

the living legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright

**TALIESIN
FELLOWS**

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 15, APRIL 2004

Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Names Interim CEO/President

During its semi-annual meeting Sunday, April 18, in Scottsdale, AZ., the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Board of Trustees named Robert Glenn Harr interim CEO and President of the Foundation. Harr replaces James E. Goulka who held the position since 2002.

The Board also named Vernon Swaback as its new chairman, replacing Gary Herberger, of Paradise Valley, AZ., who retired after having served nine years on the board, the last two as chairman. Both Swaback and Herberger have the distinction of having served as apprentices to Wright.

Harr brings to the position extensive executive experience as well as a long association with the Foundation. More than 20 years ago Harr, as president and CEO of Heather Hill Hospital Health and Care Center in Ohio, began working with Taliesin Architects and Foundation staff to develop innovative facilities for post-acute care programs at the Heather Hill site. Harr was named to the Foundation Board of Trustees in 2002. Harr earned his Master's and Bachelor's degrees from Pennsylvania State University.

Swaback heads Swaback Partners, a Scottsdale-based multidisciplinary firm of architects, planners, landscape architects, and interior designers. He serves on the boards of the Foundation and Taliesin Preservation Inc. and has authored many publications, most recently, *The Creative Community: Designing for Life*.

In naming Harr interim CEO and President, Swaback said, "We are pleased that someone of Bob's caliber is able to accept this position. He has consistently demonstrated comprehensive leadership in a non-profit organization. His creativity and innovation have yielded significant results including raising more than \$35 million for research, program development and capital campaigns in his previous positions." Plans for initiating a search for a new CEO are pending.

Wright established the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation in 1940 to be the repository of his life's work. A non-profit 501 (3) corporation, the Foundation maintains its international headquarters at Taliesin West. The Foundation owns two of Wright's greatest masterpieces Taliesin (Wisconsin) and Taliesin West; and the vast Frank Lloyd Wright Archives housed at Taliesin West. It also operates an accredited architectural school, the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture with campuses at Taliesin West and Taliesin. The Foundation's mission is to preserve and enhance the contributions and ideas of Wright and provide opportunities for people throughout the world to learn about Wright's contributions to architecture.

Day and Night . . . A New Bronze by Heloise Crista



Heloise Crista, Taliesin staff and resident sculptor, has named her latest creation "Day and Night". The new work is executed in cobalt bronze; the figure is 18" in height.

Crista, who joined the Taliesin Fellowship in 1949, commented on the metaphysical nature of this work: the form, from the front, represents the face we show to the world — *day* — and when viewed from the back we sense the deeper, real nature of our being, that which is not easily seen by the outside — *night*.

This piece is the latest in many sculptures that Crista has created in her long tenure at Taliesin. These include her famous bust of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Day and Night is currently on display in the Music Pavilion Court at Taliesin West.



Editor

Re: Stricker in TFN #13 and #14

Milton Stricker's essay **A Return To Organic Architecture, Part One- Assessing Current Dilemmas** (TFN Oct 03) effectively sounds the alarm on Postmodernism and International Eclecticism. We hear Kipling's take on the Tower of Babel, E.O. Wilson's call for Enlightenment thinking, Postmodernism defined, its beginnings traced, then identification of the dilemmas it produced: The existence of truth denied wherewith "the spirit of architecture disappears" and we are asked, "How can the organic ideal survive?" Wreckage architecture by Gehry and the same by Tornado is pictured side by side as Stricker specifies, "The biggest problem with today's architecture . . . is a lack of ideology; a want of reason."

Yes, but truth denied remains truth and permanently accessible to any seeker. The spirit—the reality—of architecture can't disappear unless we turn away from it or allow distraction. "Reality is spirit," Mr. Wright said, and this spirit reappears when steadfastly pursued. The organic ideal will survive because it is intrinsic to nature, is an absolute that exists independently, akin to the life principle and not to popular thought.

I realized from this treatise that cold, inhuman mockery of architecture and the philosophical poison that produces such, needs to be called the manifestation of evil that it is. I am not an architect, but as an artist I've felt this affliction throughout American culture for some time. Evil though is ultimately boring mentally empty, spiritually empty—a phenomenon, that, as Stricker indicates, can only destroy itself. The danger is hypnotic aggravation, not "that calamitous building." But knowing the leading error is mesmerism and turning away to genuine organic architecture restores freedom because hypnotism has in reality no substance, is only relative to the human notion—

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FURTHERING THE PRINCIPLES OF FRANK LOYD WRIGHT

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E-mail: newsletter@midglen.com
650.369.0416 Fax 369.0417
Website: www.midglen.com/taliesinfellows

Editor: William Arthur Patrick

Contributing correspondents: Richard Keding,
Frank Laraway, Earl Nisbet, Barry Peterson, Milton Stricker,
Myron Marty

*The opinions and articles appearing in the Newsletter
do not necessarily reflect the policy or statements
of the Fellows Board of Directors or the
Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation.*



Bill Patrick

With this issue of the Newsletter we will conclude our editorship.

