

**FLLW**  
150  
YEARS

Our commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Frank Lloyd Wright's birth begins with the story about the uncertainty regarding exactly where he was born. Our May issue will list some of the commemorative events to look forward to in Wisconsin this year.

Visit [www.taliesinpreservation.org](http://www.taliesinpreservation.org) and click on the "Engage" tab to learn about the Signature Events celebrating Frank Lloyd Wright's 150th.



## Where Was Frank Lloyd Wright Born?

We know the date, but there are seven possible birthplaces.

by LON ARBEGUST

Frank Lloyd Wright was born on June 8, 1867, but the precise location is open for debate among six possible locations in Richland Center and one in nearby Bear Valley. Wright often changed his story when asked where he had been born. Any documents that would solve the mystery were lost in a courthouse fire before 1899.

William Carey Wright—Wright's father—and his wife, Anna, came to Richland Center from Lone Rock in 1864 when William became minister of the Baptist congregation who would build a church at 294 North Church Street. The Wright family moved to McGregor, Iowa in 1869 when their son, Frank Lincoln Wright (he later changed his middle name to Lloyd), was three.

■ BIRTHPLACE CONTINUES ON PAGE 11

Hyatt Richards illustrated the uncertainty about Wright's birthplace in this cartoon for *The Richland Observer*, October 13, 1966.



© Rachel E. Hershberger, Wisconsin Department of Tourism

Wisconsin Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett (left); Greg McManors, executive director of Monona Terrace; Rep. Todd Novak (51st Assembly District); George Hall, president of Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin; Wisconsin Transportation Secretary Mark Gottlieb; and Jim Ladwig, director of global community affairs for SC Johnson, gathered at Monona Terrace on December 5 for a ceremonial inauguration of the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail. See page 18 for more.



# President's Message

by GEORGE HALL

As organizations grow and become more successful, priorities may expand to require a redefinition of mission and structure. Such has been the experience of Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin, as we must realize that we are not the same organization that was founded over two decades ago. The recent official announcement inaugurating Wisconsin's Frank Lloyd Wright Trail means that collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and a closer working relationship with and support for all Wright sites has become much more critical, and the continued success and expansion of the Burnham Block project—from the one building originally purchased more than a decade ago, to now four buildings with major restoration projects—require a much broader and more widely divergent focus of our board and resources than was originally imagined.

We have reached the point where it may be more efficient and beneficial for these two functions to operate independently, with separate resources and management that can devote a stronger focus on each segment of the business. As the ever-growing Burnham Block project continues to develop, it could greatly benefit from a Milwaukee-based board with the requisite funding and management skills for what is fast becoming a very important Frank Lloyd Wright site.

At my request, the board unanimously authorized me to look at how we might amicably divide the organization into two separate nonprofit corporations.

By recognizing that our Burnham Block project is ready to fledge and leave the nest, we hope to strengthen our complementary, yet increasingly separate, missions in support of the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright by actively supporting the other public and private Wright sites, our education and tourism programs, and now Wisconsin's Frank Lloyd Wright Trail.



© Tim Hoyer

By improving and increasing our nascent K–12 educational activities and sponsoring more frequent tours, we hope that Wisconsin's legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright is further strengthened by two separate groups devoted to complementary missions, and you, our members, as well as generations to come, will be the real beneficiaries.

Much work remains to be done to determine how separation could best occur, but initial informal meetings with attorneys suggest that what we intend is possible, so stay tuned. Current and renewing members of FLLW WI, Inc., will not likely see any foreseeable changes in our programming, and we very much appreciate your continued support and engagement. If anything, the opportunities for you to meaningfully participate will only expand.

Since our last (summer) newsletter, our Wisconsin Wright community regrettably lost two of the pre-1959 apprentices: Marcus Weston (apprentice 1938–1946), and Jim Pfefferkorn (apprentice 1952–72). Marcus was a good friend of mine for the past decade-plus, and I knew Jim Pfefferkorn slightly. You may recall that we had buildings by both architects on our 2012 Spring Green tour. An obituary for Marcus Weston appears on page 12 in this issue, and George (Jim) Pfefferkorn is fondly remembered by Taliesin Preservation,

■ PRESIDENT CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

Mike Lilek lectured at several celebrations of the centennial of the American System-Built Homes in Milwaukee, including at the Zimmerman Architectural Studios, Inc.

## CONTENTS



### ARTICLES

- 01 Where Was Wright Born?
- 05 Wright and Like 2017
- 08 Vacation with Wright
- 10 New Stewards for Shorewood Wright
- 12 In Memoriam

### REGULAR FEATURES

- 03 President's Message
- 06 News Briefs
- 16 What Mr. Wright Means to Me
- 17 "At Taliesin"
- 18 Tours & Events
- 20 Vintage Postcard

Published three times annually in February, May and September.

*WRIGHT IN WISCONSIN* is published by Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin, a nonprofit organization designed to promote, protect, and preserve the heritage of Frank Lloyd Wright, his vision and his architecture, in his native state of Wisconsin. Membership benefits include discounts at the Monona Terrace Gift Shop and on *Wright and Like*™ tour tickets, a free tour of the Model B1 home in Milwaukee, this newsletter, volunteer opportunities, and more. Donors of \$100 or more receive reciprocal membership benefits at Wright sites nationwide (benefits vary by location). To join, visit us at [www.wrightinwisconsin.org](http://www.wrightinwisconsin.org) or contact us at the number or address below.

**Editor** Mark Hertzberg  
**Designer and copyeditor** Scott K. Templeton  
**Special thanks** to architect/author Randy Henning for contributing the "At Taliesin" column, and Patrick Mahoney for contributing the vintage postcard.

**Board of Directors (Sites Represented)**  
 George Hall, president; Mike Lilek, vice president-facilities; Mark Hertzberg, secretary; Kim Mattila-Kasten and Paul Sheahan, co-treasurers; Lon Arbegust (*AD German Warehouse*); Mary Arnold; Lois Berg; V. Terry Boyd; Michael Bridgeman; Ken Dahlin; Michael Ditmer (*Schwartz House*); Timothy Frautschi; Andy Gussert; Timothy Hoyer; Bill Martinelli (*Seth Peterson Cottage*); Mary Ann McKenna (*Wyoming Valley School*); Sarah Milestone (*Taliesin*); Donna Newgord; Heather Sabin (*Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center*); Humberto Sanchez; Ron Scherubel; Traci Schnell; and Dave Weber (*Unitarian Meeting House*).

**Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin**  
 P.O. Box 6339, Madison, WI 53716-0339  
 (608) 287-0339 | [www.wrightinwisconsin.org](http://www.wrightinwisconsin.org)

Taliesin Preservation invites community members to share artifacts, memorabilia, and stories related to the Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center, originally known as the Spring Green Restaurant, in honor of the building's 50th anniversary in 2017. See page 4 for more details.



© Mark Hertzberg

## PRESIDENT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Save Wright, and the Taliesin Fellows in recent Facebook and other posts.

There are two other developments of note to mention to you. First, as part of making connections with allied groups, I'm having conversations with the American Institute of Architects Wisconsin Chapter, with whom we already collaborate on our Wright lecture program organized by board members Henry St. Maurice and architect Ken Dahlin. We share with the AIA chapter an interest in preserving the Wisconsin legacy of the Fellowship apprentices along with the work of Taliesin Associated Architects. Through these conversations, I'm envisioning laying the groundwork for future tours, newsletter articles, and hopefully future additions to the archives at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Second, we have the prospect of a late July tour to Manhattan for the 150th Frank Lloyd Wright birthday anniversary exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Former board member Karen Bergenthal is working with Sherri and me to flesh out what we might do, including visiting Wright sites in Manhattan and Usonia, New York. Before trip planning progresses much further, Sherri and I will be quizzing you on preferences.

On December 29th, Sherri and I were able to pull together what is believed to be the first FLLW WI board potluck, at the First Unitarian Society Meeting House. The gathering also included several owners of our Madison 2015 tour houses. Despite rather short notice, we had 18 attendees from as far away as Two Rivers, Milwaukee, Racine, and Spring Green. The group experienced some difficulty breaking away at our 9 p.m. deadline, as conversations continued unabated. Everyone resolved to do this again, and with more notice and planning, Sherri and I would like to include FLLW WI members as well.

Last of all, I'd like to express appreciation for the planning, largely completed, for our June 2017 *Wright and Like* in Milwaukee. Thanks go to board member Traci Schnell, former president and board member Denise Hice, and to you—our members—for your continuing support. ■

## Burnham by the Numbers



The Burnham Block celebrated its **100th** anniversary last year. This is a summary of visitors to our American System-Built Homes in Milwaukee.

- Number of visitors: About **3,000** including during *Doors Open MKE*
- Number of states visitors came from: **26**  
*Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin, plus Washington, D.C.*
- Number of countries visitors came from: **11**  
*Australia, Austria, Canada, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Scotland, and Spain*
- Doors Open MKE brought in about **2,000** visitors from *California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Wisconsin, and Washington D.C.*
- How visitors heard about the Burnham Block:
  - Internet
  - *Seth Peterson Cottage*
  - *Farmer's Market*
  - *Tour Companies*
  - *Wingspread, SC Johnson Tour*
  - *Channel 10 Auction*



## Wright and Like 2017: Milwaukee

A very special celebration of Wright's 150th birthday

by TRACI SCHNELL, co-chair, *Wright and Like 2017*

Although it's only a few weeks into the New Year, the Wright in Wisconsin office has been fielding a number of inquiries regarding 2017 *Wright and Like* tour specifics. First off, if you haven't already, please reserve the first weekend of June (June 2–4) for a trip to Milwaukee to experience the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his contemporaries. This year marks the fourth time that *Wright and Like* will be held in the greater Milwaukee area. While plans continue to unfold, we fully anticipate our usual schedule of a Friday evening fundraiser event, the Saturday *Wright and Like* tour of homes, and, if all continues to go well, a Sunday event also. And, although final building selection continues, we'd like to provide you a modest peek into the full roster. In addition to the usual (Wright-designed) suspects, our "Like" offerings will include no fewer than two John Randal McDonald homes that have never before been open to the public. Located near Lake Michigan in Cudahy (a southern suburb of Milwaukee) and built in the 1950s, the homes share some of the expected McDonald design features, but they in no way resemble each other. In obtaining these homes, we were pleased to have had a substantial "assist" from Dave Erickson, a freelance photographer and the co-author of an upcoming book on McDonald's architecture.

Another featured "Like" architect—or, in this case, architectural partnership—is that of Willis and Lillian Leenhouts (pronounced LEEN-howts). Those of you from outside of the Milwaukee area may not recognize the name, but around Milwaukee they are among the upper echelon of mid-century modern architects. Born in Milwaukee, Willis was the son of Cornelius Leenhouts, a partner in the well-known architectural firm of Leenhouts & Guthrie. Not to immediately cast Willis aside, but we so rarely have female architects featured that I would like to properly introduce everyone to Lillian Leenhouts. Born in South Milwaukee, Lillian May Scott attended Milwaukee's Layton School of Art from 1929 to 1932. Wright aficionados may recognize Layton as one of the institutions where Wright's touring exhibition, entitled



"The Show," was displayed. The exhibit was at Layton in 1930 when Lillian was a student there, and it was her exposure to that show that made her a fan of Wright's work. Another significant influence in Lillian's work was her attendance at the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, where she viewed "The House of Tomorrow," a passive solar design by George Fred Keck. After receiving her degree in 1936 from the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor, Lillian would work for Milwaukee architect Harry Bogner, where Willis Leenhouts was also employed. In 1942, Lillian became the first registered female architect in Wisconsin, and the following year she and Willis were wed. In 1948 they built their passive solar home and office in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. Both Willis and Lillian died in the early 1990s, but the home—which feels much like a museum and will be open for *Wright and Like*—remains in the family.

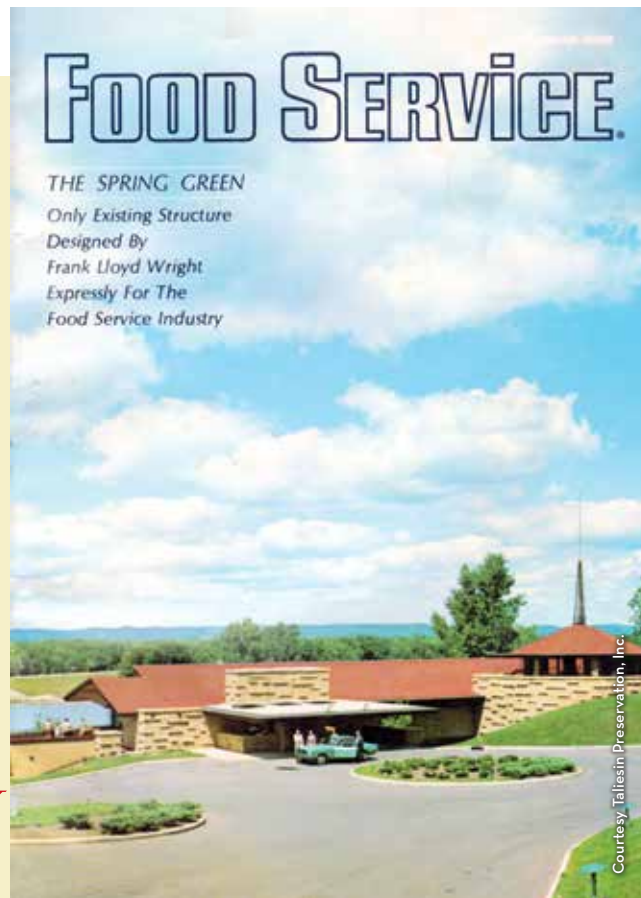
As the weekend's events solidify, we will be updating the Wright in Wisconsin website with information, so please check back regularly. We look forward to seeing you in Milwaukee in June! ■

