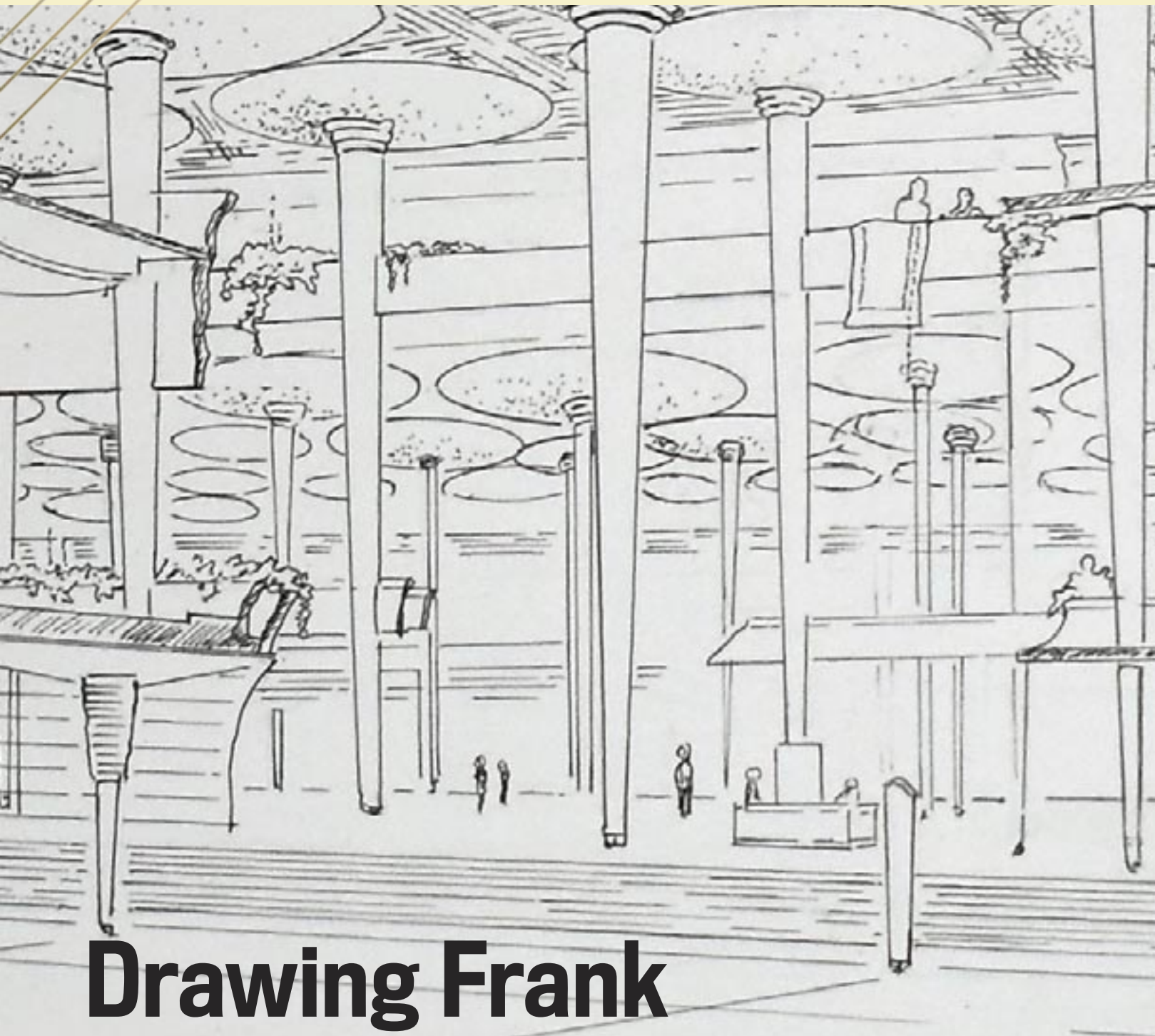


WRIGHT IN WISCONSIN

MEMBER NEWSLETTER \ CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT



Drawing Frank

MICHAEL PIPHER EXPLORES WRIGHT'S ARCHITECTURAL VISION

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The Atom Brick Co. is set to offer a model of SC Johnson

News & Notes

Remembering Jane Kinney • Taliesin Reopens for 2020 Tour Season with Special Guidelines

In May, we said goodbye to Jane Kinney, of Madison. Jane, long-time owner of J. Kinney Florist, was the daughter of Patrick Kinney and Margaret (Murrish) Kinney, who commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design a home for them in Lancaster.