The effort first began as a newsletter which we published for the members of the Northern California Taliesin Fellows. This grew to become the official newsletter for all of the Taliesin Fellows and members at the behest of former president, Larry Brink. With this issue, Number 15, we have managed to produce a quarterly publication for nearly four years. It was intended to cover the work of former apprentices as well as news of the happenings at Taliesin.

We ran several series in the cause of Organic Architecture, notably conceived and presented by former apprentice Milton Stricker of Seattle. Our range ran the gamut of humorous Taliesin remembrances by Earl Nisbet and controversial pieces by Richard Keding and Frank Laraway, all former apprentices to Wright.

Indira Berndston of Taliesin has been a reliable supporter of our efforts and led us to stories on the work of the Fellowship at Taliesin. While we were never able to publish any of the work of the Taliesin Architects, we asked for their contribution as we regarded them as member Fellows of Taliesin.

Despite numerous entreaties, we have failed to elicit real support from the Fellows Board of Directors for news and features which left newsgathering and most writing the editor's task. What was conceived as a participating endeavor has become practically a one-man job. With thanks to all who have assisted in this work and with continuing dedication to the future of Organic Architecture, we say so long. . . .

Taliesin 1948-49

Photo credits:

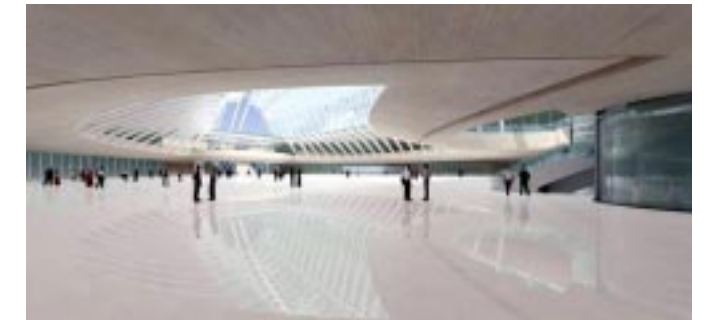
page 1: courtesy of Heloise Crista and the Whirling Arrow
© Frank Lloyd Foundation
page 3: © Santiago Calatrava
pages 4-8: Arthur Kimbal Thompson
page 10: © Frank Lloyd Foundation
page 12: "Watering Hole"-- Whirling Arrow, © FLLW Foundation

Although we have expressed some doubts about Santiago Calatrava's kinetic architectural antics, a recent description and talk on Char'ie Rose (PBS) on the design for the transit station at the World Trade Center, has given us pause to re-think his philosophy.

This design places him solidly on the organic track. It is magnificent in concept and will actually be built. Some of the structural elements are reminiscent of the Milwaukee museum, particularly in the sensual structural columns that support enormous spans and decks as the building rises from the trains upward through several open mezzanine levels to a soaring glass canopy that opens in relation to the sun's track on the day of September 11, and forms spectacular cantilever glazed cross arms. Earlier we found some disappointment with the Milwaukee Museum project in which the innovation of moving elements made a stretch for legitimacy though adding excitement and novelty to the architecture.



Calatrava expressed in the Rose interview the metaphysical nature of inspired architecture in which the form develops from the concept of the purpose of the space. Like Wright, he recalled the Gothic cathedrals as organic as they reached higher and higher to acknowledge and honor the dedication of its users to their deity, empirically creating beautiful structure through ongoing failures in engineering; and theirs was original, not copying the Romans who copied the Greeks before them. In the design for the Trade Center station, the competence of Calatrava's engineering acumen enables form expressing the metaphysical quality inferred in the memory of the horrifying events of September 11 to be experienced daily by the thousands of travelers who will emerge or descend through the levels of the space. It will be a cathedral for daily inspiration in the workaday world of Manhattan.



Calatrava has completed two other projects in the United States, the Milwaukee museum and a pedestrian bridge in northern California which many local residents have failed to see as practical or grasp any sense of the symbolism the designer intended to impart. He is working on a design for an opera/concert hall for Atlanta as well. A stunning video rendition of the trade center project can be seen on the internet, a state of the art demonstration of computer rendering: www.calatrava.com. Spanish born, Calatrava has maintained an office in Switzerland and has lived in Paris; he resides with his family in New York at present.

. . . letters continued

media and political pronouncements notwithstanding. The question is what are we aligned with and magnifying in our individual work?

