

WRITINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE SETH PETERSON COTTAGE CONSERVANCY, INC.
FOR THE COTTAGE BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT IN MIRROR LAKE STATE PARK

Volume XVI

Issue 2

Have You Heard?

By Claire Barnett

The summer newsletter has turned into a fall one! I am as surprised by this as you are, but the summer was a busy one, both for me personally and also for our cottage. So there will be lots of news in this issue, including the spring workweek, a change in the SPCC Board, and news of a new board office. This will be a larger than usual issue with more pictures, and I hope that helps to make up for its being delayed.

The top story is that there has been a change in the presidency of the Conservancy—see the story inside for details. We now have an acting president—me, actually—which is one of the reasons why the newsletter is late. I have discovered that the president deals with everything that isn't being done by anyone else, and that there is more of that

than I had ever imagined! Luckily, since last year I have been dealing with questions from our rental agent, Sand County, and shopping needs for the cottage because I live nearby, little realizing that I was rehearsing for a larger role!

Our spring work week went well, as you will see in a later article by Bill Martinelli, our vice president and facility manager. The driveway lights mentioned in the last newsletter are installed. (*See details later in this issue.*) I still haven't seen them at night, but in another few weeks we will appreciate them as we leave after our tours on the second Sunday of the month. They will be a welcome addition, lighting the way to the parking area.

We had an erosion problem this spring around the bird feeder. The feeder was at the base of a natural slope away from the cottage, and so it received a concentration of runoff, and the ground was bare from so much bird and squirrel and raccoon activity.

The feeder was moved and stained during the April work week, but the story doesn't end there. In July, lightning struck the huge white pine tree above the new and old feeder locations, causing the tree to split. The feeder was spared when half of the tree came down, but the remaining part of the tree could have fallen on the cottage, and so it, too, had to come down. Thanks go to Paul Zajackowski and his Mirror Lake State Park

crew for dealing with both the tree and the erosion. See also an article about related squirrel activities.

There have been long-term plans since the death of Audrey Laatsch, who looked after so much, to find a part-time administrative assistant for the conservancy. For the past year, we have leased a small space from Vierbicher Architects, but had not yet organized it. I am pleased to announce that both issues have now been taken care of. We have contracted with Tara Fuhrman to organize our office and to do weekly work such as mail pickup and distribution, and preparing materials for our meetings. Since she is employed by Vierbicher Architects, she is on site and works for

us on a part-time basis. She and I have spent many evenings sorting out our files and getting our space organized into an attractive and useful office. I will provide more information as well as pictures of both Tara and our office in the next newsletter.

There has also been another recipient of the Jill Vladick Memorial Scholarship Award, as you will note in another article.

As always, any comments can be directed to my email address of crmrogan@yahoo.com, or to the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Box 334, Lake Delton, WI 53940. Write *Attention: Newsletter* on your envelope. I would also welcome any article contributions.



Contents

Have You Heard?.....	1
A Historic First!.....	2
A New President.....	2
Greedy Squirrels.....	2
Membership & Order Form.....	3
2004 Work Week.....	4
Vladick Scholarship Award.....	5
Rehabilitating Birds of Prey.....	5
Gerald Trumm Retires	6
Harry R. Cullins Memorial.....	6
From the Guest Book.....	7
Upcoming Events.....	7

A Historic First!

Five UW-Madison students from Taiwan attended the September open house. Some of the students' command of English was poor, which would have made it difficult to explain the cottage's architectural concepts to them easily. Fortunately for them, (and us), one of our recent volunteers, David Chen, was on hand. Imagine the students' surprise (and his), when he gave the tour in Mandarin Chinese! He reports that the students really appreciated having the tour in their native language. To my knowledge, this is the first time that a cottage tour has been conducted in a language other than English.

A New President

Last spring, Patrick Cleary, who has ably led the Conservancy for over 4 years, received the good news that he had been promoted at the architectural firm where he is employed. However, his increased workload also meant that he would no longer have enough time to devote to the cottage, so at the April 27th board of directors meeting he reluctantly resigned as president. Claire Barnett, longtime first vice president, became acting president.

Patrick has been with the conservancy for many years, beginning as a tour guide, later becoming a board member and tour coordinator, and then president. He was the conservancy's fourth president, following founding president Audrey Laatsch, Steve Korban, and Jan Aslaksan. He continues to volunteer at open house days, but his guidance on the board will be missed.

