

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wingspread
other names/site number Johnson, Herbert F., House

2. Location

street & number 33 East Four Mile Road ☐ not for publication
city, town Racine ☐ vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Racine code 101 zip code 53402

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Foundation/Center

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Wrightian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Kasota sandstone on rock ballast

walls brick and red plaster, oak and cypress siding

roof red tile

other concrete floors

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

In 1981 the Johnson Foundation in its publication Wingspread accurately described the house:

Visitors approach Wingspread at the entrance of Four Mile Road. The drive, marked by easy turns which follow the land lines of the prairie, crosses a wooded ravine before the building comes into view with its dominant earth colors.

The 12-acre conference center site is extensively landscaped in a manner which follows the natural contour of the Midwestern terrain, with a formal planting in the area near the house. The plantings of evergreens and other trees specified by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1938 have now matured to create a harmonious balance with the architecture. To the observer the effect is one which combines strength with composure.

The Wingspread site is part of a larger, contiguous area on Wind Point, which has been designated as a Wisconsin wildlife refuge. Wind Point is itself a promontory jutting east into Lake Michigan and dominated by a headland lighthouse. Wingspread is therefore within walking distance of Lake Michigan's western coastline. Another feature of Wingspread's grounds is a ribbon of nature walks extending through woods, pasture, the ravine and beside reflecting pools. ...

Architects find particular interest in the zoned plan of the structure and the tall spaces of the central living area flowing upward around the chimney shaft, which extends through the clerestory roof.

Wright called Wingspread "the last of the prairie houses" which he began thirty years earlier. It is the largest and most dramatic of his prairie-inspired homes and draws for its central portion upon the prototype of all prairie houses--the Indian wigwam, with a fire in the center and a hole in the top to let the smoke out.

The domed structure of the former Johnson family residence housed the living areas, with the elliptical chimney stack as the central feature of the massive room. Four wings are flung out from the living area. Originally, these were a master's wing ending in a cantilevered porch and

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

extending, at its opposite end, into a mezzanine overlooking the living room; a children's sleeping wing with its own playroom overlooking the swimming pool; a guest wing to the west; and a service wing.

The wings now are used as conference rooms, including a theatre-conference room for showing films, and offices clustered about the central lounge.

Through his use of widespread wings, Wright laid the basis for the zoned plan of the house, which was the principal departure from his previous house designs. The zoned plan was carried out in the living area despite the great height of the clerestory ceiling about the chimney stack. The structure provides a low-ceiling sitting room under the mezzanine, with a library alcove from which steps lead up to conversational furniture groupings on the long sides of the chimney stack.

The stack offers a separate fireplace to groupings on each of its four faces, as well as one on the mezzanine level. The portion of the central room adjoining the service wing formed the dining area. The great room opens on four sides to terraces through walls of high, narrow glass doors.

A number of the interior walls are finished in "cherokee red," slightly concave brick and rough plaster. The wood in the interior of the building, including several expanses of paneling in the living room, is American oak. The grain of the wood is used to emphasize the horizontal and vertical lines of the architecture.

Exterior walls are formed from the same red brick found on the interior, with cantilevers and balconies of lap siding cut from California cypress, a wood also used in the pergolas, on which there rests a full growth of wild grape vines.

The chimney stack rises in three tiers, pagoda-like, and culminates in a glass lookout or belvedere. From there one can see the 30-acre grounds and Lake Michigan about 1/2 mile to the east.

Footnote

1. Richard Kinch, Wingspread--the Building (Racine, Wis.: The Johnson Foundation, 1981), p. 13-16.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D NHL criteria: 4

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1938

Significant Dates

1938

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Johnson, Herbert F.

Architect/Builder

Wright, Frank Lloyd

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

"Wingspread" and the Johnson's Wax Building in Racine were built at about the same time (1937-1938). Herbert Fisk Johnson was the President of Johnson's Wax Company. Wright considered the Herbert F. Johnson House the finest (and most expensive) house he had built up to that date. It is so completely wedded to its site, rolling grassy slopes and shallow ravines, that it seems to grow naturally from the earth. This large Prairie house sitting squarely on the land has the same surprise feeling upon entering--a sense of expansiveness, of soaring, moving, unending space, rather like a Gothic cathedral. Wright said that the reality of a house is not its walls or roof, but the space within. He spent a lifetime exploding the box-like rooms of traditional houses. He designed integrated, beautiful rooms to live in and extraordinary exterior forms that are inseparable from them. The Johnson house also displays what Wright called the "eloquence of materials," beautifully finished and integrated surfaces of wood, concrete and brick put together with respect and taste.

Hitchcock, in discussing the Herbert Johnson house at Wind Point north of Racine, quoted Wright as saying that it was the last of his Prairie Houses. The house is "zoned" in great radiating arms -- the living quarters in the center, the masters' rooms in one wing, a children's wing, services in the third and guest rooms and garage in the fourth. It is an elaborate expansion of the plan for the Coonley House (1907) in Riverside, Illinois. Resembling a great bird or an ocean liner, it seems to float over the grassy slopes and gentle ravines. The complex was presented by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson to the Johnson Foundation in 1959 and today it is one of the most important educational and cultural conference centers in the Middle West.

Frank Lloyd Wright planned the house so well that no major architectural changes have been necessary in converting the building into a conference center. The grounds also house an outstanding collection of sculpture including works by

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☒ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 11.8 acres

UTM References

A

1	6
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4	3	6	7	5	0
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4	7	3	6	7	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	6
---	---

4	3	7	0	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	3	6	3	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B

1	6
---	---

4	3	7	0	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	3	6	7	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

D

1	6
---	---

4	3	6	7	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	3	6	3	5	0
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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the 11.8 acres that was deeded by the Johnsons to the Foundation in 1959 and includes the house and its immediate grounds.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian

organization History Division, NPS

street & number 1100 L Street, NW

city or town Washington

date 1/29/89

telephone (202) 343-8166

state DC zip code 20013

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section number 8 Page 2

Carl Milles, David Aronson, Robert Cook, Milton Hebald, Berto Lardera and Emilio Greco. The master builder for both the Johnson's Wax Company building and "Wingspread" was Ben Wiltscheck, who executed a number of Wright's works.

Frank Lloyd Wright was ignored after he finished his earthquake-proof Imperial Hotel in Tokyo in 1922. In the 1930s came a series of commissions that would, once again, put him in the forefront of American architecture. Houses like Wingspread and Falling Water were designed and built. This fallow period in the late twenties was not lost on architectural critics: Lewis Mumford praised Wright not only for his pioneering residential work that revolutionized the intent and technique of architectural design the world over but also for a philosophy and insight into human needs of permanent value. Alexander Woollcott, writing in a New Yorker Profile, concluded that "If I were suffered to say who is the one American genius, it would be Frank Lloyd Wright."

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Bibliography

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Giedion, Siegfried. Space, Time and Architecture. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. In the Nature of Materials. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942.

Kinch, Richard. Wingspread--the Building. Racine, Wis.: The Johnson Foundation, 1981.

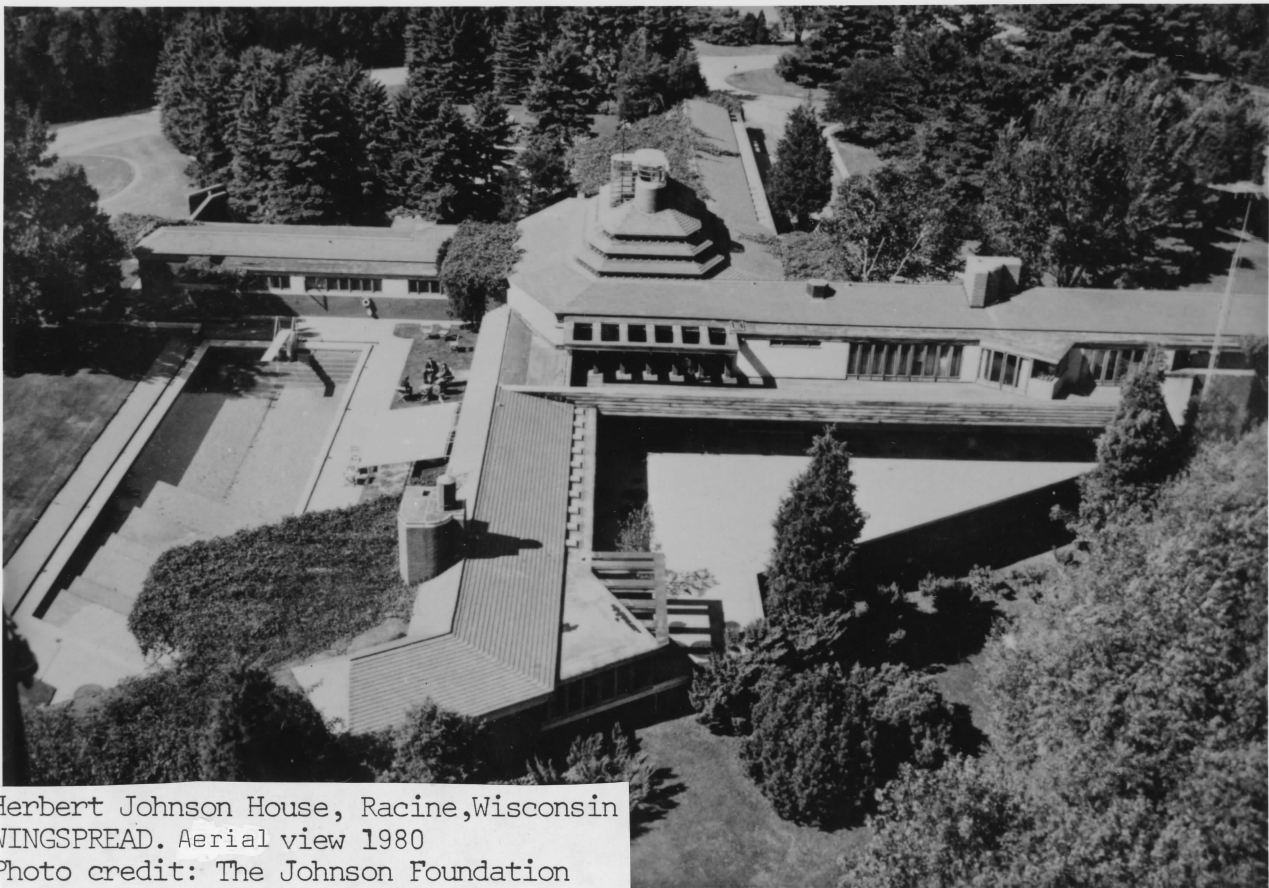
Pfeiffer, Bruce Brooks. Frank Lloyd Wright Monograph, 1937-1941. Photographs by Yukio Futagawa. Tokyo, Japan: A.D.A. Edita, Ltd., 1986.