In Part Two- **Conclusion** (TFN. Jan. '04) Stricker pulls the new integrity out of the fire in three steps. One: re-establish the basic principle that the natural organic process is timeless" because "international roots remain as the prevailing force within the establishment... depriving America of its indigenous democratic architecture." Two: "Architecture is an art and must remain free of artistic conformity and unwarranted documentation" because, in part, "Technology is more powerful than nature; it dehumanizes, alienates, and separates." The final step: Support the FLLW School of Architecture.

Bravo, but One— Wright proved through his buildings that the establishment is not where the action is. Here, gratitude helps. That America has Frank Lloyd Wright at all is a glory indeed. Two- Mumford's efforts to humanize teahnolgy for

the common good adds up; but in perspective we know technology is essentially dependent on electricity which is "the sharp surplus of matter" according to Einstein, and we have it on good authority [Wright] that reality is spirit—the opposite of matter. So, not technology, but nature—the manifestation of the Great Spirit—is where power really is.

I appreciate Stricker's explanation of the current architectural system and am convinced that principle will prevail. Reconciliation of the natural, human, and technological will come in rendering unto the machine what is the machine's and unto nature what is nature's. For over twenty-five years I have lived contentedly with no car, television, or computer, connected, by choice, more to the earth and less to the technological world.

While in some basic respects most women could rage at Mr. Wright's "right ordering of human life," nobody said

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In Passing . . .

ROBERT GREEN
1935 - 2003

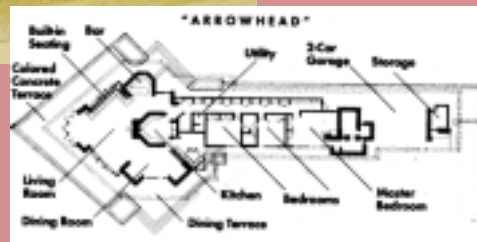


Robert Green, born in Savannah, Georgia in 1935 and apprenticed at Taliesin in 1958-59, died in Atlanta September 17, 2003.

Green became a student of organic architecture following his early enrollment at Georgia Tech when he first learned of the work of Wright. After service in the Marine Corps he applied to become a Taliesin apprentice at 23, and related in an article recalling his study with Wright, his first encounter when he greeted the Master: "Mr. Wright, I'm Robert Green and I have come study with you". His directness won the day and though warned he would live in a tent in the desert, Green enthusiastically became an apprentice.



Green's perspective of his Nicoll house, Atlanta
At right: plan and photo of Arrowhead House, Amberwood, Atlanta



Provided with a tent, cot, air mattress and sleeping bag Green elected to forego tent-making or build a shelter in favor of "spending time where it mattered", Green said.

After Wright's death Green established himself in Atlanta and designed following Wrightian principles, residences, churches, apartments, and commercial buildings in the Atlanta area.

His work reflects close adherence to the forms and materials of the Wright legacy and Green's sudden demise from an aneurism cut short his career in bringing Organic Architecture to Georgia.



Sunset Beach Residence (2004)

Schematic rendering of 4000 s.f. home for a family of four located on the north shore of Oahu. The plan is based on a 4 foot grid module. The beachfront elevations open to lanai areas at each level providing natural ventilation both horizontally and vertically. Floors and decks are of sandstone flagging, stained concrete and tropic hardwoods. Exterior walls are of layered coral and plaster.

The Architecture of Arthur Kimbal Thompson

Arthur Kimbal Thompson grew up in Indiana and after exposure to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright — his mother once lived as a neighbor to the Dana House in Springfield, one of Wright's most famous early designs — a visit to the Guggenheim museum in New York in 1958 while it was under construction, reinforced his own goal of becoming an architect.

The Indianapolis 500 race events raised his interest in race cars and automobile design, and under his birth sign of Pisces, he also became a competitive swimmer and scuba diver. Jacques Cousteau became a role model early in his youth, but following high school his appraisal of architectural schools concluded they offered no real enticement for a career in architecture.

After experience in Chapman College's University of the Seven Seas where he studied oceanography as well as exposure to Grand Prix racing in Europe, Thompson visited Taliesin West while on a summer excursion in California. What began as a tour progressed into a discussion with a Taliesin staff architect, and an appointment for an interview with Wright. Later he apprenticed at Taliesin in 1967 - 1968.

He worked on the early revision for the Nakama Country Club project, an updated proposal for the Monona Terrace in Madison, and studies for the islands of Minoa and Kish in Iran while he was at Taliesin. Following his apprenticeship, Thompson moved to Hawaii and graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1972. Graduate school, sailing, Polynesian

history and travel along with "apprenticing" with several architects in Hawaii led to establishment of his own practice in 1978 in Hawaii. Thompson maintains his practice in Kaneohe. His family includes his wife Nicki Ann and son Taylor.

Thompson is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Taliesin Fellows.