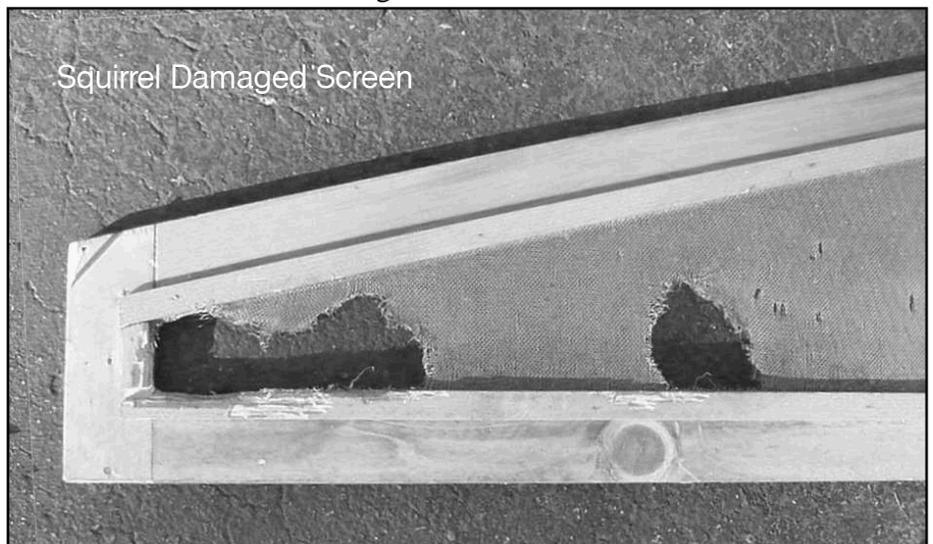
Attack of the Greedy Squirrels! *By Claire Barnett*

Our guests are often delighted when the neighborhood squirrels frequent the bird feeder. However, guests don't always fill the feeder, and when someone left the storage shed door open, the squirrels discovered a treasure inside—a plastic trash can full of sunflower seeds.

When the shed was again secured, the squirrels, now apparently with knowledge of the treasure inside, soon took matters into their own hands . . . er, paws . . . and chewed their way through a metal window screen to gain entrance. They then ate a big chunk out of the plastic lid and container, and from the appearance of the shed interior, had many wild parties! When a guest finally notified our Sand County rental agents and they called me, I went out and replaced the screen with the window that we install during cold months of the year. I cleaned the shed and left another screen in place, on the back side of the shed, to air it out. Not to be deterred, the squirrels attacked that screen, too, and no one told me about it until sometime later. So I had another session of wiping counters and sweeping out seed shells and blue shreds of plastic trash can. Both windows are now in place, about a month earlier than usual, and the seeds are stored in a metal trash can! My current plan is to redo the screens and moldings, adding hardware cloth over the screen. Despite the name, hardware cloth is wire material with about one-eighth-inch square openings, supposedly squirrel-proof.

I have consulted with Bill Martinelli, our facilities manager, and other ideas to improve the shed are to get a sheet metal cover for the doorsill since it has been chewed on, too, and also metal covers for the planters to keep water out over the winter. The covers, sill, and the above mentioned hardware cloth will be painted "Taliesin red," which will look better than shiny galvanized metal.

In the meantime, the squirrels continue to attack the wood frames of the windows, apparently remembering the treasure trove of seeds inside. We can only hope that the fat ones with knowledge of the shed's contents won't make it through the winter.



Membership Renewal and Merchandise Order Form

The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. for the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright in Mirror Lake State Park

<i>Item</i>	<i>Choices</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Total</i>
Individual Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$15.00		
Household Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$25.00		
Preserver Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$100.00		
Life Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$250.00		
Membership subtotal					
Members receive 10% discount on merchandise.					
"Audrey's Star" unframed print, 6" x 8".			\$35.00		
"Audrey's Star" unframed print, with tri-color mat.			\$80.00		
"Audrey's Star" print, matted and framed.			\$100.00		
Unframed limited edition rendering print of the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright.			\$65.00		
Official SPCC visor cap. Cream w/bright red logo. One size fits all.			\$15.00		
100% cotton pique polo shirt w/Cottage logo and name in red. <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Green <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Mark color & size. <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL			\$32.00		
Beige and rust T-shirt w/Cottage perspective by John Eifler. Mark size. <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL			\$15.00		
Sweatshirt w/red logo. Mark color & size. <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Tan <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL			\$35.00		
Elegant silk tie. Black design based on the design in the clerestory panels. Mark background color. <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> Beige <input type="checkbox"/> Blue			\$25.00		
Cottage Jewelry of black, white and silver, based on design in the clerestory panels.					
Letter Opener			\$25.00		
Long Earrings			\$30.00		
Short Earrings			\$20.00		
Cuff Links			\$29.00		
Bar Pin			\$20.00		
Cottage Pin, red logo/black background			\$5.00		
Book: <i>Frank Lloyd Wright's Seth Peterson Cottage: Rescuing a Lost Masterwork</i> by John Eifler, AIA and Kristin Visser.					
Special Edition (signed & numbered)			\$90.00		
Softcover Edition			\$15.00		
Merchandise subtotal					
Member discount 10%					-
Shipping & handling					
Under \$10			\$2.00		
\$10-\$30			\$3.00		
\$30-\$100			\$6.00		
Over \$100 -- free shipping					
Total (membership + merchandise - discount + shipping)					

