



WRITINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE SETH PETERSON COTTAGE CONSERVANCY

Vol. XVI, Issue 2

COTTAGE COMMENTS BY CLAIRE

The tourist season is over and the flu season has begun! With myself being an early victim of the latter, and other contributors to the production of this newsletter having had various travels, other deadlines, and computer problems, this issue was delayed by a few weeks, but here it is at last. It is our second full color issue and this time, unlike last year's issue, we won't have to have captions that say, "Can you imagine the beautiful fall colors surrounding the cottage?" Now, you will be able to see them!

With the exception of our canoe being stolen, we had a good summer at the cottage, and a wonderfully warm and colorful autumn. Our monthly tour attendance was good, and thanks to our acquiring and training two new tour guides—Stephen Gochenaur and Larry Lamar—we were usually able to keep up with our many visitors. (We always need extra tour guides, so please contact me if you wish to become one.) After some delay due to the present financial situation, Sauk County officials decided to postpone the repairs to the Mirror Lake dam, and that meant that our Fall Color Boat Tour could finally take place. (We can only hope that Mother Nature was in on the agreement to delay the repairs, considering the flooding of last year!) I went along on the tour for the first time to get some autumn color pictures from the water. The leaves were almost at peak color, and although the temperature was a bit chilly, the guests had a good time. Sitting around the fire-

place in the cottage felt especially cozy this year, unlike last year, when the weather was so warm that most guests sat out on the terrace instead. Next year, we may have the same waiting game to decide if we can hold the tour, since the possible repairs are again scheduled for early fall, and it may be necessary to lower the level of the lake for the dam repairs, leaving our dock high and dry. But we are determined to do the tour,

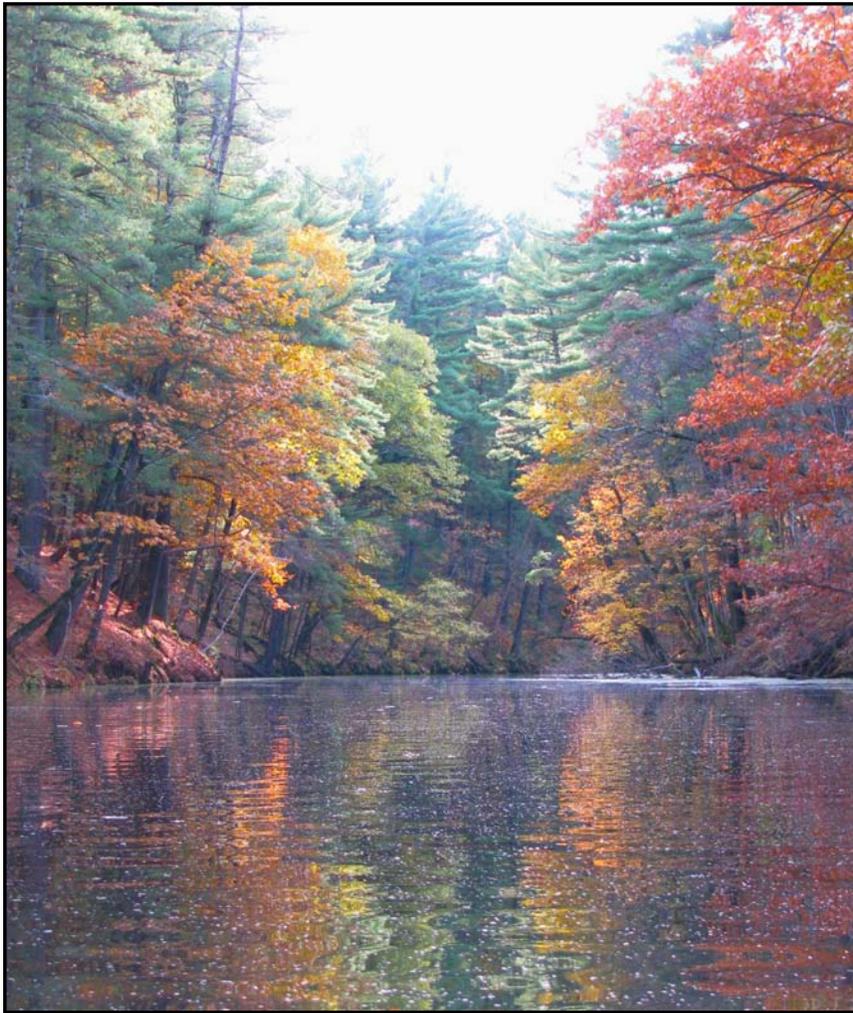
even if we have to use a gangplank to get aboard the boats!

