Retreat to Delavan Lake
A FRESH LOOK AT THE HENRY H. WALLIS SUMMER COTTAGE

© Mark Hertzberg
The FLWBC’s mission is focused exclusively on the preservation and maintenance of all of Wright’s remaining buildings. Simply put, the group works to “save Wright” through a mix of education, advocacy and technical services. To this end, the FLWBC has worked on more than 100 cases involving Wright buildings across the country.

It truly is a nationwide, even worldwide, organization. More information is available online at: SaveWright.org.

While Wright in Wisconsin is proud to be the only statewide, Wright nonprofit, Wisconsin is our focus.

While our mission shares the FLWBC’s commitment to preserving Wright’s work (e.g., our restoration of Wright’s American System-Built homes in Milwaukee), we also are committed to promote Wright’s legacy and that of his apprentices in his home state. Our most recent success in that area was the creation of the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail.

There is no richer landscape in which to experience Wright’s work than Wisconsin. To FLWBC conference participants, we wish you a terrific time during your visit.

We look forward to meeting you!

**Welcome Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy**

**Wright in Wisconsin is excited to welcome the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy (FLWBC) back to Wisconsin. This will be the second time the group has held its annual event at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison.

Members of our board of directors have been working with the FLWBC staff and volunteers for many months to plan the four-day “Preserving Wright’s Legacy in Wisconsin” conference and its many associated events. Wright in Wisconsin also will provide volunteer and logistical support to help ensure a successful conference.**

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**President’s Message**

by MICHAEL DITMER

*So here I stand before you preaching organic architecture: declaring organic architecture to be the modern ideal and the teaching so much needed if we are to see the whole of life, and to now serve the whole of life, holding no ‘traditions’ essential to the great TRADITION. Nor cherishing any preconceived form fixing upon us either past, present or future, but — instead — exalting the simple laws of common sense — or of super-sense if you prefer — determining form by way of the nature of material...* — Frank Lloyd Wright, *“An Organic Architecture,”* 1939

As I have been giving tours at Still Bend/the Schwartz House this summer, I invariably am asked some version of: “Why didn’t this sort of architecture ever really catch on?” I frequently find myself thinking about the question, and the only answer I can find is that Frank Lloyd Wright was undoubtedly ahead of his time.

The world is just now catching up. Wright, in many ways, was the original green architect, a concept that didn’t exist when he was alive. He was designing eco-sensitive properties that were generations ahead of his time. Wright was incorporating passive solar design, the use of thermal massing, passive berm insulation, environmentally sensitive landscaping, passive ventilation systems and passive natural light. He was constantly interested in the adaptation of new technologies.

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We have lots of great memories from Wright and Like 2018. On Friday night we enjoyed the premiere performance of “Mrs. Wrights,” by Jenni Reinke, of Milwaukee’s Quasimondo Physical Theatre, at Hillside Theatre. On Saturday, we had more than 400 members, friends and architectural enthusiasts come to Spring Green and Richland Center. We enjoyed great architecture, lots of conversation with homeowners and great food at the Enos Farms taco stand located at the Wyoming Valley School — turning our tour headquarters grounds into a festive, informal picnic site. (Amid all that, have forgotten about the mosquitoes?)

We welcomed visitors from 18 states, among them our first-ever guests from Alaska. But they wouldn’t get the prize for longest journey to Wisconsin — that credit goes to our guests from New Zealand!

Your feedback tells us the event was a tremendous success:

**Deb wrote:** “I just wanted to say thank you for a wonderful experience at the 2018 Wright and Like tour. I excitedly signed up for the tour for the first time this year, but as the dates approached I began worrying if there would be long lines, if we’d get to see all the sites or have to pick our favorites, but you guys did an amazing job. The limited sold tickets meant that every house had little-to-no wait times and could be truly enjoyed. Docents were everywhere, allowing them to be resources and giving the whole tour a feeling of organization and coordination. The sites had history and stories, numerous homeowners were onsite, and it was just so wonderfully done. It was also a pleasure meeting Sherri toward the end of the day. And the Enos Farms tacos were shockingly good! This won’t be our last tour with you. The work and thought that your group put into this — which must have been extensive, was very evident. Thanks again!”

**Sara wrote:** “This was an interesting tour and well-designed. All the volunteers we encountered were so helpful not only about answering questions regarding the various properties but also about how to find roads we were looking for. All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable and educational day. Well done!”

**Bev wrote:** “We really enjoyed the tour this weekend. You folks do a wonderful job. Very organized, accommodating.”

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Only six original drawings of the main house at Penwern, Frank Lloyd Wright’s great summer estate for Fred B. Jones, on Delavan Lake, are still in existence. They are: a foundation plan, first and second floor plans, east and west elevation views and one wall section with four small interior wall elevations.

Tragically, missing from this list are the north and south elevation views. These are the most important views as these drawings describe the front and back of the main house. The north elevation faces Delavan Lake, and the south elevation faces the back yard and gardens.