Lillian Leenhouts is shown seated at the drafting table in her home office in this photograph from the 1950s.



### Call for Memorabilia

Taliesin Preservation invites community members to share artifacts, memorabilia, and stories related to the Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center, originally known as the Spring Green Restaurant, in honor of the building's 50th anniversary in 2017. The items will be displayed April through December 2017 as part of an exhibit on this fascinating building designed by Wright and completed in 1967. Artifacts can include photographs, menus, uniforms, cocktail napkins, swizzle sticks, ashtrays, glassware, or other table setting items. Items may either be loaned and returned next January or donated to Taliesin Preservation in your honor. Memorabilia may be brought to the administrative office at the Visitor Center during business hours until March 10. Call (608) 588-7900, ext. 231 with questions or to share your story.



A historic photo shows Wright during construction.

Food Service magazine devoted a 1968 cover story to the opening of The Spring Green Restaurant.



### Ride for Taliesin

The second annual Tour du Taliesin bicycle ride will take place Sunday, May 21. Taliesin Preservation invites cyclists to explore a broad swath of Frank Lloyd Wright territory, starting and ending at his 800-acre estate. The event offers a challenging ride as well as a memorable gourmet experience. The ride is fully supported with mechanical and medical staff, clear road signage, and nutrition and hydration at every aid station. There are four routes to choose from: 20, 40, 60, and 100 miles. There is an after-party under the oaks at Tan-y-Deri Hill, across from Taliesin.

The Apprentice-level ride (\$115) includes the ride, after-party, Taliesin-designed bike socks, general parking, and a 25%-off coupon for a tour of Taliesin. The Master-level (\$240) also includes a Taliesin-designed bike jersey, VIP parking, and free tour of Taliesin.

Contact Aron Meudt-Thering for information about sponsorships, club discounts, or the ride itself at [events@taliesinpreservation.org](mailto:events@taliesinpreservation.org) or (608) 588-7900, ext. 221.

(Note: your newsletter editor endorses the ride ... he completed the 40-mile route with his son last year and they are signed up for this year's ride as well, planning on tackling the 60- or 100-mile route). ■



The inaugural Tour du Taliesin bicycle ride on May 22, 2016, offered riders a choice of 38- and 100-mile routes. The fundraising ride began at the Frank Lloyd Wright Visitors Center and ended with a cookout below Tan-y-deri.



The city of Richland Center highlighted the A.D. German Warehouse on billboards that were placed around Richland County for about a month at a time this past summer. The billboard campaign, which started four years ago, has been well received according to Sherry Klatt, the city's tourism coordinator. She has even heard from people who saw the billboards while kayaking on the Pine River. The billboards have increased tourism and increased website traffic for the city.



# Vacation with Frank Lloyd Wright

Wisconsin leads the way

by SHERRI SHOKLER

**There has never been a better time** for fans of Frank Lloyd Wright to plan their vacation around experiencing the master's architecture. Nationwide there are over fifty Wright designed buildings that offer public tours and more than twenty offering overnight rentals.

Wisconsin is proud to be home to the very first Wright site vacation rental—the Seth Peterson Cottage—and to the newest—the Kinney House in Lancaster. Add to this the Arnold Jackson House in Beaver Dam, Still Bend (the Bernard Schwartz House) in Two Rivers, and an American System–Built home in Milwaukee, and Wisconsin gives visitors more unique opportunities to experience firsthand what it means to live in a Wright building than anywhere else in the world.

The Seth Peterson Cottage near Wisconsin Dells is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its restoration this year.



© Kit Hogan

Here's where you can experience living in a Wright design as you travel through Wisconsin.

## Seth Peterson Cottage ■ Mirror Lake

This small cottage was nearly lost after being boarded up for twenty-three years. This year it is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its rehabilitation, brought about through the tireless efforts of a dedicated band of volunteers led by Audrey Laatsch, whose friend suggested making it a vacation rental. In July 1992 the cottage became the first Wright building in the country to welcome overnight guests.

Since then, the combination of a stunning location in a state park, easy highway access, and closeness to Taliesin have helped make the cottage phenomenally successful and self-sustaining. It has also served as a model for other restorations around the country.

You will need to book your stay at the cottage well in advance since it has an amazing 90% occupancy rate. Visit [www.sethpeterson.org](http://www.sethpeterson.org) or call (608) 254-6551 to find out about availability and pricing.

## Still Bend ■ Two Rivers

Almost everyone familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright knows about his *Life Magazine* "Dream House." Still Bend is the built version of that house. Located along a bend in the East Twin River, staying here is to experience living the dream. Details like vintage radios, books, and magazines from the 1940s make for an authentic experience of what it was like to live in the house when it was new.

Since opening as a vacation rental in 2004, the house has welcomed visitors from forty states and twelve countries. This is a great house and location for a family getaway. Visit [www.theschwartzhouse.com](http://www.theschwartzhouse.com) or call (612) 840-7507 to find out about availability, pricing, and more.



© PlansMatter

## American System–Built Home ■ Milwaukee

This 1916 home is one of six Wright-designed ASB homes on the same block, a collection unique in the world of Wright buildings. Originally built as a duplex, in the early 1980s the house was sensitively reconfigured as a single-family home. Light from eighty leaded-glass windows creates a warm, organic living space with built-in bookcases and armoires, tray ceilings, and natural fireplaces. Staying in this beautiful urban home lets you experience Wright's earliest attempt to provide beautiful and life-affirming architecture for working-class Americans. Visit [www.vrbo.com/434063](http://www.vrbo.com/434063) to find out more.