This issue also includes pictures of Paul and Cheryl Harding, recipients of the Kris Visser Preservation Award, as well as an article about Russell Mahoney, recipient of the Jill Vladick Memorial Award. I have gotten to know Russell over the last three years during visits to Taliesin and student visits to the cottage, and was very pleased that he was selected by the Taliesin staff.

The guest book continues to be interesting reading for us and for our guests. One guest wrote, "We enjoyed the echoes of those who visited here before." Many guests hate to leave. I could not read the name or origin of the guest who wrote; "10 AM is too early for checkout!! But wait! They're not here to kick us out yet. I can

write more!" Others wrote short poems about their stay. Sherry and Will from Indiana provided me with a suitable closing quotation. "The atmosphere is a presence of many people and their stories. But the place is the constant. How wonderful." ■

Claire Barnett
President, Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy



Mirror Lake Autumn Reflections - Copyright, 2009, Laura V. Page, laurapagephoto.com

NEWS FROM THE MIRROR LAKE ASSOCIATION

Mark Blakeslee

The association had a very successful summer, with great participation from our members and friends in our spring clean-up day, our annual meeting, and then our summer picnic. Mirror Lake is blessed to have so many people who monitor and work to keep it the natural place it is.

Next year, shoreline cleanup will be a priority. The repair of the dam has been delayed until the fall of 2010. The dam repair work may draw down the lake, giving us an excellent opportunity to do some shoreline cleaning. We will also continue to clean the shoreline of brush that promotes aquatic plant growth.

The Mirror Lake Management District is moving forward on erosion control of gullies on the east end of the lake, a difficult and expensive task due to the sandy soil conditions around the lake. The shared funding for this comes from the Dell Creek Priority Watershed Project and the individual land-owners. We greatly appreciate the time and resources individual property owners are extending to enhance and improve the lake.

The lake dredging last summer has made the west end of the lake accessible for visiting a wildlife area that was once almost impossible to get to. The marshland and Dell Creek area

has its own unique wildlife, all within a short canoe or kayak paddle from the Seth Peterson Cottage. Eagles, sandhill cranes, blue heron, and many other birds are everyday sights.

If you have any questions about the Mirror Lake Association or would like further information, please feel free to contact me at mblakeslee@uwalumni.com. ■

MIRROR LAKE STATE PARK REPORT

Paul Zajackowski

2009 has certainly been a busy year! Visitation to the park may surpass that of any other year, with more than 330,000 visitors to date. This

past summer, we were fortunate to hire Marty Heidke as our seasonal Assistant Naturalist Guide, thanks to funding from the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy and a matching grant from the State of Wisconsin Parks Friends Group. Marty, a retired



Marty Heidke, Assistant Naturalist Guide

geography teacher, conducted 18 hikes and programs at Mirror Lake and Rocky Arbor State Parks. Marty also assisted with the October 24th annual Halloween Mystery Hike, sponsored by Mirror Lake State Park and Friends of Mirror Lake State Park. More than 200 people hiked a one-mile, torch-lit trail, stopping along the way to read clues to help them solve this year's mystery, later gathering at bonfires while the Friends group sold food and beverages. Future candlelight ski/snowshoe/hike events are scheduled for January 2nd and February 6th of 2010.

Along with the normal routine of camping and trail maintenance, park staff completed the annual inspection for gypsy moth egg masses. Although some were found within the park, the numbers were low and aerial treatments such as the ones conducted in the spring of 2008 and 2009 will not be needed.

Work has begun on a new parking lot on the west side of Hastings Road, just south of the park entrance. This lot will be utilized by those skiing or hiking the Fern Dell and Hastings trails. Other completed projects include a new kiosk outside the park office with a map showing designated use areas, electricity added to the beach area, and continued work on the new Ishnala Trail.