Twombly, Robert C. Frank Lloyd Wright, An Interpretive Biography. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

Wright, Frank Lloyd. Architectural Forum, 2,2 (January 1938).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 10 Page 1

Part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 27, Township 4 North, Range 23 East, described as follows: Begin at a point in the North line of said Section 27, located South $89^{\circ}43'17.5''$, East 1494.71 feet from the northwest corner of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 27, run thence south $01^{\circ}18'40''$ West 795.00 feet, thence South $45^{\circ}39'17''$ East 379.45 feet, thence South $13^{\circ}56'47''$ East 321.63 feet, thence South $30^{\circ}47'20''$ West 231.85 feet, thence South $22^{\circ}33'49''$ West 230.33 feet, thence South $01^{\circ}25'43''$ East 29.54 feet, thence North $88^{\circ}51'06''$ West 356.19 feet, thence North $00^{\circ}34'14''$ West 475.89 feet, thence South $89^{\circ}42'46''$ West 149.94 feet, thence 371.92 feet Northeasterly on a curve of Westerly convexity whose long chord bears North $21^{\circ}06'28''$ East a distance of 364.45 feet, thence North $41^{\circ}06'46''$ East 162.96 feet, thence 236.54 feet Northeasterly on a curve of Easterly convexity whose long chord bears north $21^{\circ}34'48''$ East a distance of 231.64 feet, thence North $01^{\circ}18'40''$ East 655.00 feet, thence South $89^{\circ}43'17.5''$ East 50.00 feet to the point of beginning; containing 11.831 acres, more or less.



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Aerial view 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. ~~Aerial~~ view 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation

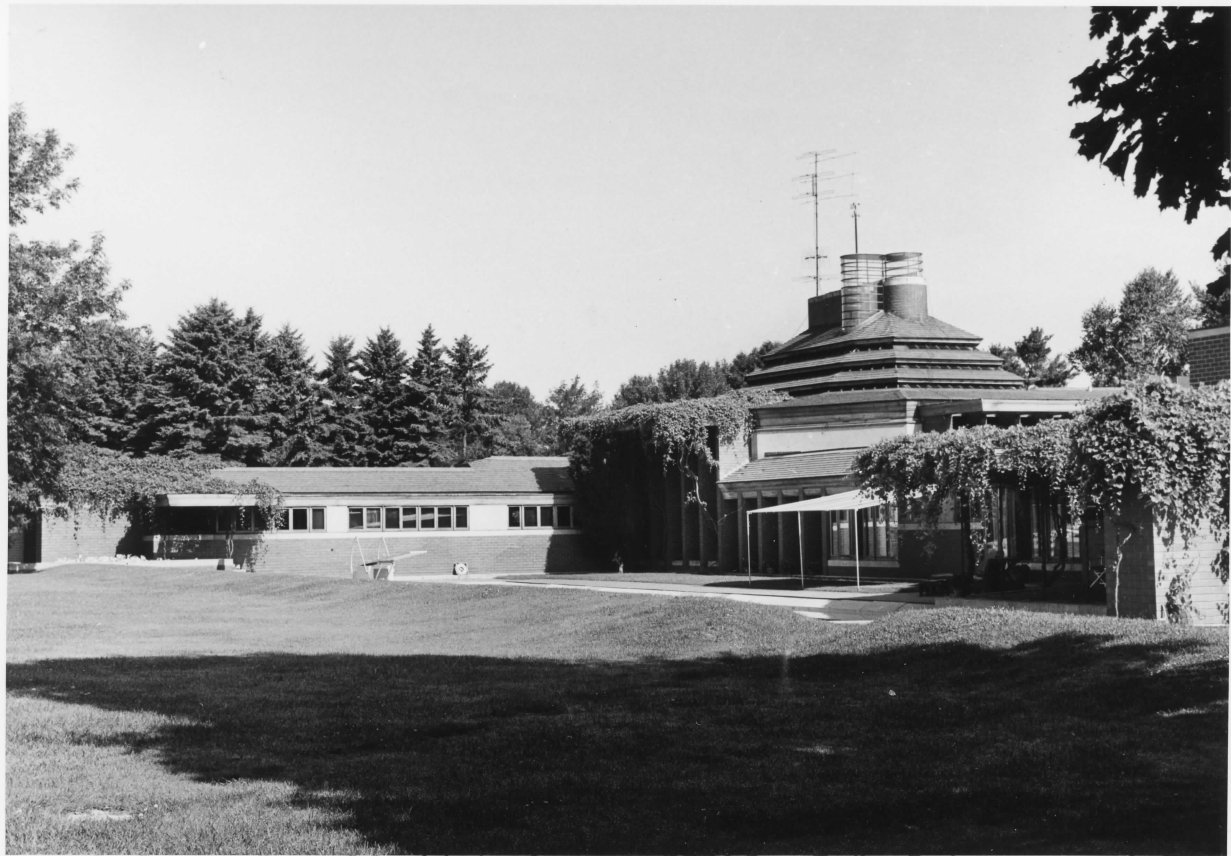


Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Exterior from garden 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Exterior from garden 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation

credit: The Johnson Foundation



PHOTOGRAPHING DEPT

18758 - 1

Johnson Foundation
Marina, Wisconsin

JOHNSON FOUNDATION PHOTOGRAPH

Negative Number _____

Event _____

Date _____ Location _____

Persons in Photograph (Left to Right) _____

Wingspread exterior photo

Taken by Al Krescanko ← _____



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Interior Central Fireplace 1980
Photo Credit: The Johnson Foundation



← 05 2.0 5 1/2" →

Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Interior Central Fireplace 1980
Photo Credit: The Johnson Foundation

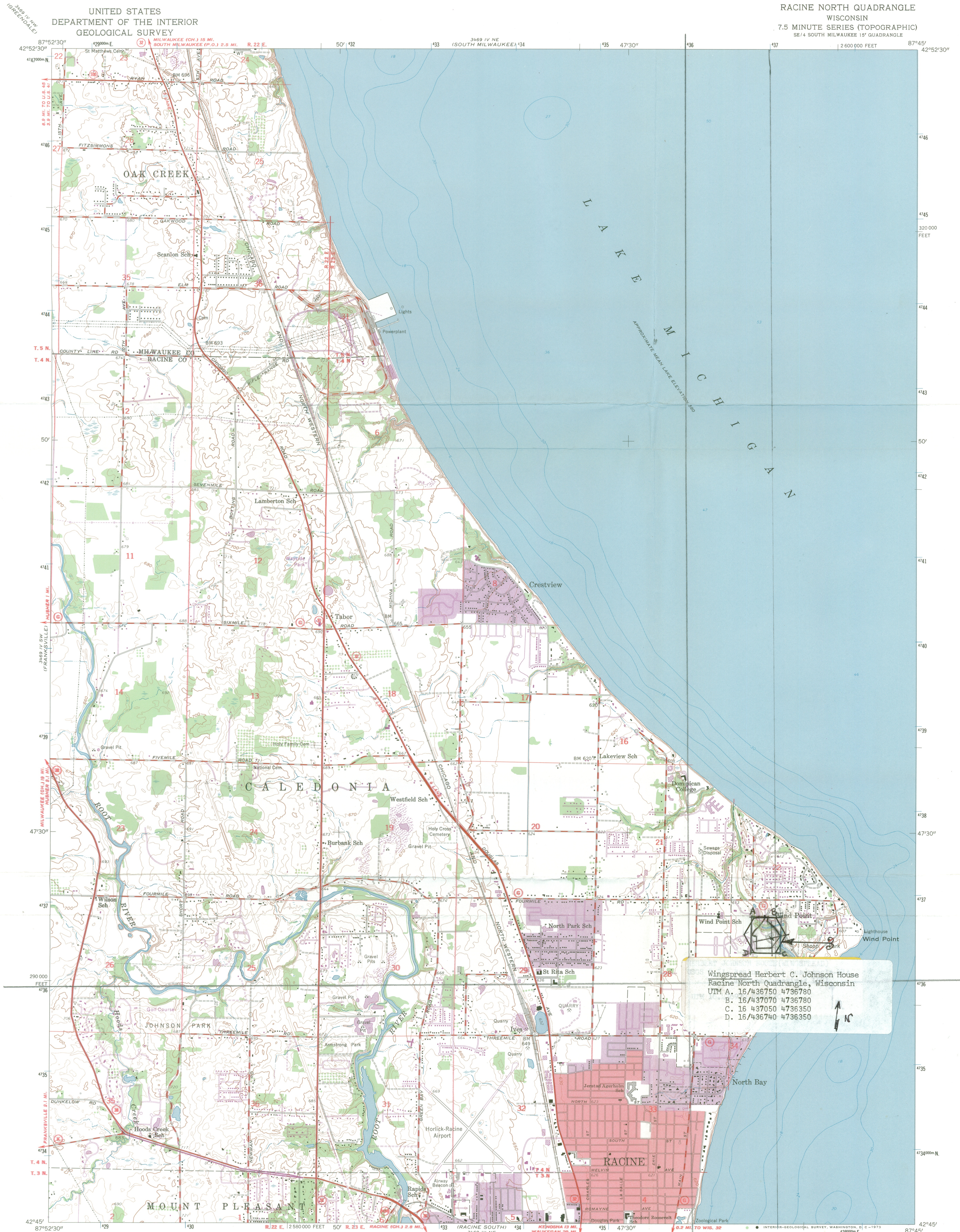


"Wingbread"
Racine, Wisconsin

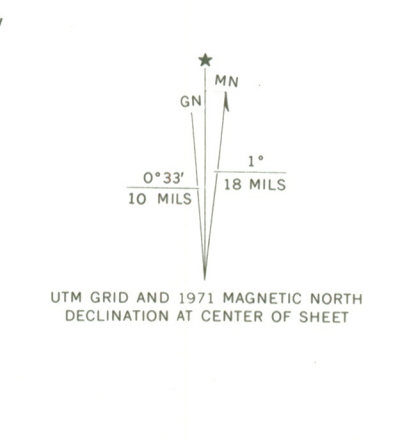
Johnson Foundation Photograph

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

RACINE NORTH QUADRANGLE
WISCONSIN
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE 1/4 SOUTH MILWAUKEE 15' QUADRANGLE



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
Aerial photographs taken 1955. Field check 1958
Hydrography compiled from U. S. Lake Survey chart 74 (1957)
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1971. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



SCALE 1:24000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS 578 FEET
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
AND BY THE WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
State Route ———
RACINE NORTH, WIS.
SE 1/4 SOUTH MILWAUKEE 15' QUADRANGLE
N 4245—W 8745/7.5
1958
PHOTOREVISED 1971
AMS 3469 IV SE—SERIES V 861

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401

August 6, 1975

Miss Carolyn Pitts
Architectural Historian
Architectural Site Survey
National Park Service
U. S. Department of Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Miss Pitts:

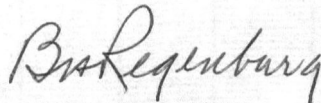
As indicated in our telephone conversation today, we have enclosed a legal description of the property owned by The Johnson Foundation, Inc., on which the conference center Wingspread is located.

