Along the Shore

WRIGHT AND LIKE™ TOUR FOCUSES ON NORTHEAST WISCONSIN
Historic preservation tax credits have been approved for the restoration of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed A.D. German Warehouse and the adjoining 1912 warehouse, according to the warehouse conservancy’s board of directors.

In a news release, the board said: “These credits will provide a minimum of $1.3 million in funding that will be combined with more than $550,000 that has already been received from private donors. Many additional requests to private and public funding sources are in process. “The total cost is $4 million. The project has grown in size and scope since its inception as plans and potential uses for the building have developed.”

Recent historic research and documentation elevates the significance of the warehouse, specifically regarding Wright’s development and innovation in cast concrete. Lessons learned at the warehouse informed Wright’s next architectural innovations in Los Angeles and the Hollywood Hills,” according to the warehouse conservancy.

“Although German was ultimately unsuccessful in his business and the warehouse has been underutilized these past 100 years, it has enormous future potential. The building remains ... usable, suitable to a variety of uses that are in development.

“In addition, the Wisconsin Historical Society placed the two buildings on the State Register of Historic Places in February. The four-story warehouse was listed in the National Register (of Historic Places) in 1974, but the nomination excluded any mention of the two-story warehouse next door. Since that time, a greater understanding of the significance of the larger property has developed.”

A.D. German Warehouse Work Earns Tax Credits

WRIGHT IN WISCONSIN — VOLUME 24 \\
ISSUE 2 \\
MAY 2019

WRIGHT IN WISCONSIN is published three times annually in February, May and September by Wright in Wisconsin, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promote and preserve the heritage of Frank Lloyd Wright, his vision and his architecture — as well as the work of his apprentices, Taliesin Associated Architects, and like-minded architects — in his native state of Wisconsin. Membership benefits include discounts at the Monona Terrace Gift Shop and on Wright and Like™ tour tickets, 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 or contact us at the number or address below.

Editor - Mark Hertzberg
Designer and copy editor - Brian R. Harman
Special thanks to Patrick Mahoney for contributing the vintage postcard; and Robert Hartmann for sharing his vintage pictures.

Board of Directors
(Sites Represented)
Michael Ditmer, president; Still Bend/Schwartz House; Bill Martelini, vice president; Seth Peterson Cottage; Andy Guzzetti, treasurer; Mark Ierksberger, secretary; Lon Arbogast (A.D. German Warehouse); Mary Arnold (Krautland-Bagley House); Jay Johnson; Lisa Berg; Terry Boyd (Frank Lloyd Wright’s Bumrun Block); Ken Dahlin; Garden Hall; Kim Mettke Kasten; Mary Ann Gussert; Wisconsin Valley School; Aaron Maulding (Taliesin); Hunter Sailer (Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center); Kathy Spurway (Arnecuzing Greek Orthodox Church); and Mark Schweitzer (Governor’s Meeting House).

Regular Features
President’s Message — 31
Wright Thoughts — 32
Tour Dates — 33
Vintage Photos — 33
President’s Message

by MICHAEL DITMER

In February I received an invitation from Stuart Graff, the president and CEO of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, to help build the new entrance plaza to Taliesin West. I jumped at the opportunity.

I spent a morning laying desert boulders in forms and packing concrete around them to help form the desert masonry structure. The experience of working hard in the winter sun in Arizona, lifting boulders and meeting people from all over the country, felt like traveling back in time to experience what Wright’s apprentices experienced when building the desert campus.

The spirit of community and camaraderie that emerged that morning — and the chance to make new friends and establish contacts from all around the country — was extraordinary.

In April, Stuart spoke at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center for Wright in Wisconsin’s Design Series. He discussed how Wright’s organic architecture translates into a call for a more sustainable built environment.

I sat down with Stuart while he was in Madison to talk about his study of organic architecture and sustainable development, and the continuing relevance of Wright’s thinking.

With Wright and Like right around the corner, I am excited that the 2019 tour — “Along the Shore” — will be in north-east Wisconsin, where Still Bend, the Schwartz House, is located in Two Rivers.

The tour includes a fantastic collection of John Bloodgood Schuster houses, as well as a beautiful new home designed by Ken Dahlin. Ken is a Wright in Wisconsin board member and the author of our regular “Wright Thoughts” column.

I am additionally excited that the Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum in Two Rivers will serve as our tour headquarters. I’ve collaborated with staff at the internationally known, working print museum, and I encourage you to make time to explore this gem in Two Rivers.

Recognizing the ever-increasing pre-scientific understanding of organic architecture and the growing urgency for sustainable solutions in our environment — I want to thank our community, the members of Wright in Wisconsin, for the continued support you bring to advance that vision and fulfill our mission.

