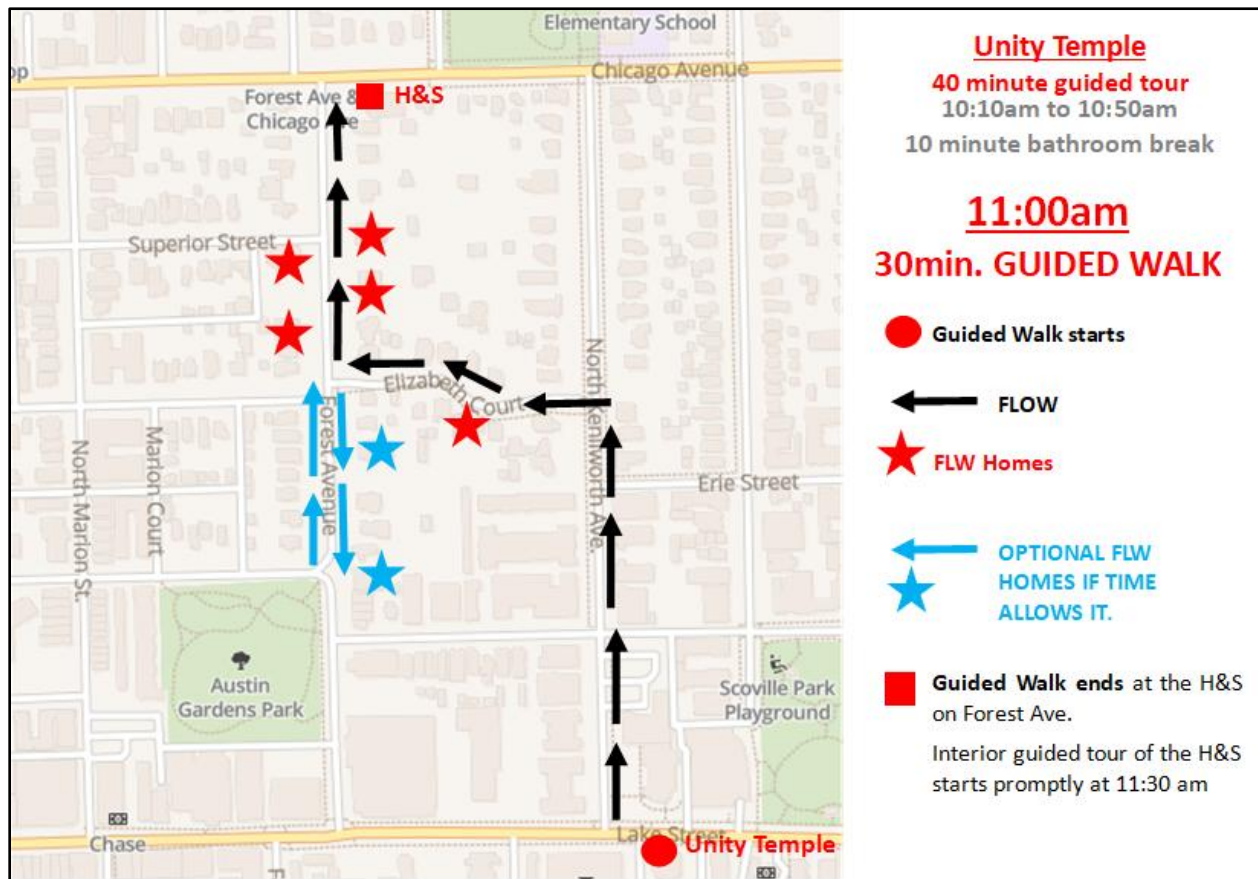


WAC 30-minute walk from Unity to H&S



Laura Robeson Gale House, 6 Elizabeth Court

- Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905 for the widow of Thomas H. Gale, for whom Wright built several commissions. Completed in 1909, the house was designed and constructed during the same time as Unity Temple. The flat roof and overhangs relate to the Unity Temple design.
- The Laura Gale house is unique when compared with other houses of this period and perhaps forecasts Wright's 1935 masterpiece, Fallingwater, located near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- Wright had to work within a limited budget and lot size when designing this house, yet he created a functional and intriguing abstract structure.
- The high walls flanking the front corners of the house form a complex pattern of intersecting planes and levels delineated by wood trim. The leaded glass is minimal.
- Wright's designs would influence a generation of European architects and designers who discovered Wright's work through the Wasmuth Portfolio, published in Germany in 1910. This two-volume monograph of Wright's buildings and projects featured many of the Prairie style buildings we have seen on this tour, which were designed at Wright's Oak Park Studio.



Edward & Mary Hills/Thomas & Irene DeCaro House, 313 Forest Avenue

- Mary Hills was the daughter of Nathan Moore.
- Moore purchased several properties south of his home, which included the Victorian Frank S. Gray house designed by Charles Miller, built in 1883.
- Moore commissioned Wright to renovate the Gray house in 1901 as a future wedding present for his daughter Mary. The work was not completed until 1906, after Wright's first trip abroad to Japan in 1905.
- In 1975 a fire destroyed the second floor. Then-owners Tom and Irene DeCaro restored the house to FLW's original drawings. Because of this restoration, the house is now known as the Hills-DeCaro House.
- Wright's design moved the house 90 feet south, rotated it 90 degrees and completely remodeled the Victorian exterior:
 - The roofline, with irregular levels, emulates Japanese temple forms.
 - The new entrance is inspired by the shape of a Japanese Samurai helmet.
 - The original exterior is now clad in cement stucco with wood trim emphasizing the idea of folding planes,
 - Grouping of windows, no vertical downspouts (water free falls from the corners to concrete basins at the ground), hints of the horizontal lines of a Prairie house.
- The small, free-standing garden structure on the side yard to the right was relocated here from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition where it served as a ticket booth.
- Behind the booth is a recreation of a Wright designed pergola. The original structure was designed for the Moore house in 1906. The pergola extended from Moore's greenhouse to what you see today.