We are also enclosing eight photographs of the building, and, as an item of interest, a picture of Frank Lloyd Wright with a scale model of Wingspread. A narrative description of Wingspread, a schedule of past Wingspread conferences, and a program report of The Johnson Foundation complete the package of materials. Color slides of Wingspread will be sent as soon as possible.

In our telephone conversation yesterday we indicated that the site of Wingspread is in the First Congressional District of Wisconsin. The address is 33 East Four Mile Road, Racine, Wisconsin 53402. (53401 is also acceptable, as that is the zip code for the post office boxes.)

Any further communications on this matter may be directed to Mr. Leslie Paffrath, President of The Johnson Foundation.

Yours truly,



B. H. Regenburg
Administrative Consultant

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION, INC.
Location of Wingspread

All of the Grantor's right, title and interest in and to the following described real estate situated in the Village of Wind Point, Racine County, State of Wisconsin:

10

Part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 27, Township 4 North, Range 23 East, described as follows: Begin at a point in the North line of said Section 27, located South $89^{\circ}43'17.5''$ East 1494.71 feet from the Northwest corner of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 27, run thence South $01^{\circ}18'40''$ West 795.00 feet, thence South $45^{\circ}39'17''$ East 379.45 feet, thence South $13^{\circ}56'47''$ East 321.63 feet, thence South $30^{\circ}47'20''$ West 231.85 feet, thence South $22^{\circ}33'49''$ West 230.33 feet, thence South $01^{\circ}25'43''$ East 29.54 feet, thence North $88^{\circ}51'06''$ West 356.19 feet, thence North $00^{\circ}34'14''$ West 475.89 feet, thence South $89^{\circ}42'46''$ West 149.94 feet, thence 371.92 feet Northeasterly on a curve of Westerly convexity whose long chord bears North $21^{\circ}06'28''$ East a distance of 364.45 feet, thence North $41^{\circ}06'46''$ East 162.96 feet, thence 236.54 feet Northeasterly on a curve of Easterly convexity whose long chord bears North $21^{\circ}34'48''$ East a distance of 231.64 feet, thence North $01^{\circ}18'40''$ East 655.00 feet, thence South $89^{\circ}43'17.5''$ East 50.00 feet to the point of beginning; containing 11.8310 acres, more or less.

2-Way Memo

Subject: NHL Nominations

INSTRUCTIONS

Use routing symbols whenever possible.

SENDER (Originator of message):

Use brief, informal language.

Conserve space.

Forward original and one copy.

RECEIVER (Replier to message):

Reply below the message, keep one copy, return one copy.

To : Architectural Historian Pitts

DATE OF MESSAGE	ROUTING SYMBOL
7/20/88	
SIGNATURE OF ORIGINATOR	
<i>Ben Levy</i>	
TITLE OF ORIGINATOR	
Senior Historian	

FOLD

MESSAGE

FOLD

Regarding your memo of 7/19/88, thank you for the status report.

About the Herbert Johnson House in Racine: Have you visited it. If not you'll have to defer it until you've finished the backlog. Besides we would have to unload a series of notice letters at this time and the backlog is too much. I recommend that we hold off on this until after we have the Fall meeting stuff complete and on the way.

It is no longer possible to prepare your architectural package or any of the individual nominations for the Fall meeting. July 19 was the deadline for completed work. Let's pace ourself for a sizable package in the Spring.

REPLY

7/21/88. WINGSPREAD. I saw the property in 1975. After checking carefully with my architectural/ historian network I am told that it is in prime condition and they would be delighted to be considered again. It was turned down because it wasn't 50 years old. It is on Charles Montooth's list of the best of FLW's work. See Board Minutes attached. The nomination is in order except I want to add to the statement of significance a bit. *No problem.*

*Alright
let's do it
B*

From :

DATE OF REPLY	ROUTING SYMBOL
7/21/88	
SIGNATURE OF REPLIER	
<i>Candyn Pitts</i>	
TITLE OF REPLIER	
Architectural Historian	

OPTIONAL FORM 27 (Rev. 7-81)

GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

NSN 7540-00-082-2447

5027-107

1. RETAINED BY ADDRESSEE



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

October 8, 1975

Memorandum

To: Secretary of the Interior

From: Chairman, Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments

Subject: National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings:
Architecture

The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments at its 73rd meeting in Washington, D. C., October 6-8, 1975, having carefully evaluated a study of properties associated with the subtheme on Architecture, submits the following statement with recommendations:

A. Of the properties included in the study, the following are recognized as nationally significant in illustrating the history of the United States, and it is recommended that they be designated national historic landmarks:

Illinois

1. Reliance Building, Chicago
- 2. Leiter II Building, Chicago
3. Marquette Building, Chicago
4. Glessner House, Chicago
5. Frank Lloyd Wright House and Studio, Oak Park
- 6. Dana House, Springfield

Iowa

- 7. Merchant's National Bank, Grinnell
- 8. Van Allen Store, Clinton
- 9. Old Capitol, Iowa City



Minnesota

- 10. National Farmers' Bank, Owatonna

Nebraska

- 11. Capitol, Lincoln

Ohio

- 12. Martin Baum House, Cincinnati

Pennsylvania

- 13. United States Naval Home, Philadelphia

Wisconsin

- 14. Farmers' and Merchants' Union Bank, Columbus
- 15. Bradley House, Madison
- 16. Administration Building and Research Tower-S.C. Johnson Company, Racine
- 17. Taliesin East, Spring Green

B. Other Recommendations:

- 1. That the Manhattan Building, Fisher Building, Old Colony Building, and Monadnock Building, Chicago, Illinois, be designated as comprising the South Dearborn Street-Printing House Row Historic District.
- 2. That the Johnson Foundation, "Wingspread," Racine, Wisconsin, be given further study within the criterion ✓ on historical perspective of 50 years.

Steven L. Rose
Steven Rose

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

August 18, 1988

Ms. Carolyn Pitts
History Division (418)
National Parks Service
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

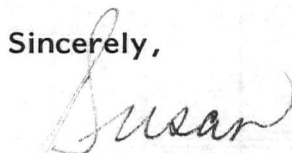
Dear Ms. Pitts:

I'm pleased that you received our slides and photos of Wingspread, and am enclosing another set of exterior slides that I think you'll enjoy. I hope that they'll reach you in time for your committee meeting. Please feel free to arrange the slides however you feel it best presents our building. We think it's a spectacular place and that pictures can't begin to show its real beauty, but I am pleased with what the photographer did in capturing some of the architectural significance of the building.

As best as we could, my colleagues and I have outlined the property boundaries which comprise the 11.8 acres of our property. However, you might take into account the fact that back in the 1930s when Frank Lloyd Wright was commissioned to build a house for Mr. Johnson, the Johnson's owned a much larger parcel of land, including a farm adjacent to the property, and also a parcel which has now become a wildlife preserve. None of those "additional acres" were deeded to The Johnson Foundation in 1959 when the building was given to us. The 11.8 acres make up that portion that was deeded to the Foundation. Therefore, it is difficult to say exactly what property was Wright's conception of a "building site" in 1937 -- nevertheless, for the past 50+ years, this has been the Wingspread site, and I think you can safely consider it as the appropriate plot for your purposes. I have asked some other staff members to review this information, and if it's different from what I've enclosed, I'll let you know.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. We do appreciate your attention.

Sincerely,



Susan Poulsen Krogh
Director, Public Information

Enclosures

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

August 19, 1988

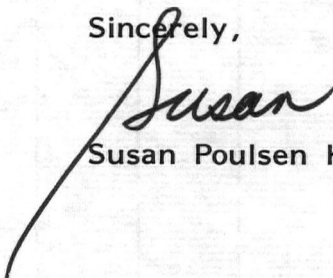
Ms. Carolyn Pitts
NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ms. Pitts:

I hope that this is what you've been looking for, and that it will be helpful in your process. We were able to find the document in our service building records cabinet. I trust that a xerox copy will suffice; if not, please let me know and I'll try to get a more official copy for you.

Again, thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan Poulsen Krogh

H34(418)

NOV 4 1988

Mr. Jeff Dean, Director
Historic Preservation Division
State Historical Society
816 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Dear Mr. Dean:

We wish to inform you that the National Park Service is studying the property identified on the enclosed sheet to determine its potential for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The National Historic Landmarks Program recognizes sites of national significance in the Nation's history, architecture, archeology, and culture. Each Landmark receives a certificate of designation; owners may also apply for a bronze plaque.

National Historic Landmark designation follows three steps: study, which requires a visit to the property and preparation of a nomination; review of the nomination by the National Park System Advisory Board; and a decision by the Secretary of the Interior on the Board's recommendations.

When we complete our study of the property, you will receive a copy of it. At that time you will have 60 days to submit your views in writing if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2) and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). We also call your attention to the supplemental information that appears on the enclosed sheet.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin Levy

for

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosures

PROPERTY TO BE STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

JOHNSON, HERBERT F., HOUSE (Wingspread). Racine, Wisconsin

Mr. Bray

☒ As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

Mr. Grady

Mr. Dean

☒ In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

While you may comment at this time, you may wish to wait until the study is completed and transmitted to you. You are, of course, welcome to consult us at any time. If you wish to respond at this time, please address your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

If you have general questions regarding the National Historic Landmarks Program you may contact Ben Levy at the History Division address given above, (202) 343-8164 or FTS: 343-8164. Architectural historian Carolyn Pitts will prepare the study of the property. If you have questions concerning the study, you may contact her at (202) 343-8166 or FTS 343-8166.

H34(418)

NOV 8 1988

Honorable Les Aspin
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Aspin:

We wish to inform you that the National Park Service is studying the property identified on the enclosed sheet to determine its potential for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The National Historic Landmarks Program recognizes sites of national significance in the Nation's history, architecture, archeology, and culture. Each Landmark receives a certificate of designation; owners may also apply for a bronze plaque.

National Historic Landmark designation follows three steps: study, which requires a visit to the property and preparation of a nomination; review of the nomination by the National Park System Advisory Board; and a decision by the Secretary of the Interior on the Board's recommendations.

When we complete our study of the property, you will receive a copy of it. At that time you will have 60 days to submit your views in writing if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2) and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). We also call your attention to the supplemental information that appears on the enclosed sheet.

Sincerely,

s/ William Penn Mott, Jr.

William Penn Mott, Jr.
Director

Enclosures

PROPERTY TO BE STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

JOHNSON, HERBERT F., HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin

☐ As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

☒ In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

While you may comment at this time, you may wish to wait until the study is completed and transmitted to you. You are, of course, welcome to consult us at any time. If you wish to respond at this time, please address your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

If you have general questions regarding the National Historic Landmarks Program you may contact Ben Levy at the History Division address given above, (202) 343-8164 or FTS: 343-8164. Architectural historian Carolyn Pitts will prepare the study of the property. If you have questions concerning the study, you may contact her at (202) 343-8166 or FTS 343-8166.

H34(418)

JAN 24 1989

Honorable Bob Kasten
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kasten:

We are pleased to inform you that the National Park Service has completed the study of the property identified on the enclosed sheet for the purpose of nominating it for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark. We enclose a copy of the study report. The National Park System Advisory Board will consider the nomination during its next meeting, at the time and place indicated on the enclosure. The Board will make its recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior based upon the criteria of the National Historic Landmarks Program.

