Cultural Crescent.*

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

*The Park Inn Hotel, Its Place in the Body of Wright's Work.*

Thursday, February 25, 2016

*Restoration of the Park Inn/City National Bank to "The Historic Park Inn Hotel".*

**Location:** The McCoy Architectural Interpretive Center

**Time:** 4-5:30 pm

**RSVP:** not necessary

**Admission:** Open to the public

**Cost:** FREE, donations appreciated.

### NEW GIFT SHOP ITEMS

**Kathy Kinsey**, Gift Shop Manager, is always adding new items to our extensive collection of unique Wright-inspired gifts. Stop in to see what is new. The gift shop is open every Saturday from 10-2pm for your holiday shopping pleasure. Compared to shopping on the internet, there is no waiting for them to be shipped, no shipping charges and no sales tax. RCSHP members get a 10% discount on all non-consignment items.

### MASON CITY IN THE NEWS

#### 1 of 3) Mason City Couple Given Wright Spirit Award



L to R: Bonnie and Bob McCoy (award winners), John Thorpe (FLWBC presenter).

On October 3, 2015 the **Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy**, at their annual conference held this year in Milwaukee, WI, presented Mason City's own **Robert and Bonnie McCoy** with a *Wright Spirit Award*. This award recognizes efforts of extraordinary individuals and organizations who have preserved the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright through their tireless dedication and persistent efforts. The McCoy's purchased the Walter Burley Griffin-designed Blythe House in 1963 and have been involved in historic preservation efforts in Mason City for over fifty years. The McCoy's were also instrumental, along with the **River City Society for Historic Preservation** and **Wright on The Park**, in their successful efforts to save Wright's *Stockman House* and the *City National Bank and Park Inn Hotel*.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, an international preservation membership organization, is based in Chicago, Illinois. Founded in 1989, its mission is to facilitate the preservation and maintenance of the remaining structures designed by Frank Lloyd Wright through education, advocacy, preservation easements and technical services. Website: <http://SaveWright.org>

#### 2 of 3) Mason City Home Salutes Prairie School-Style

The Cedar Rapids Gazette had an article on the Stockman House and Mason City on November 30, 2016. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the article.

#### 3 of 3) Mason City Ranked #6

[Windowsandsiding.net](http://Windowsandsiding.net) has ranked Mason City as #6 of architecturally significant small towns in America.

*From the article:* "When most people think of architecture, major cities like Chicago, New York, and San Francisco come to mind. But while plenty of those big cities are renowned for their awe-inspiring buildings, there are just as many American small towns that are equally impressive. The 30 small towns in this listing are some of the most architecturally impressive in America. Whether your architectural interests lean towards landscape architecture, the preservation of historic buildings, various revival styles, or something else entirely, chances are there is a small town in America to send your architect's heart aflutter."

"Each town on this list has fewer than 100,000 people (according to the last census) and at least one notable architectural attraction. They were chosen and ranked based upon their overall appeal to the average person with an interest in architecture. Those towns with more specific architectural features, or a variety of impressive structures, were ranked higher than those towns with a single architecture feature or a general style."

"Tiny Mason City, Iowa, is known for having one of the largest collections of Prairie-style homes in the world. In fact, Mason City is the location of Frank Lloyd Wright's famed Prairie School. Defined by its low profiles, horizontal lines, natural lighting, and uninterrupted flow between the indoor and the outdoor, "prairie style" is directly inspired by the flat terrain and open sky of the Midwest. In addition to the Prairie School, Wright's architecture is also represented by the 1908 G.C. Stockman house. Though perhaps less impressive to purists, a number of "copy-cat" architects also constructed similarly styled buildings that are no less impressive."

*(Editor: Journalism is not what it used to be. Unfortunately they did not mention the Historic Park Inn. The photo that was included was a Prairie-style house, but just not one located in Mason City. To use the pejorative term "copy-cat" was entirely unfair to those architects who were employees of Mr. Wright and taught by him to design in the Prairie Style.)*

### 2015 TOUR SEASON

Our scheduled tour season is from mid-April to the end of October. Compared to last year, 2015 was great. The number of tourists was up 13%. Tour income was up 15% and Gift Shop revenue increased by 10%. Small group tours

by appointment were up 320%. *Tours by Appointment* are available from November thru April. Please call 641-423-1923.

**WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?**

Since our last E-Newsletter we have had 783 people who have toured the Stockman House. Among these we had 132 from 5 large group tours. We also had 53 people who called ahead to participate in our new *Tours by Appointment* program on the days we weren't open. According to our guest book we had visitors at the AIC from 34 states (AR, AZ, CA, CO, DC, FL, GA, HI, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, ND, NE, NH, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI) and 6 foreign countries (England, Canada, France, Netherlands, Vietnam, China).



**QUOTE**

"The only thing wrong with architecture are the architects." – FLW

**MASON CITY HISTORIC HOUSE FOR SALE**

The WBG-designed **Arthur Rule House** (1912) at 11 Rock Glen (below) is waiting on the market for the right new owner. Listed for \$395K contact Home Realty Group 641-423-4663, if interested.



**MASON CITY HISTORIC HOME SOLD**

Exit Realty has sold the Walter Burley Griffin-designed **Sam Schneider House** (1915), recently listed at \$250K, at 525 E. State St.

**STOCKMAN HOUSE MAINTENANCE**

The annual Fall Cleanup Day went well. We washed windows and raked leaves. Thanks to everyone who attended.

**AIC MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS**

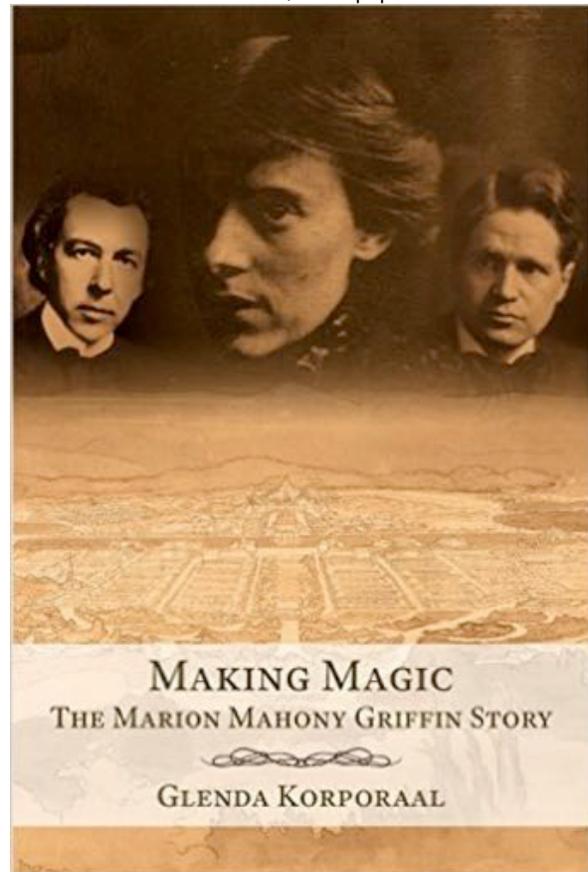
The *Farrer Foundation* has awarded us a \$3,000 grant to be used for the completion of Phase 2 of the construction of the AIC Library/Office in the basement. The work will be completed over this winter. Phase 3 will be furnishing it with bookcases, wall cabinets, filing cabinets, chairs, computer, etc.

**NEW BOOK ON MARION MAHONY GRIFFIN**

**Making Magic: The Marion Mahony Griffin Story**

by Glenda Korporeal

ISBN-13: 978-0992476908 \$24.95 paperback



The first biography of **Marion Mahony Griffin** in her own right, *Making Magic* tells Marion's story. She was the American woman who changed both American and Australian history. She broke through barriers for women in architecture and spent 15 years working for Chicago architect Frank Lloyd Wright in the formative years of the Prairie School of Architecture. She then teamed up with **Walter Burley Griffin** working with him in winning the design contest for the new Australian capital city, Canberra. She was an architect, artist, environmentalist, social observer and community builder, yet the famous men in her

life have constantly overshadowed her work.

Her story dates back to the days of Abraham Lincoln, as a traveling lawyer, who was friends with her grandparents in Illinois. It follows the story of her life over three continents - America, Australia and India. A woman with a fierce sense of idealism and a passion for nature, Marion always had a mind of her own. She developed fine artistic and architectural skills, which helped to make Wright and then Griffin famous. A woman in a man's world, she made history with her pioneering role as a female architect. Her creative work was sheer magic.

Faced with her own challenges, she drew on her energy and creativity to refashion her role in a new country, Australia. She was instrumental in setting up a unique community in the Sydney suburb of Castlecrag. Her paintings, drawings and descriptions of the Australian bushland produced another exercise in magic; yet few know her real story. *Making Magic* comes as Marion's role is now being recognized with accolades in America and Australia.

