


DESTINATION DUBUQUE

Claire Barnett

Eagle Point Park in the city of Dubuque, Iowa is home to a spectacular collection of Prairie-style buildings. It is less than one hundred miles from Madison, Wisconsin with a travel time of under two hours, making it a perfect location for a late spring or summer get-away trip. The Park will reopen for the season the first weekend in May.

The Park received a two-hundred-thousand-dollar grant under the Works Progress Administration Program in 1934. The project architect and superintendent was Alfred Caldwell, a talented Prairie and landscape architect who was called a “genius” by Jens Jensen and who corresponded with Frank Lloyd Wright and visited him at Taliesin in Wisconsin. He came to Dubuque to apply for the position of Park Superintendent and learned that an architect would be chosen the next day. He stayed up all night drawing the plans for what would become the Bridge Complex, (with the “bridge” spanning the main road and linking Caldwell’s first two structures), and the next day he was awarded the position. Caldwell’s use of native stone and his commitment to craftsmanship created an exceptional group of Prairie-style buildings, but despite his designs being given a WPA design award, he was fired in 1936 because he had offended local politicians. In 2004, the park shelters designed by Caldwell were recognized by the American Institute of Architects as among the most influential structures in Iowa from the decade.

If you plan an overnight trip, the city has some wonderful old downtown restored hotels where you can stay and there are plenty of good places to eat downtown. There is a hillside residential architectural district to drive through and also a hillside inclined railway to ride. The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium is exceptional. In addition to an impressive variety of exhibits, the museum also hosts national traveling exhibitions. Last autumn it hosted the Titanic artifacts and recreated rooms exhibition. 

Eagle Point Park Band Shell



In 1957, a band shell designed by the architectural firm of Paul Rossiter and Vernon Hamm, was constructed. An open-air pavilion and a few other park buildings are also their work.

See centerfold
for more
photos

Eagle Point Park is open from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Friday-Saturday, from the first weekend in May through the fourth weekend in October. There is a one dollar admission fee. All of the buildings can be rented for public use. <http://www.cityofdubuque.org/453/Eagle-Point-Park>

FROM THE PRESIDENT


Kermit Traska

Much has been happening with the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy. Cottage reservations have been popular, we have partnered with PlansMatter, and I have had the opportunity to visit the factory that manufactures Frank Lloyd Wright dinnerware.

People have been planning far in advance to make a reservation for the Seth Peterson Cottage. In all of 2016, there is only one day available in December. Reservations are already filling up from April through October 2017 and there are many reservations already for the summer of 2018. So is there a chance to get a reservation? There are occasional cancellations that may be filled on short notice. You can contact our reservation company, the Sand County Services Company, and get on a waiting list. We certainly appreciate all of the people who come and stay at the Cottage and, as you can tell from the comments from the people who stay, they appreciate the Cottage also.

PlansMatter is a website described elsewhere in this newsletter. The website makes available for rent homes of significant architectural design similar to the Seth Peterson Cottage. While we are currently not in need of additional reservations, their website adds another venue for getting the word out about the Seth Peterson Cottage.

My wife and I have just returned from a vacation in Tucson, Arizona. The friends we were visiting discovered and took us on a tour of the H.F. Coors factory, manufacturers of American-made dinnerware. The tour included a display of their Frank Lloyd Wright “Whirling Arrow” dinnerware. From the Coors’ brochure: “Frank Lloyd Wright’s ‘Whirling Arrow’ design is preserved forever in this dinnerware made in the USA by H.F. Coors. Mr. Wright was inspired by a petroglyph he found while excavating the grounds for Taliesin West. He interpreted the symbol, carved in stone, as ‘two hands clasping together in friendship.’ Wright loved reds and created a color called ‘Cherokee Red.’ He used this color in many of his creations and even had his car painted in Cherokee Red. This exact color has also been added to the ‘Whirling Arrow’ dinnerware. You can enjoy this American-made dinnerware, designed by an American architect, for generations to come.” While we did not purchase a full set of the dinnerware, I do have a Cherokee Red Whirling Arrow coffee cup.

Join us for a tour of the Cottage the second Sunday of each month for our regular Open House from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. We are busy, but not so busy that we can’t take time for your personal tour. Thank you for all of the continued support of the Seth Peterson Cottage. 



Frank Lloyd Wright “Whirling Arrow” dinnerware manufactured by the H.F. Coors factory, Tucson, AZ

MIRROR LAKE STATE PARK REPORT

Ryder Will, Park Superintendent


The 50th Anniversary of the opening of Mirror Lake State Park to the public will occur in 2016. Although the legislation establishing Mirror Lake State Park was passed in 1961, the official opening of the park was not until August 19, 1966, making this year the park’s 50th anniversary. In 1966 only a few trails, campsites, and beach access to the lake were available. The park has now grown to include almost 2200 acres of land holding 150 campsites, 19 miles of trail, a handicapped accessible cabin, a boat landing, world class cross country ski trails, scenic overlooks, and public access to over 70% of the shoreline of Mirror Lake.

