

THIRD FOURTH QUARTER 1981 VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2 AND

#### The Photographs of Edmund Teske for Frank Lloyd Wright Taliesin and Taliesin West 1936–1942

To the memory of Eugene Masselink devoted disciple and secretary to Frank Lloyd Wright of whom it was said, "He is to Frank Llovd Wright as

Baltrafio was to Leonardo Da Vinci."

Taliesin and Edmund Teske were brought to life in 1911. Just seven years later Teske began to use a Scout 2-C to take family photographs. It was not until 1932, however, that he purchased his first camera which he used in the theatre department of Chicago's Hull House. In 1936 Teske began a 2-year fellowship with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin. Aline Barnsdall invited him to live in Studio Residence B where he met Man Ray, D. W. Griffith and others.

in Chicago to the downtown heart and central Loop area of that city was a one hour's run in the big lugubrious No. 4 street car of Cottage Grove Avenue. My mother often made the run with her three children. This child, yours truly, E. Teske, seven or so by now, would always be sure to be on the right side of the street car-and what was the right side of the street car? The side from which he could experience the Midway Gardens of Frank Lloyd Wright, at Sixty-Second Street on Cottage Grove Avenue. The Midway Plaisance of the 1893 World's Fair Columbian Exposition, campus now of the University of Chicago.

It was of an evening in the summer of 1936. Gene Masselink picked me up at From the far south side of our residence the Meyer Hotel in Spring Green,

Wisconsin, where I had arrived by train from my hometown Chicago. He ushered me into the presence of Frank Lloyd Wright, in the loggia of Taliesin. I was filled with a sense of the ineffable wonder and beauty everywhere eminent. Mr. Wright looked at my folio of photographs and said to the fellows of the Taliesin Fellowship that were present, "Let's keep Teske here to do portraits of us all." I thereupon became an honorary member of the Taliesin Fellowship-establishing the first photographic workshop in which photography functioned for the organic architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, and the indigenous life of the Taliesin Fellowship.

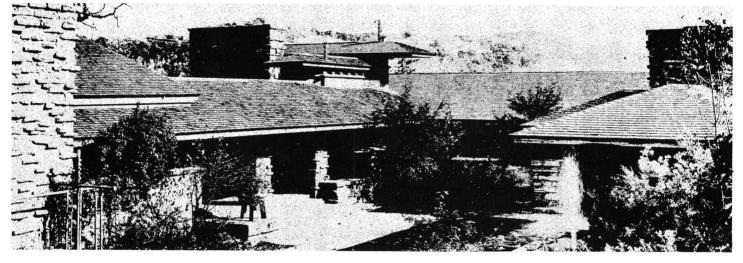
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### **Taliesin West**

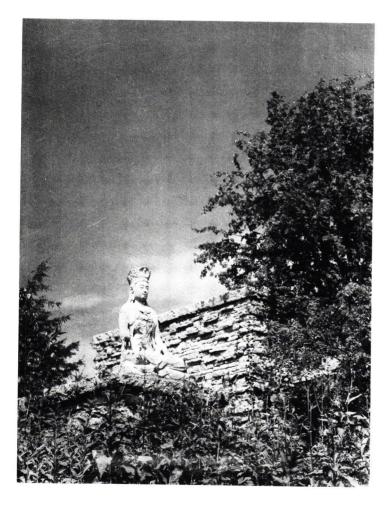
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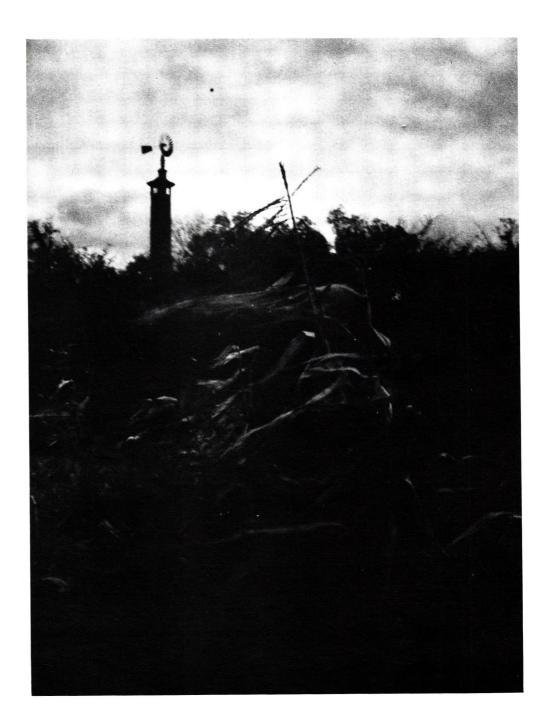




Landscape at Taliesin-Midway Hill-1936



The Buddha at Taliesin–1936-37



Romeo and Juliet-1936 THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER 5