Conversations with Griffin experts and drawing on her diaries and historical records in libraries in Australia and America, *Making Magic* tells the story of a most unusual woman. It puts the case for her recognition as an important figure who emerged from Chicago's Prairie School of architecture and tells an inspiring story of a woman and her own special brand of magic.

***We plan to have this book available in the AIC gift shop in the near future.***

#### FLW IN THE NEWS

If you are interested in learning more about FLW you might like to know that since our last E-Newsletter we have posted links to over nineteen current newspaper articles, magazines and blogs of news events related to Wright and his buildings on: <http://www.stockmanhouse.org>. To read these articles just click on *FLW NEWS & EVENTS* and then on *FLW in the News*.

#### THREE KEYS TO HAPPINESS

American clergyman George Washington Burnap (1802-1859) said, "The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for." As an RCSHP volunteer we can at least help you with the first one of these and give you "something to do." We are always looking for new volunteers to help be greeters, docents, cashiers, sales assistants, gardeners and window washers.

Such communities as Buffalo, NY and Oak Park, IL and others are recognizing architectural tourism as a significant draw of tourist dollars. With the recent addition of the restored Historic Park Inn Hotel (HPIH) to other Mason City historic sites, we have joined that list. Since 2011, Mason

City welcomed over 35,000 visitors from every U.S. state and over 50 foreign countries. Because of this we need your help at the Architectural Interpretive Center and the Stockman House to represent our city to these tourists.

***We would love to have your help!*** Call 641-423-1923.

#### UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

Join us for an informal gathering on January 19<sup>th</sup> at 10am to answer your questions and to learn more about volunteering for RCSHP. We need your help, please consider joining us at the Architectural Interpretive Center and bring a friend.

#### ANNUAL VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION DINNER

At the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner held on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the RCSHP awarded decorative lapel pins to volunteers who have accrued a milestone number of years of volunteer service to the organization: **Marilyn Lind** 20yrs, **Penny Anderson** 15yrs, **Judy Wagner** 10yrs, **Dale Jensen**, **Suzanne Hofstrand**, **Geri Barker**, **Jay Thede** and **Susan Urbatsch** all 5yrs, and **Arlene Gilbert** 3yrs. Many thanks to all of our volunteers who make it possible for us to open our doors on a regular basis.

#### VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

**Marilyn Lind** has been a docent at the Stockman House for



twenty years. Before retiring she worked in retail clothing stores here in MC. She currently has a regularly scheduled time for volunteering at the Stockman House every Thursday 1-3pm. Many of our volunteers work a

few hours each week depending on their schedule. Other volunteers fill-in on an as-needed basis. She has had a very long-term interest in Frank Lloyd Wright, which started by watching various PBS specials on Mr. Wright. She may have inadvertently inculcated her interests in her architect daughter. She has visited more than 24 Wright Sites over the years.

Marilyn's hobbies include sewing, reading, bridge, volunteering at Trinity Lutheran Church, and travel with an emphasis on seeking out FLW Architecture. She especially loves "*The FLW Field Guide*" which includes maps to all of Wright's extant structures. When asked what surprised her after becoming a docent she said she was surprised at how interested our visitors are in Mr. Wright's architecture. She found it extremely gratifying to share Mason City's architectural heritage with them. The thing she wants to share with anyone who may be interested in becoming a

RCSHP volunteer is how enjoyable it is to deal with the tourists who have made the special effort necessary to travel specifically to Mason City.

#### DID YOU KNOW...

...that even though **Frank Lloyd Wright** was known for his egotism he actually had something good to say about the work of other architects? He is on the record as saying nice things about the work of his apprentices: John Howe, Aaron Green, E. Fay Jones, and Bill Bernoudy. Other architects whose work Mr. Wright appreciated were Alvar Aalto, HH Richardson, Frank Furness, JL Silsbee, Louis Sullivan, Alfred Browning Parker and Edward Durell Stone.

#### CORPORATE MEMBERS

We love how our corporate members show their appreciation for the historic built environment by becoming members. Our historic buildings are such a special resource of Mason City. Historic buildings represent the physical memories of life as it was during a previous time. If you are friends with the owners of any local businesses please encourage them to join. They can go to our website [www.StockmanHouse.org](http://www.StockmanHouse.org) and click on *Support Us* and follow the directions to join. As you shop locally, we would like to encourage you to patronize our valued corporate members with your business.