Make Check payable to: Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc.
Send to: c/o Wegner LLP, Box 150, Baraboo, WI 53913

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

2004 Seth Peterson Cottage Work Week *By Bill Martinelli*

During the annual workweek, held April 11th to 17th, we had the best week of weather in a long time, no snow or rain. Because of the good weather and a crew of eight to ten volunteers, we accomplished much cleanup and repair work during the week. The landscaping was cleaned up, the gravel drive and parking lot were re-graded after a very hard winter of snow plowing, and lights were installed along the entrance drive. Windowsills were sanded and re-varnished, upholstery was cleaned,

the stone floor was scrubbed, and the fireplace and flue were cleaned. Some of the furniture was repaired and two new fireplace chairs were built to replace the present ones that were showing many years of wear. Windows were washed, the mattress and bedspring in the bedroom were replaced, and the hide-a-bed in the living room was updated with a new mechanism and mattress. The combination boiler/water heater was checked and adjusted and the roof was checked for any potential

problems or leaks.

The park staff also helped out during the week by cutting down a few trees that we have been keeping an eye on for safety problems, and they delivered a load of wood chips that we spread on the trails around the cottage.

Special thanks to the following volunteers who helped out during the week: Nancy Bruch, Paul Clark, Eliot Hamilton, Claire Barnett, Peter Rott, Barry Owens, Bonnie Martinelli, and Tom Martinelli.



Landscaping



Tree Trimming



Leveling the Driveway



Service Electric crew installing the new lights.



Installing the driveway lights.



New fold-out bed.

Jill Vladick Memorial Scholarship Award

By Claire Barnett and Matt Dae

The scholarship in Jill's name was specifically created after her death to allow students to experience the cottage. This year's recipient was Matt Dae.

Matt grew up in Alaska, has a bachelors degree in biology from the University of Missouri, and is halfway through a three-year architectural graduate program at Taliesin. He was accompanied on his visit by his friend Sarah Murphy, a 2003 Taliesin graduate, who is now in graduate school in Montana. Here is an excerpt of an article about his visit written by Matt for Taliesin's *Whirling Arrow* newsletter:

"Two beautiful days felt like a long and relaxing week at the Seth Peterson Cottage. It's one

thing to look at pictures and study the principles, and yet another vastly different education to experience a building as it was intended to be experienced. Sarah and I thoroughly enjoyed our stay, relaxing by the fire and cooking our own meals. I especially liked the large gas grill they provided, canoeing, watching the wildlife and sunsets, and of course exploring and experiencing the building!"

His note in the guest book added, "We would like to thank the conservancy for providing this opportunity to a couple of poor apprentices from Taliesin through the scholarship in honor of Jill."

A version of his article also appeared in Wisconsin's *River Valley Journal*.



Matt Dae, scholarship recipient, and Sarah Murphy at the Cottage.

July Program

Our July program featured Linda Bethke, a local rehabilitator of birds of prey. Linda brought a juvenile hawk with an injured wing, in addition to many informative displays. She gave an interesting presentation, impressing the audience with her skills and knowledge.

We are pleased to report that in addition to the honorarium that we presented to her, members of the audience contributed to her worthwhile volunteer work.



Linda Bethke explains the rehabilitation process for a juvenile hawk with an injured wing.

Gerald Trumm Retires

On May 8th, Bill Martinelli and I attended a retirement party for Gerry Trumm at the Blackhawk Ridge picnic shelter. Gerry was retiring after working in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for 37 years, 25 of which were spent in the Devils Lake/Mirror Lake/Rocky Arbor Parks group. He was the superintendent of Mirror Lake State Park at the time the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy was formed, and with his support the cottage went from an embarrassing liability to an asset to the Park. He will be missed, but we hope to have him return as a board member in the future.