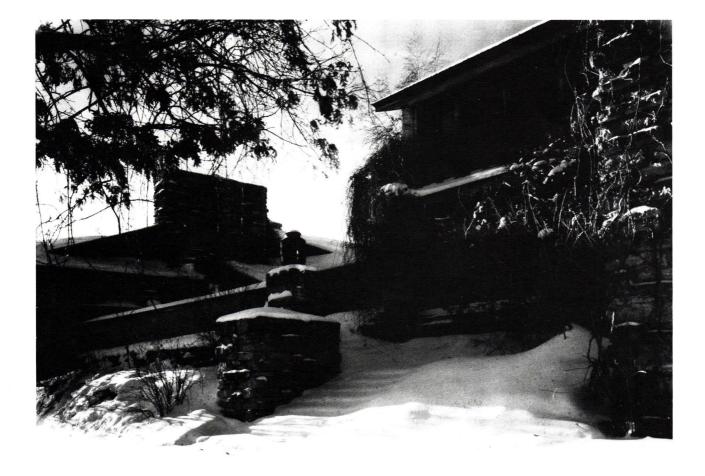


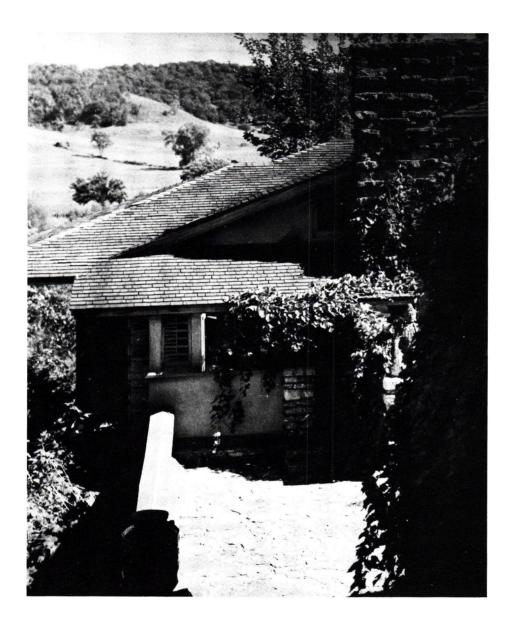
Taliesin from Midway looking North-1936



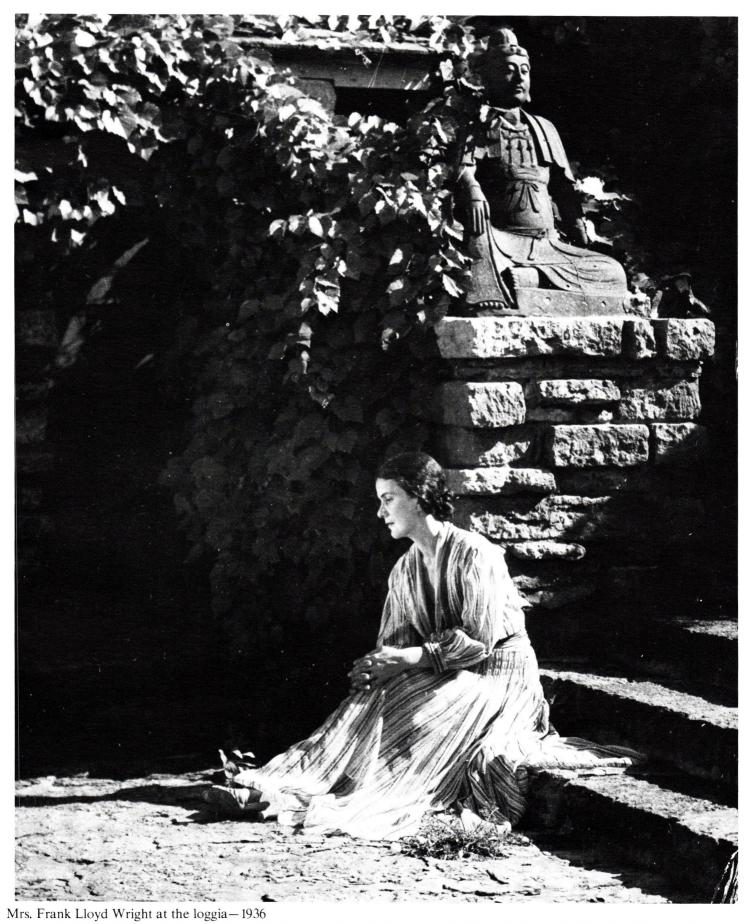
Buddha-looking Southeast over the valley, next to dining room-1936-37 THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER 7



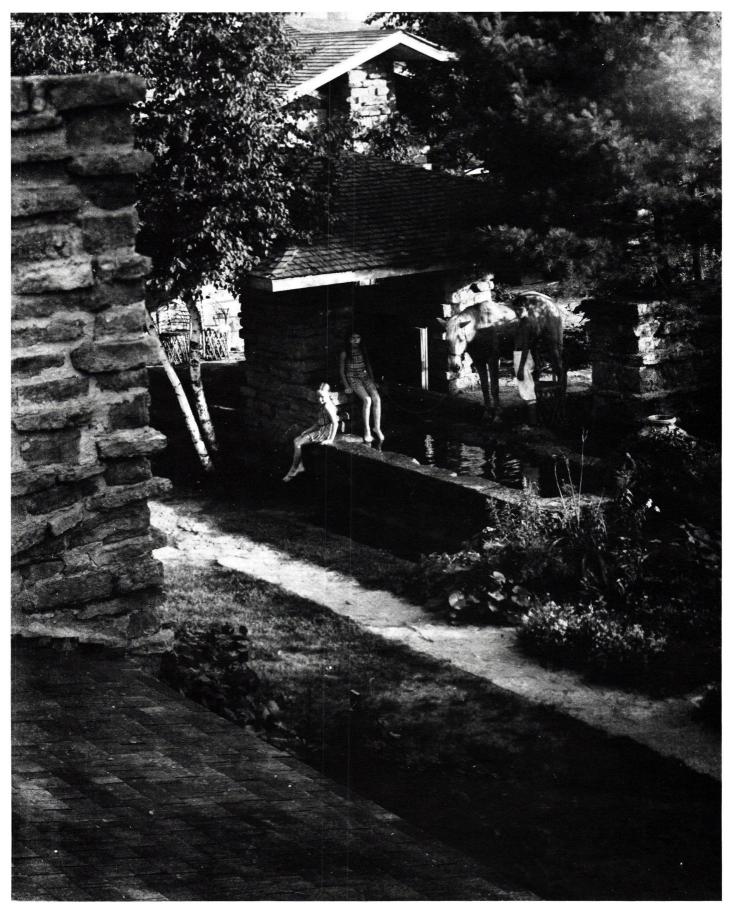




Taliesin-looking Southeast over living room-1936



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Iovana Lloyd Wright and friends-from the drafting room roof-1936



Ming vase—at court pool—1936

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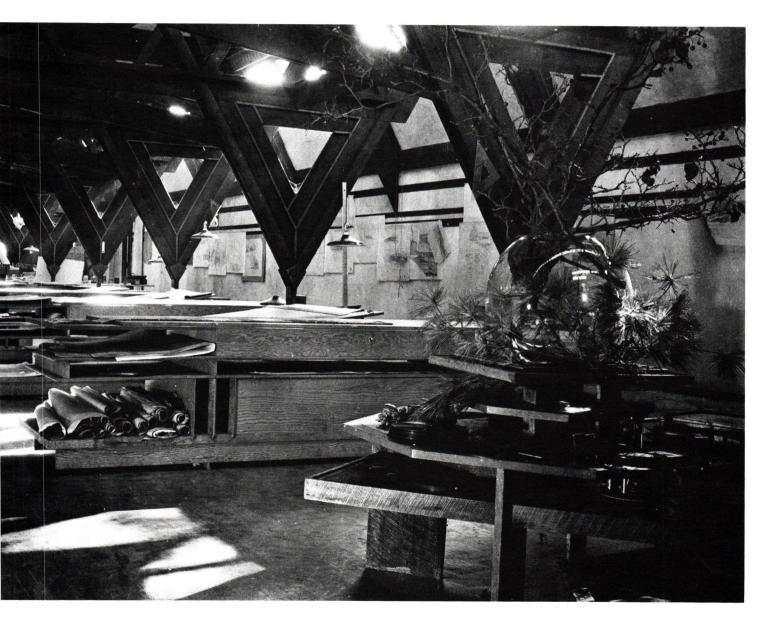
Taliesin–East side South end–1936