That these drawings are missing is not surprising, as they probably would have been handled frequently by many people during the design and construction process, including Fred B. Jones and his contractor — not to mention Wright and members of the Oak Park Studio. One possibility to consider is that Wright might have lost them.

With little chance of finding the original drawings, I proposed re-creating them to John and Sue Major, the current owners and marvelous stewards of Penwern.

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Drawing Wright

Re-created north and south elevation views fill void in Penwern construction drawings

by ROBERT HARTMANN

North elevation. ©2018 Drawing by Robert Hartmann (all rights reserved)

South elevation. ©2018 Drawing by Robert Hartmann (all rights reserved)
Frank Lloyd Wright prepared a tantalizing conceptual sketch for a summer cottage for his client, Henry H. Wal lis, that was to be built on Delavan Lake.

This project, identified in the Wright archives as Wallis Scheme No. 1 was never built. A significantly different Wright design for Wallis, known as Scheme No. 2, was eventually built several lots west of Penwern. It is known as the Wallis-Goodsmith house.

Had Wright’s Wallis Scheme No. 1 been built, it might have been one of his best summer retreats. The design included battered fieldstone piers at the four corners of the structure and a gracefully arched porte-cochère spanning from the cottage entrance to a fieldstone supporting structure. This supporting structure, identified on Wright’s plan as a cistern, was rotated at a 45-degree angle to match the orientation of the cottage entry and main stairway at the opposite end of the span.

continued on page 11
Meet Robert Hartmann

Robert Hartmann has expressed his passion for the work of Frank Lloyd Wright through photographs, drawings and architectural archaeology.

We present several facets of Hartmann’s work in this issue of the newsletter. “Vintage Photos” becomes a regular feature, drawing from photographs Hartmann made in the 1960s.

“My father introduced me to Frank Lloyd Wright’s work when he announced that he was taking the entire family to Racine to see Wright’s latest masterpiece — the SC Johnson Research Tower,” Hartmann recalls. “It was 1950, and I was 8 years old.”

In 1967, while studying at the University of Wisconsin, Hartmann followed construction of the Wright-designed Riverview Terrace Café — then known as The Spring Green — near Taliesin. He often made the half-hour drive, in his Sunbeam Imp, to photograph the project.

Hartmann is a former board member of Frank Lloyd Wright Wisconsin (now Wright in Wisconsin) and served as president from 2011 to 2013. He serves on the board of directors for Frank Lloyd Wright’s Burnham Block Inc.

His ability to analyze Wright’s drawings of Penwern, the Fred B. Jones estate on Delavan Lake, was invaluable to Mark Hertzberg — when Hertzberg worked on his forth-coming book about Penwern — and to Sue and John Major, the stewards of Penwern.

Hartmann has a Bachelor of Arts degree in industrial design from the former Layton School of Art (now MIAD) in Milwaukee. Hartman earned his Master of Science degree in environmental design at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and taught in UW-Madison’s Department of Landscape Architecture.

In 1980, he opened his design office in Racine, providing architectural, industrial and graphic design services for more than 30 years.

WRIGHT AND LIKE 2018 RECAP

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 04)

(shuttle carts were great for us older folks on the hills), informative, etc. We appreciate all that goes into this, from getting the homeowners to open their homes to organizing the docents and preparing the write-ups, signage, shoe covers, tickets, mailings, etc. Thank you to everyone!”

Add to our ticketed guests the nearly 100 volunteer house captains and docents, without whom our Saturday tour would not have taken place, and we easily had more than 500 individuals visiting tour homes.

Thank you, again, to our home owners, many of whom elected to remain at their homes, to the delight of tour-goers who engaged in conversation. But that’s what the tour is all about — enjoying great architecture while making connections.

Underlying our volunteer effort was the marvelous support and advice we received from Taliesin Preservation, Wyoming Valley School Cultural Arts Center, A.D. German Warehouse Conservancy, county sheriffs and other county department staff from two counties, municipal staff and elected officials in Spring Green and Richland Center, and the Spring Green Chamber of Commerce. These tours result from the efforts of many hands, and we thank all of you who helped make our events such a success.

HENRY H. WALLIS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 08)

Mark Hertzberg, who is just completing “Frank Lloyd Wright’s Penwern: A Summer Estate,” sent me high-resolution scans of all 17 existing Wright drawings of Penwern and the Wallis Scheme No. 1 scan, asking for my comments.

I found that Wright’s Wallis Scheme No. 1 sketch held secrets that had previously gone undetected. Under close examination — at 8X magnification — the drawing revealed faint pencil lines that Wright had sketched for both a second-level covered walkway above the porte-cochère and a three-story tower to the left of it. These elements were not incorporated into the Wallis Scheme No. 1 measured drawings, but both are featured prominently in Wright’s design for Penwern.

The Wallis Scheme No. 1 design is dated September 15, 1900, a month before the date of the main house at Penwern. My analysis drawing (pages 8-9) shows the covered porte-cochère and tower that Wright, however briefly, either considered for the Wallis cottage or was trying out as ideas for Penwern.