Promoting, protecting and preserving the heritage of Wright, his vision and his architecture really does take a village. We also take inspiration from the work of his apprentices and like-minded architects in his native state of Wisconsin.

The fórcola (Frank Lloyd Wright received in 1961) from architecture students in Venice maintains its pride of place in his bedroom at Taliesin. A fórcola is a rowlock used on the light, flat-bottomed boats known as gondolas.

ON THE COVER: Frank Lloyd Wright based the Bernard and Fern Schwartz House, or Still Bend, on drawings he made for “Life” magazine’s “dream house” edition of September 26, 1938. The home is located on the banks of the East Twin River in Two Rivers.
For the 2019 tour season, The SC Johnson Gallery: At Home With Frank Lloyd Wright will showcase a new exhibit called “Frank Lloyd Wright: Shapes and Colors.” This exhibit explores Wright’s use of shape and color in his work and features examples of his art glass, furniture and textile design.

Wright’s fascination with shape and color can be traced back to his childhood. His mother often encouraged him to play with blocks, just as she would take him for walks through the countryside to pick wildflowers of all different colors. These early experiences reinforced Wright’s belief that color and shape were important symbols he could use in his designs to represent nature and how people connect with the outside world.

The gallery opens on May 2, 2019, and will close in the spring of 2020, when the gallery is refreshed.

For Stuart Graff, “sustainability” is the newest front in understanding Frank Lloyd Wright’s concept of organic architecture and its implications for a 21st-century world.

“We live in a time where, on one hand, we pay a lot of lip service to notions of sustainability,” the president and CEO of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation said. “But what do we revere? We revere buildings that have no connections to the world around them – at least many people do. Why are we revering those buildings as opposed to the buildings that call attention to themselves because they just become a part of the fabric of a city, a community, a landscape?”

Those are the buildings we should be revering because they are doing the work of nature,” Graff said. “It is this thing that just blossoms and flows, and Wright picks up on that throughout his entire life and body of work.”

In April, Arizona-based Graff presented a pair of lectures on sustainability – one in the Golden Rondelle at the S.C. Johnson & Son Inc. corporate headquarters in Racine and another in the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison. Bringing a mindfulness to how we manage change in a modern society and efficiently use finite natural resources “fits into American values,” he said.

“You can go back to the Declaration of Independence and go back even further to John Locke’s enlightenment philosophy in which he explores the idea of laws from nature, which includes concepts like equality and liberty. Then look at the way Ralph Waldo Emerson treated them, speaking of the natural law as this spiritual thing that seems to come out of the land itself,” Graff said. “It is this thing that just blossoms and flows, and Wright picks up on that throughout his entire life and body of work.”

Like Wright before him, Graff acknowledges the challenge of capturing such lofty ideals in common sense language. But through his extensive reading and musing about Wright and transcendental principles, he said, “I keep coming back to this notion of an ‘ecosystem.’”

In this construct, Graff defines architecture as “sustainable” when its purpose and setting – its “intrinsic nature” – are connected to the land on which it is built.

“Trees grow because the nutrients in the soil make sense, when the amount of available water, the amount of light and the surrounding plants, animals and activity all allow it to thrive there,” he said. “Why shouldn’t a building be doing the exact same thing and, for that matter, why shouldn’t a city be doing the exact same thing? And a person, their life and their activity be doing the exact same thing?”

Editor’s Note: In July 2018, Graff wrote about sustainability and Frank Lloyd Wright’s organic architecture in an article for the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation’s blog, “The Whirling Arrow.” The essay is titled “Organic Architecture and the Sustaining Ecosystem.”
Herbert and Katherine Jacobs called Jacobs II home when they settled into it in 1949.

Frank Lloyd Wright called it a Solar Hemicycle when he designed it in 1944. The house is located on what was originally a rural 52-acre site consisting of farmland and prairie grasses near Middleton.

Jacobs II is the second home Wright designed for the Jacobs family in the span of eight years. The previous home, Jacobs I, considered by many to be Wright’s first built Usonian home, was designed in 1936.

It is located on an urban double-lot in nearby Madison.

Jacobs II, Wright’s first Solar Hemicycle, is a masterful example of organic environmental design. Wood, stone and glass are Wright’s building materials.

But, more importantly, it is Wright’s sensitive response to the importance of building orientation, solar angles and prevailing winds that determined the form of the home.

These photographs, taken 54 years ago during the summer and winter of 1965, remind us that Jacobs II once stood alone on the rural Wisconsin landscape. Not surprisingly, suburbia has now surrounded the home. It can no longer be seen as it once was.

