



WRITINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE SETH PETERSON COTTAGE CONSERVANCY

Vol. XVI, Issue I

COTTAGE COMMENTS BY CLAIRE

I have lots of changes to report this spring. First of all, welcome to the latest incarnation of *Writings*! We had just gotten the right mix of color in our old newsletter, and then the Mirror Lake Association put out a special color edition of their newsletter, dealing with the lake dredging and the Governor's visit. All of us who saw it were impressed, (and a little envious). At our recent Board of Directors meeting, several of our members who deal with presenting information, and who regularly see other newsletters and information packets, convinced the Board that color is more the norm nowadays, so here we are. We are keeping our style, but now you will be able to see our pictures in color, beginning with this one, which has appeared before in a

smaller black and white version. Later this summer, we will begin posting this and older editions of the newsletter on our website. (See article inside on website updates).

Our traditional April work week involved cottage improvements under the direction of Bill Martinelli, Vice President and Facilities Manager. There is a report in this issue.

Work is almost finished on two short cottage video programs that are meant for viewing in the Mirror Lake State Park office. The two programs will let park visitors learn more about the history of the cottage and its architecture, on days when they are not able to take a cottage tour. We may sell copies of these at a later date, or we may wait until we produce

a planned hour-long program. Work on that project will begin later this year, and we hope that, when finished, it will air on national television, and then eventually be offered for sale.

The Fall 2008 edition of *Writings*, which included a request for tour guides, produced two excellent volunteers, so I am asking again. Over time, our volunteers move away or else begin part-time work that occupies weekends, so we are always in need of additional help. Despite this year's May cottage open house occurring on Mother's Day we had more than forty

visitors, and needed one more person to give tours. If you are interested in becoming a tour guide, please write to us at the new cottage address with information about how we can contact you.

Our next edition will have pictures of an upcoming project, the repair of the Mirror Lake dam, which will impact the



cottage, and our planned Fall Color Boat Tour.

Please note that we have changed the mailing address and voice mail phone number for the cottage; details appear inside.

I will close with a quote from the cottage guest book. Tom and Berta of Wayzata, Minnesota wrote, "***This visit will be a lifelong memory. Thanks to all who keep this place and places like it ALIVE!***"

You are very welcome. ■

Claire Barnett
President, Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy

NEWS FROM THE MIRROR LAKE ASSOCIATION

Mark Blakeslee

The slower period of winter and spring are over, so many activities were planned for May and June. Saturday, May 2, was the annual Project CLEAN day, a community effort by the Mirror Lake Association (MLA), the Blass Lake Association, and the Lake Delton community. The main focus for the volunteers is picking up litter on the roads that encircle the lake, and cleaning up dumping areas in the park where cottages once stood. The highlight of the day is the fantastic lunch generously donated by Mark Obois from the House of Embers. The MLA alone had nearly thirty volunteers show up. We couldn't be more pleased with the support of the people around the lake to keep it clean.

Later this spring, a smaller group will get into boats and do some clean-up work on the lake. This will include not only removing litter, but taking out medium-to-small branches that hold back lake weeds. We also will try to pull out clumps of grass and weeds that came loose during the dredging project.

June 20 is the date of the annual meeting of the membership of the association. Again this year it will be held at Ishnala. This year's program will be on the history of the Mirror Lake dam and the impending repair this fall by Sauk County. The repairs are deemed necessary after an inspection

WRITINGS

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Visit us on the web at: www.sethpeterson.org

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

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Secretary: Kermit Traska

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John Muchow

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Conservancy Staff

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

that was done in 2007. The lake will be drawn down two to four feet to do the repairs. Drawing down the lake that far will also allow us to do another cleanup of the shoreline.

The Mirror Lake Management District is moving forward to doing some erosion control work on gullies on the east end of the lake. Using county resources and funds from the Dell Creek Priority Watershed Project, this work involves installing sediment barriers in gullies so they don't wash out during large rains and deposit sediment in the lake. We have five to ten gullies that require immediate attention. Our goal is to get the planning and some of the work done this calendar year.

The MLA does want to thank the SPCC for the donation of a thousand dollars this spring. Our plan is to use the money to buy equipment to assist us in our cleanups.

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

2008 ANNUAL MEETING

The SPCC Annual Meeting was held on December 14, 2008 at the Cottage. Four board members whose terms had expired, Bill DuPuy, Caroline Kotchi, Bill Martinelli, and Paul Wagner, were elected to new three-year terms, while Chris Wonter is retiring from the Board. Many thanks to Chris for her years of service on the Board of Directors and as a tour guide.

Board elections were followed by election of officers. They are Claire Barnett, President; Bill Martinelli, First Vice-President; Peter Rott, Second Vice-President; Paul Wagner, Treasurer; and Kermit Traska, Secretary.