You have 60 days to submit your views in writing, if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and then inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations for his final action.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the criteria for designation (Sec. 65.4), the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2), and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). Should you wish to comment, please send your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127.

Sincerely,

Bennie C. Keel

(for)

William Penn Mott, Jr.
Director

Enclosures

PROPERTY STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

JOHNSON, HERBERT F., HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin

Mr. Bray ☒ As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to the designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

Everyone ☒ In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above
else you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

The above property will be considered for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park System Advisory Board at a meeting on Monday, April 24, 1989 at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room M09 of the Old Post Office Pavilion (Nancy Hanks Center), 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. Should you wish to obtain information about the meeting, or about the National Historic Landmarks Program, please contact Ben Levy at the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, 202-343-8164 or FTS-343-8164.

If you have questions about the study report, you may contact Ms. Carolyn Pitts at the above address, (202) 343-8166 or FTS 343- 8166.

H34(418)

FEB 10 1989

Mr. Charles W. Bray, President
The Johnson Foundation
P.O. Box 547
Racine, Wisconsin 53401-0547

Dear Mr. Bray:

We are pleased to inform you that the National Park Service has completed the study of the property identified on the enclosed sheet for the purpose of nominating it for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark. We enclose a copy of the study report. The National Park System Advisory Board will consider the nomination during its next meeting, at the time and place indicated on the enclosure. The Board will make its recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior based upon the criteria of the National Historic Landmarks Program.

You have 60 days to submit your views in writing, if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and then inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations for his final action.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the criteria for designation (Sec. 65.4), the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2), and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). Should you wish to comment, please send your comments to me, at the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin Levy

for

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosures

PROPERTY STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

JOHNSON, HERBERT F., HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin

Mr. Bray ☒ As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to the designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

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If you have questions about the study report, you may contact Ms. Carolyn Pitts at the above address, (202) 343-8166 or FTS 343- 8166.



THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

Jeff Dean
State Historic Preservation Officer

816 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
608/262-1339

23 February 1989

Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian
National Park Service
History Division (418)
P.O. Box 37127
Washington DC 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Bearss:

Thank you for providing our office with a copy of the study report documentation for the National Historic Landmark designation of the HERBERT F. JOHNSON HOUSE / WINGSPREAD in Wind Point, near Racine, Wisconsin. The Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, is in full support of the nomination and recognition of this major building designed by Wisconsin's native son, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Wingsread, the Herbert Johnson House, is clearly among Wright's finest houses and is, therefore, worthy of designation as a National Historic Landmark. The "last of Wright's prairie houses," the residence has long been identified, within this state, as one of Wright's and this century's most significant residential designs.

The building continues to serve architecture and historic preservation in that it serves regularly as a site for conferences and meetings for organizations working in these areas. It was, for example, the birthplace of the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation a few years ago. In April it will be the site for a meeting of owners of Wright buildings interested in forming a Frank Lloyd Wright conservancy.

If you have any questions or if our office can be of any further assistance please call me at (608) 262-0746.

Sincerely,

Jeff Dean
State Historic Preservation Officer

JMD:moi

MAR 3 1989

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

March 15, 1989

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Mr. Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian
National Park Service
United States Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Bearss:

I am replying to your letter of February 10, 1989, reference H34(418). In that communication, you inform us that the National Park Service has completed its study of the Herbert F. Johnson house (Wingspread), currently owned by The Johnson Foundation, for the purpose of nominating it for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark. You solicit our comments.

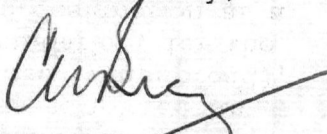
We are pleased to inform you that we would look with warm approval on the designation of Wingspread as a National Historic Landmark. It is one of Frank Lloyd Wright's more significant architectural achievements and we are proud to be associated with it.

We would encourage the National Park System Advisory Board to consider the proposal favorably at its next meeting.

We are assured, on the basis of a telephone discussion between Mr. Ben Levy of your staff and Mr. Harold Greiveldinger of The Foundation's staff, that our right in, and use of, the property will not be constrained by this designation.

With every good wish and in the anticipation of hearing from you following the Advisory Board's meeting in April, I am

yours sincerely,


Charles W. Bray

MAR 20 1989



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

TAKE
PRIDE IN
AMERICA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30(418)

MAY 17 1989

Memorandum

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks *Brdunlop*
30 MAY 1989

FROM: Acting Director, National Park Service *KVR*

SUBJECT SUMMARY: Designation of 19 privately owned properties as National Historic Landmarks--Request for Secretarial Action

DISCUSSION:

At a meeting on April 24, 1989, the National Park System Advisory Board recommended designation of the following privately owned properties as National Historic Landmarks:

MARITIME THEME STUDY

1. DELTA QUEEN, New Orleans, Louisiana
2. W.P. SNYDER, Marietta, Ohio
3. USS JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, Fall River, Massachusetts
4. U-505, Chicago, Illinois
5. USS CLAMAGORE, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

ARCHITECTURE THEME STUDY

1. NIGHTINGALE-BROWN HOUSE, Providence, Rhode Island
2. CHAUTAUQUA HISTORIC DISTRICT, Chautauqua, New York
3. GRAND HOTEL, Mackinac Island, Michigan
4. MARY FISK STOUGHTON HOUSE, Cambridge, Massachusetts
5. FLATIRON BUILDING, New York, New York
6. THE NEWS (Daily News) BUILDING, New York, New York
7. MCGRAW HILL BUILDING, New York, New York
8. FISHER BUILDING, Detroit, Michigan
9. GUARDIAN BUILDING, Detroit, Michigan
10. CRANBROOK, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
11. HERBERT JOHNSON HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin
12. HANNA-HONEYCOMB HOUSE, Stanford, California
13. ALDEN DOW HOUSE AND STUDIO, Midland, Michigan
14. FOX THEATER, Detroit, Michigan

In accordance with National Historic Landmarks Program regulations, the Board reviewed the studies nominating these properties for Landmark status and found that the properties meet National Historic Landmarks Program criteria. The Board, therefore, voted to recommend that they be designated as National Historic Landmarks. None of the parties required to be notified of a Landmark nomination proposal objects to these nominations.

I recommend that you approve the Board's recommendation and designate as National Historic Landmarks the 19 privately owned properties listed above.

Approve

Manuel Lopez

Disapprove

Date

JUN 29 1989

Date

Attachments

Prepared by: Patty Milner ext.: 343-8172

H34(418)

AUG 23 1989

Mr. Charles W. Bray, President
The Johnson Foundation
P.O. Box 547
Racine, Wisconsin 53401-0547

Dear Mr. Bray:

I am pleased to inform you that the property identified on the enclosed sheet has been found to possess national significance in the history of the United States. As a result, the Secretary of the Interior has designated it a National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of landmark designation is to identify and recognize nationally significant sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them. Landmarks are chosen after careful study by the National Park Service. They are evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board and designated by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Designation as a National Historic Landmark automatically places a property in the National Register of Historic Places, if it is not already so listed, and extends to it the safeguards and benefits provided by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and other Federal laws protecting historic properties.

We are pleased to include this property on the roll of National Historic Landmarks as a significant representative of our Nation's heritage.

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosure

The Secretary of the Interior designated the following property a National Historic Landmark on June 29, 1989:

HERBERT F. JOHNSON HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin

Mr.
Bray

☒ A certificate attesting to the national significance of the property and the Secretary's designation of it as a National Historic Landmark will be sent to you, as the owner. You are also eligible to receive a bronze plaque to commemorate its designation. Copies of the plaque application form are enclosed. Please complete the form in triplicate and return two copies to the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. You may retain the third copy for your records.

Unless you specify otherwise, both the certificate and the plaque will bear the name of the property as it appears above. Both plaque and certificate have standard texts, except for the name of the property (a maximum of two lines) and the year of designation, which appears on the plaque. If you have questions about the certificate or plaque, such as the precise text to appear, please contact James Charleton at the above address, or by telephone (202)343-8165 or FTS: 343-8165.

The National Park Service will be pleased to assist you if you wish to arrange a ceremony for the presentation of the plaque. Such a ceremony should be scheduled a minimum of several months after notice of designation to provide time to cast the plaque and to arrange the participation of appropriate officials in the ceremony.

Everyone ☒ The owner of a Landmark receives a certificate of designation, and, upon
Else application, will also be awarded a bronze plaque. We are notifying the owner of the property's designation and providing the appropriate application forms.

H34(418)

AUG 25 1989

Honorable Herbert Kohl
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kohl:

I am pleased to inform you that the property identified on the enclosed sheet has been found to possess national significance in the history of the United States. As a result, the Secretary of the Interior has designated it a National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of landmark designation is to identify and recognize nationally significant sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them. Landmarks are chosen after careful study by the National Park Service. They are evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board and designated by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

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We are pleased to include this property on the roll of National Historic Landmarks as a significant representative of our Nation's heritage.

Sincerely,

/Sgd/Jerry L. Rogers

Associate Director

Enclosure

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HERBERT F. JOHNSON HOUSE (Wingspread), Racine, Wisconsin

- ☐ A certificate attesting to the national significance of the property and the Secretary's designation of it as a National Historic Landmark will be sent to you, as the owner. You are also eligible to receive a bronze plaque to commemorate its designation. Copies of the plaque application form are enclosed. Please complete the form in triplicate and return two copies to the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. You may retain the third copy for your records.

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- ☒ The owner of a Landmark receives a certificate of designation, and, upon application, will also be awarded a bronze plaque. We are notifying the owner of the property's designation and providing the appropriate application forms.

H34(418)

JAN 12 1990

Mr. Charles W. Bray, President
The Johnson Foundation
Racine, Wisconsin 53401-0547

Dear Mr. Bray:

We are pleased to have received your application for the bronze plaque identifying Wingspread (Herbert F. Johnson House), Wind Point, Wisconsin, as a National Historic Landmark.

The Regional Offices of the National Park Service coordinate the presentation of National Historic Landmark plaques. Therefore, we are notifying the Rocky Mountain Regional Office of your application, with the request that they proceed to order and provide the bronze plaque and National Historic Landmark certificate. If you have any questions regarding this issue, you may contact:

Mr. Greg Kendrick
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
12795 W. Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225
(303)-969-2875

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

cc: 1200 (RMRO) G. Kendrick
001 RF
400 RF
418 Pitts
418 PLAQUES AND CERTIFICATES (NHL) (w/c inc.)
418 WINGSPREAD (NHL) " "

JHCharleton:gm:12/18/89
thomas 23/59

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 30, 1989

Chief
Division of History
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Sir:

As the owner(s) of Wingspread located in the Village of Wind Point, County of Racine, State of Wisconsin, we hereby make application for a bronze plaque identifying the property as a National Historic Landmark. Both the plaque and certificate should carry the following inscription:

**WINGSPREAD
(Herbert F. Johnson House)**

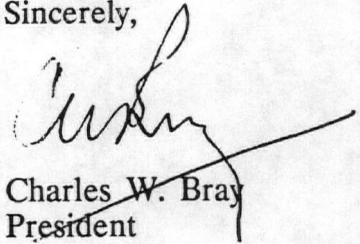
1. Fully conscious of the high responsibility to the Nation that goes with the ownership and care of a property classified as having national significance and worthy of National Historic Landmark status, we agree to preserve, so far as practicable and to the best of our ability, the historical values of the site that satisfy the criteria for national significance.
2. We agree to permit periodic inspection of the property by a representative of the National Park Service for the purpose of monitoring its integrity and the nature and degree of any threats thereto.
3. We agree that, should the Landmark designation ever be revoked in accordance with the procedures outlined in the National Historic Landmarks regulations, the bronze plaque and the certificate of designation will be surrendered upon request to the National Park Service.

