National Preservation Institute

Identification and Evaluation of Arts and Crafts, Ready-cut, and Prefabricated Houses

Seminar Overview

Explore keys to understanding some of the most seminal and widespread late 19th-century and 20th-century housing styles and types. Discussion focuses on the history and development of Arts and Crafts, ready-cut, and prefabricated houses. Learn about building components, identify models based on design characteristics, review research sources, and evaluate significance for federal guidelines and the National Register of Historic Places.

Each of these topics is available as a one-day customized training seminar or may be combined into a multiple-day workshop. Organizations may want to further customize by adding walking or driving tours that highlight a particular house type in a local historic district.

Agenda

- History and development
- Building approaches and use of component parts
- Types and definitions
- Designs/models
- Companies/manufacturers
- Identification by design characteristics
- Research sources
- Evaluation of significance for federal guidelines and the National Register of Historic Places
- *Case study*

Identification and Evaluation of Arts and Crafts Houses

In a counter-reaction to the abundance of ornamentation associated with late 19th-century design, the Arts and Crafts movement (1890-1920), called for simplification in art and everyday life. Explore the origins of this English movement favoring the picturesque and artistic in domestic architecture, with an emphasis on fine craftsmanship, and compare with the more straightforward, practical designs that predominated in America.

Discuss how the rising influence of publications emphasizing the home played a significant role in disseminating Arts and Crafts house design, interiors, and fixtures.

- Influence of English architects and designers: Charles Voysey, William Morris, and Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott
- American architects and designers: Frank Lloyd Wright/Prairie School, Gustav Stickley/Craftsman, and the Greene brothers
- Regionalism: Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, and West
- Arts and Crafts communities: Roycroft, NY and Arden, MD
- Influence of publications: Edward Bok's *Ladies' Home Journal*
- *Case study:* Philadelphia Regionalism: Will Price, Edward Bok, and Wayne and Rose Valley, PA

Identification and Evaluation of Arts and Craft, Ready-cut, and Prefabricated Houses

Identification and Evaluation of Ready-cut Houses

The ready-cut catalog or kit house made significant contributions to residential architecture in American cities and new suburbs (1906-1982). Explore the history of this house type and the companies that produced them, including industry leaders Sears and Aladdin. Learn to identify types, styles, and dates of their models from catalogue designs and built examples.

- Other manufacturers: Bennett, Gordon-Van Tine, Harris, Lewis/Liberty, Minter, and Montgomery Ward
- Post-war, mid-century, ready-cut developments
- Major types: foursquare, bungalow, English, Cape Cod, and ranch
- Spotting the ready-cut house
- West Coast firms: Pacific Homes and Tumwater
- *Case study:* early Aladdin and late Sears in Hopewell, VA

Identification and Evaluation of Prefabricated Houses

Peaking in popularity during the post-World War II housing shortage and subsequent boom, the prefabricated house (1940-1975) had industrial antecedents in the19th century and even earlier. Explore various types of prefabricated and modular construction. Review catalogue designs and built examples of housing models produced by manufacturers including National Homes and Gunnison/U.S. Steel.

- Types: prefab, modular, panelized, and portable
- Prefab architects: Charles Goodman, Richard Pollman, and Carl Koch
- Experiments: Lustron, Dymaxion, and Futuro
- Vacation houses and A-frames
- Other manufacturers: American, General Houses, Homart, Pease, Techbuilt, and Thyer
- *Case study:* Fairless Hills, PA vs. Levittown, PA