Today, the home is cared for by owners who are loving stewards of a Wright masterpiece.

Top: The roof overhang provides shade to protect the interior from the penetrating rays of the sun, at its higher, summer angle. Above: The circular tower and protective berm lend a fortress-like appearance. A protective earth berm on the home’s north side cools the house in summer and insulates it against severe cold in winter. Right: A full expanse of windows on the southern exposure offers passive solar heating in colder months.
Along the Shore
WRIGHT AND LIKE TOUR FOCUSES ON NORTHEAST WISCONSIN

Along the Shore
WRIGHT AND LIKE TOUR FOCUSES ON NORTHEAST WISCONSIN

Join us on June 8 for our Wright and Like 2019 house tour as we go “Along the Shore” to Adell, Manitowoc, Oostburg and Two Rivers.

This driving tour celebrates Wright’s birthday and the breadth of his legacy in northeast Wisconsin. You will visit Still Bend, the realization of Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1938 “Life” magazine “dream house,” a new Usonian-inspired home by Ken Dahlin, a lake side cottage, a Prairie School house and multiple mid-century modern gems. On our first visit to this area, we are excited to introduce regional “like” architects Earl F. Miller and John Bloodgood Schuster.

New ‘Like’ Architects
While you may not be familiar with their names, you will easily see how their work has a direct connection to Wright’s legacy. Miller was a Chicago School-trained architect who put his mark on Prairie School homes through distinctive interior details. The fireplace brickwork at the Meany House is just one example of such detail. A part of the newly designated Lincoln Boulevard Historic District in Manitowoc, this home is one of several Miller designs in the area.

Schuster spent nearly two decades working in various capacities with Russell Barr Williamson, a close associate of Wright during his World War I period, when Wright was involved with the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. Williamson oversaw the construction of Wright’s 1917 Frederick C. Bogk House, the 1916 Arthur R. Munkwitz Duplex Apartments and the Burnham Block American System-Built houses. A Milwaukee native, Schuster likely met Williamson in the 1930s. After World War II, he worked at Williamson’s business in Sheboygan Falls that made pre-fabricated housing.

When that venture closed in 1948, Schuster began designing homes on his own. Williamson and Schuster continued their close acquaintanceship and working relationship — eventually building homes within a stone’s throw of each other along Lake Michigan. Not surprisingly, homes by Schuster use many of the same materials and share many of the organic design and siting characteristics of Williamson’s homes.

New Tour Site
We are thrilled to announce the addition of another Schuster-designed house to our lineup — the Emil and Nora Schmidtman House. This 1957 home is complete with original built-ins: banquette seating and tables in the living room and den, bedroom desks, a built-in breakfast nook, kitchen cabinetry and storage. It also has extensive interior soffits, a common Schuster feature.

Having multiple Schuster designs open for touring gives you a unique opportunity to explore his work, one that we are confident you will enjoy.

Editor’s Note: Traci Schnell, an architectural historian and former Wright in Wisconsin board member, contributed research on the somewhat elusive Schuster.

© Andrew Pielage
Bernard and Fern Schwartz House, 1939
Frank Lloyd Wright · Two Rivers
Wright redesigned his 1938 “Life” magazine “dream house” project for Bernard and Fern Schwartz, creating the masterpiece known as Still Bend. The two-story brick and tidewater red cypress home features radiant floor heating, a Cherokee Red concrete slab foundation and large expanses of glass.
Jeff and Jane Uecker House, 2017
Ken Dahlin \ Adell
With a prow inspired by Wright’s Tainter’s Knoll, this 3,500-square-foot home is a contemporary interpretation of his Usonian designs based on a triangular-unit grid system and continuous-flowing interior. The stone-and-wood home features many built-ins and radiant in-floor heating, in a modern, functional plan.

William and Nancy Webster House, 1970
John Bloodgood Schuster \ Two Rivers
The Websters selected Schuster to design their home because of his skill in siting a home to capture multiple views. Their lot on the East Twin River, next to Still Bend, is filled with natural beauty. The bi-level home of cedar and mahogany that Schuster designed for them does just that. | Exterior only

Harold and Janet Schulz House, 1962
John Bloodgood Schuster \ Oostburg
The design of this cedar-and-glass house is a creative solution to the constraints the architect faced: a narrow, 60-foot lot and the need to fit into the footprint of a previous cottage. With three levels and a wraparound balcony, this lakeside cottage has essentially remained unchanged, with the exception of a remodeled, lower-level bathroom.