SEP 5 1989
M/-

Chief
Division of History
National Park Service
P. 2 of 2

4. We further agree to affix the plaque for public view and in an appropriate manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'C. W. Bray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles W. Bray
President

H34(418)

JAN 12 1990

Memorandum

To: National Historic Landmark Coordinator
Rocky Mountain Regional Office

From: Chief Historian **Edwin C. Bearss**

Subject: National Historic Landmark Plaque Application

A single copy is attached of the application and related correspondence from the owner regarding the plaque identifying this National Historic Landmark:

WINGSPREAD (HERBERT F. JOHNSON HOUSE), Wind Point, Wisconsin

We ask you to contact the owner and arrange to order and provide the plaque from the Regional budget. We will provide the requisite National Historic Landmark certificate.

The Department would appreciate being advised of arrangements made to present the National Historic Landmark plaque. Every effort should be made to coordinate any ceremony with the availability of high-level Departmental staff and to secure the participation of Members of Congress who represent the locality.

Attachments

cc: 001 RF
400 RF
418 Pitts
418 PLAQUES AND CERTIFICATES (NHL) (w/c inc.)
418 WINGSPREAD (NHL) "

JHCharleton:gmg:12/18/89
thomas 23/55

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 30, 1989

Chief
Division of History
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Sir:

As the owner(s) of Wingspread located in the Village of Wind Point, County of Racine, State of Wisconsin, we hereby make application for a bronze plaque identifying the property as a National Historic Landmark. Both the plaque and certificate should carry the following inscription:

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(Herbert F. Johnson House)**

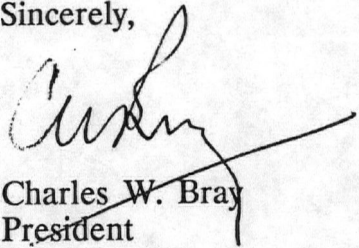
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SEP 5 1989
mt

Chief
Division of History
National Park Service
P. 2 of 2

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Charles W. Bray
President

Herbert Johnson House

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53401-0547

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 5, 1990

Mr. Dale B. Engquist
Superintendent
United States Dept. of the Interior
National Park Service
Midwest Region - Indiana Dunes
Porter, Indiana

Dear Mr. Engquist:

Following up my earlier telephone conversation with you, The Johnson Foundation will not have a formal public unveiling ceremony for the designation of **Wingspread as a National Historic Landmark.**

We sincerely appreciate your kind offer of attendance but we will not require a representative from the Park Service.

Again, thank you for your help and please do stop for a tour of Wingspread if you are ever in southeastern Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Reba Pilgrim
Secretary to the President

C: Edwin Bearss, Washington ✓

MAR 8 1990
W

Removed for NHL book project

R. J. J. 10/22/98



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Interior, central fireplace
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation 1980

3 1/2'

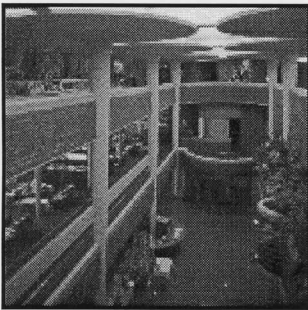
→ LET HIM CLIMB



SC JOHNSON WAX BUILDING RACINE, WISCONSIN

■ Since its opening on April 22, 1939, the SC Johnson Wax Administration Building has been a "mecca" for tourists, architects and Frank Lloyd Wright devotees from around the world. Today the building remains in use as the international headquarters for SC Johnson Wax.

■ The bricks used in the building are unusual in that more than 200 sizes and shapes of brick were made to form the angles and curves used by Wright. Even their color, Cherokee Red, was specified by Wright.



The Great Workroom, which covers nearly one-half acre, is the main office area. Though it has many unique features, two of the most prominent are the slim dendriform columns that support the roof, and glass tubing which replaces conventional windows.

Address

14th and Franklin Street, Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Reservations

Required

Season

All year - Tuesday through Friday

Memorial Day through Labor Day - Tuesday through Saturday

Days and hours

10am, 11:15am; 1pm, 2:15pm

Admission

Free

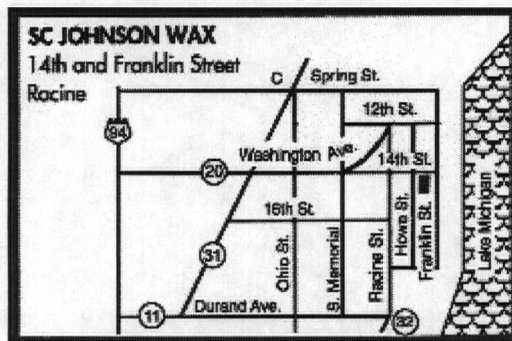
Information

(414) 260-2154 - SC JOHNSON WAX Tour Office

800-C-RACINE - For local accomodations and visitor information.

Please mention this Internet as your source for these numbers or use the SC Johnson Wax Internet site: <http://www.scjohnsonwax.com>

Locator map



**RETURN
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[Return to Heritage Tour Index page](#)



Johnson Wey Foundation

"Wingspread"

Racine, Wisconsin

photo by Arthur P. Haas, Racine WI



Johnson Wax Foundation
"Wingspread"
Racine Wisconsin

photographer: ??

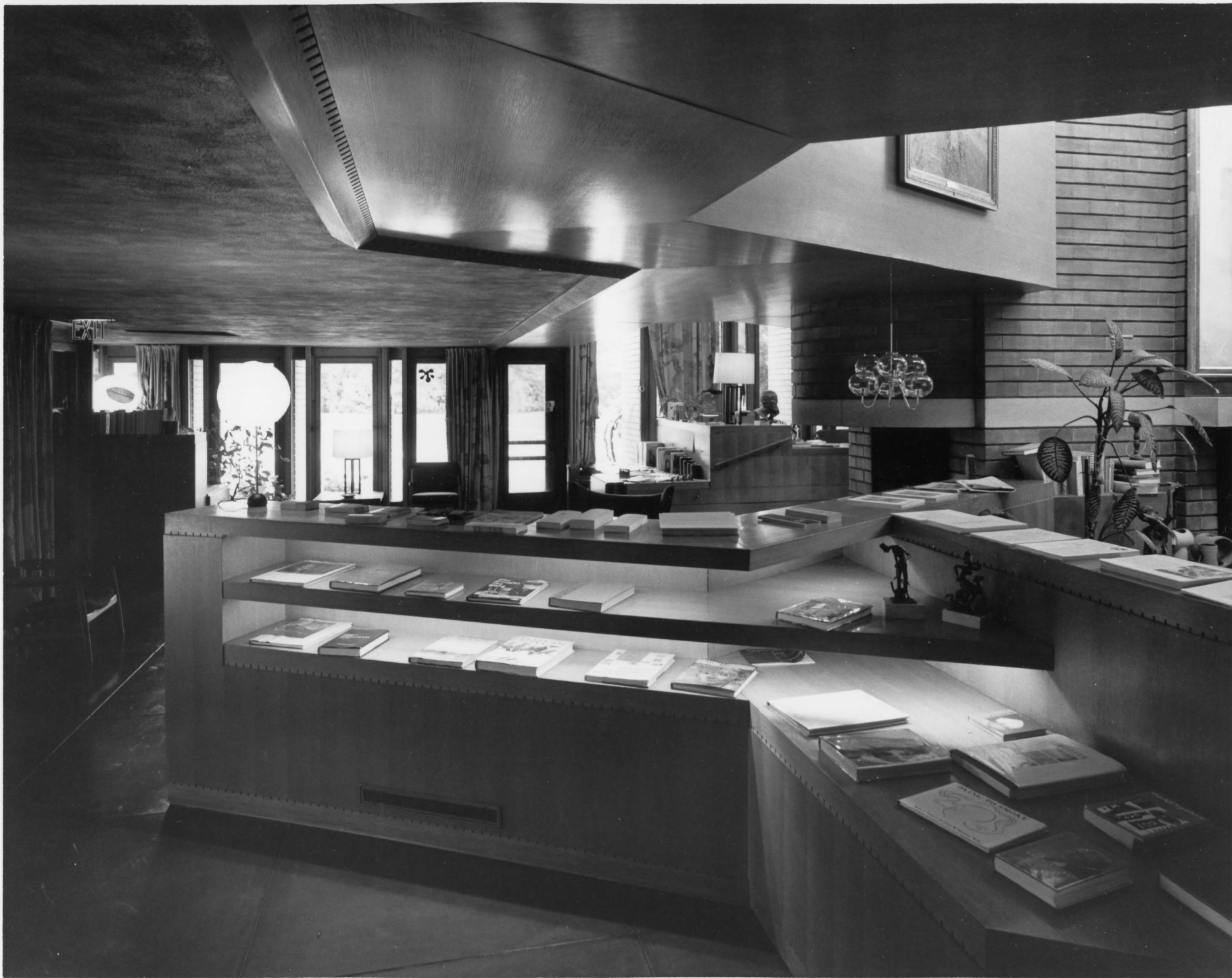


70-2039

3391 D 11A

Johnson Wax Foundation
"Wingspread"
Racine Wisconsin

photo Arnold Gore, Milwaukee WI



Johnson Wax Foundation
"Wingspread"
Racine, Wisconsin

photo: Arnold Gore, Milwaukee WI

3391 (3) 28



Johnson Wax Foundation
 "Wingspread"
 Racine, Wisconsin

photo Arnold Gore, ~~Racine~~ Milwaukee Wi



(W-1)

Pgs 68-69

Johnson Wax Foundation
"Wingfreud"

Racine, Wisconsin

photo:

Arnold Gore, Milwaukee, Wi

Gold duo

CI-D-125E

(55)

P. 68



255/3

Model for Johnson Wax Foundation
"Winged Bread"

Frank Lloyd Wright

photographer: ??



Herbert Johnson House, Racine , Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Exterior. Central core 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation

02-180

489



02-180

4890

Herbert Johnson House, Racine , Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Exterior. Central core 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation

Herbert Johnson House, Racine , Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Exterior. Central core 1980
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation

Please return to:

The Johnson Foundation, Racine, WI 53401



58-7333

~~Green Bay, Wisc.~~ Frank Lloyd Wright, the 88-year-old
dean of U.S. architects is shown here in the garden of
Taliesin, his home in Wisconsin.
Source: Globe Photos

Copy Neg.