Taliesin–East facade–1936

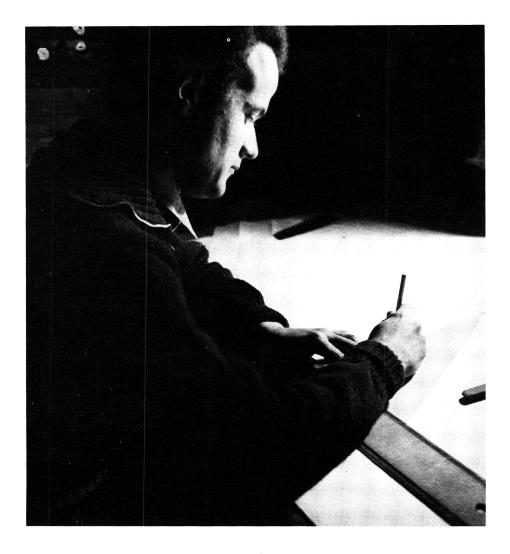


Cary Caroway and Burt Goodrich—1936-37



The drafting room at Hillside–1938

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Gene Masselink and Fellows at work on the Johnson Wax Co. model-1936-37 THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER 19







Wes Peters and Fellows hauling wood-1936





Hans Koch, whom Mr. Wright termed "Master Builder"-1936-37



Taliesin-Garden Court up to Tower-1936-37



Sunday afternoon picnic—1936

# RANK LOYD KIGHT NEWSLETTER POST OFFICE BOX 2100 • OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60303

April 20, 1982

To Subscribers:

We apologize for the photo reproductions in the last issue of the 1981 Newsletter, Volume 4, Numbers 3 and 4. Enclosed is a copy of the corrected reprint. We are sure that it will be up to the standards that you have come to expect from us. This replacement issue will not affect the cost of the 1982 editions nor will it preempt any 1982 issues.

It is hoped that if you have not already renewed because of the quality of the printing of the last issue that you will see this as a statement of our commitment to excellence in the Newsletter and that you will stay with us. We thank you for your comments regarding your expectations of our publication and hope that you will continue to support the work that we are doing.

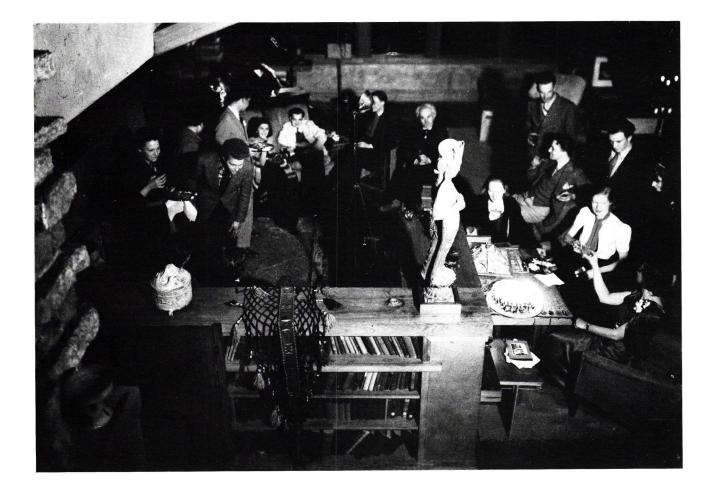
Sincerely, Thomas A. Heinz Editor

Ovid H. Bell; President,

The Ovid Bell Press, Inc.



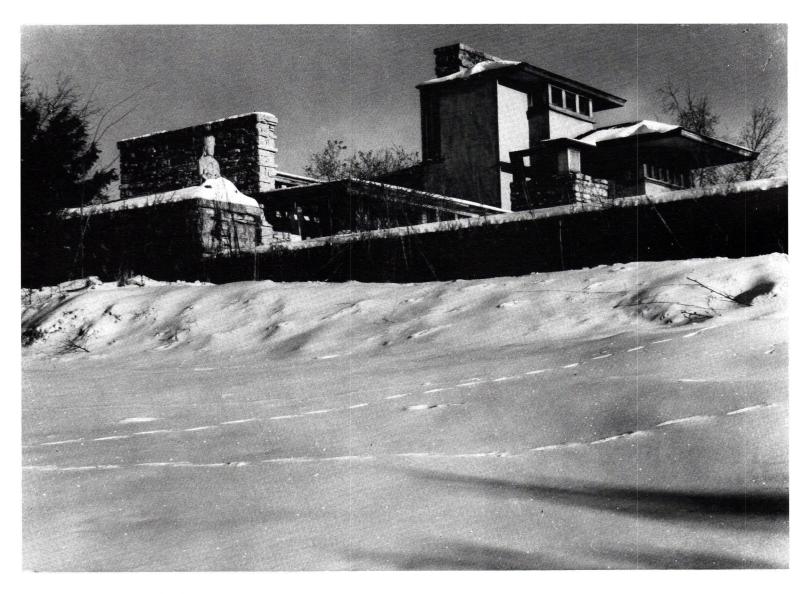
Living room birthday party-Marya Lillien-1936 THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER 27



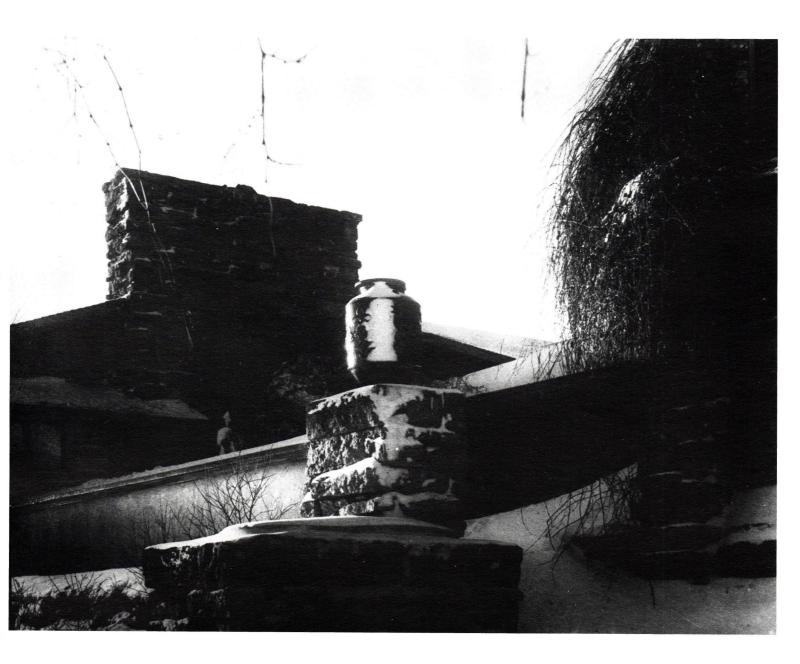
Living room supper party—1936-37



The living room-photo by Hedrich-Blessing-1937



Taliesin-looking North to Tower-194030FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981

