

The Norcal Website Develops

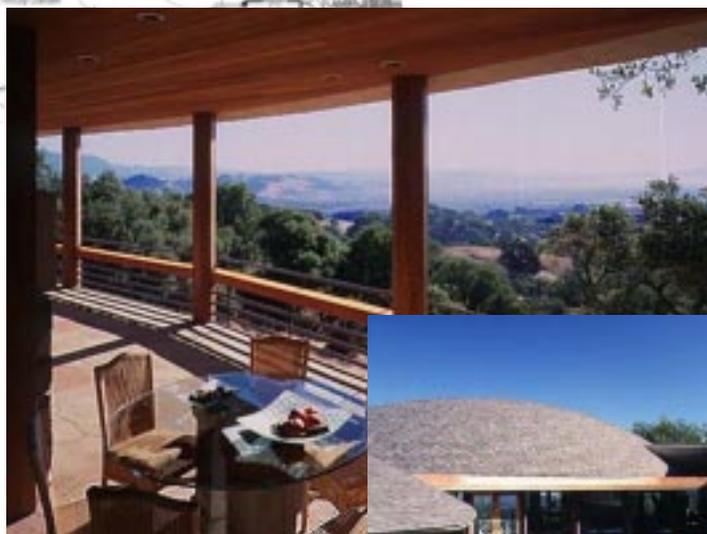
Our website project continues apace and we are looking for new material to show on the Internet. We have changed our Internet address to [WWW.MIDGLEN.COM / NCFELLOWS](http://WWW.MIDGLEN.COM/NCFELLOWS) with Midglen continuing to act as our headquarters.

We are in the process of creating links to our site through other organizations and we have been looking for a "Search" engine to bring attention to our location.

We also plan to publish our Newsletter on the Website to add to the entertainment and information value of what we can offer.

We would like to see some effort from our members in providing material for this project. Since many of our members are not on-line as yet, we print a smattering of our current materials featuring work by Fellow Richard Keding as a sample.

Keding who lives in Santa Rosa, was born and grew up in Oak Park, Illinois. He was inspired to apprenticeship with Wright through early familiarity with the houses on the streets of Oak Park. His view is that Organic Architecture is not at all related to that of the past, and is concerned not with composition but with interrelationships. It generates fluid forms and asymmetrical arrangements that create possibilities not yet fully explored in architecture.. He was apprenticed at Taliesin 1958-60; 63-70.



Fellow Richard Keding's recent creation of an elegant country house in Sonoma County, CA.

Meetings

The Northern California Fellows will hold our annual meeting at Midglen Headquarters Saturday, June 5, 1999 at 2 p.m. We'll conduct some business and we'll fire up the pizza oven for a party in celebration of the birthday of FLLW.

We have learned that the Taliesin Fellows in Los Angeles have scheduled an event for Wright's birthday at Eric Wright's Malibu place tentatively set for June 6. We will coordinate the events and change dates as necessary to enable participation at both venues.

We'll keep you informed.



FURTHERING THE PRINCIPLES OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

We've turned over the critic's corner this issue to the hand of Frank Laraway of Silverhill, Alabama, who was apprenticed to FLLW in 1958 and 1959.

Frank has contributed to several earlier issues of the Newsletter.

To the loyal friends of FLLW and Organic Architecture:

Am I alone in my very negative reaction and assessment of Ken Burn's recent TV essay on the life and work of Frank Lloyd Wright? Did anyone else notice the general import of the distortions, the half-truths and the backhanded put-down of his life and work? Does anyone dare speak out against this highly touted but misleading video essay of his life, philosophy and works?

The selections of the various periods of his life, the dreary black and white views of old work, the unfortunate old photos, TV interviews of even his aged face, gave one a most negative impression of the man himself. The obsession with his amorous affairs, marriages, divorces, his personal mistakes, his financial woes, all gave the impression that they literally dominated his life and work. Even when he was out of architectural commissions, he was designing, building, writing and doing great things while the program would lead you to believe that he was dead in the mud.

The use of all of his surviving old enemies-of-Organic-Architecture (Scully, Johnson, Gill) along with many others of the new literary/academic critics like Levine, Cronon, et al, to tell what it was all about, was like wolves in a chicken house. They went on and on about their assessments of the man and his architecture, spending many precious minutes showing us and rationalizing about The International Style of architecture, the movement so hated by Mr. Wright. This time could have been better utilized to show more contemporary pictures of his work to not only illustrate its consistent good quality but its broad scope of character. The camera reviews the same buildings over and over. The limited comments by some of his old apprentices dwelt more on his mythical character and his idiosyncrasies than on a more realistic interpretation of his life and philosophy. There were many anecdotal accounts present to the neglect of his positive ideas about beauty, Nature, Unity, Architecture and Religion. We heard nothing about the unit system of design, his ornament system, his concepts of continuity of structure, inside-to-out architecture and his theory of graphics and many more.

continued

critic's corner

So much of everyone and everything else, comparative analysis and little of the thing itself.

This type of historical and philosophical revisionism is very characteristic of the media at this time. It is a media bent on sensationalistic entertainment rather than enlightenment. Surely a man of this genius, along with his historical mentor Jefferson, do not deserve the portrait that the media, either by ignorance or intent have put upon them. If we would be the true admirers of the two greatest men of American history, we all would do well to devote more time in reading their biographies, especially their personal writings about their ideas and life. Their critics have never really appreciated their lives, indeed were always putting them down. Now they are the experts to feed the public these distortions and negative opinions.