Many of us have stories of our working with Gerry, but I am sure that I am the only one who was escorted into the cottage with a drawn revolver! No, it wasn't pointed at me, nor is that how the board was recruited. In fact, this was before the SPCC existed. I had been asked to prepare a report on the cottage for Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, and the day I met Gerry to tour the cottage, there was an escaped prisoner in the area.

Since it was a remote and abandoned building at the time, Gerry correctly checked its safety before letting me come in. It was quite an introduction to both the cottage and Gerry!



Best wishes to Gerry for a fun, relaxing, and productive retirement from all of us at the SPCC.

In Memory of Harry R. Cullins

Funds for the new driveway lights were donated by Ed Council in memory of his long-time friend Harry Cullins, who passed away in June of 2003. Harry had stayed at the cottage and loved it, and Ed and his wife Bridget stayed there in March of this year, on a day that would have marked Harry's third visit. The following was provided by Ed Council to give us a glimpse of our benefactor.

"Harry Cullins had a lifelong love and admiration of the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright and visited many of the buildings he designed. During his many visits, Harry was able to chat with the tour guides, showing his knowledge of Wright's work, and obtained several behind-the-

scenes tours of portions not open to the public. He enjoyed his stays at the Seth Peterson Cottage and considered it his personal retreat into the world of Frank Lloyd Wright. He also loved the art of Georgia O'Keeffe and visited Ghost Ranch in New Mexico on several occasions. Perhaps being an eccentric character himself—with unique tastes and an eye for great beauty—led him to identify in some special way with their work. Harry found inspiration in many things, from old pipe organs to fine china. It is fitting that his passing is remembered by his friends with a donation to the Seth Peterson Cottage, a place dear to his heart and spirit."

There is a small plaque commemorating Harry's gift on the light post at the corner of the driveway.



One of the new driveway lights.

From the Guest Book

Many of our spring and summer guests mention peacefulness and getting away. The Sterling and Johnson entry mentions that this is their tenth stay—surely a record! And the following entry shows that some of our guests come from far away:

“Well worth the long journey. Hope that we will return one day, as this visit is much too short.”
– David and Wendy Rounce, of Somerset, England

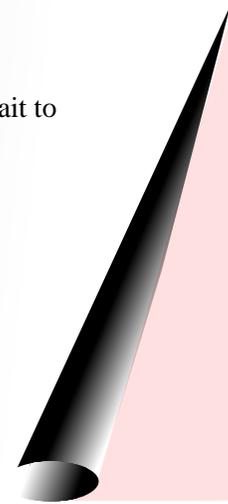
“This is the ultimate cabin in the woods. Time stops and you are at peace, at rest.”
– The Van Derans

“...time and life move so quickly, one must step back occasionally to reflect on what is really important and what clutters one’s mind and soul.”
– The Keriths

“...it’s so peaceful that even washing dishes is a pleasure. It was great to be back, and we can’t wait to return.”
– Tom and Diane Pierson

The Gaceks celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary by staying at the cottage, just as they did for their 20th and 25th. They go on to say:

“We leave filled with . . . the peace and tranquility the cottage holds for those who share the space for a time. This is an awesome setting for love, reflection, rejuvenation, and yoga.”



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, November 14

Monthly Open House, 1-4 p.m. Guided tours \$2.
Board of Directors/Members Annual Meeting, 11-12:30

Sunday, December 12

Monthly Open House, 1-4 p.m. Guided tours \$2.

Sunday, January 9

Monthly Open House, 1-4 p.m. Guided tours \$2.

Sunday, February 13

Monthly Open House, 1-4 p.m. Guided tours \$2.

Sunday, March 13

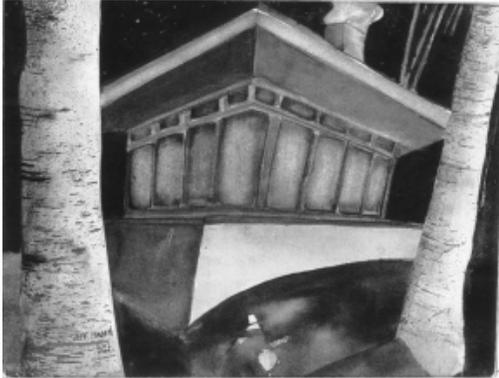
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Have You Heard?
A Historic First!
A New President
Greedy Squirrels
Membership & Order Form
2004 Work Week
Vladick Scholarship Award Recipient
Rehabilitating Birds of Prey
Gerald Trumm Retires
Harry R. Cullins Memorial
From the Guest Book
Upcoming Events