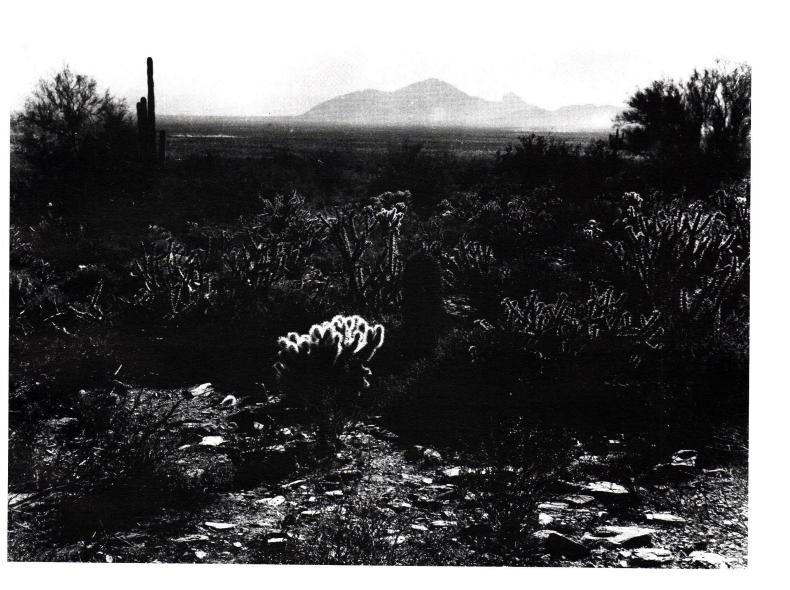


Ming vase-1936

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Taliesin-from the South-1936-37



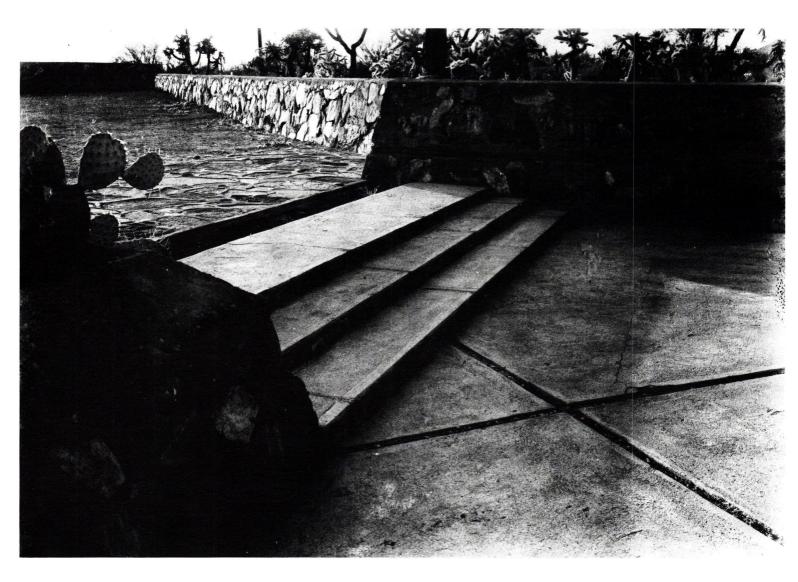
Desert landscape and Camel Back Mountain-1943



Taliesin West-looking North over office-1943

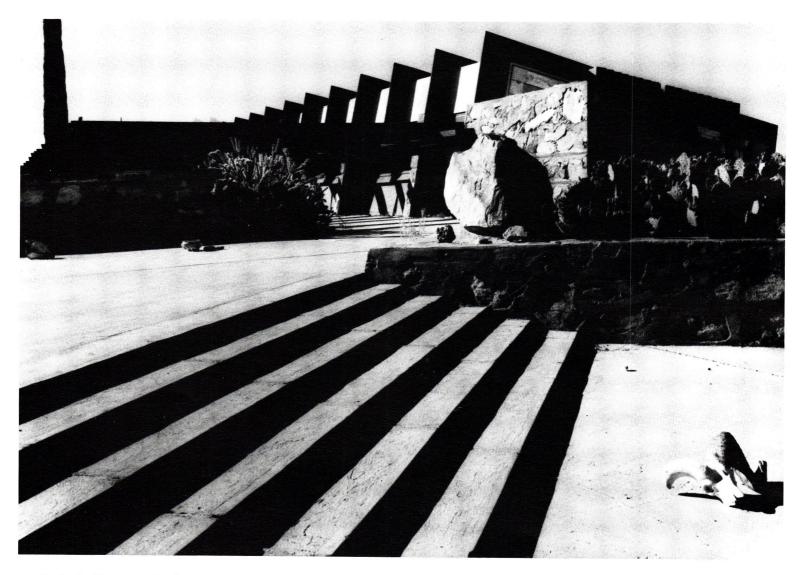


Taliesin West-Drafting room-1943 THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER 35