One of the original land purchases included an architectural gem, the Seth Peterson Cottage. While the cottage rehabilitation work did not begin until 1989, it has been a part of the park’s story from very near the beginning. Just as the Cottage has needed the help and attention of many dedicated volunteers and benefactors, so, too, has the park benefited from decades of support from a wide range of supporters. Without the vision in the mid 1960’s of setting aside this area for preservation and outdoor recreation, Mirror Lake would likely have a highly developed shoreline with little chance for the public to experience this beautiful area.

Both the Mirror Lake Association and the Mirror Lake Management District need to be thanked. These organizations grew out of generations of private property owners whose care for the lake and, by extension, the park, have proven a great benefit to all. The slow-no-wake regulations, dredging project, sediment trap, weed harvesting, and shoreline improvement are just a few of the recent examples of these local lake-supporting groups.

The Friends of Mirror Lake State Park must also be thanked for providing added value to the park experience through their decades of volunteer work and financial support. The Friends, in partnership with the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, provide all the funding for the park’s naturalist program. A very sincere “thank you” to both groups for bringing a great deal of education, joy and entertainment to thousands of park visitors.

Mirror Lake State Park has seen steady growth in visitation, with many families returning year after year. We hope to see many future generations continue to build memories as we together move into the second half of a century of the park. The beautiful place we call Mirror Lake exists because of the dedication of private land owners, volunteers, visitors, and park staff, who have all made sacrifices of time, money, and property to preserve this incredible natural area. I encourage everyone to take the opportunity of this 50th anniversary to reflect on their own actions and to take the time to appreciate past efforts, and to continue to support the park so that in another fifty years, visitors will see a natural, pristine, and beautiful place similar to what we now have, thanks to the efforts of those that came before the present time.

Please consider joining the Friends of Mirror Lake State Park and Department of Natural Resources staff for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the park's opening on August 19, 2016. There will be a variety of activities taking place at the park amphitheater. More information can be found on our website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/mirrorlake/> or by calling the park office at 608-254-2333. 

MIRROR LAKE ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Mark Blakeslee, President


Winter on Mirror Lake is a special time. This winter has been milder than most, but it still gave us many great opportunities for outside fun!

Just a couple hundred yards from the Seth Peterson Cottage is a Wisconsin State Natural Area called Fern Dell. It is a natural gorge that starts out level and ends at Mirror Lake with fifty-foot cliffs on both sides. In the summer, it is filled with ferns. In the winter, more years than not, Fern Dell gives us some of the most amazing winter spectacles anywhere. Due to snow melt or springs, amazing icicles form over the cliffs. As they form they pick up particles of sand and minerals which give them a beautiful colorful appearance. These ice flows were found all along the trail. However, with the recent warm weather, just like Frosty, they leave and won't be back 'til next year.

The first Saturday of January and February, the Friends of Mirror Lake State Park have their annual candle-light ski outings. Over 3,500 people attended both events this year! Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and hiking are all done on trails lit only by torchlight. Then afterwards everyone enjoys a hot chocolate by a large campfire. It makes for a great evening.

In January, the Delton Sportsmen's Club held their annual ice fishing Fisharee. It was particularly cold this year with temperatures around negative ten. At that temperature, poles freeze up. Still, a few hundred people

showed up to test their skill for bragging rights for the largest fish. The Mirror Lake Association annually gives out a trophy to the largest fish caught by a child under 10 years old. This year, a 0.8 pound bluegill took home the prize. Not necessarily a wall-hanging trophy, but I'm sure it tasted good when it came out of the fry-pan!

Winter can be a great time to spend at the Cottage. Often there are openings for a winter stay at the Cottage. Check out the reservation site on the webpage at SethPeterson.org and perhaps you will have an opportunity to take advantage of the many outdoor activities winter presents. The best part, no mosquitos! 



Icicles form over the cliffs at Fern Dell



Run-off sand and minerals provide the color





Above: Part of the Bridge Room (left) and Indian Room Buildings (right) Below: Southeast Side of Bridge Complex



Below: Stonework Detail

Below: Built-in Tables at the Bridge Complex Annex



EAGLE POINT PARK, DUBUQUE, IOWA



Above: The Band Shell from the Front
Below: North and South Veranda Rooms



Above: Park Entrance Building
Below: Terrace and Restrooms behind the Indian Room



Fall Color Boat Tour and Reception

It is not too early to start thinking about the 2016 Fall Color Boat Tour and Reception that will be on October 9th starting at 4:00 p.m. following the Sunday Cottage open house tours. A \$30 per person fare will include a pontoon boat tour of Mirror Lake as well as hors d'oeuvres around the Cottage fireplace.