According to the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation: “Margaret had initially experienced Wright’s architecture firsthand while working at Taliesin as an assistant to Wright’s sister (Jane Wright Porter).”



Completed in 1953 using a double hexagonal module, construction of

this Usonian home involved active family participation. Patrick Kinney, a local lawyer, quarried and hauled the necessary limestone. More recently, Jane and her astrophysicist sister, Anne, opened the family home for overnight stays.

Wright in Wisconsin last toured the home in 2018. We will very much miss Jane, her wonderful, outgoing personality, the stories she told about

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LEFT: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, Wauwatosa
ON THE COVER: SC Johnson Administration Building, (1936), Racine. Courtesy of Michael Pipher

President’s Message

by GEORGE HALL



In our February newsletter, I alluded to rebuilding the organization. Now that the board is nearly finished with the details, I can elaborate.

We were organized and incorporated in 2017 as a successor corporation to Wright in Wisconsin Inc., for which the IRS had issued a not-for-profit-organization 501(c)(3) determination in the 1990s. Last December we discovered our new Form 1023 filing, mailed last July, had been lost. In the course of a thorough look-back, we also discovered other issues we’ve since addressed by filing restated articles of incorporation and corrected annual reports.

From our network of friends in the Frank Lloyd Wright world, we’ve received marvelous cooperation — along with helpful suggestions. It took countless hours to fix the problems, but we also adopted board policies and bylaw changes that assure that something like this doesn’t occur in the future. Given the current economy and the role of the hard-pressed IRS, we don’t expect to hear anything for at least six months. Wags among us suggest that Wright would have well understood the many difficulties, as we do our best to follow the rules and seek to perpetuate his legacy.

Please contact me through our office if you have questions.

Like you, I’m receiving heartfelt pleas for donations from Wisconsin and other Wright sites open to the public, as keeping critical staff on board, paying bills and continuing site maintenance, while making plans for re-opening, are important considerations. When you consider those appeals, please keep in mind that our own membership renewal forms and annual request for donations — which we normally mail in December but which have been on hold until now, pending the refile of the requisite paperwork with the IRS.

Our financial needs are no less critical than other organizations’, especially because our major fundraiser, the annual Wright and Like tour, is on indefinite hold. If you can respond favorably to our forthcoming membership appeal, we thank you.

Meanwhile, our Madison office remains closed, although we continue to monitor messages left by phone, email, our website and our post office box. Our newsletter, website and social media platforms remain available for Wright sites in Wisconsin to use, as we try to keep you up-to-date with individual site information as it is shared with us. When it becomes possible for the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail to resume, we’re there to aid travelers with our office and website.

Wright and Like Update

While the coronavirus pandemic continues to intervene and affect us all, we’re postponing Wright and Like 2020 in Madison. Like most of us, the owners of our tour homes, as well as our event partners (Monona Terrace, the Wisconsin Historical Society and Madison School and Community Recreation), are all observing “safer at home” practices. We will not set an event date until everyone involved is able to safely resume group contact, especially given the at-risk age group most of us fall into.

We are actively participating with the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy’s public sites group, receiving current information from various sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on best practices for when and how to access sites. Through all of this, while giving thanks to everyone in the medical and social service community caring for the sick and keeping us safe, we also need to give hope for the future as we continue to advocate and educate on behalf of Wright and historic preservation.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONTINUES ON PAGE 10

Drawing Frank

Artist Michael Pipher Explores Wright's Architectural Vision with Ink-and-Paper Renderings

INTERVIEW with BRIAN R. HANNAN

These days, one of the toughest tickets in town is for a tour of a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed property. While a few sites have opened in the midst of the current pandemic, other sites will remain indefinitely closed.

So we sat down with Michael Pipher, a New Jersey artist, for a chat about the more than 5,300 ink-and-paper renderings he's made of Wright's work over the course of nearly four decades — the buildings we know and love, lost along the way or never built. He agreed to offer Wright in Wisconsin members a virtual tour via several of his rarely seen interior drawings.

Pipher said he began drawing “from a young age, mostly freehand stuff like cartoons. I had a love of Disney and the buildings there. I was intrigued by them.