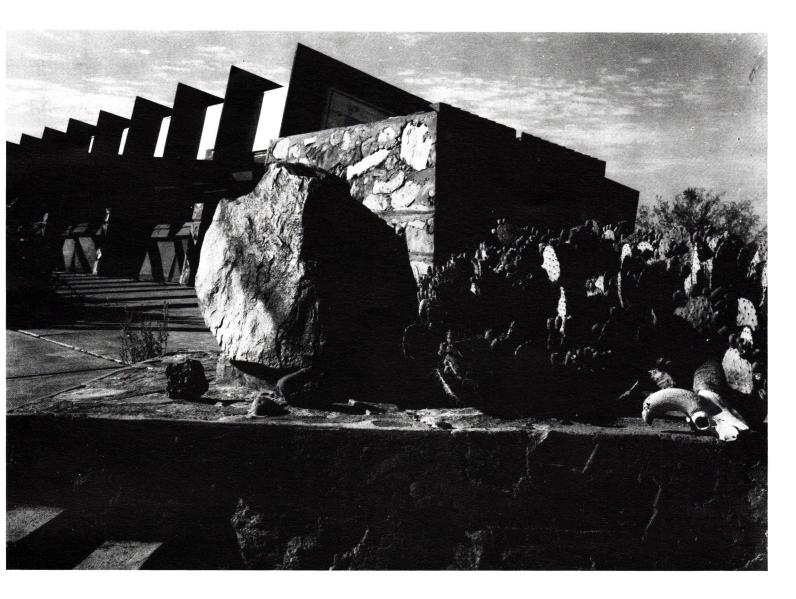


Taliesin West entrance way-1943





Taliesin West-skull of ram-194338FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT NEWSLETTER THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS 1981



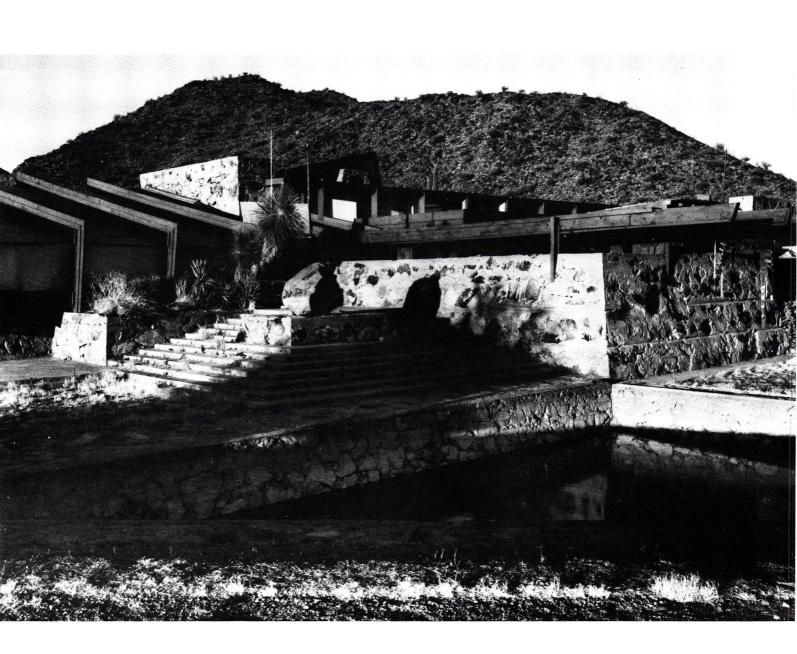
Taliesin West–1943



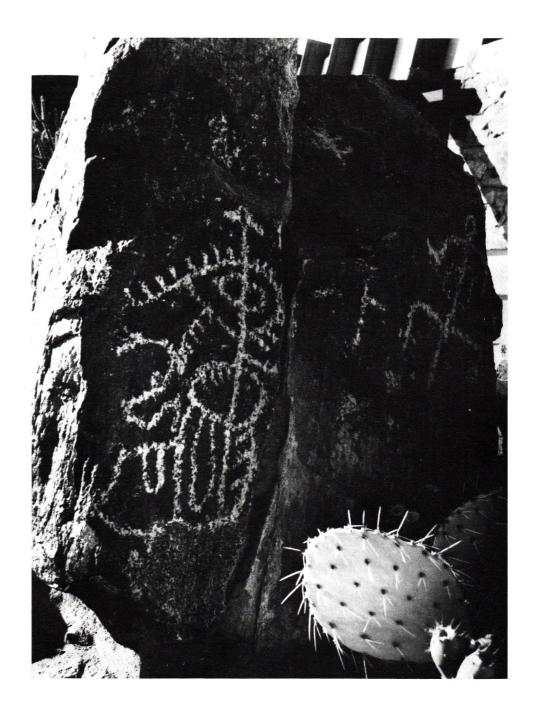
Taliesin West with cactus-toward drafting room-1943



Detail of structural stone work-desert masonry-1943



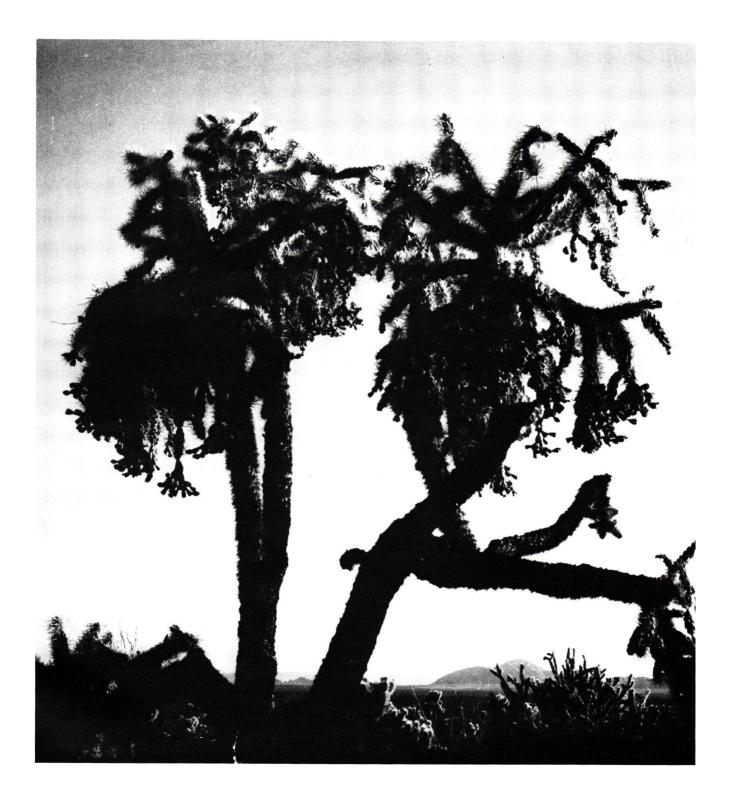
Pool-toward dining room-1943



American Indian hieroglyphic on rock at Taliesin West–1943



Taliesin West-pool and cactus-1943





**Book Review** by Frederick Gutheim

H. Allen Brooks, Editor, Writings on Wright: Selected Comment on Frank Lloyd Wright. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981, 229 pp., \$17.50.