## The Arnold Jackson House ■ Beaver Dam

The Jackson House is unique among Wisconsin's vacation rentals in a number of ways. First, it is a customized version of an Erdman prefab design; second, the house was moved from Madison to Beaver Dam in 1985 to save it from destruction; and third, at this house you can chat and share Wright stories with the owner, who lives onsite. The home was part of our *Wright and Like* tour in 2008. Rental information can be found by visiting [www.AirBnB.com](http://www.AirBnB.com), by calling (608) 770-5120, or by visiting [www.arnoldjacksonhouse.com](http://www.arnoldjacksonhouse.com).

## The Kinney House ■ Lancaster

In 2016 the Kinney House became the newest Wright site to offer visitors the opportunity to experience living in a Wright design. This home, rich in family history and ties to Mr. Wright, is still owned by the original family.

Patrick Kinney and his wife Margaret, who once worked for Wright's sister at Taliesin, commissioned the home in 1951. Patrick acted as general contractor as well as laborer. He dug, dynamited and hauled local limestone to the site, and then helped stonemasons lay it. The majority of the original Wright-designed furniture, with the exception of the living room banquettes, is still in the house. John Howe designed an addition to the house in 1964. The landscaping—including trees, shrubs, and flowers all planted by the family—is based loosely on a plan by Cornelia Brierly.

This three-bedroom Usonian home with the capacity to sleep five is a perfect quiet getaway. Visit [www.plansmatter.com](http://www.plansmatter.com) to check pricing and availability.

Come for a weekend or a week. There are plenty of Wright places to stay in Wisconsin! ■



# New Stewards for Shorewood Wright

Recently rediscovered ASBH home finds eager new protectors

by MARK HERTZBERG

**Angela and Nicholas Hayes** joined the Wright family at the end of 2016 when they became the new stewards of the Elizabeth Murphy American System–Built Home (1917) at 2106 E. Newton Ave. in Shorewood (near Milwaukee). The house, which was altered in the 1970s with the addition of a basement-level garage, was documented as one of Wright’s American System–Built Homes in June 2015. The siding, which either covers stucco, or more likely replaced it, also masks its Wright heritage. Still, Nicholas notes, “The entire home remains as drawn, down to the knobs on the dining cabinets.”

The Hayeses outlined their interest in Wright and commitment to staying in Shorewood in a letter to the previous stewards, Roger and Pat Wisialowski. The letter, which accompanied their offer to purchase, follows.

Both lifelong Milwaukeeans, we came to Shorewood 21 years ago to raise our kids among lovely neighbors and homes like yours.

We lovingly upgraded our own home and gardens, I built businesses nearby, and Angela became the art teacher at Atwater School, where she teaches Shorewood children about local art and architecture, among other things. One of her class projects was to recreate Shorewood façades in clay after hiking neighborhoods, talking about history and engineering, and making 2D pencil sketches. Hundreds of colorful miniatures of familiar homes rest on Shorewoodian fireplace mantels alongside student-signed architectural renderings as provenance.

With our adult daughters now in college, we’re entering a new chapter: we plan to stay in Shorewood, where we hope to give back. We think your home is an important key.

Like you, we plan to be attentive and careful stewards and archivists while we live at 2106 East Newton. We will protect its glory,

celebrate its importance, and secure its future. We plan to study every detail of Wright’s plans and workmanship and make sure that they remain intact and fresh. We will invest in and care for the home and yard as an important artistic and civic statement.

To that end, Angela is already supplementing her curriculum to teach students about Wright’s vision, genius and aesthetic through her own experience of living in it. I’ve read every word written about the home since your discovery and will continue to engage the experts to try to uncover new clues and details about its place in our neighborhood. The home will remain a well-cared-for showpiece, although it will not be trampled by tourists. It will stay a private, quiet neighborhood gem, while also, importantly, creating a direct, tangible teaching moment for local kids.

The Hayeses are excited about the discoveries they have made in just a few weeks: “We’ve made some amazing discoveries in one short month: the original porch floor paint was hidden under carpet and parquet. Maple floors run throughout the upstairs (most were covered by linoleum and carpet). The all-birch cabinetry and trim can be painstakingly returned to original with classic materials: vinegar, steel wool, shellac, and of course, time.” They are posting their progress on Twitter, including the following pictures, used with their permission. ■



## BIRTHPLACE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The seven possible locations for Wright’s birthplace are:

- #1 ■ **The extant Weigley House** at the corner of Church and 2nd streets, a block away from William’s church.
- #2 ■ **The Wertz House** at the corner of Seminary and Park streets. This house was moved to the 700 block of South Park Street when the Carnegie Library was built. According to a newspaper article from 1967, this house was believed to be Wright’s true birthplace, but nobody knows for sure. The house has been razed and replaced by a parking lot.
- #3 ■ **The Miner House** at the corner of Central Avenue and Mill Street, now the location of the post office.
- #4 ■ **The Bear Valley house**, long since torn down, belonged to a relative of William Wright. Rev. Wright was in Bear Valley for a funeral the day Frank was born. Some believe Anna Wright may have accompanied him on the trip and given birth there.
- #5 ■ The fifth possible birthplace is located at **101 South Church Street**, the present location of the Edwards Building which was built in 1912–1913.
- #6 ■ Located in the **middle of the block on East Mill Street**, this house is still standing although greatly modified into a multi-unit building.
- #7 ■ The last of the seven possible birthplace locations was located at the **southern end of Park Street**. A gas station now occupies the site.

Wright is connected to Richland County in many ways. Not only was he born there, he designed the A.D. German Warehouse there. He lived nearby at Taliesin and was often in Richland Center. His father is buried in the Bear Valley Cemetery. Two houses in Richland Center were designed by Herbert Fritz, Jr., who studied architecture as a member of the Taliesin Fellowship. The Barrett-Tuxford House, designed by well-known architect Arthur Dyson, pays homage to Wright with many features he developed. One of its original owners, Bruce Barrett, studied architecture at Taliesin as well. Richland Center also has a medical clinic that Marshall Erdman designed in 1962. ■