Application for reservations may be placed beginning July 1st. To apply for a reservation, call the toll free cottage voice mailbox at 877-466-2358 and leave your name and phone number along with a request for a reservation for the Fall Boat Tour. Your call will be returned in the order in which it was received. Reservations are limited to a maximum of 4 per person, and total attendance is limited to the first 24 paid reservations.

The boat tour and festivities in the Cottage will take place rain or shine. Adverse weather conditions on the lake may preclude the boat tour. The path down to the lake and boat dock is steep and is not handicapped accessible. ☐

Seth Peterson Cottage Available on PlansMatter.com

Connie Lindor, Scott Muellner, AIA

Since our first visit to Taliesin nearly 20 years ago as architecture students, we've toured many Frank Lloyd Wright buildings. But it wasn't until our stay at the Seth Peterson Cottage last year that we had the privilege of two uninterrupted nights alone in his work. Experiencing architecture first-hand has no substitute. Words, photographs, film...nothing can replicate the power of actually being there. Experiencing architecture over a period of time is even more powerful. What happens to the light as the day progresses? How does a heavy snow-fall change things? How about a thunder storm?

We created PlansMatter.com for guests who value exceptional architecture to find and experience architectural accommodations, elevating their stay beyond the ordinary. Designed by masters such as Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as currently practicing architects, accommodations available on PlansMatter have architectural quality, intention and a story to tell. They are well-designed and authentic. Our mission is to make these places easily discoverable and available for people to experience on their own.

Our stay at the Seth Peterson Cottage confirmed how moving this first-hand experience can be. We never imagined contemplating Wright's ideas about the integration of architecture and nature, while sipping wine in front of a roaring fireplace *in a cottage Wright actually designed!* Incredible! Our time there confirmed that good

design can inspire and improve life in both small and large ways. We are thrilled to have the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy's participation in PlansMatter.com, and equally thrilled for the great memories of our two nights at the Cottage! ☐

FROM THE GUEST BOOK

"... To be together as brothers in this magical space has been more precious and necessary than could possibly be imagined. Thank you all for your devotion to Frank & Seth's vision, for the restorative power of the location, and for your exemplary care for the property."

- Trev, Mitch & Owen, Canada & NYC, USA

"... Our stay here has been very relaxing. Being unplugged from the day to day hectic lives we lead has led to great conversation and a chance to appreciate a simpler way of life."

- Don & Jean, Newton, IA

"A lovely night with Frank Lloyd Wright. What could be a more beautiful site? Thank you to the preservationist!"

- Chip & Kathy, Mason City, IA

"What a lovely way to spend our 20th anniversary. Fun and relaxing in a beautiful setting and a truly historic home."

- Michele & Scott

"One of the best Frank Lloyd Wright houses we've ever stayed. As one of the children who stayed here I can gladly say that I had a great time. Our entire family got along, I was never once angry or upset. I didn't care what I looked like or if anyone saw me with my parents because it all is nature around us. I want to come back for sure."

- The Guthries

"Our 5th time here! Always peaceful. Always perfect! We brought our 15 year old son this visit. His words on first seeing Seth Peterson "It looks like a treehouse!" After an enjoyable weekend he felt otherwise."

- Jeff, Juli & Zack, Downers Grove, IL

"The best anniversary getaway in all our 12 years. Fire – Wine – Colors – Sunset. Perfect. Inspiring space where plans come to full color. Enchanting."

- Michael & Kathy

"Thank you uncle Seth, for acting upon your dream of a life here."

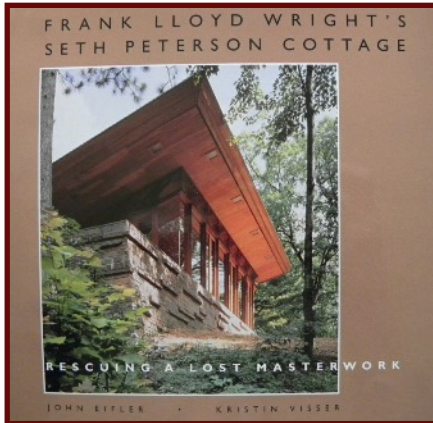
- Will



RESCUING A LOST MASTERWORK

The Cottage Today

This is the nineteenth 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 site work.