Volunteer Awards were given out, recognizing our tour guides' service to the cottage. Based on how many open house tour days they attended, many volunteers were given a gift certificate for dinner at Ishnala.

Following the official meeting, Beth Traska again provided a fine meal. Jan Aslaksen and Carolyne Kotchi donated an excellent Christmas tree as usual, which members decorated after dinner. The tree stays up until our January open house, so many guests have asked where to buy the cute little birch bark birdhouses that are used along with red bows and lights to decorate the tree. Sadly, they were obtained long ago by our late founding president, Audrey Laatsch, and we have no idea where she got them. ■

FALL COLOR BOAT TOUR??

The traditional Fall Color Boat Tour will (we hope) occur as usual after the October 11th Open House, but that is dependent upon the water level of the lake. Necessary repairs to the Mirror Lake dam will require lowering the water in the lake two to four feet, and at this time, it is not known when the work will be completed, or if the water will be deep enough at the cottage pier to allow boarding our tour boats. There will be an update in the fall newsletter. In the meantime, there will be news about the tour on our website: www.sethpeterson.org. ■





New boiler and controls installed.



No more potholes!

April work week included some major work this year, as well as the traditional spring chores. Six volunteers came on the first day to do the usual raking of leaves and replacing of the parking landscape timbers.

The cottage boiler was replaced with a newer model, so the floors will be warmer to the touch during the heating season. The driveway and parking areas were resurfaced with fresh gravel, and then compacted. The screen doors were improved by the addition of a wood strip and a bottom door seal, and the fireplace has had a hidden metal panel installed inside its hood that should make the fireplace work more efficiently. A new telephone cable was buried, finally banishing the



Looking for the phone line.

noisy line that had plagued the cottage for some time. The terrace furniture was oiled, and the gas grill checked. The mattress and bedspring in the bedroom were replaced as they are every year.

Down at the lake, the pier steps were rebuilt to repair the damage caused by last year's flooding when the pier floated away, and by this winter's ice heaving. A professional tree climber was hired to do some high-up trimming and to remove dangerous branches. As usual, the Mirror Lake State Park crew came by with wood chips for our trails and to remove some damaged trees in the vicinity of the cottage.

Bill Martinelli coordinated work week efforts, as usual, and had an extensive checklist to ensure that the cottage is in fine shape for the new season.

Photos by Claire Barnett and Bill Martinelli



Mirror Lake State Park crew member removing damaged trees.



▲ *Rebuilt pier steps damaged by last year's flooding.*

◀ *High up trimming and removal of dangerous branches.*

MIRROR LAKE STATE PARK REPORT

Paul Zajackowski

This is the time of year when the park staff is busy preparing the park for the upcoming camping season. Other projects in addition to the normal spring work of raking, mowing, and preparing water systems include new roofs and electrical service upgrades to a number of vault toilets within the park, repairs to the Sandstone Campground shower building, and the construction of a new firewood shed. The dredging of the lake was completed last fall and work has begun on reclaiming the spoil site back to native prairie. The Cabin in the Woods was also recently re-stained by the volunteer group of Telephone Pioneers of America, who had it built about the time the Seth Peterson Cottage was being rehabilitated.

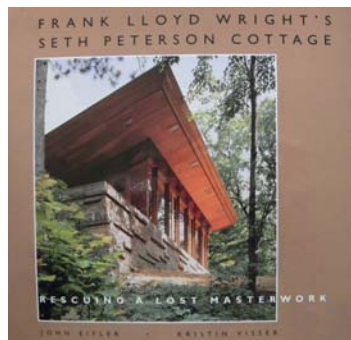
The park staff is also excited about returning to work on the Ishnala Trail. Last year a 155-foot free-spanning bridge was constructed and approximately one quarter mile of new trail was developed. This portion of trail is now open and links the Cliffwood campground to the Ishnala Restaurant. A total of 2.5 miles of new trail will be added when this project is completed.

Currently visitation to the park is slightly below last year's record 358,000 visitors. I'm sure the filming of the movie "Public Enemies" within the park last year at this time was a major reason for the increased visitation in 2008. The film is scheduled to be released in theaters July 3rd and the park staff is excited about seeing portions of Mirror Lake on the big screen.

Hikers are reporting spring wild flowers such as marsh marigolds and lupine are in bloom along with a number of nesting waterfowl on the west end of the lake. The weather is improving, so take the time to get out and enjoy the park! ■

RESCUING A LOST MASTERWORK: FUNDRAISING

This is the sixth 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 historical structure report (HSR), conducted by John Eifler, which identified the many physical problems of the cottage and what would be needed to bring it back to its former condition.



