

Trimble-Parker area is newest tourist attraction in county

The Trimble-Parker Guest House/Bed and Breakfast in Davis County is one of the newest attractions for tourists to enjoy while visiting Davis County. The new bed and breakfast is located at 29381 Otter Trail Drive, a short distance east of Bloomfield.

The home is the second home for Glenn and Ann-Marie Baughman of Des Moines and is the residence facility of Trimble-Parker Historic District. The Trimble-Parker Historic District now has a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It was added to that list in 2003. The facility includes four barns built before 1930, the guesthouse and other out buildings. When placed on the National Register, it was noted by Beth Foster Hill of the State Historical Society of Iowa that “the survival of so many of its original buildings, including a diverse set of livestock buildings reflecting the varied stock types and operations carried out on this farmstead between 1901 and 1952, is unusual and notable in the current stock of surviving farmstead buildings in Iowa.”

One of the highlights of the facility is the famous U-shaped barn that has been a part of Davis County heritage for many, many years. The Baughmans have spent a lot of time and money on the barn stabilizing it as well as performing other renovations and repairs. Stabilization began in January of 2008. Much of the work was done by March 2008 including the addition of stairways in both the east and west wings for easier access to the haymow for the twice-yearly tours of the barn. Upright posts on the first floor, angle braces in the haymow, and new gambrel ends assure the barn has a future. The stabilization project was made possible by a grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa. Additional preservation projects are planned for future years including foundation replacement, siding and paint, and roof replacement.

The barn was originally designed by Joseph E. Wing of Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, and was completed in 1901. Barns of his design appeared in Illinois and Ohio, but the U-barn is the only one known to be left. A 1907 description of the barn was found in a Chicago published building journal: “A sanitary, comfortable and commodious barn recently built is that designed by Joseph E. Wing for H.H. Trimble of Davis County, Iowa. It has 64 single stalls and 10 box stalls or breeding pens. There are bins for grain and storage for 350 tons of forage above. Silos may be conveniently added, one at the end of each wing, where the feed



Majestic U-Barn is being restored as central feature of the Trimble-Parker Area.

carrier will convey the silage down the central alley between the rows of cattle. The barn is 30' wide and forms three sides of an open court, which is 66' x 78' designed to be paved with vitrified brick or concrete, having a water tank in center, thus forming a convenient sheltered yard where cattle may exercise any day in severe weather.” The farm played host to registered Angus cattle for 75 years.

The Trimble-Parker name was chosen based on the first two owners of the Davis County farm. H.H. Trimble was a district court judge and railroad executive. He was the first owner of the farm. The farm was then sold to John and Urban Parker and their sister, Edith, who built the home and smaller barns.

The Parkers built the Craftsman style home in 1914. They lived in the home until it was sold to Harold and Gladys Baughman in 1942. Glenn and Ann-Marie Baughman continue the Baughman family ownership, maintaining the fact that the home has been owned by only two families since it was built.

The guesthouse offers five bedrooms, two porches, large dining room and living room areas suitable for weekend reunions, retreats or meetings where overnight accommodations are needed. The Craftsman-style home has been redecorated and furnished in colors of the architectural period and retains its original oak woodwork.

One guestroom is located on the first floor and features a private bath. The remaining four guestrooms are located on the second floor and have a shared bathroom facility. A stay includes complimentary breakfast, evening snacks and a complimentary beverage. The home is air-conditioned and also includes a large living room, parlor/music room, large dining room, an enclosed back porch and an open front porch with a swing.