Kimbal Thompson (Hong Kong airport site)

. . . letters continued

discovering and establishing organic architecture would be easy or without human abuse; yet step by step we see the steady gain of a great cause as the pioneering goes ever forward.

Deirdre Treacy Babcock, Taliesin 1958-59
Santa Monica, CA

(The following was received after the Foundation's ousting of Jim Goulka as CEO/President of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation on April 18)

Editor:

In considering the various attitudes within the Foundation, if it is not already too late, it needs to be advocated for those on the Board and in the Fellowship to universalize their considerations to the entire extended Fellows community that remains actively interested, to define a positive course for the future of one and all.

My plea . . . from our organization is for something to (this) point. The apparent short-sightedness of all of this is amazing; it appears that no one (or group) has ever previously developed any overall plan . Probably too many architects involved!

Anyway, (these are) only my thoughts on the situation. . . .

Arthur Kimbal Thompson, Taliesin 1967-68
Oahu, Hawaii

Editor:

Just received the latest newsletter (#14, Jan 2004) Great job—best ever.

The Laraway item is sensational. Finally, justice triumphs. That sordid matter will (find) closure when the grave robbers disclose the location of the ashes.

Your layout on my essay "A Return to Organic Architecture " is also excellent.

Milton Stricker, Taliesin 1951
Seattle



Honolulu Clinic Interior (1987) 135,000 sq. ft.
 This urban Honolulu Clinic is located near historic Thomas Square, the Honolulu Academy of Art and other historically significant church and school buildings. Stone paving continues from exterior inward throughout the lobby and ancillary areas and materials including custom carpeting, furnishings and artwork integrated into architecture. This is a full service regional clinic with emergency room, medical laboratory, radiology, physical therapy and optical department.



Kailua, Oahu Clinic (1990) 7,500 s.f.
 Design reflects triangular geometry of nature, as well as colors and spirit of this beachfront community backed by the Koolau mountain range in windward Oahu. Materials include sandstone floor paving laid on the triangular unit system of the building. This is a full service regional clinic.



Waialae Residence (1987)
 Concrete, steel and glass residence is accessed by cul-de-sac and opens to Waialae golf course and ocean views beyond. Horizontal and vertical design grid is based on the Tatami. The home was designed to suit the needs of everyday family life and also be adaptable to entertaining larger gatherings island style. The exterior glass wall facing the golf course retracts into a solid pocket and a lap pool acts as a safety barrier overlooking the golf course and ocean view beyond.



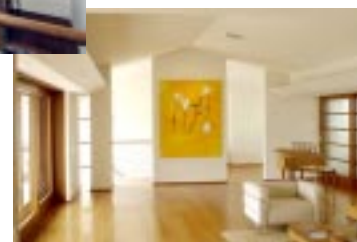
Kailua-Kona Clinic (1986) 10,000 sq. ft.
 While contemporary, internal corridor to ancillary services Lab, Pharmacy, Optical, etc. emulated scale of Kona exam rooms, waiting areas, with patient areas having exterior vistas and design linking Hawaiian healing with modern Kona fitness events. This is a full service regional clinic.



The living room converts to informal cinema theatre for screenings following a luau. Cylindrical kitchen at front of house opens to bar and serving area. North facing clerestory lights provide individual daylighting to all bedrooms. The Master suite contains a "secret" stair to a loft study that overlooks the view.



Diamond Head Residence, (2000)
 This is an extensive remodel including substantial additions for a coastal residence located on the lower slope of Diamond Head on Oahu. The residence is two levels, including a new two-vehicle garage carved out from under the existing structure and entry foyer on the lower level. The 3000 sq. ft. main floor level includes a unique translucent roofed studio and dining rooms, kitchen, living room, master suite and library/guest suite opening onto exterior lanai areas and overlooking the Pacific Ocean.



Primary structural materials are concrete, concrete masonry, steel and wood composite construction. The main floor is medium toned hard wood with off-white imperial plaster walls and ceiling. The exterior is a combination of wood, plaster, glass and wood shake roofing with wood-capped stainless steel railings and limestone lanai paving. Frameless glass occurs floor to ceiling and wraps corners. Hardwood framed sliding doors occur as infill to these glass walls and disappear into solid pockets.

Puapuanini Residence (1989) 4200 sq.
 Located in a well established Oahu neighborhood, this home was designed to maximize existing views while preserving neighborhood character, existing neighbors' view channels, retain existing trees, maximize shading and ventilation and provide continuity with neighboring landscape elements. The combination of wall construction, broad eaves, second story exterior wall setbacks, disappearing glass pocket doors, and operable skylights work to provide cooling and natural ventilation. The 1400 s.f. carriage structure contains a three-car garage with recreation room with the main house above. The siting works effectively as a wind shadow for the flagstone paved entry court while maximizing views of Diamond Head and the mountains beyond. The three-level residence overlooks a tropical lagoon swimming pool, koi pond, spa gazebo and ocean view.