After last year's dredging project, the lake's water clarity has been the best in our memory, and park staff have been receiving many positive comments. A great deal of credit goes to the combined efforts of the Mirror Lake Association, Lake District, Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Friends of Mirror Lake, and private land owners for their efforts, stewardship and dedication to improving and maintaining the lake and surrounding area. ■

WRITINGS

is a publication of The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. for the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright in Mirror Lake State Park.
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Visit us on the web at: www.sethpetererson.org

The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. Board of Directors Executive Committee

President: Claire Barnett
First Vice President: Bill Martinelli
Second Vice President: Peter Rott
Treasurer: Paul Wagner
Secretary: Kermit Traska

Members

James Booth, Jim Draeger, Bill Dupuy, Tim Heggland,
Carolyne Kotchi, Raymond Matlosz, Jerry Minnich,
John Muchow

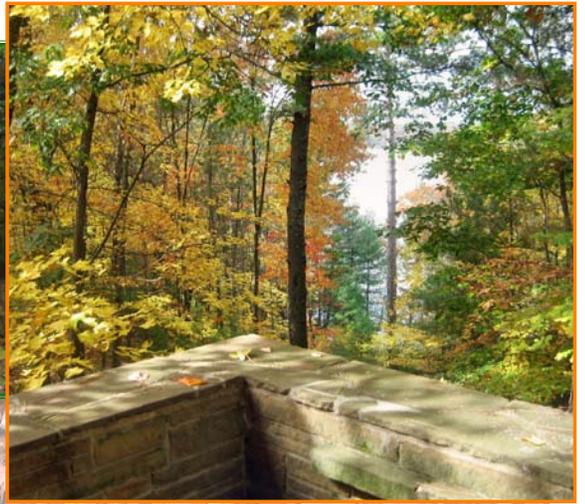
Ex-officio members

Mark Blakeslee, President, Mirror Lake Association
Paul Zajackowski, Superintendent, Mirror Lake State Park

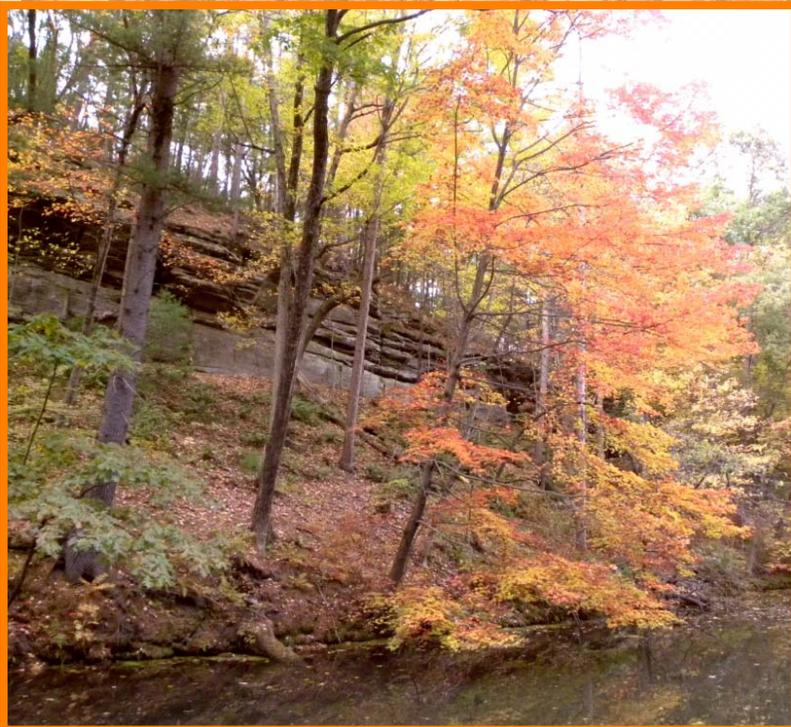
Conservancy Staff

Office Manager: Ron Dakter
Marketing Coordinator: Gail Kohl

For cottage reservations call the Sand County Service Company, Lake Delton, Wisconsin: 608 254-6551.



Autumn colors are ablaze around The Seth Peterson Cottage as the 2009 Fall Boat Tour participants enjoy the change of seasons from the cottage and Mirror Lake.



ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual Meeting of the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy will be held on Sunday December 13th, at 4:30 PM. It will include annual and financial reports, and the election of board members and officers. Any member of the Conservancy whose annual dues are current may attend and vote on any motions made at the meeting.

The meeting will be approximately an hour long, and will be followed by a private party for the cottage tour guide volunteers. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should send an email to cmrogan@yahoo.com, with "Annual Meeting" as the subject. 

COTTAGE CANOE DISAPPEARS!