Sifting through the avalanche of "Writings on Wright," H. Allen Brooks takes the high ground of the cultural historian and critic. As might be expected of the author of The Prairie School, he uses his editorial prerogative to advance further what writers like Grant Manson, Norris Kelly Smith and Reyner Banham have enunciated: Wright's intellectual, social and cultural significance. I hasten to add that this collection is not a rehash of earlier accessible thoughts, nor does it neglect more explicitly architectural elements. Even those who have read widely in the literature that Wright has stimulated will find new things-as in the comments of Eric Mendelsohn, here printed for the first time, the shrewd analysis of the Dutch architect Hendrick Petrus, or the British Broadcasting Corporation program written by Lionel March. The biographical aspects of the subject have not been neglected and there is an especially rewarding collection of comments by Wright clients. But in picking his way through many thousands of pages, Professor Brooks has steered by his own star and we are given thoughts about regionalism, the art nouveau, the American family and its houses, the automobile and sprawling North American cities, and many other topics that were characteristic of Wright's times and to which he responded and made contributions in both his design and his thought.

#### An excellent annotated bibliography pro-

Mr. Gutheim is the author of On Architecture published as part of the 1941 trilogy which included the second edition of the Autobiography and In the Nature of Materials by Henry-Russell Hitchcock.

vides both the best introduction to the subject and profitable clues to the editorial interpretation offered here. Like the book itself, it is divided into the architect's own writings, biographies and architectural histories, clients, the assessment of Wright's work by Americans, the European discovery of Wright and an omnium gatherum, "More Recent Evaluations." The significant omission would appear to be some attempt to survey the Japanese literature on Wright and the Brooksian question of the failure in Japan to recognize Wright's contribution to that country's indigenous architectural traditions.

The pertinence of what Brooks has provided (given his limited scope) to current interests in Wright might be illustrated by his inclusion of two selections dealing with the Taliesin Fellowship-and inescapably with Wright's work as a teacher of hundreds of young architects and the still larger question of what he taught and even whether Wright's architecture could be taught. Elizabeth Kassler's new directory of the members of the Taliesin Fellowship (1932-1982-The Taliesin Fellowship: A Directory of Members) has opened the door to some exciting new perspectives. Over his seven decades of professional activity, the later years are just beginning to come into historical focus, and many who worked closely with Wright in the period since the watershed year of 1930, when his reputation emerged from the shadows, have still to make their contributions. Perhaps this sense of large dimensions of unknown history and biography is the main impression one carries away from Brook's stimulating and important book.

It is a further attractive feature that the book is not limited to architecture and history to the exclusion of human interest. Marjorie Leighy's charming and perceptive reaction to her experience living in a Wright-designed house illustrates this. I wish there had been space to include a similar account that might be drawn from Maginel Wright Barney's The Valley of the God-Almighty Joneses-perhaps the scene in which she smuggled a ham with the baked potatoes Wright loved through the lobby of the Plaza Hotel and into Wright's suite. But there are other rewarding glimpses of the country, country life, and the ineradicable countryman that have been included. The important thing to note is that Allen Brooks has not distained the anecdote or even the wisecrack—as happened in the hands of Gregory Affleck.

It should be noted also that beyond the diffcult task of selection, Brooks has accepted the further responsibility for shortening and editing the individual selections and, in a few cases, for paraphase. The result is a highly readable text that speeds along at the pace of our times but without any significant sacrifice of scholarly values.

Brooks' high estimation of Loren Pope's description of the subjective values he found while living in the Usonian house Wright designed for his family tells us a great deal about Brooks' effort in this volume to communicate with a larger public than the architects and architectural historians who comprise the foot soldiers among Wright followers.

While great stretches of this book record unrelieved appreciation, these are not uncritical endorsements but, for the most part, perceptive, frequently subjective insights. And there are some notable bloopers like the the comments of Harriet Monroe, and Russell Sturgis' essay on the Larkin Building. Brooks is obviously preoccupied with the failure of American architectural writers in the first 40 years of Wright's career, notably the period 1908-1930, to recognize Wright's accomplishments. But it was then that one suspects Wright was motivated to begin writing about his work, especially in Architectural Record.

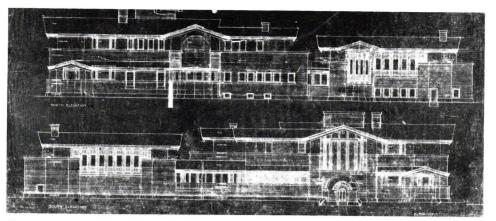
Writings on Wright will make its way readily to the narrow shelf of other basic books on the architect which is dominated, of course, by what Wright himself has written. It should help to introduce a new generation to the subject and to the large and somewhat daunting quantity of literature by and about Wright. It is a merit that the editor has a point of view, values with which he approaches his task, and that he reaches conclusions. This does not mean that he has cropped Wright into some procrustean shape; on the contrary, he has deliberately emphasized his many-sidedness, both as a subject and as reflected in the highly varied responses he stimulated. Brooks has dealt, more fully than has any other editor, with the whole of Wright's span-a distance of eighty years from the first of these writings to the last.

## Dana House Is Sold to the State of Illinois

Thomas Publishing, the loving stewards of the house since they bought it from the estate of Susan Lawrence in 1946. sold the Susan Lawrence Dana House to the State of Illinois in early August of this year. The Department of Conservation of Historic Sites is the new manager of the property. Robert Coomer, the superintendent of Historic Sites, said that, with the exception of a few special events, the house will be closed until next summer. Time will be spent studying the structure and preparing a history of the house and of Susan Lawrence Dana for the tour guides and visitors. Some restoration and maintenance also will be carried out while the house is closed.

The purchase of the house was spearheaded by Governor James Thompson. The Governor rallied support in both houses of the Illinois legislature, and the appropriation for the purchase received final approval in July. Governor Thompson is quite knowledgeable about Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods, and when the opportunity arose for the state to acquire this property, he seized it. All the original furniture is still in the house; no other building of the prairie period has all its furniture. The interior is in nearly perfect condition with many of the original plaster surfaces yet intact. The delicate mural rendered by George M. Niedecken for the spandrel panels in the dining room has remained although there is some terra cotta sculptures executed by Richard Bock look as if they are new. The Flower in the Crannied Wall is a most striking piece and is immediately seen as you enter the front door.