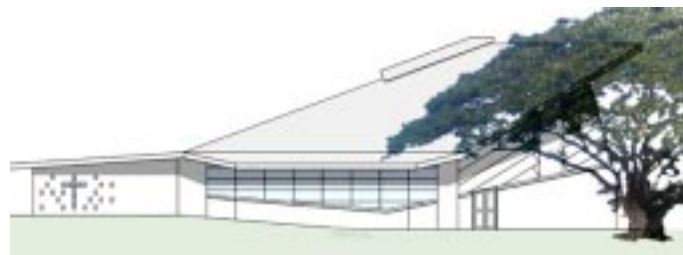
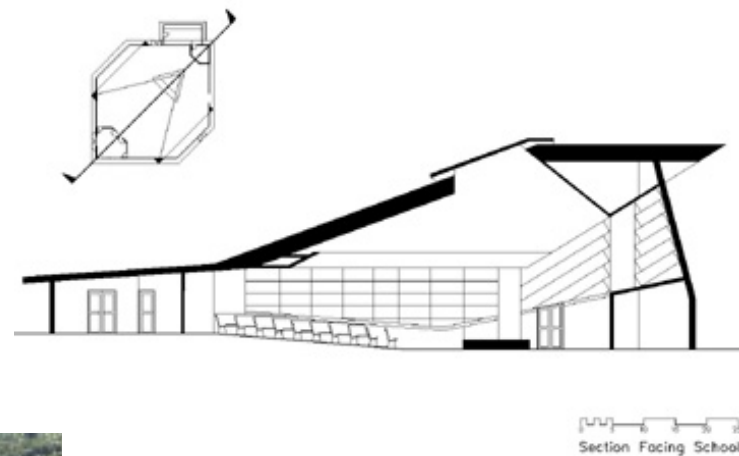




by Jim Goulka, Ceo/ President
Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

Kailua Beach Park Canoe Halau (2001)

Beachfront facility to store 36 Hawaiian racing canoes for various windward Oahu canoe clubs. Materials include stone flagging decking, exposed coral aggregate concrete, wood, and clay roof tiles and coated metal grille work all designed to perform well at this beachfront location. The design consists of two smaller buildings each accommodating 18 canoes and connected by a wood trellised Lanai area utilized for rigging the canoes. The resultant halau appears smaller and well suited to the site. Similar park pavilion structures are sited within the adjacent Beach Park.



Windward Church (2003-04)

Exterior elevation, computer model and section of church in design development for windward Oahu. This 5,000 sq. ft Main Sanctuary building is sited on a 2.26 acre site abutting Kawainui Marsh on windward Oahu. The building will share the site with an existing meeting room and pre-school campus. Siting is such to overlook the marsh, town of Kailua and ocean beyond and allow for natural cooling and daylighting. Acoustics accommodating the church choir, bell choir and other instrumental performances is paramount in the design.

Learning by doing is a phrase that connotes different things to different people. For those lucky enough to have worked with Mr. Wright, it meant working on his projects directly or through his senior apprentices. Long hours on his projects sometimes revising, sometimes stumbling, sometimes getting it right the first time, were the essence of learning architecture. Those who came afterward had different experiences as multiple architects led projects. The experience varied as the architects varied. Some architects employed armies of apprentices others just a few. As in all things artistic, each master has his own view and his own methods of imparting knowledge.

For many years, there was ample work in the Taliesin studios to keep the apprentices busy learning by doing. In recent years, though, as the work flow ebbed at the same time as professional and accrediting standards became more explicit, new pressures—in effect, new masters—arose, creating serious conflicts on the use of apprentice time.

To ensure that learning by doing—the most central concept in our education program—remains at the core of the program, but is expressed in contemporary terms, the School has refined the means to make it happen. The principles are unchanged:

- 1) Each architect resident at Taliesin or Taliesin West continues to engage apprentices to work on their projects according to the way the individual architect chooses to work. One, for example, wants apprentices with specific skills to work on specific projects. Another, by contrast, likes working with apprentices regardless of skill levels. Others have not used apprentices much at all for a number of years. It is not appropriate for the School to dictate to the architects as to how they practice.
- 2) The obligation of the School to the apprentices is to provide learning by doing opportunities that meet their educational needs. This means matching the apprentice with the architectural opportunity.

The change here is the overtness of the matching process.

With the slowdown of work among the resident architects over the last 5 years it is obvious that additional opportunities have to become necessary if the School is to deliver on its obligation. To address this, the School has created a new program, called Apprenticing Away, which enables advanced apprentices to work full time learning by doing in studios away from Taliesin. The School, the apprentice and a willing firm together design a specific internship that works for the apprentice and for the firm.