When the cottage was dedicated in June 1992, interior

furnishings were not finished. The furniture had not been completed and a bar sink substituted for the yet-to-arrive kitchen sink. Work continued on the final details, but the cottage welcomed its first overnight guests in July 1992. (The first guests slept on a mattress that arrived ten minutes before they did.) Since then, the cottage has been wildly successful. Instead of the hoped-for 36% occupancy—131 days annually—needed to ensure financial stability, the cottage has been occupied more than 325 days per year for more than four years [Note: This book was published in 1997]—a phenomenal 89% occupancy rate. It has received national and international publicity on the ABC television network, in The New York Times, Architectural Digest, and House Beautiful, as well as much regional publicity. Consequently, it has had guests from as far away as Australia. And many guests return for second, third, and even fourth visits. Because of this enthusiastic reception, the cottage is booked well in advance, with popular weekends and holidays reserved up to two years ahead.

Guests are enchanted. “We stand in awe of every detail. You can’t absorb it all at one stay,” wrote one. Another offered, “As a student and admirer of FLW for 30+ years, this has been a wonderful experience for me. I am once again moved by the power of principle in the hands of a genius and the magic interplay of intellect and emotion a building such as this affords. . .” One enjoyed the merger of nature and architecture. “It is truly an inspiration to live in a Wright home for even a short period of time. Words cannot describe all that is experienced here, from the scenic views to the feeling of outdoors while sitting by the fire at night. . .” A winter visitor added, “. . . we sit alone savoring the simple life but feeling so rich. Bare feet on the flagstone floor! Throwing another log on this awesome fireplace. . . A beautiful Wisconsin snowfall, listening to Strauss, and watching the critters.”

The cottage rehabilitation project, and John Eifler and Audrey Laatsch as individuals, have won six awards,

from the Wisconsin Association of Historic Preservation Commissions, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Trust for Historical Preservation, the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, and Wisconsin State Parks.

The popularity of the cottage gives the conservancy financial stability. It has no debts, so all income from the per night rental rate goes toward cottage operations. □

Next time: The concluding excerpt

Support the Preservation Efforts of the Conservancy

Interested in a book on saving the Seth Peterson Cottage or Cottage merchandise? The Cottage Merchandise Order Form is on our website at www.sethpeterson.org, go to the menu item for The Conservancy and select the Gift Shop from the dropdown menu. All sales of merchandise help the Conservancy maintain and preserve the Seth Peterson Cottage. □

WRITINGS

is a publication of The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. for the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright in Mirror Lake State Park.
 Editor: Jerry Minnich, Madison, WI
 Coordinator: Kermit Traska, Oregon, WI
 Design & Production: Alice J. Seeliger, AJS Creative, Brooklyn, WI
 Submit Articles/photos to: Kermit Traska at:
sethpetersoncottage@gmail.com
 Visit us on the web at: www.sethpeterson.org
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Seth-Peterson-Cottage-Conservancy-Inc
 Cottage Voice Mail: 877 466-2358

The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. Board of Directors

Executive Committee

President: Kermit Traska
 First Vice President: Bill Martinelli
 Second Vice President: James Booth
 Treasurer: Paul Wagner
 Secretary: Peter Rott

Members

Claire Barnett, Jim Draeger, Bill Dupuy, Tim Heggland, Dr. Steven Kincaid,Carolyn Kotchi, Raymond Matlosz, Jerry Minnich, Heather Sabin, Cheryl Weston

Ex-officio members

Mark Blakeslee, President, Mirror Lake Association
 Ryder Will, 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.

WRITINGS

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

Address Service Requested



What's Inside...

Destination Dubuque
From the President
Mirror Lake State Park Report
Mirror Lake Association Update
Centerfold: Pictorial of Eagle Point Park,
Dubuque, Iowa
Fall Color Boat Tour & Reception
Seth Peterson Cottage Available on
PlansMatter.com
From the Guest Book
Rescuing a Lost Masterwork Excerpt
Support the Preservation Efforts of
the Conservancy

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, **April 10**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Monday, **April 11** through Friday **15**—Annual Spring Clean Up
Sunday, **May 8**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Sunday, **June 5**, Statewide State Park Open House—Includes Free Admission at the Seth Peterson Cottage and All State Parks, Forests and Trails
Sunday, **June 12**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Sunday, **July 10**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Sunday, **August 14**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Sunday, **Sept. 11**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
Sunday, **October 9**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4 and Fall Color Boat Tour (see details inside).

Join us at one of our monthly Open Houses.
SPCC Members receive free admission.



The Seth Peterson Cottage is located at
E9982 Fern Dell Road
Lake Delton, Wisconsin

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.

Mirror Lake State Park Headquarters
Latitude/Longitude:
43.5613° N 89.8170° W



www.sethpeterson.org