

Wright in Wisconsin: Frank Lloyd Wright state organization rebrands, reorganizes

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Board spins off new group devoted singularly to Burnham Block Properties

MADISON, WI - In an effort to increase capacity and focus on two missions, the board of the state's Frank Lloyd Wright group voted unanimously this week to reorganize into two distinct organizations. The first, Wright in Wisconsin, will continue to promote, protect and preserve the heritage of Frank Lloyd Wright, his vision and his architecture, in his native state of Wisconsin. The second will focus exclusively on developing the Burnham Block historic site, located in Milwaukee, which includes six examples of Wright's American System-Built Homes.

"With the recent creation of the Frank Lloyd Wright state trail, and the celebration of the 150th anniversary of his birth this year, Wright's legacy has never been stronger in Wisconsin," said George Hall, President of Wright in Wisconsin. Rolling out a new website this week (www.wrightinwisconsin.com), this not-for-profit organization was first created in 1991 with the assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State of Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Historic Wright sites across Wisconsin applauded the creation of a Frank Lloyd Wright Trail by the state legislature last year, including co-sponsorship of 38 legislators from both parties. Running from Racine to Spring Green, and including Wright's birthplace of Richland Center, this route links together Wright buildings across Wisconsin, including Burnham Block.

"This reorganization creates a group now singularly set on restoring the historic Burnham Block site and welcoming visitors to experience Wright's broadest gesture to a wide American audience," said Mike Lilek, head of the newly formed Frank Lloyd Wright Burnham Block

organization, and former Vice President of Facilities for the Wright in Wisconsin group. Constructed between 1915-1916, the Burnham Block site consists six homes that symbolize the challenge faced by Wright to create beautiful and affordable spaces. The site was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. The site welcomes thousands of visitors each year from across the United States and more than 33 countries.

This year marks the celebration of Frank Lloyd Wright's 150th birthday (1867-1959). Born in Richland Center, Frank Lloyd Wright is considered to be one of the most important architects of the century. With over fifty separate buildings, and a dozen sites open to the public, Wisconsin includes work from every decade of Wright's body of work. The state served as the backyard laboratory for his architectural experimentation, making it a unique destination for those who want to understand Wright's organic style of architecture.

Along with expanded educational opportunities for adults, and publishing the quarterly newsletter, Wright in Wisconsin will continue to offer the annual Wright & Like Tour to provide the public with a rare opportunity to experience private homes and public buildings designed by Wright, his apprentices, and related architects. In the past, the tour was held in Milwaukee, Racine, Madison, Delavan Lake, Wausau, and central Wisconsin. In June of 2018, the tour will focus on the Spring Green area in collaboration with Taliesin Preservation.

"Wright in Wisconsin is committed to promoting the success of Burnham Block, as well as increasing attendance to all public Wright sites across the state," shared Andrew Gussert, Treasurer of Wright in Wisconsin. For more information on the public sites that make up the trail and are members of Wright in Wisconsin, visit www.wrightinwisconsin.com