We already have two opportunities. Don Fairweather has embraced the program to bring an apprentice to his firm. Another apprentice is going to a firm in Australia.

Ideally, on a continuing basis, the School would like to have six to eight Apprenticing Away opportunities for advanced apprentices. I can think of no more effective way for alumni fellows to contribute to the continuation of the learning by doing idea or of ensuring the legacy of Mr. Wright's ideas than to create an opportunity to share his/her own practice with a learning apprentice. Please let me or anyone in the School know if you would like to be part of this exciting program.

Editor's note: Goulka's Update was filed before the action of the Foundation. We reprint the news report of Kate Nolan of the Arizona Republic to further illuminate the CEO hassle.

Wright Foundation Ousts President; Both Sides Mum

by Kate Nolan
Apr. 21, 2004

The executive hired to invigorate and professionalize the foundation dedicated to preserving the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright has been ousted.

President and Chief Executive Officer James Goulka, 56, failed to survive a vote by the foundation's board during a semiannual meeting Sunday at Wright's winter home, Taliesin West, which serves as the group's headquarters in Scottsdale.

Goulka, a former bank executive and head of Encyclopedia Britannica, had moved aggressively to raise the profile of Taliesin and improve its finances, proposing new belt-tightening measures.

Hired in 2002, Goulka was credited with securing a half-million-dollar grant from Scottsdale to open a downtown museum and renovate Frank Lloyd Wright's living quarters at the Taliesin campus, which also houses the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture.

Board members and Goulka said they are unwilling to discuss his departure until details are concluded.

The foundation controls the legacy of the famous architect, including campuses in Arizona and Wisconsin, an architecture school, a design center and his art and design collections.

Robert Glenn Harr, an Ohio health care executive, will serve as interim president and CEO of the foundation. Harr joined the board in 2002.

Philanthropist Gary Herberger also resigned after nine years on the board, the last two as chairman. He is president of Herberger Enterprises, a development company.

Architect Vern Swaback has been named board chairman.

Goulka hired a new assistant dean, James Scalise, at the school, and merchandising expert Betsy Lynn was brought on to explore marketing opportunities.

Staff members at the Scottsdale architecture center shrugged off the developments.

Joan Brookings, director of environmental studies, said, "I predict a harmonious change. Nothing surprises me here. Change happens."

Wes Peters' Morvarid (Pearl) Palace formerly belonging to the sister of deposed Shah Pahlavi of Iran has popped into prominence in Iran in recent months as being recognized as an important monument following the organic principles of Frank Lloyd Wright deserving of restoration. It has been deteriorating over the years and reportedly has been used as a storage facility.

While we have been unable to update the current status of this design masterpiece, its refurbishment to grandeur is a tantalizing prospect. There appears to be resurrected interest in the pre-Islamic buildings of Wright's successors the Taliesin Architects, headed by Peters who was Wright's son-in-law.



An Iranian Treasure



The Morvarid palace was constructed on a large site overlooking sloping hills adjacent to a small artificial lake near Teheran less than ten years before the Islamic revolution. Thomas Casey, a senior Fellow at Taliesin and one of the surviving architects of the time, served as engineer for the project. Casey and his wife lived in Iran many years representing the Frank Lloyd Foundation across the Middle East.

The design of the Pearl Palace has been cited as reminiscent of Wright's Greek Orthodox Church in Milwaukee, and of the Marin Government Center. The diversity of the interior design, its raw materials, decorations, sculpture and paintings, along with the proportions of the space recall Wright's completeness of design.

Because of neglect over some thirty years since its completion, deterioration of the Plexiglas domes have led to major erosion of the concrete structure. However, upon restoration the building can be used as one of the nation's most valuable contemporary architectural and artistic treasures as reported in the Iranian press. The gardens surrounding the former palace and the adjacent lake have been used as a recreation center by students under the sponsorship of the Basij Militia, which took over the building in recent years.

In a video interview in January 1991, Peters related the story of his visit to Iran with former apprentice Nezam Amery and the subsequent development of a design for the palace for Princess Shams, the Shah's sister. Peters described his relationship to the Princess and commented on her sense of grasping the philosophy of Wright. He presented a basic design made up of two intersecting domes with a series of other buildings clustered to form an enclosed space of nearly 50,000 square feet. A long rising spiral ramp culminated in the Princess's bedroom with a spiral ziggurat.

"Before she told us about what she wanted she sent me to see some of the historic spots (of Iran)," Peters said. "Nezam Amery and I went down to see Persepolis and Isfahan and a number of other beautiful sites and cities in Iran. I was very much impressed by the great tradition there."