“Having a mom in real estate, I was exposed to homes I knew — the ones I liked, I would start drawing those for fun.... Wright entered my life a short time after that with images of Fallingwater, SC Johnson, Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, Robie House and the Marin County Civic Center. They filled my head in wondrous delight,” Pipher said. “I would read anything I could get my hands on that had to do with Wright. The more I read, the more I wanted to know. His designs fueled my soul. I went from drawing Mickey to drawing Fallingwater with the same delight.”

Much is written about Wright's connectivity between internal and external space. What do you think



Michael Pipher at the Seth Peterson Cottage

Wright understood about interior space — for its own sake — that enhances its beauty and utility?

The sense of space in any Wright structure is so much a part of the whole design. This has been the case since the early days to the last projects he designed. The spaces developed over his career, but the main concept remained. The Prairie homes had a space within a space — the inglenook in the living room that was transferred to Usonian homes as alcoves within one main space or great room. In the case of the Pope-Leighey House, the dining space is a part of the whole, but Wright lowers the ceiling to make it more intimate.

We are not meant to stand in a Wright home; we are meant to sit and interact in the space. One of the things most people don't really get to appreciate is the spaces as they were

intended to be used. While you can take a tour of a Wright public site, you mostly cannot sit down or touch anything, so you're truly not getting the full experience he intended.

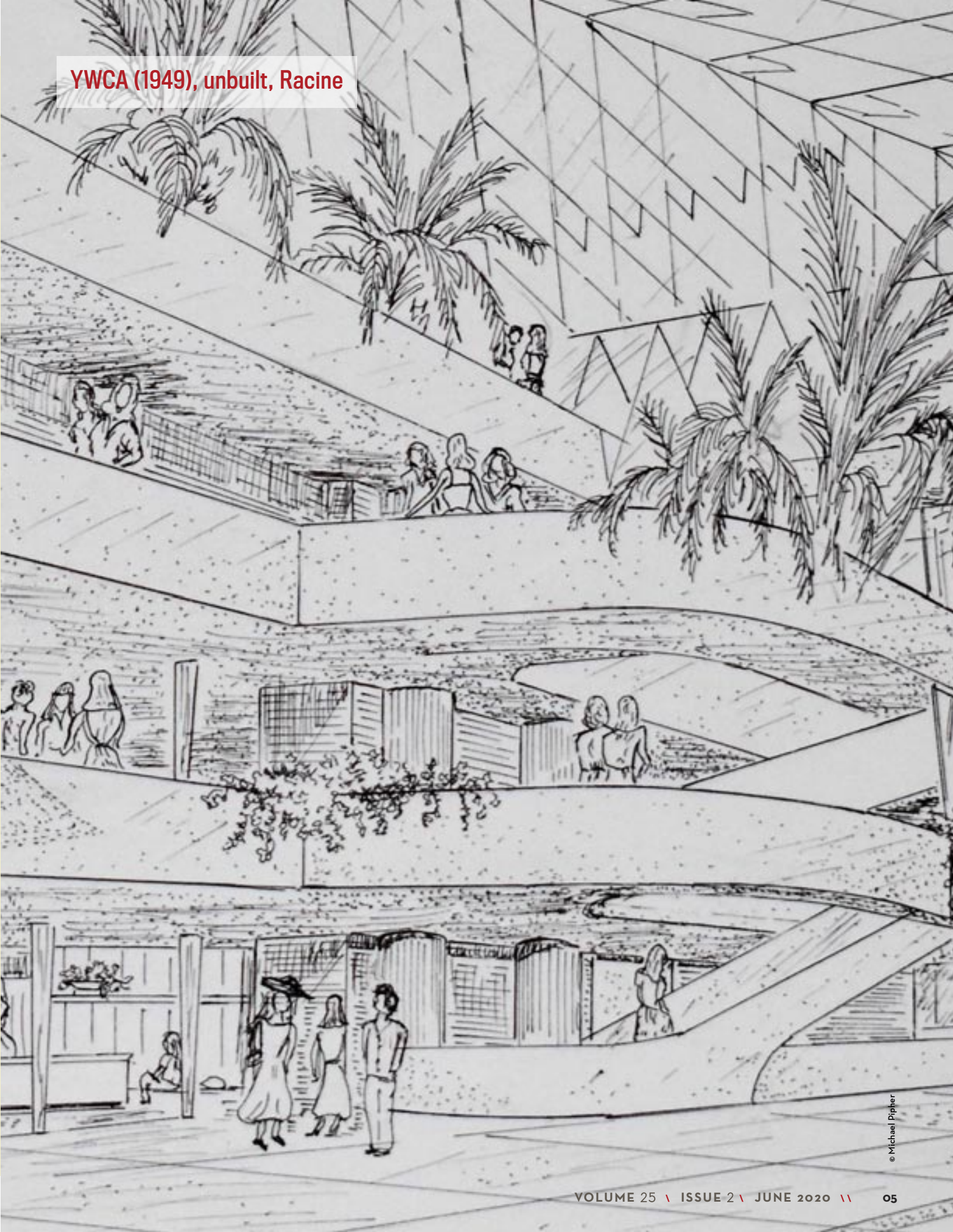
Wright would frame the landscape with the placement of windows; he lowered ceilings to force the eye outward to nature. Here we get into a area that transcends what architecture is and what it truly can be. I think when you hear stewards of a Wright-designed home talk about their house, you hear them say how the home changed their lives for the better. You have just another part of the genius that was Wright. I believe he wanted not only the owners but also their guests to sit and think of their place in nature.