So what could the Wallis Scheme No. 1 design have looked like with the covered walkway and tower? That was the question I asked myself. After considerable study of...
Reflections on Usonian Design

Wright coined “Usonian” for his homes, designed from the 1930s and later, that embodied his ideas of democratic individuality and freedom, along with an affordable way of building homes in the post-Great Depression and post-war era.

This parallelized ideas he incorporated in his Broadacre City project, first presented at the Rockefeller Center in New York in 1935, that entailed decentralized planning and a return to a more rural, land-based way of building where each resident would have at least 1-acre of land to build their home and have some self-sufficiency. These homes departed from traditional homes by eliminating the basement and attic spaces, while spreading out more horizontally.

The largest realized Usonian development, in Pleasantville, New York, reminded members in 1946 that “our architecture will be Usonian or organic, not modern or functional, which brings to mind the stark barren cubes of the Bauhaus. Usonian architecture adapts to nature and the individual.”

At the Jacobs I house in Madison, Wright takes the idea he expressed 30 years earlier in the “Art and Craft of the Machine” essay and incorporates that into a new highly disciplined system that is modular (both on a horizontal 4-foot-by-4-foot grid and a 13-inch vertical module), yet flexible and aesthetically beautiful. He grid gave it the discipline of the warp and weft from which various expressions could then be modulated. This brilliant system was a way to avoid haphazard design that had no unity or the sterile results of a purely mechanical way of thinking.

And so, too, the homes on this year’s tour reflect organic design principles. These homes conform their layouts to the topography of the site rather than forcing a rigid plan upon them. They use natural materials such as wood and stone in earth tones rather than the stark colors of International Style modernism. Glass is used in expansions to open up the inside to the outdoors. Wood and stone are used generously inside, not just on the outside. Each of these homes also reflects an individual freedom of expression while conveying an organic family resemblance.

Some of the homes use a rectangular planning system, while others bring in curved geometries to frame the natural view either horizontally (Crescent Ridge) or vertically (Barrett-Tuxford house). Wright experimented with concrete block construction even before the Usonian era in his California block homes in Los Angeles. This construction carried over into many of the Usonian homes, sometimes very simplified in their layouts to the topography of the site rather than a purely mechanical way of thinking.

The purpose of the project was to fill the existing void in the Penwern drawing file.

The drawings would delineate the house as originally designed, including the rear open porch on the south elevation and curved open front and side porches on the north elevation.

The drawings would be prepared at the original scale of Wright’s drawings, as noted on his title block (quarter inch=1-foot), and made by hand using traditional drafting equipment supplemented by freehand drawing. The Majors agreed.

After close examination of the existing drawings, it was evident that some of the exterior detailing shown on Wright’s drawings differed from the way the house was actually built.

Most surprisingly, Wright’s surviving drawings show that almost all corner miter joints were to be eliminated when horizontal batten strips were to be used. This is a departure from Wright’s typical preference for miter joints at corners.

However, this detail was not used when the house was built. For consistency, I did include it in my drawings. The end result was the re-creation of the two lost elevation views, with every effort made to show the main house at Penwern as closely as possible to the way it was originally designed.
**Ongoing Tours and Events**

**American System-Built Home Model B-1**
Milwaukee $15 | No reservations needed
Tours second and fourth Saturday of each month
10:30 to 11:00 a.m. Tours start on the half hour.
www.wrightinmilwaukee.org

**A.D. German Warehouse**
Richland Center $15
Open every Sunday and first Saturday of every month
May - October
10 a.m. to 11 a.m., other times by appointment
Various concerts, lectures and music events
Visit calendar on website for details
(608) 604-5034 or larbegust@gmail.com
www.adgermanwarehouse.org

**Still Bend / Schwartz House**
Two Rivers $15
See website for dates and times
Email Michael@theschwartzhouse.com
www.theschwartzhouse.com

**Monona Terrace**
Madison $5 per adult, $3 per student
May 1 to October 31
A variety of tours, times and prices
www.mononaterrace.com

**Seth Peterson Cottage**
Lake Dellon $5
Open house and tours second Sunday of each month
11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
www.sethpeterson.org

**SC Johnson Administration Building**
Racine $15
March to December, various tours plus exhibition
Visitors admitted by donation
www.fusmadison.org/tours

**Wright in Wisconsin**
Tours Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
(608) 588-2544
wyomingvalleyschool@gmail.com

Events are free unless otherwise noted. Visit WrightinWisconsin.org for a complete listing of tour schedules and contact information.
This Real Photo Postcard was posted from Arena, in the summer of 1913, and shows Taliesin from an elevated vantage point. Wright’s living quarters are shown at the right, while the drafting studio is near the middle of the image. The wooden trellis adjacent to the studio chimney would be replaced by a metal trellis, most likely by the fall of 1913. That chimney would also have a triangular clerestory added to it at that time — which this card predates.