58-7333 Green Bay, Wisc. Frank Lloyd Wright
Amer. Architect. Source: Globe Photos



Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Interior, central fireplace
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation 1980

342

→ LET ALL COME



061-9

≡

342"

→

LET ALL COME

Herbert Johnson House, Racine, Wisconsin
WINGSPREAD. Interior, central fireplace
Photo credit: The Johnson Foundation 1980

PAGE 14
Left 2001 ⑦

Wingspread - the Building

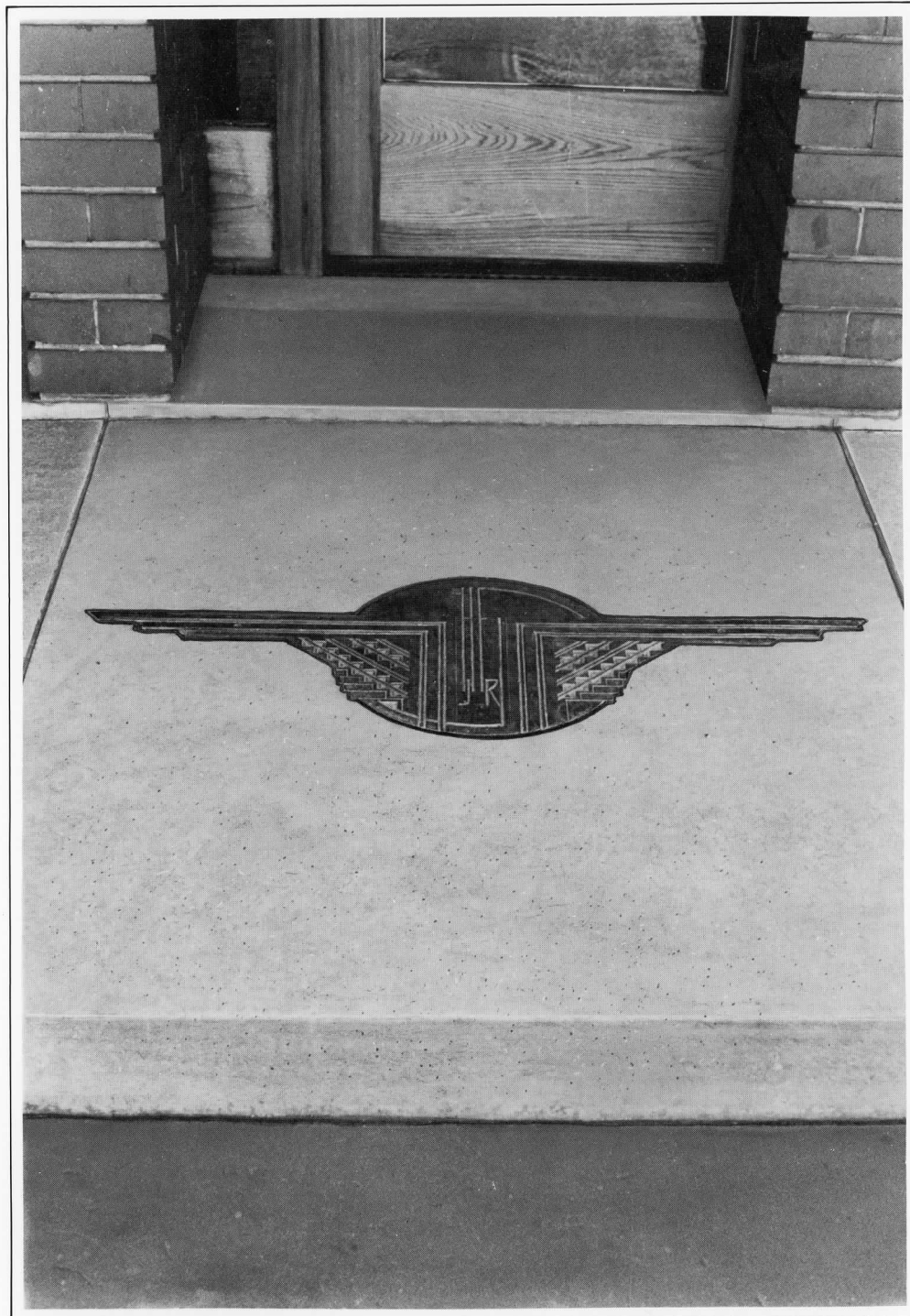


Wingspread - the Building

*COVER ILLUSTRATION adapted from,
Frank Lloyd Wright's rendering of
Wingspread.*

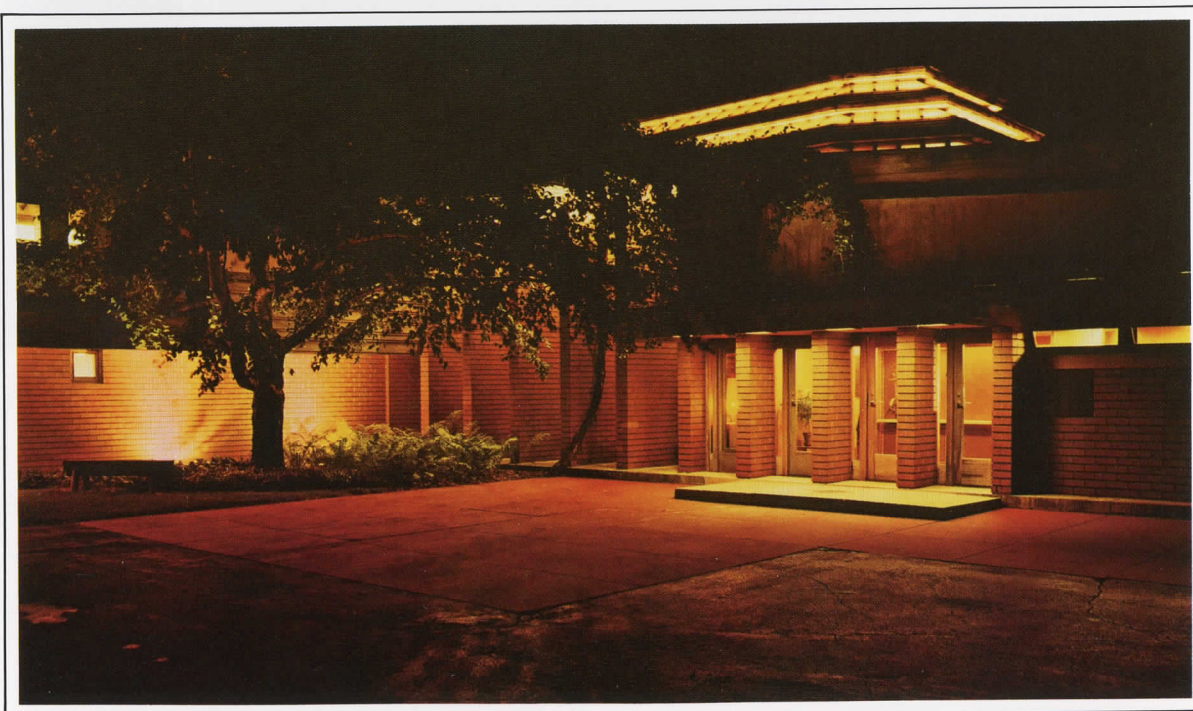
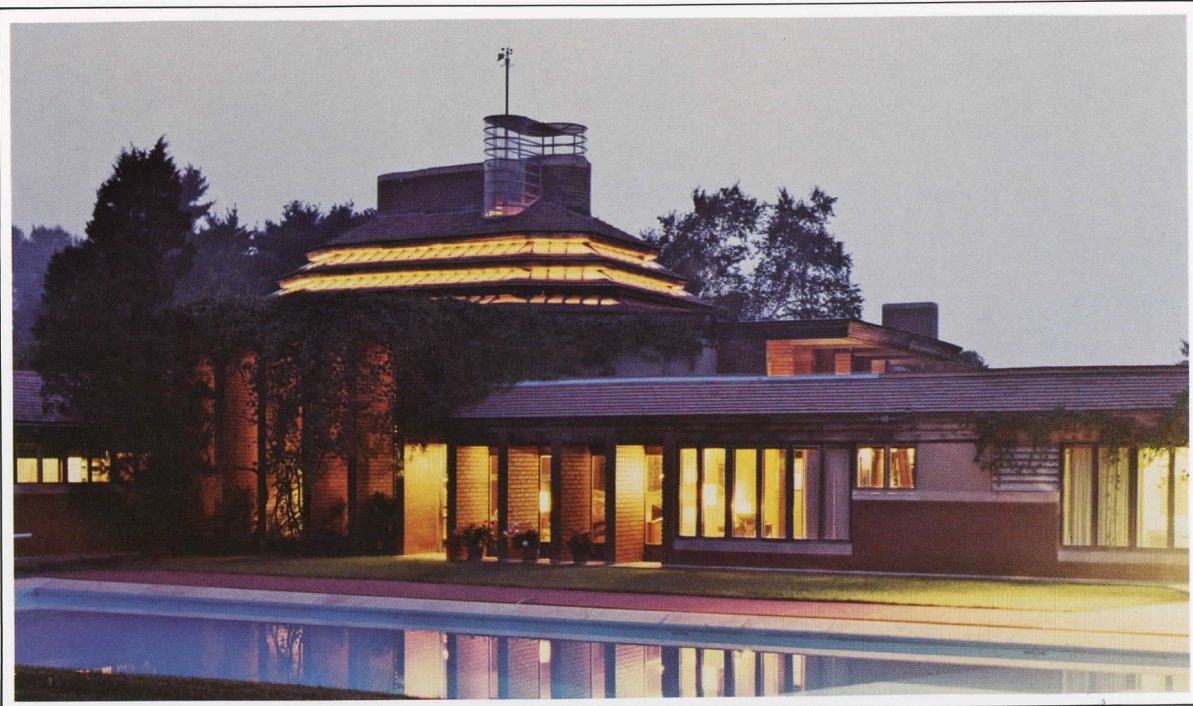
*"We called the house 'Wingspread'
because spread its wings it did. We set a
cast bronze door plate into the wide stone
slab of the doorsill with abstract wings
upon it in low relief to signify the name."*