Max and Bertha Alpert House, 1958
John Bloodgood Schuster \ Manitowoc
At 1,830 square feet, this single-story, two-bedroom home is a smaller example of Schuster’s characteristic mid-century modern style. With original, bright interior colors, and window walls facing the expansive rear yard, this home is a good example of how an affordable Schuster-designed home can fit today’s lifestyle.

Emil and Nora Schmidtman House, 1957
John Bloodgood Schuster \ Manitowoc
A well-maintained time capsule, it retains original built-ins throughout, including banquette seating with original coverings, cabinetry in all rooms and a dining nook with a fixed table and banquette seating.

Dr. John and Anna Meany House, 1912
Earl F. Miller \ Manitowoc
Located within the Lincoln Boulevard Historic District, soon to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this four-bedroom, Prairie School house consists of nearly 2,500 square feet. It was designed by Miller, a Chicago School-trained residential and commercial architect. While maintaining the home’s original integrity, the current owners have completed a small number of renovations to make it their own.

ALONG THE SHORE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 09

Tour Headquarters
Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum \ 1816 10th St., Two Rivers
The Hamilton Manufacturing Co. was founded in Two Rivers in 1880 and went on to become the largest manufacturer of wood type in the U.S. Today, the Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum is home to the world’s largest collection of wood type and internationally known for its workshops.

Important tour information: Wright and Like will be held, rain or shine, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 8, 2019. Order tickets online at wrightinwisconsin.org or by calling (608) 287-0339. Tickets purchased in advance cost $60 each for members and $70 each for nonmembers.

Tickets may be purchased on tour day at the Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum. Tickets purchased on tour day cost $70 for members and $80 for nonmembers.
Understanding the Usonian Grid

Most of the homes on this year’s Wright and Like tour were designed in a style that can be loosely called Usonian. Frank Loyd Wright coined “Usonian” for the homes he designed, from the 1930s forward, that embodied his ideas of democratic individuality and freedom.

These homes departed from traditional homes by eliminating the basement and attic spaces, while spreading out more horizontally on the land. They presented an affordable way of building homes in the post-Great Depression and post-World War II eras.

Wright’s Jacobs I house in Madison is perhaps the earliest and most well-known Usonian. Wright’s design for the September 26, 1938, edition of “Life” magazine was commissioned by Bernard and Fern Schwartz and built, with modifications, in Two Rivers. Like Jacobs I, the Schwartz House — also known as Still Bend — was based upon a modular grid.

Wright’s Usonian designs were meant to be affordable solutions for the American middle class, systematized on a grid layout and modular planning concepts. As the culmination of Wright’s essay, “Art and Craft of the Machine,” 30 years earlier, the Usonian home incorporates a new, highly disciplined system that was modular, yet flexible and aesthetically beautiful. The machine’s potential is honored. The grid gave it the discipline of the warp and weft from which various expressions could then be modulated.

They were modern like their European contemporaries were, yet different in significant ways. Consider, for example, two plans based on a modular grid system — Wright’s Jacobs I House and Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House. Each architect took a very different approach to how he used the grid in his design philosophy.

The Farnsworth House plan reveals a static, self-contained grid. While this home sits in a beautiful, natural setting, the house is perched off of the ground on two large plinths, raised on steel columns as if to be careful not to touch nature.

The Jacobs I plan, however, while also based on a grid, is not determined by the grid. There is a modulation of the grid, as a weaving of a work of tapestry. The plan is allowed to ebb and flow with the site in a much more intimate connection with the land. But another important aspect to this modulation of the grid is the rich interior spaces that are created, producing a sense of mystery and beauty.

Part of Wright’s skill is his ability to hold in tension the opposing aspects of rational discipline and the free play of form — a unity of form with a particularity of expression; rational, while creating an intimate, human-scale, emotional connection. Organic architecture itself is not monolithic, and its various practitioners have emphasized differing aspects in their approach.

Possibly more often since Wright, it has tended toward the individualizing aspect, emphasizing the particular at the expense of overall unity.

John Bloodgood Schuster, who learned from Wright apprentice Russell Barr Williamson, is an example of this as well. The floor plan of Schuster’s Huchtausen home shows this tendency and is very reminiscent of Williamson’s later work.

Absent is the sense of an underlying grid tying the whole plan together. Rather, the plan is sculptural and expressionistic, with each area of the home seeking to be free to respond to its location, function and architect’s vision. There is a combining of different geometries such as the circular elements at the stair and dining room with the more angular non-rectangular rooms.