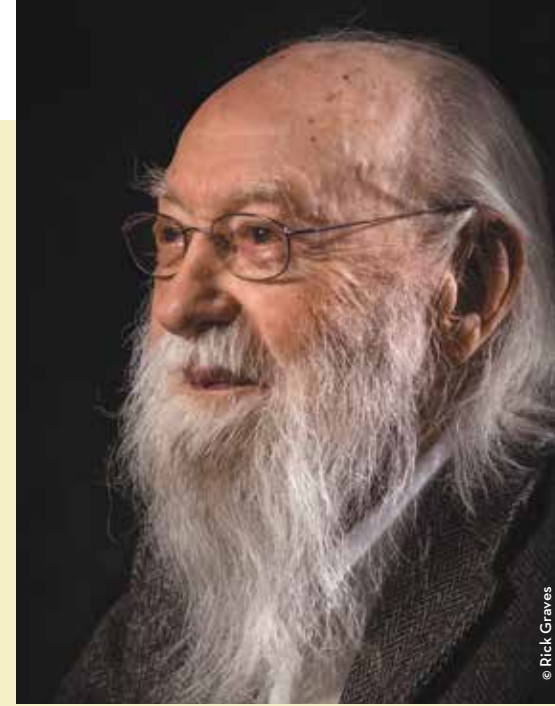
The story of the announcement of the rediscovery of the house as one of Wright’s ASBH homes is at [wrightinracine.wordpress.com/2015/06/05/newly-discovered-wright-home-near-milwaukee/](http://wrightinracine.wordpress.com/2015/06/05/newly-discovered-wright-home-near-milwaukee/)

# Marcus E. Weston

October 25, 2016

**Marcus E. Weston** passed away peacefully on Tuesday, October 25, at his home in Spring Green at age 101¾. Marcus was born Jan. 25, 1915, in Spring Green. He grew up doing carpentry and masonry with his father and soon was working alongside him at Taliesin and also helping to build Taliesin West in Arizona. He was inspired to become an architect himself and was accepted by Mr. Wright into the young Taliesin Fellowship in 1938.

As war settled upon the world, Marcus declared himself a conscientious objector and after a high-profile court case was sentenced to prison, later accepting alternative service in the University of Michigan hospital in Ann Arbor, where he met Fannie V. Ogoroskin. Marcus and Fannie were married on July 7, 1946, moving back to Taliesin for a time and later to Monticello and then back with their young family to Spring Green, where he designed and built a home and lived for the rest of his life. Most of his professional architectural life was with the well-known Madison partnership of Kaeser & McLeod, in which he became a partner in the 1980s, as well as numerous local architectural commissions, notably the Spring Green Senior Center and “South Hill,” a private residence in the wooded hills north of Spring Green.



© Rick Graves

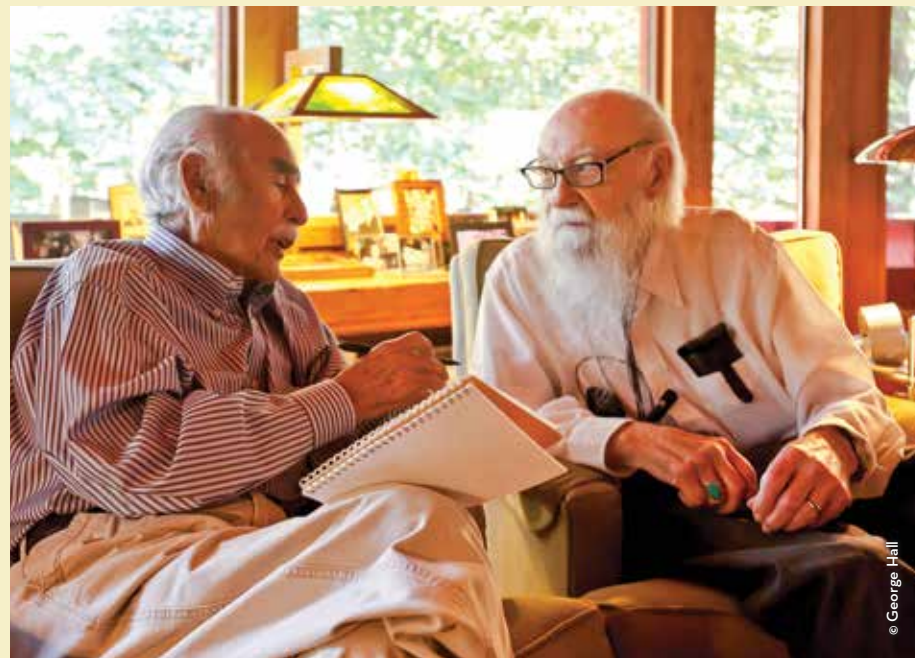
Marcus and Fannie became ardent advocates for mentally disabled citizens, and Marcus served as an ARC state board member for many years. He served energetically and vocally for three terms on the Sauk County Board of Supervisors in the 1990s. In middle age he also discovered backpacking, introduced his two older children to it, and started adding up the miles on the iconic Appalachian Trail, eventually completing over 250 miles. Though he always wished he could have hiked the whole trail, he was very proud of his granddaughter, Ruthie, who through-hiked the entire Trail in 2014. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in his honor to the Wisconsin Disability Association or to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. ▀

■ Marcus Weston's South Hill house (1967) outside of Spring Green, designed for Dr. Gerald Kempthorne.

■ With Pedro Guerrero, left, at South Hill in 2012. Guerrero and Weston were at Taliesin about the same time, and were friends.



© Courtesy of Rick Graves



© George Hall

# Memories of Marcus

Our board president reflects on a friendship

by GEORGE HALL

**My friendship with Marcus** began thanks to an introduction provided by Joni and Rick Graves, who, in the 1990s, purchased a home that Marcus had designed for Dr. Gerald Kempthorne outside Spring Green in 1967, and who were the instigators behind many of his recent birthday parties.

Although he was a very modest and private person, Marcus was nevertheless a window on life lived at Taliesin. He had worked with his father, William (Billy or Will) Weston, on various parts of Taliesin East and West while growing up in the late 1920s and 1930s and continuing after becoming an apprentice in 1938. His father (shown in several pictures in Ron McCrea's 2012 book, *Building Taliesin*) assisted Mr. Wright with the construction of the first Taliesin, and later built an American System-Built house for his family in Spring Green. Mr. Wright had told him “he could choose [the plans for] anything he wanted that hadn't been built,” so says Marcus.

Marcus occasionally told stories from his early years, such as rebuilding Romeo and Juliet (along with Mr. Wright, who climbed to the top to discuss where reinforcement should go and observe the two Westons wielding their hammers). In photos by Pete Guerrero, we see Marcus working on models for the 1940 Frank Lloyd Wright exhibition at MoMA, and Marcus would tell of building screens and setting beams at Taliesin West.