The Seth Peterson Cottage eventually cost \$350,000 to rehabilitate. (The increase over the original \$250,000 estimate was due to the costs of furnishing and equipping the cottage, building the storage shed and the dock, completing the landscaping, and other extras that were not in John's original analysis.) When the conservancy started fundraising, members had virtually no experience and no contact with foundations

and other funding sources. They soon discovered that money should be the primary concern of any group undertaking a rehabilitation project, whether large or small, and a capital campaign must be carefully planned before any rehabilitation work begins. More often than not, design and construction expenses run over budget, leaving many groups with a project that is difficult to complete. Yet, the process of raising capital is neither a cut-and-dried nor easily understood task. Fundraising is a humbling experience because a fundraising group must aggressively seek funds from both familiar and unfamiliar sources and must continue until the project is finished and debt is eliminated. The cottage rehabilitation is an enlightening example of how one group of committed citizens pursued a capital campaign that was to prove difficult, frustrating (although educational), and ultimately successful.

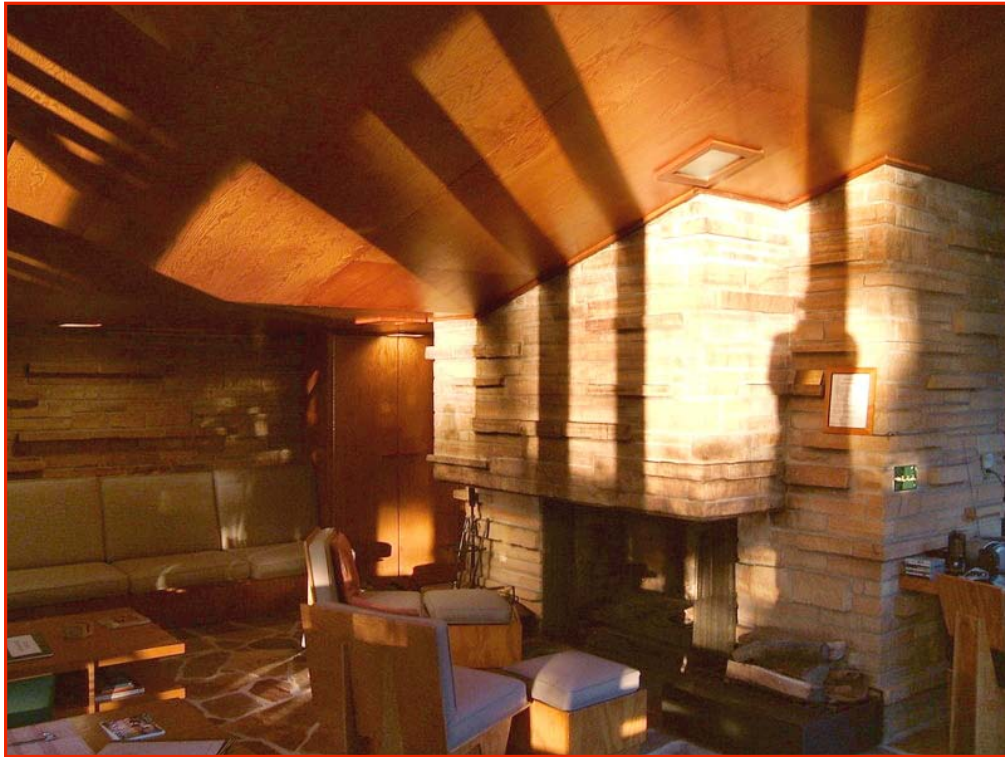
Sandra Shaw, fundraiser for the State Historical Society, provided important advice to SPCC: "You have to determine the future use [of the project] before you can raise any funds. You can't ask someone for money if you can't tell them what you'll be doing with the building once it's finished. Matching funds or grants from the state or federal government should be applied for. No one likes to be the first to give, but everyone is willing to join the crowd. Also, by showing that the state is interested, it is easier to get private individuals to donate."

On the advice of SHA staff, Audrey [Laatsch] contacted State Representative Dale Schultz of Sauk County, who became an advocate for the cottage. He drafted an amendment to the 1989-91 state budget legislation which allocated \$50,000 from the state for a matching funds grant for the cottage. The proposed grant would provide \$25,000 in seed money for rehabilitation with the condition that the SPCC raise a matching \$50,000 in order to receive the second \$25,000 installment. . . . Soon after the governor signed the budget, the SPCC received the initial \$25,000 to begin the long-awaited cottage rehabilitation. Conservancy leaders thus learned early on that having political support for a project can be extremely helpful.

The conservancy also applied for 501(c)(3) status with state and federal governments. This tax filing status exempts a not-for-profit organization from taxes on all income derived through fundraising and asset acquisition. As a 501(c)(3) organization, the SPCC could embark on an aggressive fundraising campaign and membership drive. A major fundraising drive to match the \$50,000 state grant ensued, and in-kind donations, the value of which counted toward the matching grant, were solicited to significantly lower labor and material expenses.