Claire Barnett

On August 16th, a cottage guest went down to the lakeshore to use the canoe and discovered it missing! He notified Sand County Services who notified me, and I called the Mirror Lake State Park office. Park staff searched the lake the next day, but did not find it. An official Incident Report was filed by the Park, and also with the Sauk County Sheriff's office. The proximity of the cottage to the township boat landing, across the lake, may explain why the canoe disappeared so suddenly. Other incidents of vandalism occurred around the lake at the same time.

The canoe had been donated to the Conservancy in memory of Jeff DiVall, an early Conservancy board member, and there was a plaque to that effect inside the canoe. The canoe had previously been kept on the lakeshore from April through November for about 14 years without incident.



A replacement canoe was purchased within a couple of days, along with a 15-foot cable and lock. Bill Martinelli later made an off-the-ground storage cradle for it, and cottage guests have since enjoyed using it during our warm autumn weather. A new plaque commemorating Jeff DiVall and also Steve Korban, the original donor, will be installed soon. 

FALL COLOR BOAT TOUR

Twenty-two guests attended the Fall Color Boat Tour, with a reception at the cottage afterward. Beth Traska provided a wide range of tasty treats, as usual, along with wine and hot

and cold apple cider. Guests were glad to warm themselves in the cottage by the fireplace after a chilly time on the lake, and



enjoyed talking among themselves. Later, SPCC President Claire Barnett and Secretary Kermit Traska gave an informal talk about the cottage rehabilitation, and answered questions. Everyone appeared to have a good time, and there were suggestions that we should sponsor similar occasions throughout the year. A special thanks goes to Mirror Lake Association members for making the event possible, by again generously providing and operating three pontoon boats for the tour. 

KRISTIN VISSER AWARD

The 2009 Kristin Visser Historical Preservation Award was presented, on June 14th, to Paul A. Harding, FAIA, and Cheryl Harding, in a short ceremony at the cottage. The Hardings were selected for their splendid work in restoring the E. Arthur Davenport House, in River Forest, Illinois.

Jerry Minnich, award chairman, presented the Hardings with an engraved plaque and a check for \$5,000, which the Hardings said would be used to replace art glass windows in the house.



The Davenport House was designed and constructed in 1901. It has the distinction of being the first Prairie School House by Frank Lloyd Wright to be built in Chicago and its suburbs. Beginning in 2005, the Hardings, current owners, started a five-year \$800,000 restoration project, which has been carried out with extreme fidelity to the original Wright design. The project was undertaken with exhaustive research that has advanced the understanding of historic Frank Lloyd Wright finish systems.

The next Visser Award will be presented in 2011 for preservation work done during 2009 and 2010, on a Frank Lloyd Wright building or a Prairie Style building in the Upper Midwest. Applicants may receive more detailed information by contacting Jerry Minnich at jminnich7@att.net. ■

JILL VLADICK AWARD

The winner of the 2009 Jill Vladick Award is Russell Mahoney, who received his Masters Degree at Taliesin this fall. He grew up with a father and uncles in the construction business, but his college general studies led to a ten-year career in corporate computing. He was working for a German firm, but despite getting a high salary, he found his career unsatisfactory. He began his studies at Taliesin in 2006 in his early thirties, and considers 25-30 to be the ideal age for a Taliesin student.



Architects must have graduated from an accredited school, complete two years of professional development as an intern, and then pass six exams to be licensed. Russell might spend part of his internship at

Taliesin. He plans eventually to return to the Philadelphia area to work on his ideas for hybrid architecture, involving modular



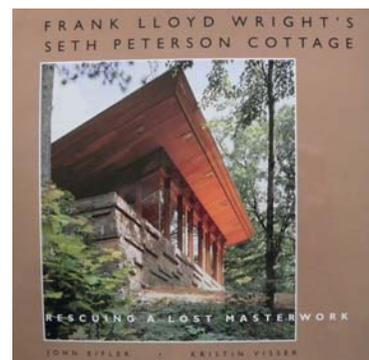
Russell Mahoney with the first level of the independent structure he designed inside the Midway Tower milk house shown above.

construction inside of existing older buildings. His B.A. degree in Political Science and his experiences of growing up with a father who was a labor union president, give him an interest in working to change building codes to allow creative reuse rather than demolition of older structures. While at Taliesin, he designed a “furniture system” to install an independent structure inside the Midway Tower milk house, while being completely independent from it.