*Frank Lloyd Wright
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY*



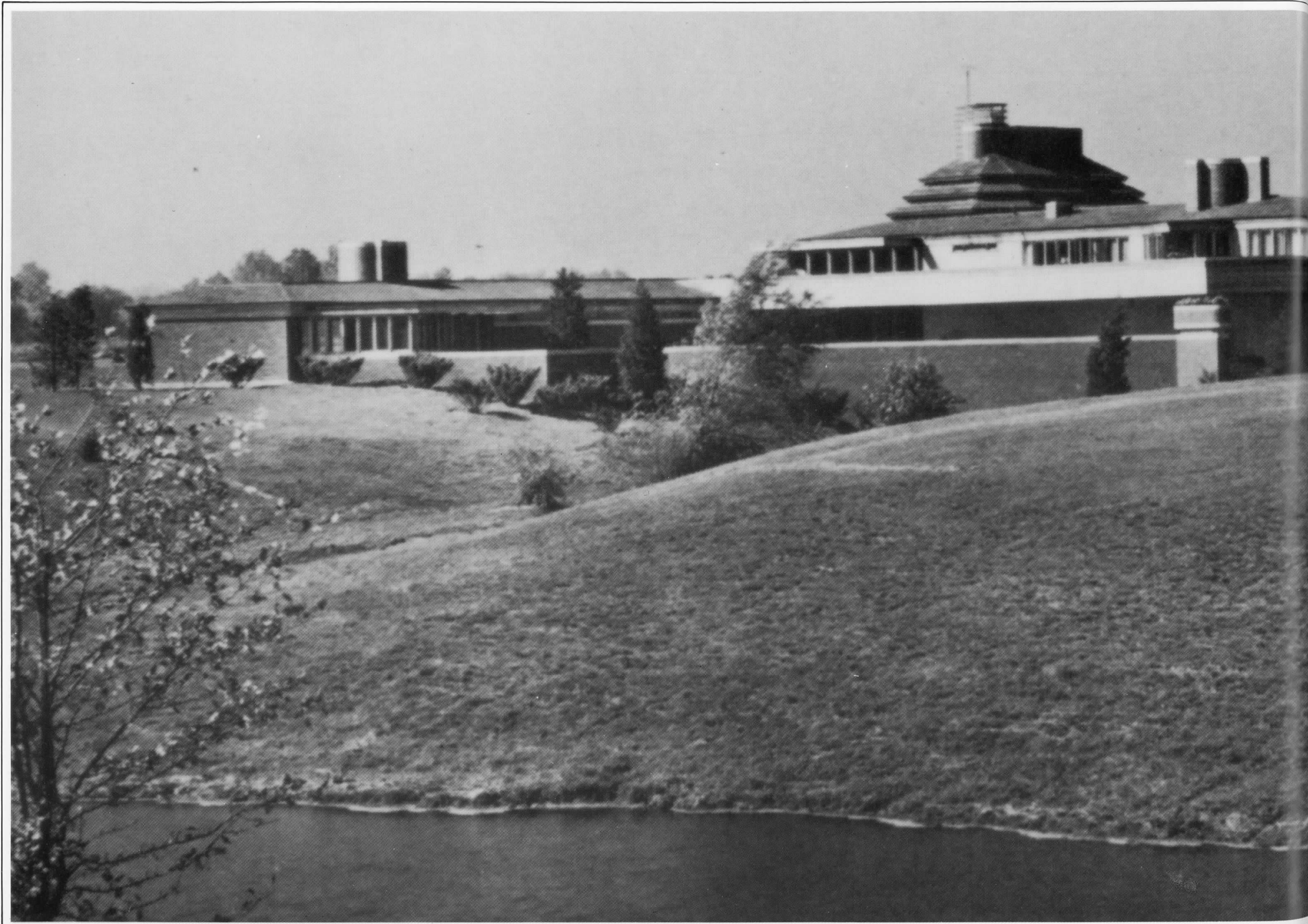


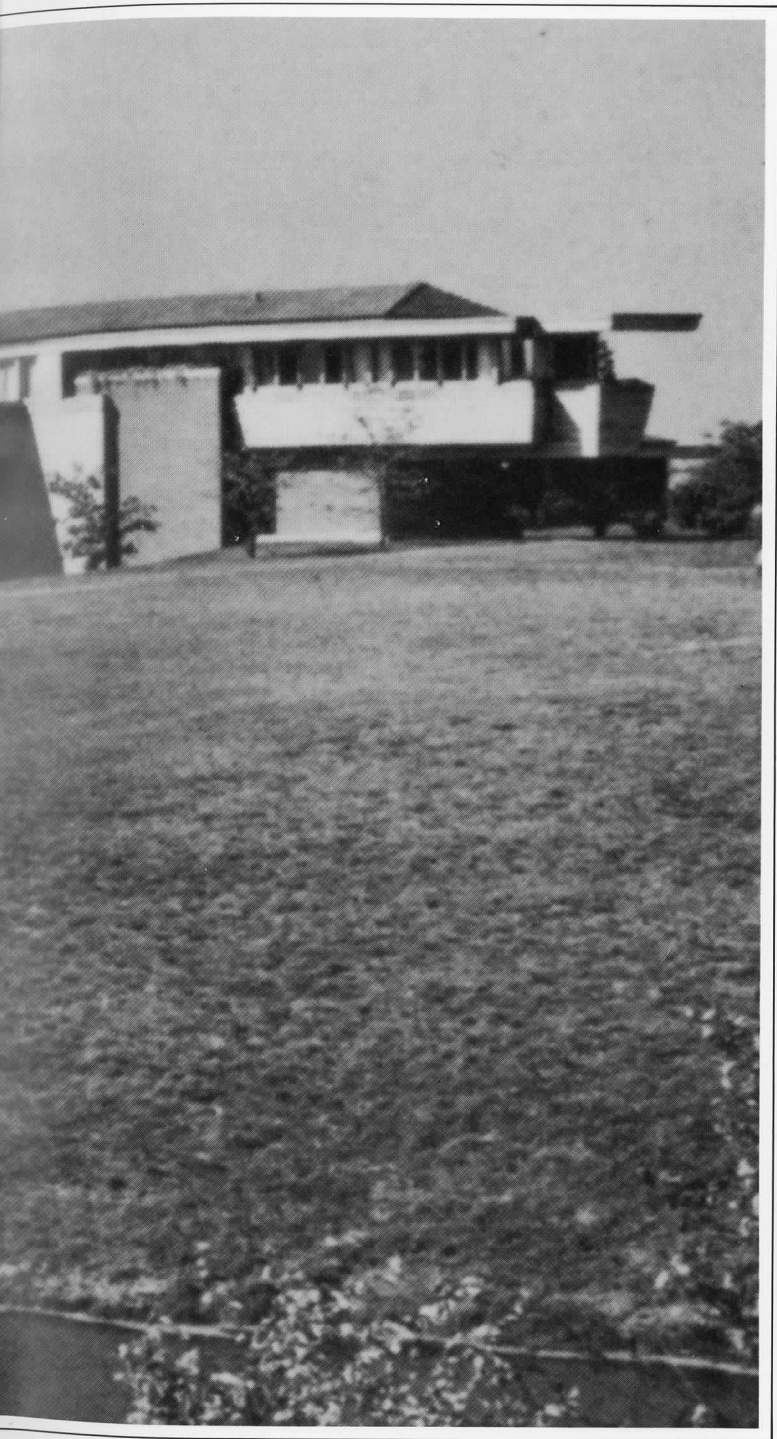
Herbert Fisk Johnson
1899-1978



WINGSPREAD AT NIGHT







Wingspread — the Building

This is the house that Frank Lloyd Wright built in 1938-39 for the H.F. Johnson family. Here the family lived for 20 years in the last and largest of the "prairie houses;" and here since 1960 The Johnson Foundation has convened Wingspread conferences. First as a private residence and then as an educational conference center, Wingspread has been an enduring masterpiece of America's most celebrated architect.

The house is set in a 30-acre park. Wright said the site was undistinguished and that Wingspread improves its setting. Certainly the house is "integral" with its setting, as the architect also said. Wingspread is surrounded by lawns and groups of plantings (mostly arbor vitae and pines, now of over 40 years' growth), and rises above a wooded ravine with a series of ponds and lagoons. In a neighborhood now grown suburban, the Wingspread grounds provide a refuge to waterfowl, migrating songbirds, and a surprising amount of wildlife. Lake Michigan is a half mile off; when the wind is strong and easterly you can hear the breakers on the beach of the Wind Point peninsula in the center of which Wingspread is located, north of Racine, Wisconsin.

The visitor is impressed by the way the house spreads elegantly across its gently rolling site. To the east, Wingspread overlooks the ravine and waterfowl pond that lie below, but elsewhere the building's ground floor is almost at ground level. Thus horizontals dominate, and Wingspread seems earthbound. Furthermore, its colors and materials acknowledge the earth: stucco and sandstone courses, "Cherokee red" brick and red roofing tiles, gray cypress siding boards, and from the cypress pergolas, hanging masses of wild grapevine.

WINGSPREAD FROM THE EAST, across the waterfowl pond. The cantilevered wing points north. Photo taken about 1940.

Photograph from *IN THE NATURE OF MATERIALS* by Henry-Russell Hitchcock (Da Capo Press, 1973). Used with permission.

From the center of this array of horizontals and grapevines rises Wingspread's dome-like living room, the core of the house, compared by the architect to a wigwam. It rides above but does not overbalance the ground-hugging wings. The dome is tiered, suggesting a pagoda, and carries three bands of clerestory windows. The roof of the living room is supported by narrow deep brick piers at the outside dimensions, and at its center by the great brick chimney which pierces and caps the roof. The chimney is accompanied by an oval glass lookout or belvedere, suggested to the architect by his client.

FRONT ENTRANCE.

The front entrance of Wingspread, like Wright's entries and passageways generally, is low and understated. Note the very low foundation and that the ground floor is nearly at ground level.

WINGSPREAD FROM THE SOUTH, across the swimming pool, which is below the line of vision. The vines are wild grape.





The visitor to Wingspread may feel awed, or delighted, perhaps charmed—but indifferent the visitor cannot be. This elegant building demands a response and elicits the visitor's participation. Wright said his house was integral with its setting, and one may feel that the central core of the building, rising above the wings that reach across the earth, was always here. The metaphors that come to mind are often organic. The house is planted on its site, or rises living from its shallow ravine, is alive with its stone

and brick and wild grape, or loves the earth and is sympathetic to its surroundings. One falls easily into speaking of the building's moods which alter with the light, the season, the time of day, the weather.