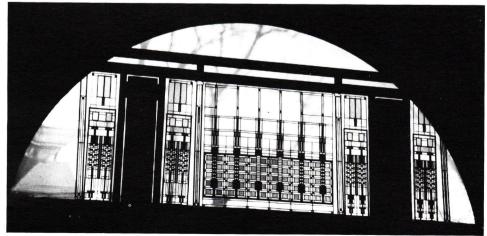
By far the most beautiful feature of the house is the art glass; here is the best of Frank Lloyd Wright's glass art. All of the patterns are related, but in each plane there is a different pattern. His understanding of this medium is so well illustrated in the Dana House that students of this art would do well to dwell on these superior examples. The Dana House is the most unique example of Frank Lloyd Wright's domestic work of the period and one that we all are very glad to see in the capable hands of the Historic Sites Department.



From Wright's original drawings come these two elevations. As usual, the building was altered during construction.



deterioration over the years. The two terra cotta sculptures executed by Richard Bock look as if they are new. *The Flower* North or breakfast end of the dining room has all of its original furniture and glass. The table has a piece of glass over the top for protection causing the bright reflections.



capable hands of the Historic Sites The most unusual use of art glass in any of Wright's windows, this nine piece unit is Department. hung from a wood frame inside a sheet of clear plate.

## **Taliesin** Day

by Thomas A. Heinz

This was the third Taliesin Day, and the second one to be held in Spring Green. The day began at 8:00 a.m. with registration and coffee at the Hillside Home School building on the south side of the campus that is often referred to as Taliesin or the valley of the Lloyd-Joneses. The official welcome was given by Richard Carney with an explanation of how the Fellowship is organized. Architect Tom Casey then explained the School of Architecture, ending with a tour of the original Hillside buildings that were designed and built in 1902 for Frank Lloyd Wright's aunts. These buildings were expanded by the first members of the Fellowship in 1932 with the addition of the drafting room and living quarters. Because the trusses that supported the roofs were constructed of green oak and were nearly 50 years old, they needed some straightening and/or replacement. In 1978 the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation received a National Park Service grant through the State of Wisconsin to do the first restoration project, the replacement of the roof and the strengthening of the old trusses. This operation was explained by architect Charles Montooth at the end of the tour. We then broke for coffee and were free to wander back to the Hillside living room where fresh rolls baked by members of the Fellowship were being served.

Wright's drawings are housed at Taliesin West. Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, director of these drawing archives, explained how the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation is organizing and preserving them. Many organizations including the Avery Library at Columbia University in New York and the Barnsdall house in Los Angeles now have agreements with the Memorial Foundation whereby they exchange copies of materials. Some of the drawings have been damaged over the years and recently the Graham Foundation of Chicago has given the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation a grant for the conservation of some of the most critical drawings. Mr. Pfeiffer further explained the program established for visiting scholars to use the archives. First an appointment is made and an indication of what drawings are needed is given a few weeks prior to arrival. Then

Thomas A. Heinz is the Editor of the Frank Lloyd Newsletter.

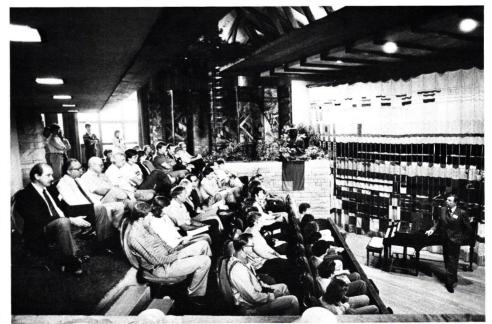
in order to save the originals and in the interest of time, the scholar can view  $4 \times 5$  transparencies of the originals on a twopower microfilm reader. This technique is usually sufficient. In the event that enough information cannot be obtained through the microfilm reader, the original drawings are brought out. Wright's and his clients' letters, which are still being cataloged, also are part of these archives. All of this material will eventually be part of the library and study center being planned for the Scottsdale campus, where the drawings may be viewed from October to May.

After Mr. Pfeiffer's talk, we visited the Dana Gallery where over one hundred original drawings were on special display for us, including those that were restored by the Graham Foundation grant. In this same gallery is the model of Broadacre City that was constructed in the 1930's. It was explained by Cornelia Brierly who attended Taliesin while the model was being made.

To help prepare ourselves for a hearty lunch, we walked over the hills and through the valley to Taliesin, the home and studio Wright built for himself in 1911.



Taliesin from the south. Photo courtesy Hedrich-Blessing for the 1938 Forum.



In the Hillside Theatre, Architect Tom Casey addresses the first gathering of the participants.

Here we had a tour of the original drafting room, the newly dedicated Lovness suite, and of some of the apartments, including those of Mr. and Mrs. Wright. Mrs. Wright welcomed each Taliesin Day visitor in the great living room.

At lunch in the Hillside dining room we were treated as members of the Fellowship, sitting with some of the members while others served us. Coffee was served up the hill to the north at Tan-y-Deri, a four-square house built in 1907 by Mr. Wright's sister, Jane, and her husband, Andrew Porter, and now used as a residence for some of the senior staff members—including Ken and Susan Jacobs Lockhart. This house has a view over a small valley and back to Taliesin and onward to the Wisconsin river valley.

After lunch, presentations by Charles Montooth, Tom Casey, John DeKoven Hill, Cornelia Brierly, and a graphically excellent slide program by Tony Putnam were given, mostly relating to the current work and ideas of the architects. Later in the afternoon, tea and more food were served on the terrace of the theater, followed by a most entertaining musical



Architect Charles Montooth explains the Hillside drafting room roof restoration.



presentation, part of which was composed by Mrs. Wright, and a film by the BBC on the Fellowship. Charles Montooth thanked all of us and wished us well.

#### Reflections on Taliesin Day

One of first things I noticed were the name tags; of course everyone had one. What was unusual was that every tag simply listed a name—there was no differentiation between Taliesin staff members and visitors. At first I thought this might lead to some confusion as to whom to address when a question arose. Instead of confusion, it made everyone approachable; one could talk to a member of the Fellowship as easily and as openly as to one of the fellow vistiors.

I was immediately impressed by the engaging manner of the Fellowship members. They were genuinely friendly and personally welcomed us—and not as representatives of an organization programmed to be cordial for the day. This achieved the wonderful effect of eliciting from the visitors the same openness and warmth. A spirit of congeniality suffused the entire day.