While at the cottage, Russell wrote that he relaxed, canoed, ate at Ishnala for the first time, and read a lot. His entry in the guest book states, “Frank Lloyd Wright has changed so much of the world we occupy. It is an honor to stay in a structure the way he intended it, anchored to nature.” ■

RESCUING A LOST MASTERWORK: FUNDRAISING

This is the seventh in a series of excerpts from the book, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Seth Peterson Cottage: Rescuing a Lost Masterwork, by John Eifler, AIA, and Kristin Visser. It is the definitive story of the cottage. The previous excerpt described the beginnings of the fundraising process.



The conservancy also began a member newsletter and offered premiums ranging from color photos of the cottage to rental discounts for major donors. Most conservancy membership funds were used for the daily operating expenses (printing, postage, etc.) while larger donations went toward rehabilitation expenses. The conservancy targeted solicitations from donors who were interested in experiencing a Frank Lloyd Wright environment firsthand and who would appreciate the techniques of the cottage design. The conservancy also made money—and publicized the project—by selling T-shirts, framed architect’s renderings of the cottage, and note cards with a drawing of the cottage. Additional donations were received as a result of publicity about the cottage in newspapers and magazines. Board member Bill Martinelli graphically reproduced the cottage’s flagstone floor design originally used as a map to remove and reconstruct the floor. This map provided means by which individual donors could “sponsor” a stone for a \$200 donation.

Although the first conservancy board of directors lacked a basic standard of fundraising, i.e. connections with philanthropic individuals and organizations, they quickly learned that the board needed to be enlarged to include members with specific professional skills and contacts. They realized that a diverse board comprised of members who could approach personal acquaintances for contributions, whether in funding, services, or in-kind donations, was a key to success. In general, relying on personal connections for help may seem awkward, but often those relationships represent the largest component of a fundraising effort.

John [Eifler] and conservancy board members were able to secure donations of both money and building materials through their personal and professional contacts. For example, board member Mary Lawson, a partner in a Madison architecture firm, used her contacts with suppliers and contractors in the building trades and secured a Burnham Boiler from General Heating Contractors, a Madison supplier with whom Lawson had worked previously. The board kept detailed accounts of monetary and in-kind donations so contributions could be accurately applied toward matching grants. Without the work of the board members enlisting contacts to make in-kind donations, the SPCC would have been hard-pressed to meet their matching grant targets. In-kind contributions eventually totaled roughly \$100,000, nearly a third of the total cost of the rehabilitation.

By providing in-kind contributions to the conservancy, corporate sponsors and product manufacturers received two benefits. First, they could deduct the cost of manufacturing the product from their net year-end taxable income. Second, products contributed to the rehabilitation provided the manufacturers with name recognition through the association with Frank Lloyd Wright and preservation. For example, Pella Windows used pictures of the cottage with their windows in national building trade journal advertisements. Many of the product contributors were Wisconsin-based manufacturers who felt a sense of responsibility toward a Wisconsin Frank Lloyd Wright structure and a Wisconsin not-for-profit organization. This was not a unique situation, as many not-for-profits should and do solicit regional businesses for support. Yet with the Seth Peterson Cottage rehabilitation the amount of local support was staggering and very much appreciated.

Next time: Ups and downs of fundraising; hiring a fundraising consultant; what worked and what didn't. ■

PENNIES IN THE FLOOR

Claire Barnett

There are three pennies in the floor of the cottage, two of them placed one on either side of the fireplace and the third hidden away in the back left corner of the closet in the bedroom hallway. Steve and Ann from Minnesota inquired in the guest book, "Nobody has mentioned the pennies in the floor. What is the purpose? Whose are they? Why are they there?"

We found the first one in the early days of our tenure, when the cottage was being dismantled to begin reconstruction. At that time, the crew found a penny dated 1959, prominently placed to the right of the fireplace. We asked Seth Peterson's lifelong friend Bert Goderstat about it, and he replied that Seth had it placed there to commemorate the construction year of the cottage. I liked that idea, because I was raised in a similar tradition—my Mom was always putting initials or marbles or pennies in new concrete work. So I gave the masons a 1992 penny to put in a similar place to the left of the fireplace, to commemorate the year the cottage rehabilitation was finished.