After leaving the Fellowship in 1948 with his wife, Fannie (a nurse he had met while performing his conscientious objector's service at a Michigan hospital during World War II), Marcus worked with David and Priscilla Henken on Usonia, New York, contributing at least one complete house design. At the time, Marcus forsook a career with Edgar Tafel in New York City in order to stay and raise his family in Spring Green. He worked first with John Steinmann in Lancaster, and was later in partnership with William Kaeser and Arthur

McLeod in Madison, working out of Kaeser's studio on Circle Close in Shorewood, a few doors away from Marshall Erdman's home (also designed by Kaeser).

While Rick Graves and I were working on finding homes for the 2012 Spring Green *Wright and Like* tour, Marcus showed us numerous apprentice homes hidden in the nearby hills. He insisted that we visit without warning, all the while commenting on the architecture (Marcus retained his Wisconsin architect's license until the very end). This led to some surprise encounters with homeowners. I vividly remember one couple who weren't exactly pleased that their fine home by Jim Pfefferkorn was now known to others. But Marcus explained what we were doing and charmed his way in as only he could. Who could refuse a gentleman in his late 90s who was a local fixture? Although Marcus walked with a cane, he was spryer than one might imagine.

Always a defender of Frank Lloyd Wright, Marcus had a habit of pulling books about Wright off library shelves (including mine) and crossing out or changing parts he didn't like. After all, there were times when he was there and the author wasn't, so why shouldn't he set the record straight? ▀

■ Marcus Weston in April 2011, outside the Frank Lloyd Wright exhibit at the Milwaukee Art Museum.



© George Hall

# Eugene Szymczak

December 3, 2016

by MARK HERTZBERG

**Eugene Szymczak**, who became the seventh steward of Frank Lloyd Wright's Thomas P. Hardy House in Racine (1904–06), died suddenly in his sleep at home Saturday evening, December 3. He was 67.

To me, Gene was more than the man who rehabilitated a very distressed Wright home and saved it for another century—he was a dear friend. Gene's fascination with the house began when he was a college student working one summer on a city garbage truck route. His route took him down Main Street, and once a week he picked up the garbage from the north courtyard of the Hardy House. He bought himself a nice camera and photographed places in Racine that moved him. One was the Hardy House (in Gene's typically modest manner, though, shunning extravagant things, he soon returned the camera because he thought it too much of a luxury).

Our adventure together with the Hardy House began with an email from him on August 8, 2012, when he surmised I was trying to sell the house for the owners by word of mouth: "I was wondering what the expectations are for the potential buyer for the Hardy house. Can we get together and talk?"

I took him through the house. Its condition was daunting. Equally daunting was the engineering study another potential buyer had commissioned. Gene wasn't fazed. As we left the house he said, "I don't have children; this is something I could do for Racine." Indeed. Gene, president of Educators Credit Union in southeastern Wisconsin, was altruistic. He gave of himself to countless community improvement efforts. He then wrote me, "Thanks for taking my family and myself through the house. It was really a treat to have you take us on tour ... It will be interesting to see how things move forward. It is an enormous responsibility as well as a source of joy and frustration."

The late John G. Thorpe of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy advised me to stay out of the sale to Gene, and leave it to professionals. Still, I wanted Gene and the then-owners to meet. A week



© Mark Hertzberg

later, over cashews and lemonade at their apartment, Gene made them an offer for the house, and suddenly it was sold. I had told Gene what pastry to bring Mrs. Yoghourtjian; he also brought her and her husband a Japanese print evocative of the famous Marion Mahony view of the Hardy House from the lake bank below.

Gene followed that visit with one more nice email before writing one that I just might forgive him for tonight, "I would hope that Margaret and I could become friends. She makes great lemonade and I make killer baklava [he did!]. Life is all about being true to your beliefs and a blessing to others ... Sincerely, Gene"

Although we were friends, I had not yet been exposed to Gene's wry sense of humor. Five days before the scheduled closing, he wrote that he was having second thoughts about the purchase and was thinking of buying the property, doing a tear-down, and putting up something with a three-car garage underneath. I was on the verge of calling the Yoghourtjians to call off the sale when I finally got hold of Gene (who was on his way to visit Lynda Waggoner at Fallingwater). "Just kidding!" was the crux of the conversation.

Gene's stewardship of the house was recognized in 2015 by the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy when he was awarded the prestigious Wright Spirit Award in the Private Home category at the annual meeting, fittingly in Milwaukee, following a tour of the house.



© Mark Hertzberg

Anne Hasse, a teacher at Wakanda Elementary School in Menominee, is one of the team that teaches a Wright and architecture immersion class that is another past Wright Spirit Award winner. Gene always welcomed her students when they visited Racine in the spring. When told of Gene's passing she commented, "To open up that house to a bunch of kids, only Gene would do that. Just a big-hearted guy."

When I told Gene's neighbor Marco of his passing, he said, "Gene will finally get to meet Frank Lloyd Wright." I told him, "No, Frank Lloyd Wright will finally get to meet Gene."

Wright scholar David Jameson, who toured the house this summer with Tim Samuelson, Chicago's Cultural Historian, and Eric O'Malley, another Wright Spirit Award winner, wrote me,

What a shame Gene got so little use of the Hardy House. But he was a very good steward of it. Anybody who has conserved a Wright house (particularly a Prairie one) knows just how expensive it turns out to be. But to meticulously return it to its original (even more glorious, perhaps) condition is possibly the finest memorial one could actually have.

I don't worry about the Hardy House. Not only has it got good bones, but it now has a civic hold on Racine. It's theirs as much as Wright's.

Here's to Gene. May all private owners of remarkable Wright houses be as generous with history as him. I think Gene's memorial will most likely be that the Hardy House will live on because he cared.

Robert Hartmann of Racine, past president of Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin, also knew Gene. Told of his passing he asked to repeat what he, as president of the organization, wrote to Gene when he bought the house:

Dear Gene,

All too often the words "Thank you" are left unspoken. So, as a fellow citizen of Racine, let me simply say thank you for purchasing the Hardy house. It is comforting to know that this iconic Wright design is in your caring hands. I believe that in future years Wright scholars, i.e. Mark Hertzberg and architectural historians alike, will chronicle September 17, 2012, as a benchmark date in the life story of the Hardy house. Your intention to restore the home ... is further evidence that the future of the Hardy house is indeed a bright one. I don't think it's an overstatement to say that Racine will be a better place in which to live because of your recent actions.

Now, let me put on my other hat—president of Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin—and again say, thank you for purchasing the Hardy house. Our organization, which is dedicated to the preservation of Wright's architectural legacy in his native state, congratulates you on the purchase of the Hardy house and views your plans for its restoration as not only having local and state significance but recognize, as you do, that the restoration of the Hardy house will be celebrated by a national and international audience as well.