I know it is very philosophical to think that a building can truly touch something deep inside us; provoking thought is very far removed in residential architecture today. You look at new housing developments today, and you see that what Wright called “the paper box boys” are still doing things the way they did back in Wright's time and not reaching for something better or learning from what he gave us.

While today's buyers want an open floorplan, in a way, what they are getting is an empty shell, hollow of emotion. Wright used and laid the spaces or rooms out in a very playful way. The Prairie homes use of banded trim that lead your eye from space to space, and the homes feel like they are never-ending.

DRAWING FRANK CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

YWCA (1949), unbuilt, Racine



Seth Peterson Cottage (1958), Lake Delton



Jacobs I (1937), Madison





Taliesin guest room

© Brian R. Hannan

NEWS & NOTES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 02

the home and our long association with her.

Taliesin Re-opens for the 2020 Season

“Taliesin Preservation is pleased to announce our opening ... for the 2020 season. This year will be a little different but perhaps more inspiring and captivating than ever. Join us for an intimate tour with no more than 10 guests in which you will have more quality time in the spaces Frank Lloyd Wright designed and more time to ask questions of your guide....

“At this time, Taliesin will be open six days a week, Thursday - Tuesday, and closed on Wednesdays for deep cleaning. To ensure the safety of our guests and employees, we will diligently be implementing increased sanitation practices. All touch points will be disinfected, staff will be wearing masks and capacities have been reduced including our tours (10 guests), gift shop (10 guests) and café (25 guests). We strongly suggest guests wear a mask, keep their distance between parties and wash and sanitize their hands regularly while visiting us.

“For those who wish to explore outside, Taliesin has both paved and unpaved walking trails originating from the Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center Parking lot. We also invite guests to enjoy a take out meal from the Riverview Terrace Café at one of our picnic tables overlooking the Wisconsin River. The café’s dining room is also open with limited capacity and our staff will be implementing increased sanitation at all touch points.”

Source: Taliesin Preservation Inc.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 03

With that thought in mind, until we can re-sume physical contact, we’re looking at ways of bringing virtual content to you through our website and social media.

In anticipation of our eventually holding a Madison Wright and Like™, how might you prepare yourselves, Wright mavens that you are? I’d recommend reading:

- “Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison: Eight Decades of Artistic and Social Interaction,” Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Paul E. Sprague, 1990
- “Building with Frank Lloyd Wright: An Illustrated Memoir,” Herbert Jacobs with Katherine Jacobs, Chronicle Books, 1978
- “Uncommon Sense: The Life of Marshall Erdman, Doug Moe and Alice D’Alessio,” Trails Custom Publishing, 2003
- “John Howe, Architect: From Taliesin Apprentice to Master of Organic Design,” Jane King Hession and Tim Quigley, University of Minnesota Press, 2015

There are other worthy books to commend, but these titles should be sufficient to stimulate enthusiasm.

Please complete and return our member questionnaire when you receive it. Meanwhile, stay healthy and safe, and flatten the curve!



© Brian R. Hannan

The AD German Warehouse Conservancy recently announced it will be hosting petite weddings in ‘The 1912.’ More information about the ceremonies is available at: adgermanwarehouse.org



© Robert Hartmann

Vintage Photos

The Geneva Inn Wright Designed for Arthur L. Richards Served as a Popular Lakefront Resort

by ROBERT HARTMANN

The demolition of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Lake Geneva Hotel is a vivid reminder of the fate that can befall Wright buildings in the absence of advocacy organizations such as Wright in Wisconsin and the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy.