"If you want to build a dome — I don't usually like most domes because they're enclosed," the Princess explained. "If I have a dome I want to have a dome that's floating and has spaciousness and light." "We made a model of the building," Peters related, and said the Princess was "absolutely taken up with (it)." When they had presented marketplace furnishings they thought appropriate, the Princess decided that everything should be specially designed for her, and with John Hill's participation, chairs and other furniture pieces including even a design for an eight-foot diameter bed. She chose a special design by Hill for a gold bedspread that was the most costly furnishing — this came to \$25,000.

The total cost for the entire project came to about 3.5 million dollars. Peters recalled the initial presentation and the effect it had on the Princess. Suddenly she burst into tears and left the room. When she returned she explained that the drawings depicted the palace she dreamed of as a small girl, and she was overcome with emotion. Following the revolution in 1978, Princess Shams moved to the United States.

Other Taliesin principals contributed to the design and construction of the Pearl Palace including Stephen and Frances Nemtin, and Cornelia Brierly.

Indira Berndston, who conducts the oral history project for Taliesin Archives, and Frances Nemtin contributed to this report. The complete Wes Peters' video interview is in the Archives at Taliesin.



noteworthy books

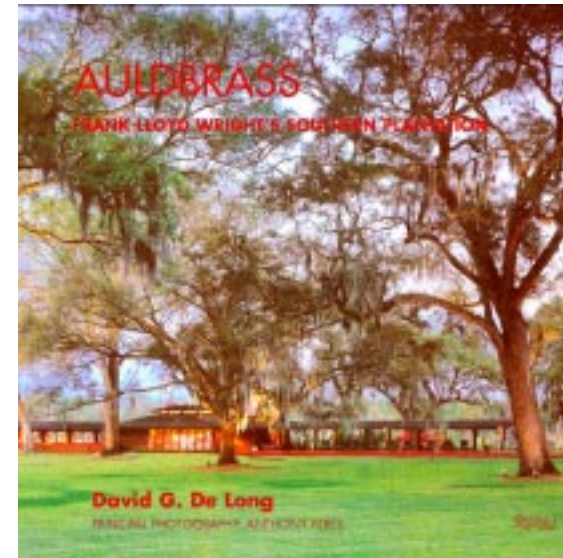
Reviews by Myron Marty

Auldbrass: Frank Lloyd Wright's Southern Plantation, by David G. De Long. Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. 260 pages / 141 color and 62 black and white illustrations, \$45 US, \$70 Canadian.

Spend a few moments with *Auldbrass* and you will see that it is much more than a lavishly illustrated Frank Lloyd Wright picture book. The fifteen pages preceding the title page, each filled with a 10" x 10" picture, assure readers that *Auldbrass* is place worthy of study.

In the introduction, architectural historian David G. De Long compels one to read on, as he outlines the book's essential themes: why this commission proved so long and difficult; how Wright's "unusual design proved resistant to familiar conventions of building, confounding local builders and adding immeasurably to costs," and how, under Eric Lloyd Wright's extraordinarily sensitive guidance, *Auldbrass* was rescued from decay and ruin and set on the road to grandeur.

De Long also pays tribute to the many men and women whose assistance made the book possible, most importantly Jessica Stevens Loring, whose father had engaged Wright to design this Southern plantation, and Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., who brought *Auldbrass* to De Long's attention and opened doors there for him. Heightening one's anticipation for what is to follow is a short piece by film producer Joel Silver, who has been restoring *Auldbrass* since acquiring it in 1987.



Auldbrass is a collection of insights and discoveries, based on exhaustive research and woven deftly into engaging stories about two exceptional men, Frank Lloyd Wright and C. Leigh Stevens. The stories revolve around the changing circumstances that produced one of Wright's most distinctive designs. One set of circumstances involved Stevens' multiple changes of wives, who brought different tastes and commitments to *Auldbrass*. World War II provided another set, as Stevens' volunteer service as an industrial consultant interrupted his involvement in the design and construction process. Wright's diminished cadre of apprentices during the war and shortages of construction materials caused problems for him.

De Long is particularly good at explicating the "angled geometries" in Wright's *Auldbrass* drawings. He cites as precursors to the design the hexagonal grids used in several of Wright's 1920's projects, and more immediately in the Hanna House in Palo Alto, California (1935-1937). He rightly attributes the inspiration for the honeycomb system to work done by Cornelia Brierly, who is yet today a senior member of the Taliesin Fellowship. De Long remarks that Wright's buildings could have been more simply designed, but "reductive simplicity was never Wright's objective."

The first drawings for *Auldbrass* were produced in 1939, and construction began in September 1940. It continued off and on, even after the deaths of the architect in 1959 and the owner in 1962. That it took so long is not surprising, for

Auldbrass is not simply a building, but rather a complex complex of buildings, as the beautiful pictures in this book attest.