Nathan Moore House, 333 Forest Avenue

- Nathan Moore, an attorney, insisted on an English Tudor-style home, which Wright designed and built for him in 1895. *Wright reluctantly gave Moore an English style design, but he stated, "never has an English Tudor style home met a porch along its façade."*
- Moore's existing 1886 house on the lot was moved west to Superior St.
- Wright's design placed his house on the north edge of the lot, following Moore's request for a separate home-office entrance from Superior Street. The main entrance faces south, allowing the residential part of the house to open to a large garden with a warm southern exposure.
- The original 1895 Wright's designed house was almost destroyed by a fire on Christmas Eve in 1922. Wright rebuilt the house in 1923. Charles E White Jr. supervised the work.
- The original 1895 design had traditional English aesthetic, (guide can point to the original stable to the south-east as an example of the original design)
- In his 1923 design, Wright brought a wide variety of influences. He was particularly interested in Mayan architecture, here, he used Mayan and Japanese motifs, as he had in the 1923 Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan, and the 1921 Hollyhock House in Los Angeles, CA.



Arthur B. & Grace Heurtley House, 318 Forest Ave

- Built in 1902
- This is a prime example of Wright's Prairie style which emphasizes the horizontal line of the Prairie.
 - The broad chimney
 - The hipped roof with extended eaves
 - The banding of windows with their connecting sills
 - The bricks are laid in projecting and recessed courses with recessed contrasting horizontal mortar joints and vertical flush brick color joints to accent the horizontal
 - No vertical downspouts, water free falls from the corners to concrete basins at the ground
- The chimney is low and broad, and its position tells you that the fireplace is in the center of the house. The hearth is the spiritual core of Wright's houses, the center of family life.
- The roof acts like sheltering arms over the base of the house. The position of the windows just below the eaves helps the roof seem to "float" above the walls (an effect best seen at night).
- The long thin band of leaded glass casement windows forms what Wright called a "light screen." The exquisite decorative glass provides ornamentation and a measure of privacy to the interior.
- A prow shaped low wall frames the Romanesque arched entrance, sheltering the offset front door. The entrance is realized by what is called "Wright's path of discovery"
- Note that the living spaces for the family are on the second floor. A common feature of Wright's Prairie designs
- Wright designed every aspect of the Heurtley house, from the building itself down to the furniture and rugs of the interior.



William & Frances Cole Copeland House, 400 Forest Ave.

- Constructed in 1875, the Copeland house was built in the Italianate style.
- Wright remodeled the stable in 1908, the original structure was converted into a garage. The steeply pitched roof was lowered and replaced by a hipped roof, the loft was converted into a living space for the chauffeur-caretaker.
- FLW remodeled the house in 1909. He proposed 4 schemes for the exterior of the house, none of which were completed, except for the first-floor interior. The interior was remodeled following a new esthetic in total contrast with the house's original Italianate style.
- The hipped roof, dormer and roof extended eaves were completed before Wright left Oak Park in 1909. The rest of Wright's radical exterior design was never realized. Architect Hermann van Holst was hired by Wright to complete all his outstanding commissions. Van Holts completed the exterior work with minor simplifications to the original Italianate house.



EXTRAS:

Peter A. Beachy & Emma Susan house, 238 Forest Avenue

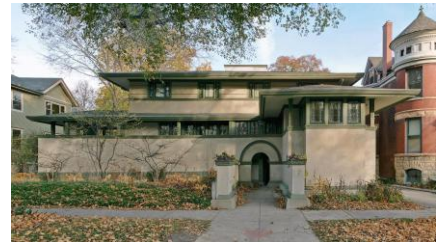
- Designed in 1906, after FLW returned from his first trip abroad to Japan.

- An original structure in gothic revival style, on the north side of the lot, was completely engulfed by Wright's design.
- Wright extended the interior space with the extension of the terrace to the south, blurring the boundaries between exterior and interior, expanding the living space, taking advantage of the breeze, the lawns, and warm southern exposure.
- Like the Hills-DeCaro house, the Japanese influence appears in the design of the roof. Notice that there is no art glass, Wright chose wooden muntin's in the windows, like Soji screens.
- Comparing this house with what we have seen, Wright uses multiple materials, red clinker brick, cement stucco, concrete sills, and heavy timber trim. Also, planters are incorporated in the architecture, bringing nature into the design.
- Typical of Wright's Prairie buildings, the front door is unobtrusively tucked away on the north side of the house.



Stop 7: Frank Thomas House, 210 Forest Avenue

- Built in 1901, commissioned by James Campbell Rogers as a wedding present for his daughter.
- The house was built on the original site of the Grace Episcopal Church. The three-story Victorian row houses on the south predate Wright's design.
- It is considered the first of Wright's Prairie houses in Oak Park.
- In this small lot, although a three-story structure, by using the entire width of the lot, Wright emphasizes the horizontal nature of a Prairie style design like the Heurtley.
- A "T"-shaped plan, with the dining room extension on the south, takes advantage of the afternoon light and the view of the woods across the street. The front landscape was designed to slope up toward the face of the building to reduce its apparent height. There are no windows on the first floor facing the street. The entrance is framed by planter walls toward a roman arch that hides stairs leading to the second-floor main entrance.
- Wright integrated the interior with the exterior using ribbon windows that create a wall of glass. Featuring gold leaf and intricate, flower-like motifs, the windows are among Wright's most exquisite. They open the interior space to the natural environment.



Walk North on Forest to Elizabeth Court. Walk East on Elizabeth Court to the next house.