Visual delights surrounded us also. Most of the day's activities took place at the Hillside buildings. It was more a matter of convenience and space than of trying to keep people from other parts of the grounds. Nearly every visitor had seen the buildings we visited in some detail in photographs. Still, with each tour conducted by the Fellowship, it became clear that the photographs are poor substitutes for the actual experience of walking through the spaces. Photographers often use a wide angle lens for these spaces, trying to capture as much as possible in one view. This is a mistake because the lens adds to the perspective so much that the walls appear to be hundreds of feet away and ceilings seem so high it's a wonder clouds don't form inside.

Prior to this visit, one visitor very familiar with Mr. Wright's buildings and with photos of his buildings remarked that her favorite place on earth was Fallingwater. It was a great joy to see the expression on her face and to witness her reaction to Taliesin, especially to the grand living room. The surprise at the difference in scale, the beauty of the day, and the warmth and excitement of the people all contributed to her unabashed delight. The seventy or eighty people in the living room at one time did not really diminish your feeling for the space. Even empty, the room retains its human quality and scale; it is nothing like being alone in an auditorium—rather, it is more like an intimate tree house if you look out the windows over the valley, or like a cozy cottage if you are near the fireplace. All the different spaces in the one room comprise a wonderful complexity which Wright buildings have that too few other architect's structures include.

It was in the living room that Mrs. Wright greeted and welcomed each visitor. At first some of the visitors had a difficult time, being drawn both to Mrs. Wright and to the room. They found refuge in the rest of the bedroom wing before coming back into the living room to look at the room again and to chat with Mrs. Wright. All of the rooms in this wing were open for view, even Mr. Wright's bedroom with its spectacular view over the valley. This room is rarely seen by visitors. The soffit height here is lower still than in the rest of Taliesin, in fact only 6'-0''. This and the room's framed view southeast over the valley make it one of the most inspiring and peaceful settings I have ever visited.

The day left no doubt. What one sees is a life surrounded by art. The Fellowship members live in beautiful sites-Taliesin and Taliesin West. They personalize their living areas with expressions of their perceptions of beauty. The arrangement and choice of foods are considered not only for their nutritional value, but also for their artistic effects: color, simplicity/ complexity, texture and their relationships to the others. The work of each Fellowship member contributes to the environment they create for their clients, resulting in an awareness of nature's beauty abstracted through the buildings and the carefully chosen and placed appointments. During some part of each day the members gather to work on choral or musical arrangements and presentations for performance at the Saturday night dinner. The guests that are invited to Taliesin are people in all fields of endeavor, who like the Fellowship, are striving toward a life of beauty for themselves and for others. What I departed with was a sense of exhilaration and awe at seeing life lived so simply and so beautifully. 

#### **Recent Publications**

#### Taliesin Directory

1932-1982-The Taliesin Fellowship: A Directory of Members is the official title of this booklet by Elizabeth Kassler, an apprentice from 1932 to 1949. The booklet contains over 600 names and short biographical entries for most, if not all, of the people who came to Taliesin to learn and work with the master architect. A short introduction is followed by a listing of apprentices in alphabetical order. These young people came from all over the world, with many talents, and many of them certainly have contributed interesting and meaningful work since their apprenticeships. The cover, by Jack Howe who has done many covers for this newsletter, is an abstraction of the two Taliesins. Dedicated "To Mrs. Wright, who made our experiences possible," the booklet is available to members and former members of the Fellowship for \$5.00 and to non-members for 10.00 by writing to E. B. Kassler, 128 Bayard Lane, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

#### Wingspread—the Building

An elegant booklet on Wingspread has just been published by the Johnson Foundation. It is a photo essay on the building, comprised of 33 photographs, five of which are in color.

The cover is a color rendering, adapted from a Wright drawing of the house as seen from the ravine. Richard Kinch, a program associate of the Foundation, wrote the informative text. It is available for \$5.00 from the Johnson Foundation, Box 547, Racine, Wisconsin 53401.

#### Hanna Honeycomb

Frank Lloyd Wright's Hanna House, by Paul R. and Jean S. Hanna. New York:

The Architectural History Foundation and Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press, 1981, 148 pp., illustrated. \$25.00 hardcover.

This is the fifth publication of the series begun in 1978 by the Architectural History Foundation. The authors did not leave all to their memories. They referred to their extensive, over 80 volumes, of documents that they have collected since 1930. The book carefully documents the events over these 50 years in not only words but also actual copies of certain documents and many photographs. These photos properly illustrate the unfinished product and show many stages of the years of construction and alteration. The drawings show clearly the changes and explain the hexagonal unit the entire house is based on. An upcoming issue will give a full review of the book.

# Queries

The stained glass of Frank Lloyd Wright is the subject of further investigation by Thomas A. Heinz. A recent grant from the National Endowment of the Arts will enable him to complete the cataloging of the glass. Mr. Heinz is seeking information and photographs of the glass that is no longer in situ, either in private or public collections. The cataloging will include windows, lamps, wall sconces, ceiling lights, and glass mosaic fireplaces. Information concerning the drawings or the location of the original drawings that depict these pieces, either by Wright's office or by the craftsmen who produced the pieces, also would be helpful. This documentation is particularly important for those buildings no longer standing. Interior photos are especially welcome. Mr. Heinz can be contacted through the Newsletter, P.O. Box 2100, Oak Park, Illinois 60303 USA, (312) 383-1310.



Living room, Taliesin-1938. Photo courtesy Hedrich-Blessing.

# Letter to the Editor

I have read with great interest Margaret William Norton's article, "Japanese Themes and the Early Work of Frank Lloyd Wright," published in the *Frank Lloyd Wright Newsletter*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1981. She has written a very good article; but I would note that the first published analysis of Japanese influence in FLW's work was by Dimitri Tselos in 1953 (written in 1951, I believe). This article by Tselos, "Exotic Influences in Frank Lloyd Wright," (*Magazine of Art*, Vol. 47, April, 1953, pp. 160-169), is still, to my way of thinking, one of the most important pieces yet published on Wright. I would appreciate it if you could bring this article to the attention of the readers of the *Newsletter*.

David Gebhard Department of Art History University of California, Santa Barbara

# Fourth Taliesin Day

March 27, 1982, is the scheduled date for the fourth "Taliesin Day" to be held at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona. For further information please contact Richard Carney, Registrar, The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, Arizona 85258. The schedule for the day has not been totally formalized but the careful evaluation of each previous event promises that this Taliesin Day will be a most worthwhile experience for all participants. One should register early. The last Taliesin Day was booked completely very quickly.



Thomas A. Heinz, Editor; Gay L. Pearson, Managing Editor.

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