Persons familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright's penchants will nod knowingly at some of the circumstances De Long recounts. He sparred with Stevens, for example, over his desire to use canvas flaps with wood stretchers instead of conventional glass and wood-framed doors; he lost. Experienced apprentices were not sufficiently available to supervise construction, although Curtis Besinger, Jack Howe, and Wes Peters provided competent assistance; Peter Berndtson was the principal on-site supervisor.

Readers of this Newsletter may know that Joel Silver engaged Eric Lloyd Wright as the restoration architect when he bought the Storer house in Los Angeles, so it was natural for him to call on him again when he acquired *Auldbrass*. Eric says that he welcomed the colossal task of rescuing this masterpiece and that making it livable once again, and attractive, too, was a richly rewarding experience.

As for the architect who designed *Auldbrass*, De Long writes: "Like so much of his work, his concept embodies unique qualities of the sort that distinguish his career, qualities intrinsically tied to, and in part derived from, the particular site. And also like so much of his work, the realization of the concept would show him willing to compromise on some aspects, but clear in his determination to preserve the essential qualities of its design."

Note: When possible, as in this and the two previous issues, we review recently published books. Sometimes we will turn to less-recent books that warrant attention. Readers' suggestions are invited.

Taliesin Fellows Elect Morosco, Berndston to Board

Gerald Lee Morosco, former 80's apprentice and vice president of the Taliesin Fellows, was elected president of the board at its February meeting. He succeeds Larry Brink of Michigan who has held the post for four years.



Morosco has served on the board for the past six years and was organizing host for a highly praised symposium of Wright's work in Pittsburgh, PA in June of 1999 which featured exhibits of student work of the FLLSWA and from Carnegie-Mellon University, as well as lectures by former apprentices, historians, and others.

Morosco maintains an architectural practice in Pittsburgh and is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Frank Lloyd Foundation and also serves on the Taliesin Preservation Board, Inc.

Indira Berndston, currently Administrator of Historic Studies for the Frank Lloyd Wright Archives, was elected to the Board of Directors for a three year term.

Berndston has been affiliated with Taliesin from her early years as her parents, Cornelia Brierty and Peter Berndston were apprentices of Wright before beginning their own architectural practice in Pennsylvania. As head of Historic Studies at the Foundation she has conducted interviews with former apprentices and others who were in contact with Wright, and has gathered more than 1400 hours of recollections both on video and oral interviews. The oral history project is an ongoing endeavor, which Berndston heads.



She assists researchers from all over the world through correspondence and in person relative to the life and work of Frank Lloyd Wright and Taliesin. As a member of the Oral History Association she has been awarded the James V. Mlnk Award for excellence in oral history.

In 2001 she became a trustee of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation and has been on staff since 1967, serving as secretary to William Wesley Peters and Iovanna Lloyd Wright as well as assistant to the Director of the Taliesin Archives, Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer.

Taliesin 'Watering Hole' Burns

The Post House restaurant and its Flying Dutchman bar have been destroyed by fire of unknown origin, as reported in the Madison Times April 4.

The Post House on Jefferson Street in Spring Green was the longest running restaurant in the state and was a favorite hangout for Taliesin apprentices in years gone by. Wes Peters of Taliesin designed the bar, which also featured a mural by Gene Masselink, Wright's life-long secretary and an accomplished designer in his own right.

Early reports indicate that the mural may have escaped destruction as a wall fell over it and, though damaged, there is the prospect of salvage and future restoration by Taliesin personnel.

LATEST NEWS!
The mural escaped with some damage and has been brought to Midway at Taliesin for some future restoration.



As reported in the Taliesin *Whirling Arrow*, Jaime Kimber of Taliesin commented on the devastation of this favorite place. "On the way back to Taliesin" from viewing the site, she wrote, "I thought of all the wonderful winter evenings we've been able to share there, and the special occasions with friends in the garden. . . We have offered our help in rescuing Gene's mural... If there is a chance of saving it we will help remove it from the wall and stabilize it for future restoration."

Membership

Become a member of the Taliesin Fellows and support our on-going work of returning the two Taliesins to their original design as executed by Wright prior to his death in 1959, and in the cause of furthering organic architecture. Members will receive the Taliesin Fellows Newsletter, published quarterly, and *Journal of the Taliesin Fellows*. Annual membership dues are \$50-Friends of Fellows (open to all); \$40-Fellows (alumni of the FLLW School of Architecture, former apprentices, or affiliation with the Taliesin Fellowship) and \$25-Student (with proof of full-time status). Foreign subs add \$12. Send your check (on a U.S. bank) made payable to Taliesin Fellows, P.O. Box 5930, Scottsdale, AZ 85261-5930.

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 5930, Scottsdale, AZ 85261

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