The most recent construction on this year’s tour is the Uecker home. It is based on a triangular grid using 60- and 120-degree angles. The grid establishes a module and informs every wall and angle in the home to bring about a unity and harmony of expression. The actual floor plan then undulates to relate to the site, views, sun orientation and internal functions. The spatial flow is also an integral element of the home design and affects the experience of the home. The familiar compression and expansion of spaces, along with discovered views and niches, give both human intimacy and drama to the experience of the home.

Usonian homes conform their layout to the topography of the site rather than by forcing a rigid plan upon them. They use natural materials such as wood and stone inside and out, in earth tones rather than the stark whites of International Style modernism. Part of the distinction between the Usonian-inspired midcentury modern home, as compared to European modernism, is its warmth of natural materials, individualizing character discussed above and connection to the land — traits Wright would have referred to as its democratic, American character.

Glass is used in expanses to open up the inside to the outdoors. While flat roofs were a signature element of many Usonian homes, many also had simplified, pitched roofs and open gable roofs with shallow pitches. Both shared a predominant, horizontal expression of lines, punctuated by a vertical stone or brick chimney mass rising from the roof. Most often concrete slab on grade floors with radiant heat and a scored grid pattern were used.

Each of these homes also reflects an individual freedom of expression while still conveying an organic family resemblance.

The grid pattern were used.
Ongoing Tours and Events

**A.D. German Warehouse**
Richland Center, $1, Cost varies
May-October: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday
See website for other months
Group tours by appointment for an additional cost
Cash or check only
(608) 604-5034 or lerbegast@gmail.com
www.adgermanwarehouse.org

**American System-Built Home Model B-1**
Milwaukee $15
No reservations needed, except for Thursday tours
May-August: 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday
July-August only: 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday
Tours start on the half hour.
www.wrightinmilwaukee.org

**Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church**
Wauwatosa, $1, Cost varies
Groups of 15 or more $10 per person
NEW Groups of 14 or fewer: $25 flat fee
By appointment only at (404) 241-9400 or www.annunciationwi.org

**Monona Terrace**
Madison $5 per adult, $3 per student
Guided Tours May 1 to October 31, Daily at 1 p.m.
From November 1 to April 30, 1 p.m. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday
Closed major holidays.
www.mononaterrace.com

**SC Johnson**
Racine
March to December, various tours plus exhibition
Reservations at (262) 250-2154 or www.scjohnson.com/visit

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

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

Taliesin
Spring Green, Reservations strongly recommended
A variety of tours, times and prices
May 1 to October 31
www.taliesinpreservation.org

Unitarian Meeting House
Madison, Reser. online: $12.50 | Day-of: $15
May and September: Tours weekdays at 10 a.m.
June-August: Weekdays at 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.
Groups by appointment
(608) 233-9774
www.fusmadison.org/tours

Wingspread — The Johnson Foundation
Wind Point
Tours Wednesday - Friday. By appointment only.
Register at www.scjohnson.com/visit, call (262) 681-3353

Wyoming Valley School
Spring Green, Donation appreciated
Tours Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 20 through November 15
(608) 588-2544
wyomingvalleyschool@gmail.com

Wright Calendar
Saturday, June 8, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Wright and Like
Adell, Manitowoc, Oostburg and Two Rivers
See page 11 for ticket information
Wright in Wisconsin brings our annual Wright and Like house tour to northeastern Wisconsin as we go “Along the Shore.” This is our first visit to this area, and we are excited to introduce regional “like” architects John Bloodgood Schuster and Earl F. Miller.

Sunday, June 9, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Print This! Members-Only Event
Two Rivers
Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum $55
Wright had a lifelong interest in graphic arts, and he believed in hands-on learning. This is your chance to experience firsthand letterpress printing.
Join us for this special event and print your own personalized poster featuring the Wright and Like 2019 graphic of Still Bend, above. The morning will consist of brunch, an in-depth tour of the museum and time in the print workshop. Museum staff will walk you through the process of selecting and setting type, as well as inking and printing your poster. No previous experience is necessary.
Due to the nature of this event, attendance is limited to 24 people — with priority given to Wright in Wisconsin members. Remaining tickets, if available, will be open for purchase by nonmembers after May 11.
This postcard shows the foot of Broad Street in Lake Geneva. At the left side of the image is the Lake Geneva Hotel. The hotel was designed for the Artistic Building Co., which was formed by Arthur L. Richards and John J. Williams. Frank Lloyd Wright designed the project in 1911, and it opened in August 1912. As built, the structure was two stories high and made primarily of wood and stucco.

This image was postmarked in June 1923 from the nearby town of Walworth. The image shows the end of the hotel and a portion of its covered porch.

The hotel was demolished in 1970.