Designed by Wright in 1911 for Milwaukee real estate developer/contractor Arthur L. Richards, and later renamed the Geneva Inn, it became a favorite watering hole for Midwest tourists seeking a lakefront resort destination when it opened in 1912.

Arriving at the site shortly before it came down in 1970, I found the building was penned in by a chain link fence, looking like a condemned prisoner awaiting execution. Wright’s conceptual perspective



© Robert Hartmann

drawing of the hotel complex included a three-story, L-shaped wing at the east end of the building and a boat house at the lake’s edge, but neither of these features was built. The Lake Geneva Hotel as built was a simplified Prairie-style structure of wood, stucco, brick and glass.

The lobby, dining room and kitchen were grouped at the west end

of the building with a double-loaded corridor of guest rooms with shared bathrooms extending inline from the lobby to the east.

Continuous bands of ribbon windows ran the length of the structure with low pitched hip roofs and deep overhangs. One of the treasured features of the hotel was the abstracted tulip designs in the first-floor lobby’s art glass windows.



DRAWING FRANK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 04

Wright wanted us to discover, to explore and to interact with his treasures.

The new generation may have an open plan but do these people have something to touch their heart or soul? Not in my opinion. Not all the paint and fancy pillows in the world can do that.

I find so many new homes are designed not for a family but what's going to bring the builder the most return on investment. New homes are big for the sake of being big, on small lots to maximize the number of homes.

The thought of a family coming together in one space is lost. Parents are in different areas of the home, and the kids are off doing their own thing in their rooms. Wright gave the family unit a space that was beautiful to come together that made everyone want to be in that space.

Look at the SC Johnson Administration Building. Employees wanted to come to work just to be in that Great Workroom.

Left: Taliesin III (1925), Spring Green

What do you think we find so compelling about Wright's architecture today?

I believe that for those who want something more than an off-the-shelf plan, with the same old elevation, Wright and organic architecture hold the answers for that special home. With more and more public sites open for curious minds to see firsthand what we in the Wright world already know, some people will visit and just see a nice old home. For those lucky few who can see the open floorplan the way it was meant to be lived in and used, they'll recognize that the function of the build is in direct relation of the form of the building.

Many people come to visit because of the man and not the architect. I think they are missing out on something special. Wright said architecture was the mother of all arts, and he was a master of using all the arts to the fullest and creating something more beautiful than just a vase on a shelf.

Wright pushed the envelope with design and with construction materials. One can look at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center — even though it was built 23 years ago, it looks like it was built yesterday. Now take into account that the first design Wright proposed was in 1938 — and it was more futuristic than what was built 82 years later. It still is. Hollywood can put a Wright design from 1923 in a movie set in the future, and it doesn't look out of place. I find that compelling.

What does re-creating Wright's work do for your appreciation and understanding of a given property?

Every drawing I do is still a learning exercise, even after 38 years. As a designer, I do stop and look at unbuilt project and will think, "Well, if you did this or that it could be an improvement." But then I stop and say, "Don't be silly."

But, seriously, with new construction materials and improvements, there are things that could be revisited or expanded on — but only with the deepest understanding of the principles that Wright taught us.

Wright was known for trying new things or taking a plan he designed years before and tweaking it and reintroducing it. One has to evolve to try new things but still be respectful of the land and the owners for which it is designed. Wright said: "A great architect is not made by way of a brain nearly as much as he is made by the way of a cultivated enriched heart."



SC Johnson Headquarters

New Building Brick Model Gives Fans a Hands-on Experience with Company's Racine Campus

by BRIAN R. HANNAN

Later this summer, admirers of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed SC Johnson Administration Building and Research Tower will be able to bring them home. An Illinois company, The Atom Brick Co., is preparing to launch a 1:350 scale interconnecting brick model.

As with the actual iconic structures, Adam Reed Tucker, the company's founder, said he based the set on their famed lily pad- and taproot-inspired supports. He used removable roof and wall panels to make the model more "engaging."

"It's really understanding the cir-

ulation, the structure, the interior spaces and how they relate to one another. You don't get that unless you're able to peel off the outer layers and peer inside," he said. "When you take off the roof and reveal all the columns and colonnades that occur, you feel this place is special."