The third penny came later and was placed in secret! In February of 2006, the flagstone floor needed to be taken up to replace the cottage radiant floor heating system. Careful instructions were given to the masonry crew to be sure to save the pennies, particularly the 1992 one, since it was laid in a masonry joint between stones and not in a stone like the original one. They wanted to know why, and then decided to continue the tradition, placing a 2006 penny in the back of the closet, without telling us about it! Look for it under the folding chairs. ■

FROM THE GUEST BOOK

"I was standing by the living room windows watching the feeder when a little chickadee came and perched on the ledge outside the window as if to welcome me." Carolyne, Illinois

"We feel very peaceful and content here. It is a place where my outer smile and inner smile come together, and no yoga required." Jayne and Jeff, Wisconsin

"The last fire, the last cup of coffee, the last viewing of the bird feeder, the last look at the lake . . . Oh, how too quickly this wonderful visit comes to an end, but as always, it has been fabulous. Time spent living at one with Nature . . . is very, very special to us." Jim and Trish, Kentucky

COTTAGE-INSPIRED POETRY

*Canoeing, viewing, talking, reading,
Walking, gazing and pure perfection.
Completely connected to Nature
An endless blessing.*

- The Carlsons, Illinois -

■
*Seth Peterson cottage
A reflection
On Mirror Lake*

- Mary Lou and Jack, Oregon -

■
*Sandstone and plywood
In harmony with nature
Breathtaking, Perfect*

- Derek, Scotland -

■
*The light through the trees
is it serendipity
or a Master Stroke?*

- Pamela, Colorado -

Membership Renewal and Merchandise Order Form

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

Item	Choices	Quantity	Unit Price	Subtotal	Total
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		
Friend Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$50.00		
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.			\$70.00		
Official SPCC visor. Tan w/bright red logo. One size fits all. Official SPCC cap. Forest Green or Tan w/bright red logo. One size fits all. <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Green <input type="checkbox"/> Tan Circle Visor or Cap and Mark Color if selecting Cap.			\$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. <input type="checkbox"/> Beige <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Mark background color.			\$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. Softcover Edition			\$15.00		
Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly Magazine with Seth Peterson Cottage articles <input type="checkbox"/> Summer 1993 B & W <input type="checkbox"/> Winter 2007 Color			\$5.00 \$5.00		
Merchandise subtotal					
Member discount 10%					-
Shipping & handling					
Under \$10			\$3.00		
\$10-\$30			\$4.00		
\$30-\$100			\$7.00		
Over \$100 —free shipping			FREE		
Total (membership + merchandise - discount + shipping)					

Please make checks payable to: Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. Send to: **SPCC, 400 Viking Drive, Reedsburg, WI 53959**

Name: _____ Telephone # _____
Street Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

WRITINGS

THE SETH PETERSON COTTAGE CONSERVANCY, INC.
400 VIKING DRIVE
REEDSBURG, WI 53959

Forwarding Service Requested.



What's Inside...

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- Jill Vladick Award Winner*
- Rescuing a Lost Masterwork Excerpt*
- Pennies in the Floor*
- Guest Comments*
- Cottage-Inspired Poetry*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, **December 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Directors/Members Annual Meeting 4:30-5:30 pm

Sunday, **January 10**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Sunday, **February 14**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Sunday, **March 14**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Sunday, **April 11**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

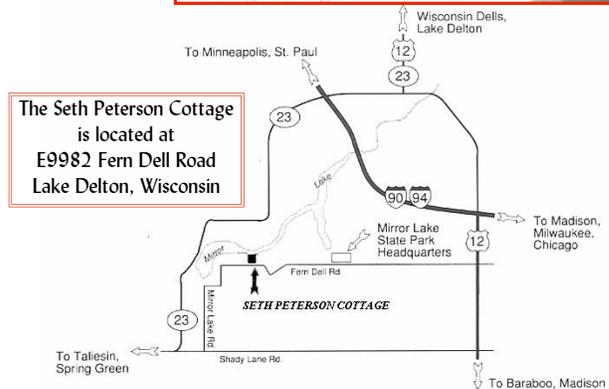
Sunday, **May 9**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Sunday, **June 6**, 1-3:30 pm, Annual Mirror Lake State Park Open House Day, Guided Tours, **FREE Admission**

Sunday, **June 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Join us at one of our monthly open houses.

Visitors find touring the cottage to be a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon. Take a scenic drive and experience first hand this restored Frank Lloyd Wright-designed cottage during the cottage open house tours. (See schedule at left).



www.sethpeterson.org