

NEWS

Historic award presented to Altfillisch houses

The Decorah Historic Preservation Commission will present its annual award to five homes designed by regional architect Charles Altfillisch.

The award ceremony is Thursday, May 17, at 5 p.m. in the Decorah Municipal Center Council Chambers, 400 Claiborne Drive.

A reception with light drinks and snacks will follow the award ceremony. The event is free and open to the general public.

The five homes being recognized are:

- The 1922 Charles and Abbie Weiser residence, 609 W. Broadway, owned by Dale and Susan Goodman

- The 1935 E. J. and Virginia Goen residence, 500 Fifth Ave., owned by Matthew and Jerita Burreson

- The 1940 Lester and Helen Larson residence, 100 Pleasant Hill Drive, owned by Neal and Rhonda Sheeley

- The 1957 Charles and Leila Altfillisch residence, 801 Mound St., owned by Michael Tone, Jeff Tone and Susan Tone Pierce

- The 1960 Hjalmar and Helen Carlson residence, 303 Upper Broadway, owned by Ben and Padrin Grimstad.

The five homes represent the range of Altfillisch's residential designs, according to Commission Chair Mark Muggli.



The Decorah Municipal Center, designed by Charles Altfillisch and the site of the Decorah Historic Preservation Commission's annual award event Thursday, May 17. (Submitted photo)

"We aren't claiming these are the only important Altfillisch homes in Decorah. But they are excellent, well-preserved examples of the work he did in each of the five decades he was active in Decorah," Muggli said.

Altfillisch project

"This award represents an early stage in our Commission's long-term project to inventory and celebrate the whole of Altfillisch's work in Decorah," said Commission member Adrienne Coffeen. "We hope the award announcement and our ceremony will help unearth

information about other Altfillisch designs."

Charles Altfillisch (1891-1978) came to Decorah in about 1919 and produced work until into the 1960s. Some of his most prominent large-scale architectural designs in Decorah are the West Side School, the Municipal Center and Firehouse, and many buildings at Luther College, including Main III, Valdars Hall of Science and the Tower dormitories.

As city engineer, Altfillisch was perhaps the single most important figure in the development of the flood control plan that brought the

dike system to Decorah in 1950.

"We think it is really cool that we can present awards to Altfillisch houses at a ceremony inside of an Altfillisch-designed building like City Hall," said Commission member Diane Scholl.

In addition to a brief introduction to Altfillisch's work, the award ceremony will include exterior and interior photos and comments on the five highlighted homes.

Anyone with information on Altfillisch designs is encouraged to contact Muggli at 612-720-5795; or mugglimz@luther.edu.