Again, thank you.

Regards, Bob ■

Frank Lloyd Wright's Thomas P. Hardy House on Main Street in Racine, saved and painstakingly restored by its most recent steward, Gene Szymczak, for the benefit of future generations of Wright scholars and enthusiasts.



# What Mr. Wright Means To Me

## Thoughts about Frank Lloyd Wright from Wakanda Elementary

Students at Wakanda Elementary School in Menominee participate in a renowned study of architecture, "Breaking the Box." Lead teachers Anne Hasse and Sally Johnson accepted a Wright Spirit Award honoring the program from the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy in 2014. Some of their students and their parents share their thoughts about Wright and his work.

### What architecture means to me ...

When we started to learn about architecture I did not know what it meant. I've seen it in the dictionary a couple times but I had no idea it meant so much. But over the year in 5th grade, where my brain got filled with information on what it really means, I started to respect and love it more than ever. I now know that architecture is not just buildings or bricks and cement. Architecture is compassion, beauty and most importantly art. It depends on how you choose to see it but I believe that life is a canvas and architecture is the art. You just need to think deeper and really get to see the hope and expectations the building was set for.

— Madison Newman, 6th Grade

Mr. Wright means creativity and hope to me. He makes you feel like you can accomplish anything!

— MyKenna Mogen, 6th Grade

(All three Mogen sisters have gone through the "Breaking the Box" program)

Mr. Wright inspired me to do my own creativity in my own mind.

— Rebekah Oehler, 6th Grade

To me, he was an adventurous person with a beautiful sense of creativity. I love his work, and I still look at buildings differently than I did before I learned about him. Frank Lloyd Wright meant a new perspective on the things I see around me everyday.

— Chloe Oehler, 8th Grade

He was an architect and he had a unique way of thinking.

— Bobby Nelson, 9th Grade

He was an architect, a very creative one.

— Leslie Nelson, 9th Grade

He is an architect who has built many houses with a red brick in them and has made many cool looking houses.

— Steven Nelson, 11th Grade

I think the most amazing result of the FLLW study was the unleashing of creativity and confidence. The realization that you can live a dream out with architecture and express yourself with the design of a building that stands the test of time. The questions flowed from the students for the presenters concerning the structures we visited on the tour. My kids look for the extraordinary when we visit new places and see buildings and always mention when there is an element of Mr. Wright.

— Mary Oehler, parent

Frank Lloyd Wright is a very creative part of our state ... one of the things I love about the children learning about him is that his buildings are interesting enough to keep their attention. ... When we go anywhere my children will still look for buildings that remind them of the the Frank Lloyd Wright buildings that they studied in grade school, and that's been 3 and 4 years ago now.

— Deb Nelson, parent

Hello Mrs. Hasse from Fallingwater! These were excited little people and the boys were very excited to share their knowledge with the tour guide. ... They were congratulated by the guide for their respectful behavior and intelligence about Frank Lloyd Wright. ... Others on the tour asked us if they went to a Montessori School. ... Nope just an amazing public school. THANK YOU.

— Text Message from Jennifer Strong, parent of twins Dylan & Connor



Dylan (left), Sydney, and Connor Norby visited Fallingwater this summer with their mother, Dr. Jennifer Strong, who took the photo.



## AT TALIESIN

With this, my last contribution to Wright in Wisconsin, comes half of an "At Taliesin" column that was co-authored by Vernon and Margaret Allen. Vernon Patrick Allen and Margaret Crouse Asire were married in the Fellowship's first official wedding, taking place in Unity Chapel on February 4, 1934. They both entered the Fellowship separately in October 1933 and left together in May 1934. Published on April 6, 1934, in the Wisconsin State Journal (Madison, Wisconsin), Margaret Allen's portion of the column is a provocative description of Taliesin as an enchanted castle. Even though this was previously printed in my book *At Taliesin: Newspaper Columns of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship, 1934-1937*; *Southern Illinois University Press, 1992* I thought it appropriate to leave you, after these past eleven-plus years, with what is one of my personal favorites of the "At Taliesin" columns.

— RANDOLPH C. HENNING

## Enchanted Castle

"Write about the enchanted castle," said the eight-year-old member of the Taliesin Fellowship to whom I frequently tell fairy tales.

"But what has that to do with Taliesin?" I said.

"Everything," was her quick response. "It certainly is not an ordinary house."

She is right, of course. Taliesin is the enchanted castle—not that it is peopled with goblins and elves and other supernatural beings. It is true that Manuel, our master craftsman, who is a Spaniard and deeply imbued with the superstitious beliefs of his race, declared that he had seen the devil peering in his window with "horns, pointed beard and eyes of fire." However, the apparition turned out to be none other than Nanny, our one and only goat, who has adopted the runway of gentle sloping roofs of Taliesin as her especial playground. No, we cannot even boast one convincing ghost. The Taliesin Fellowship is a perfectly normal human being on the whole, not sleeping for

100 years as did the people of the enchanted castle in the fairy tale—"The Sleeping Princess"—even if sometimes they would like to—but one very wide awake indeed in this daily round of striving constantly to live the ideal to which all have subscribed.

Do you remember in the same fairy tale how the idly curious could never get through the hedge of briars surrounding the castle, for "In the place of every twig of thorns they broke, one hundred new ones grew"? So at Taliesin those find welcome who, sincerely interested, come seeking with open mind and heart.

Notwithstanding our youngest member, Taliesin certainly does not resemble a castle in appearance. Its enchanting beauty is essentially its own. Low and rambling, it grows out of and again into the hill on which it is built. It lies just below and encircles the crest of the hill on which it grew. The roof lines follow the contours of the surrounding hills. The architecture has nothing in it reminiscent of battlements and towers. It is so natural and simple and beautiful that inevitably

■ AT TALIESIN CONTINUES ON PAGE 19

**WISCONSIN WRIGHT SITES** Taliesin® \ Hillside Studio and Theatre \ Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center  
 A.D. German Warehouse \ Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church \ American System-Built Homes \ Bernard Schwartz House  
 Monona Terrace® Community and Convention Center \ Seth Peterson Cottage \ SC Johnson Administration Building  
 Unitarian Meeting House \ Wingspread (H.F. Johnson House) \ Wyoming Valley School



**TOURS & EVENTS**

**AT WISCONSIN WRIGHT SITES**

FEB-APR 2017

**Wright Calendar**

■ **Thursday, February 9**  
**Monona Terrace**

**Madison**  
 Wright Design Series  
 "3 Wisconsin Waterfront Museums" presented by James Shields, FAIA, lead designer HGA Architects and Engineers  
 Lecture Hall, 7 p.m.\*