**Accord Architecture**  
**Alpha Media (formerly Digny Communications)**  
**Anderson Furniture Restorations**  
**Bergland + Cram Architects**  
**Blackmore Nursery Inc**  
**Burgmeier Dentistry**  
**Central Park Dentistry**  
**CL Tel**  
**Dr Bruce Dunker, MD Ob-Gyn**  
**Dr Robert J Friedrichs, PC DC DA**  
**Duggan Painting Service**  
**Farm Credit Services Of America**  
**Hawkeye Auto Body**  
**Hearing Associates**  
**Henkel Construction Co**  
**Hertz Farm Management Inc**  
**Historic Park Inn**  
**ITC Midwest**  
**Jeffrey Repair**  
**Johansen Welding & Fabrication**  
**Jon L Hardinger DDS**  
**Lehigh Cement Company LLC**  
**Mason City Buick GMC Cadillac**  
**Metalcraft Inc**  
**Midland Concrete Products**  
**North Iowa Community Credit Union**  
**North Iowa Eye Clinic PC**  
**Petersen Plaza**  
**Schupick & Associates PC**  
**The Law Offices Of Timothy L Lapointe PC**

**Tierney Properties**  
**Waggoner and Wineinger Architects**  
**Westview Apartments Corp Of Mason City**  
**Wright On The Park**

#### 2015-16 WINTER TOURS

Tours during November thru April are by advanced appointment only. *Small groups* of less than ten people must make a reservation at least three days in advance. Large group tours of ten or more must be made a week in advance. Please call 641-423-1923.

#### EDUCATIONAL STUDENT TOURS NOW FREE

In recognition of our educational mission the RCSHP Board has voted to change our tour policy for Student Groups. From now on all student group tours for grades 5 thru 12 from any public or private educational institution will be FREE. Student groups must be scheduled *at least two weeks in advance* and are available all year, except May & September. Call 641-423-1923 to arrange a tour to suit your needs.

#### MEMBER BENEFITS

RCSHP members can receive a 10% member discount at the AIC gift shop (with your membership card) on all non-consignment items. Free member tours are available only during only during regularly scheduled tours from May — October. Corporate members can get a free group tour for up to 10 of their employees any time during the year, reservations required.

#### PLEASE INCLUDE US IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLAN

At heart, preservation is not looking at history under glass or behind velvet ropes. It's being a part of it, about understanding that what's behind us is as important as what is in front of us. Preservation is knowing that the next generation will only inherit what we choose to save and preserve. No matter where you are in your estate planning, we can help you create a bold preservation legacy. Contact us today to remember us in your will and trusts. We have two tax-deductible 501(c)3 non-profit organizations that can accept your charitable donations:

#### RIVER CITY SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION & THE STOCKMAN HOUSE MUSEUM FOUNDATION

Please have your attorney or advisor contact us at our mailing address (next column) if they have any questions.

#### E-NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All members are welcome to submit information, contribute a topic, a photo, an article, a book recommendation or a book review that you think would be appropriate for the next quarterly newsletter. If you know of an upcoming event that the membership should be made aware of please let me know that too. The deadline for the **Spring 2016 E-Newsletter** is February 15<sup>th</sup>. We welcome and encourage your submissions. All submissions should be emailed to: [info@StockmanHouse.org](mailto:info@StockmanHouse.org). Paul Ringstrom, *Editor*

**FY2016**

**RCSHP BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Judy Wagner, *Tour & Volunteer Scheduler*  
Kathy Kinsey, *AIC Gift Shop Manager*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of RCSHP is to restore, preserve, protect, own/operate historic and/or architecturally significant buildings and sites in Mason City, educate the public about historic architecture and encourage others to do the same.

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*The RCSHP owns and operates the Stockman House Museum and The Robert E. McCoy Architectural Interpretive Center, both of which are open for public tours.*

*The RCSHP is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization run by volunteers and relies on donations, memberships, grants, tours and gift shop revenue to maintain our buildings and support our activities. Please go to the website and click on SUPPORT US to donate or renew your membership.*

*Mailing Address:*

**RCSHP, P.O. BOX 565, MASON CITY, IA 50402**

*Email Address:*

[info@StockmanHouse.org](mailto:info@StockmanHouse.org)

*Website URL:*

[www.StockmanHouse.org](http://www.StockmanHouse.org)