With the state matching grant and 501(c)(3) status approved, the SPCC Board of Directors developed a long-range fundraising plan. By March 1990 the SPCC had developed a brochure which provided potential donors with a mission statement describing the rehabilitation proposal and how contributions would be used. Also included in the brochure was a schedule of donor categories ranging from a \$15 individual membership to a \$1,000 patron.

Next time: Approaching donors, generating publicity, working the network, cocktail parties and t-shirts. ■



◀ Shadows - and - ▶ Reflections

Two photos by Ebbie Azimi and Niloofar Karimi, 2006 Jill Vladick Award winners.



“It is a treat to watch the light patterns both inside and in the woods as they change throughout the day. Looking across the lake was very beautiful and relaxing. It was amazing to watch the light and wind patterns on the lake evolve. At Dusk at least two different animals swam across the lake, leaving a patterned wake.”

— Bruce and Lilly, Middleton, Wisconsin



“It feels like we are living in harmony with nature here. The sun and sunset on the water--the water in general is a calming spiritual part of the ‘house’.”

— Bob and Glory, Chicago, Illinois



“I never dreamed something like this place even existed. It’s like being able to live inside something that was once only in FLW’s mind.”

— Hugh and Ramee, Crystal Lake, Illinois

KRIS VISSER PRESERVATION AWARD

The 2009 recipients of the Kristin Visser Historical Preservation Award are Paul A. Harding, FAIA, and Cheryl Harding, for their work in restoring the E. Arthur Davenport House, in River Forest, Illinois. Jerry Minnich, award chairman, will present the \$5,000 award to the Hardings at the Sunday, June 14th open house tour day at the Seth Peterson Cottage. The Hardings will stay at the cottage that evening and the next, as guests of the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy.

The next 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.

NEW CONSERVANCY CONTACT INFO

We have changed our mail address from the Lake Delton P.O. Box, to our office location. The new address is:

The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy
400 Viking Drive
Reedsburg, WI 53959

We have also changed our voicemail phone number to 877 466-2358. This is a toll-free number, and as before, it is simply a voice mail box. The toll-free number is considerably less expensive for the Conservancy than our former arrange-

ment, and it will also send an e-mail to our Office Administrator when a message is received. This improvement will make it easier and less expensive for callers to contact us, as well as improving our response time.

Our web site address remains the same: <http://www.sethpeterson.org/> We do not have an e-mail address for the Conservancy at this time.

WEBSITE UPDATES COMING SOON

Claire Barnett

Our cottage website will be updated to show the new Conservancy address and phone number. We have a number of other changes in mind that will be implemented over the course of the summer. We hope to start entering current and some older newsletters in a new newsletter section. Eventually, we will post as many of our back editions as we can locate and scan, going back to the early days of the cottage.

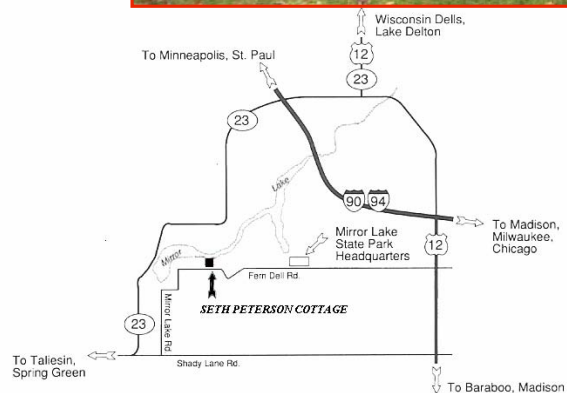
Much later in the summer, we hope to add to the on-line picture gallery, so that you can get a better idea of what different parts of the cottage look like. We also hope to finally add a cottage history section. A new color merchandise page will finally let you see what our cottage products look like. The art print of the original presentation drawing of the cottage by Taliesin Associated Architects has long been available through us, but it has seldom been seen. We have cottage-inspired jewelry, too, that has only been seen at some of our open houses, usually the summer ones where we can set up outside and have more display space. Our new page will finally enable you to view our products without attending an open house tour day.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sunday, **June 7**, 1-3:30 pm, Annual Mirror Lake State Park Open House, Guided Tours, **FREE Admission**
- Sunday, **June 14**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **July 12**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **August 9**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **September 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **October 11**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Possible Fall Color Boat Tour & Reception, 4:30-7:30 pm, \$20
- Sunday, **November 8**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **December 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Directors/Members Annual Meeting 4:30-5:30 pm



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). The Seth Peterson Cottage is located at E9982 Fern Dell Road, Lake Delton, WI



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 cap. Forest Green or Tan w/bright red logo. One size fits all. <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Green <input type="checkbox"/> Tan Mark color. | | | \$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.