■ **Thursday, March 9**  
**Monona Terrace**

**Madison**  
 Wright Design Series  
 Architect Spotlight: Reed Kroloff, writer and consultant, former dean of architecture at Tulane and director of Cranbrook Academy of Art  
 Lecture Hall, 7 p.m.\*

■ **April 9-14**  
**Seth Peterson Cottage**

**Lake Delton**  
 Annual Work Week  
 Volunteers appreciated; contact Bill Martinelli, (608) 238-8355

■ **Tuesday, April 25**  
**Monona Terrace**

**Madison**  
 Wright Design Series  
 "Fred B. Jones and Penwern: Frank Lloyd Wright on Delavan Lake"  
 Mark Hertzberg, author and photojournalist  
 Lecture Hall, 7 p.m.\*

**\* NOTE:**  
 Wright Design Series events at Monona Terrace require FREE ticket for admission. Tickets are available at [www.mononaterrace.com/event-group/wright-design-series/](http://www.mononaterrace.com/event-group/wright-design-series/). Tickets are limited to venue capacity and are issued on a first come first serve basis. If not sold out, tickets will be available at the event starting at 6:30 p.m.

**Ongoing tours and events**

■ **American System-Built Homes Model B1**  
**Milwaukee** \ \$15

Tours on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month 12:30-3:30 p.m., tours run continuously, no reservations, [www.wrightinmilwaukee.org](http://www.wrightinmilwaukee.org)

■ **AD German Warehouse**  
**Richland Center** \ \$10

Tours 10 a.m.-2 p.m. first Saturday every month, Sundays May-October; private tours by appointment for additional cost (608) 604-5034 or email [larbegust@gmail.com](mailto:larbegust@gmail.com)  
[www.adgermanwarehouse.org](http://www.adgermanwarehouse.org)

■ **Bernard Schwartz House "Still Bend"**  
**Two Rivers** \ \$10 donation

For tour info email [Michael@theschwartzhouse.com](mailto:Michael@theschwartzhouse.com) or visit [www.theschwartzhouse.com](http://www.theschwartzhouse.com)



© Mark Hertzberg

About 142 route marker signs for the new Frank Lloyd Wright Trail have been placed on Interstate Highway 94 in Wisconsin. Nine Wright sites between Racine and Richland Center will be further highlighted by directional signs near the closest highway exits in spring 2017. The Trail, created through bipartisan legislation, is jointly administered through the departments of tourism and transportation.

■ **Monona Terrace**

**Madison** \ \$5 per adult, \$3 per student  
 Guided tours November 1-April 30, 1 p.m. Friday-Monday, May 1-October 31, 1 p.m. daily; closed major holidays, [www.mononaterrace.com](http://www.mononaterrace.com)

■ **Seth Peterson Cottage**

**Lake Delton** \ \$4  
 Open house and tours 2nd Sunday of each month, 1-3:30 p.m., [www.sethpeterson.org](http://www.sethpeterson.org)

■ **SC Johnson**

**Racine**  
 Various tours, reservations at (262) 260-2154 or [www.scjohnson.com/visit](http://www.scjohnson.com/visit)

■ **Taliesin**

**Spring Green** \ Various prices  
 Limited tours in April, full schedule begins May 1. Reservations strongly recommended (877) 588-5900, [www.taliesinpreservation.org](http://www.taliesinpreservation.org)

■ **Unitarian Meeting House**

**Madison** \ \$10  
 Tours Sunday mornings (year-round, free), weekdays 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. May-September; groups by appointment (\$7) (608) 233-9774, [fusmadison.org/tours](http://fusmadison.org/tours)

■ **Wingspread – The Johnson Foundation**  
**Racine**

Tours Wednesday-Friday, multiple tour times available, by appointment only; register at [www.scjohnson.com/visit](http://www.scjohnson.com/visit), call (262) 681-3353, or email [tour@johnsonfdn.org](mailto:tour@johnsonfdn.org)

■ **Wyoming Valley School**

**Spring Green** \ donation appreciated  
 Tours by appointment, (608) 588-2544 or email [wyoingvalleyschool@gmail.com](mailto:wyoingvalleyschool@gmail.com)

Events are free unless otherwise noted. Visit [wrightinwisconsin.org](http://wrightinwisconsin.org) for a complete listing of tour schedules and contact information.

**AT TALIESIN**

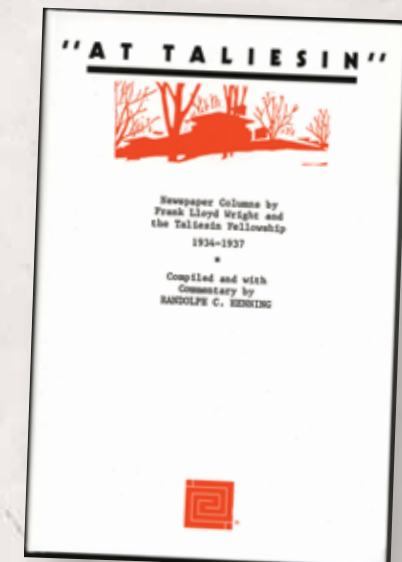
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

it seems strange, even unnatural, to those who have become accustomed to the trite artificiality of the urban architecture that urban life must live with today.

No, it is the spirit and the soul of Taliesin that makes it the enchanted castle. Here is the magic circle into which all who step believing are suddenly able to see with a clarity of vision undimmed by disillusionment and insincerity. They learn to live at one and the same time in the present and for the future, never again to sink into the oblivion of the world which slumbers and continues to dream of the "globes of the past."

MARGARET ALLEN ■

**Editor's Note:** We are grateful for Randy's contribution of "At Taliesin" to our newsletter for more than eleven years. We wish him the best as he devotes his energy to his next book. For more, see "At Taliesin": Newspaper Columns by Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship, 1934-1937, compiled and with commentary by Randolph C. Henning, Southern Illinois University Press (1992).



**FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT WISCONSIN  
HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM**

P.O. Box 6339  
Madison, WI 53716-0339

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

Madison, WI  
Permit No. 47

**VINTAGE  
POSTCARD**

courtesy of PATRICK MAHONEY



The Blue Flame, shown in front of Frank Lloyd Wright's Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, was built in Milwaukee by Reaction Dynamics, Inc. Driver Gary Gabelich set the world land speed record in this vehicle at the Bonneville Salt Flats on October 23, 1970, with a speed of 622.407 miles per hour.