Do not fall, without at least a critical review, for this anointed video cup of hot spit.
-- Frank Laraway

CEO Nick Muller Responds on Taliesin Alumni Association

Following our inquiry on the future role of Taliesin Fellows in an Alumni relationship with Taliesin, Nick Muller, CEO and President of the Frank Lloyd Foundation, has responded by way of answering a similar query from the Taliesin Fellows in Los Angeles.

Following the recommendations of Dick Carney, former CEO, for recognition of the Taliesin Fellows as the "official" alumni organization of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Muller has come to regard the "step as more important and well worth the energy of the Foundation". Muller contemplates establishing an "alumni office at Taliesin West charged with providing basic administrative functions, maintaining an accurate mailing list and roster, helping to work on the Newsletter and **Journal**, helping coordinate and administer the reunions, providing administrative support for the alumni board or council, and other activities as appropriate."

An alumni council would represent the views and interests of the alumni and take the lead in securing alumni support for the institution.

The Foundation would make a modest investment in this endeavor with the current organizations in California and elsewhere participating as chapters.

A meeting with Directors of the Los Angeles Fellows and CEO Muller and Bill Mimms, CEO of the Taliesin Architects was held at Taliesin West on the weekend of February 13. Bob Beharka, Northern California Fellows treasurer who also serves currently on the board of directors of both groups reports little substantial progress was made at the weekend meeting, although discussions on the possibilities of an Alumni Association as a part of the Taliesin Foundation organization were explored.

bits and pieces

by archie tekker

Closing Soon

An exhibition billed as SEEDS OF INSPIRATION, celebrating the past, present and future of Northern California Organic Art and Architecture continues through February 27 at the Canessa Gallery, 708 Montgomery Street, San Francisco.

Architects and artists include a number of former Taliesin apprentices including Arthur Dyson, Barry Peterson, Daniel Lieberman, Ling Po, Lee Ward and Charles Sholten some of whom are members of the Northern California Taliesin Fellows. Work by Jack Hillmer and Warren Callister is also on display. Crafts in lighting, stained and leaded glass, photography, and original designs by Mickey

Muenning and other followers of Architect Bruce Goff are featured.

Looks like we missed out on this one — perhaps it's more Goffish than Wrightish.

The Hanna House Restoration

The Sunday Chronicle entertainment section recently reported that the Hanna House in Palo Alto will be open for public tours beginning in April, 1999. Let us test their mettle and plan a meeting of the Fellows sometime after the opening.

—Don Palmer

We'll check it out and pass the word.

Taliesin Fellows and CMU to Stage FLLW Pittsburgh Event

Titled “**When Past is Future: Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin Legacy Continues....**” a joint effort by Taliesin Fellows, Architrave, a charitable foundation of AIA Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation will sponsor a symposium June 23-27 in Pittsburgh, PA.

Students in architecture at Carnegie-Mellon University and the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture will present an exhibition of the culmination of a semester of work studying organic architecture under the leadership of Professor Kai Gutschow of CMU. Their work will be exhibited at the AIA galleries in Pittsburgh. The work of FLLW will be exhibited at the Heinz Architectural Center in the Carnegie Museum of Art.

The first day of the five-day event, Wednesday, June 23, will feature the Pittsburgh work of Peter Berndtson and Cornelia Brierly, early Wright apprentices, and tours of Pittsburgh architectural historical sites.

The second day schedules panel discussions with William E. Mimms, CEO, Taliesin Architects, Aaron G. Green, Tom Olson, Heloise Crista and Arnold Roy, and a talk by Anthony Putnam, Vice President, Taliesin Architects.

The third day’s highlights will include a cocktail reception and dinner at the Heinz Architectural Center with an address by Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, Director of The Frank Lloyd Wright Archives, on **Olgivanna Lloyd Wright: her life, her words, her works.**

The fourth day’s session lists an address by Tobias Guggenheimer, Architect & Adjunct Professor at Pratt Institute on **Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin Architectural Legacy** followed by a talk by Kai Gutschow, Architect

& Professor, Carnegie Mellon University, on the topic “**Apprenticeship to Accreditation, The FLLW School of Architecture and Carnegie Mellon University.** The afternoon schedule will feature a FLLW Film Festival and exhibits of apprentice architecture, work by Val M. Cox, Heloise Crista, and Susan Jacobs Lockhart, at various venues in the city. There is also scheduled an open house and reception at the home and studio of Taliesin Fellow Gerald Lee Morosco who maintains his office in Pittsburgh.

The fifth day provides time for optional tours to Fallingwater, Kentuck Knob and Bernston’s Giles Residence.

Fellows and members desiring to participate or attend the symposium can obtain further details from Fellow Jerry Morosco at glm@sgi.net or phone 412-431-4347, 50 South 15th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 14203.

Ken Burns - FLLW

Ken Burns’ three-hour film “**America’s Greatest Architect, Frank Lloyd Wright**” shown nationally on PBS last November 10 and 11 has fallen short of its promise according to reports from a number of our fellow members.

Most comments separated the two parts of the film with great disappointment in the first part where much important work in the early career of FLLW was skipped over lightly or not even mentioned all in deference to the “steamy” side of events dealing with family and love affairs.

The second part, following the marriage of Olgivanna to Wright, gave much more attention to the creative work from 1936 onward after the sensational success of the Falling Water design.

Another bitter comment derided the selection of some of Wright’s “worst” enemies as interpreters and commentators on the achievements of the Master Architect, such as Philip Johnson and Vincent Scully.

For more incisive opinion, see Critic’s Corner, page 2