Tucker launched Atom Brick in early 2019 after several years with Lego System A/S, where he helped to launch the company's famed architecture series with popular renditions of Wright's Fallingwater, Guggenheim Museum and Robie House. Wright designs in Atom Brick's initial lineup

— all licensed by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation — included the Darwin D. Martin Housing Complex, Taliesin West and Unity Temple.

Looking ahead, Tucker said he's working with the foundation to develop sets based on other Wright-designed structures, as well as Wright's art glass and furniture. The idea, Tucker said, is for Wright properties to sell them in their gift shops and for his company to sell them online, providing "engaging educational gifts in a way that hasn't quite been offered before."

More information is available at theatombrick.com.



**TOURS &
EVENTS**
AT WISCONSIN
WRIGHT SITES
SUMMER 2020

As part of your planning to visit a Wright in Wisconsin public site, please use the contact information below to determine visiting times and conditions.

COVID-19 Updates

AD German Warehouse

The AD German Warehouse will be closed for tours and to the general public until further notice. Public access to the building will likely be affected by anticipated construction during the summer and fall of 2020.

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

The Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church is remaining closed to services and tours. Only limited numbers are allowed for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Historic Milwaukee Inc. has scheduled its Doors Open Milwaukee for Sept. 26-27, 2020. Annunciation will participate on Sept. 26. Self-guided tours and photography are allowed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Greek pastries will be sold in the cultural center.

Jacobs I

All tours at Jacobs I are canceled for the year.

Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center

While Monona Terrace is closed to the public until further notice, the rooftop garden is open. It is a beautiful destination as spring weather settles in.

Meanwhile, the community relations department remains busy moving our offerings to digital platforms. Please visit us online at mononaterrace.com/at-home to find an audio tour and family-friendly activities teaching architecture and design.

Our weekly meditation program is now facilitated on Zoom.

Seth Peterson Cottage

Open houses are canceled indefinitely. The work week during the second week in April was held as scheduled.

Taliesin and Wyoming Valley School

Taliesin will open its 2020 tour season on June 1, 2020. Tours and programming will be modified in accordance with the Badger Bounce Back program. These modifications will extend throughout the summer to keep visitors and guests safe.

We have been working on taking some of our programs online. We also are developing virtual opportunities for our summer workshops and food artisan immersion program. Stay tuned for updates as things evolve.

In light of the situation with the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation and School of Architecture at Taliesin, Taliesin Preserva-

tion is diligently working to keep the Hillside drafting studio in use, as much as possible, as a laboratory for study and experimentation. We will be adjusting our programming to include usage of the drafting studio for our youth summer camps, new micro apprenticeships programs and expanded viewing for tours.

We are excited to announce, along with Wyoming Valley School Cultural Arts Center, a new partnership between the sites and organizations. Stay tuned for tour updates and new programming opportunities!

Unitarian Meeting House

The Unitarian Meeting House facility is closed until further notice. Services and other activities currently take place online.

Editor's Note: Information is accurate as of May 1, 2020, and is subject to change.

Public Sites Contact Information

A.D. German Warehouse

Richland Center
(608) 649-1915
Email info@adgermanwarehouse.org
adgermanwarehouse.org

American System-Built Home Model B-1

Milwaukee
wrightinmilwaukee.org

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

Wauwatosa
(414) 461-9400
annunciationwi.org

Monona Terrace

Madison
mononaterrace.com

SC Johnson

Racine
(262) 260-2154
scjohnson.com/visit

Seth Peterson Cottage

Lake Delton
sethpeterson.org

Still Bend / Schwartz House

Two Rivers
Email michael@stillbend.com
stillbend.com

Taliesin

Spring Green
taliesinpreservation.org

Unitarian Meeting House

Madison
(608) 233-9774
fusmadison.org/tours

Wingspread – The Johnson Foundation

Wind Point
(262) 681-3353
scjohnson.com/visit

Wyoming Valley School

Spring Green
(608) 588-2544
wyomingvalleyschool@gmail.com

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HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM

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courtesy of PATRICK J. MAHONEY

Postcard of the meeting
house of the First
Unitarian Society of
Madison.

This view of the southern
exposure of the building
illustrates the main
entrance on the right and
the hearth room in the
center under a shallow
gable roof. The primary
material of the walls is a
native stone hauled by
parish members to reduce
the cost of construction.

Published by William
Wollin Studio, Madison.