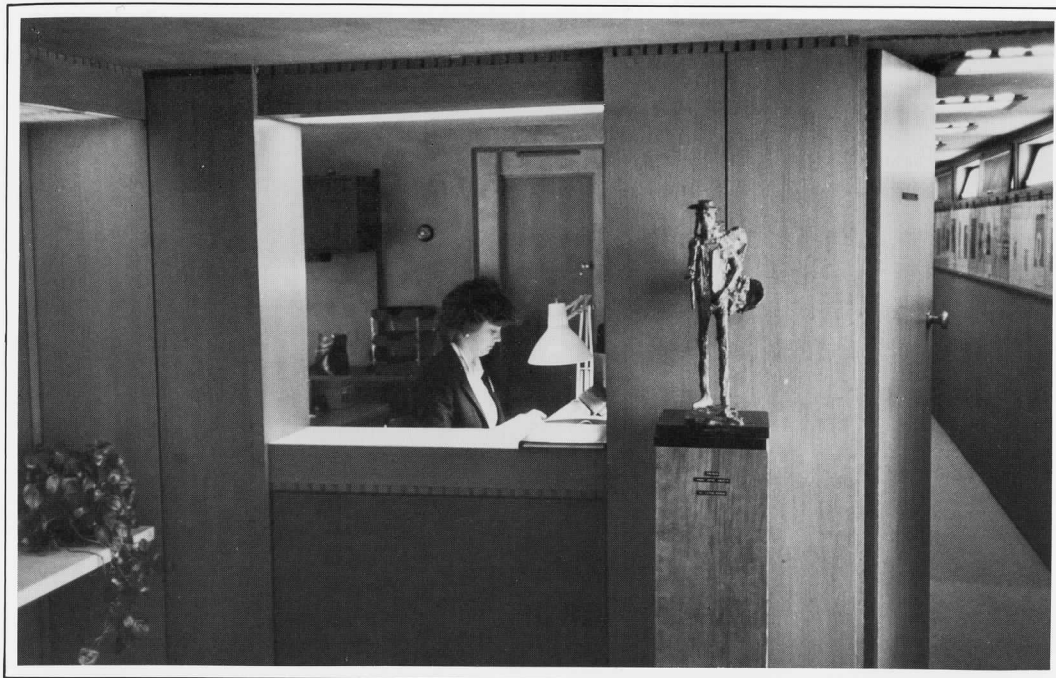
WINGSPREAD IN SUMMER.

WINGSPREAD IN WINTER.









The building's overall organization is simply stated. Its center is a zoned living room, from the corners of which extend the four wings like those of a pinwheel. The wings are at right angles to each other and are of similar length.

Such description as this, however, does scant justice to the experience of stepping into the house. The visitor passes through a low-ceilinged vestibule and then into the living room, 30-feet high and dominated by the great central chimney tower. The masonry inside and out is the same pink sandstone and Cherokee red brick, but inside are new materials, especially generous expanses of oak veneer.

The awesome chimney tower, the luminous oak panelling, and the omnipresence of indirect natural light, all of these are in spectacular contrast to the almost claustrophobic vestibule. Intrigued, some visitors stand and stare into the clerestory windows.

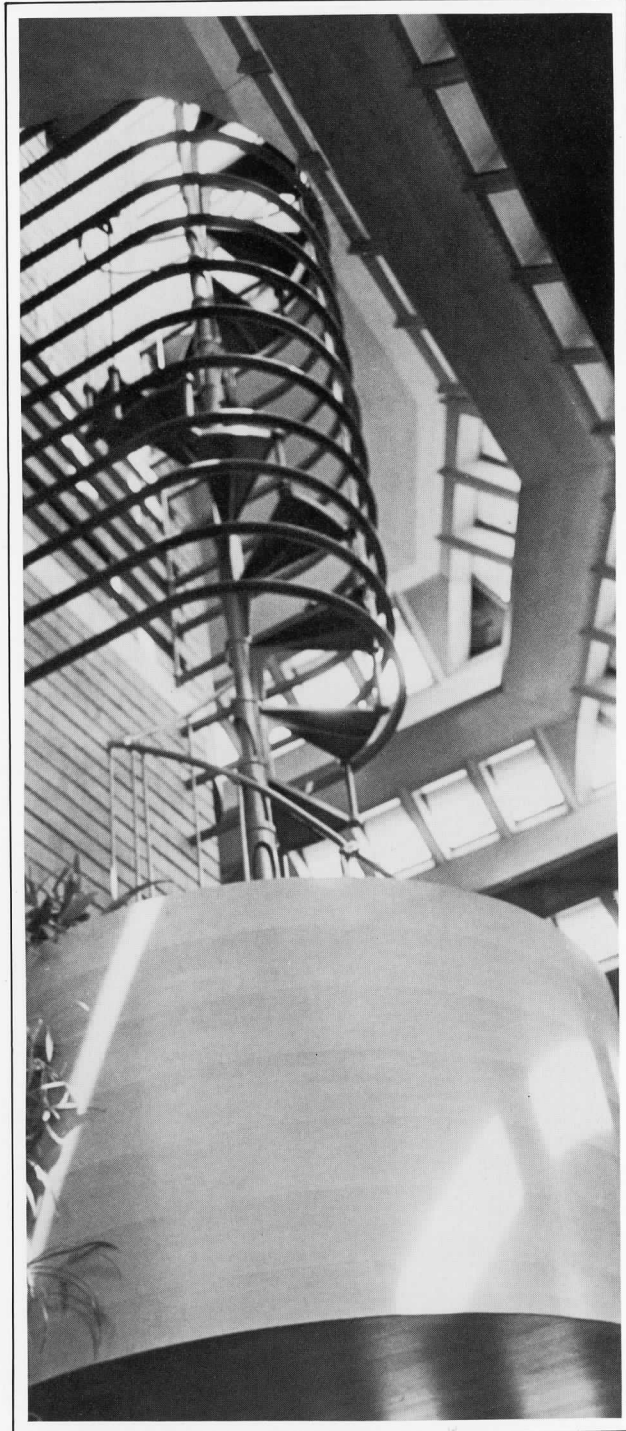


AERIAL VIEW OF WINGSPREAD.

This view shows Wingspread's "pinwheel" organization. Wright says in his autobiography that his client provided "a little sketch he had himself pencilled of the general outlines of a house zoned pretty much as it stands." Top of the photo is northwest.

THE VESTIBULE. *Entry doors are just to the right of the picture. The visitor enters, then turns left to the living room.*

THE LIVING ROOM. *This is the view as the visitor steps from the vestibule.*





The living room has eight sides—one might call it an elongated octagon. Its dimensions are 40-feet by 60-feet. The chimney is surrounded by fireplaces on all four sides. The chimney and the counter-high dividers which radiate from it separate the living room into dining and other areas. The floor is made of four-foot square concrete slabs, colored Cherokee red and polished, under which the architect laid pipes for radiant heating, in disuse now for many years. These concrete squares are repeated outside, on terraces and before entries, thus integrating inside and out with a continuous interchange.

THE LIVING ROOM, LOOKING NORTH.
The chimney tower dominates the living room. The winding stair, which terminates in a glass-enclosed lookout, was suggested to the architect by H.F. Johnson and was not included in Wright's original plan. From the lookout one can see Lake Michigan to the north, east, and south.

THE WINDING STAIR.
Access is from the mezzanine.

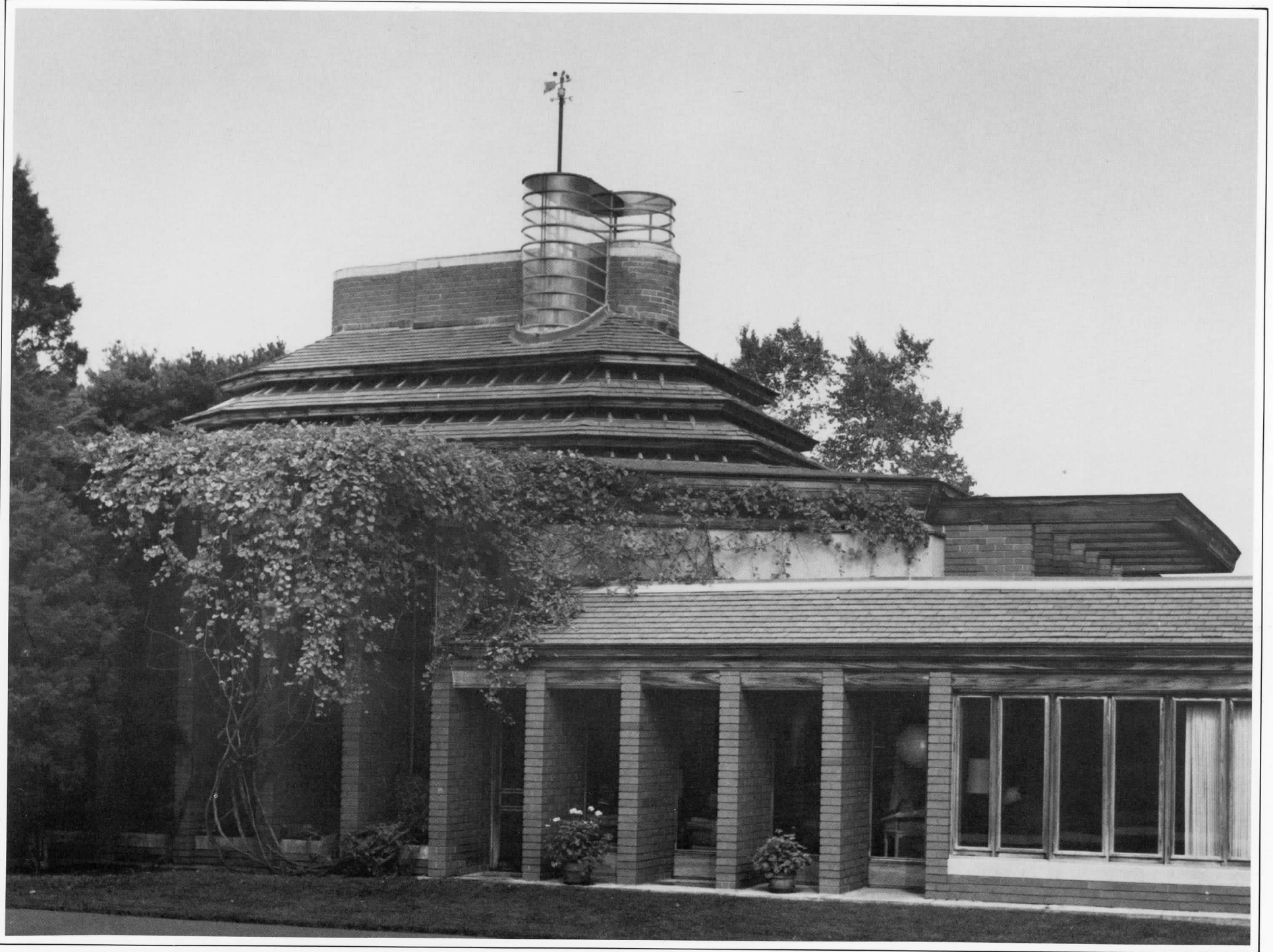
LOOKING EAST ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM.
The house is oriented to deviate slightly clockwise from a north-south axis, so that every room will receive natural light during some part of the day. The action of sunlight in the living room is extraordinary. The light enters the room through the clerestory windows and between the brick sidewall piers. It is, therefore, mostly indirect, but pervasive.

In still another way one may notice a lively exchange between indoors and out. The 16-foot high windows of the living room stand between the deep and narrow brick piers that support the roof so that as the visitor moves about, these sidewalls seem to be brick screens or direct openings to the terraces, overhanging vines, and birches outside—depending on the angle of vision. It has been remarked that this feature provides an ingenious solution to the problem of the need for interior privacy while deemphasizing the distinction between interior and exterior.

VIEW FROM THE LIVING ROOM.
The north wing is visible through the 16-foot living room windows.

VIEW FROM THE SOUTH. This view, similar to that shown on pages 9 and 11, emphasizes the deep narrow brick piers that support the roof.



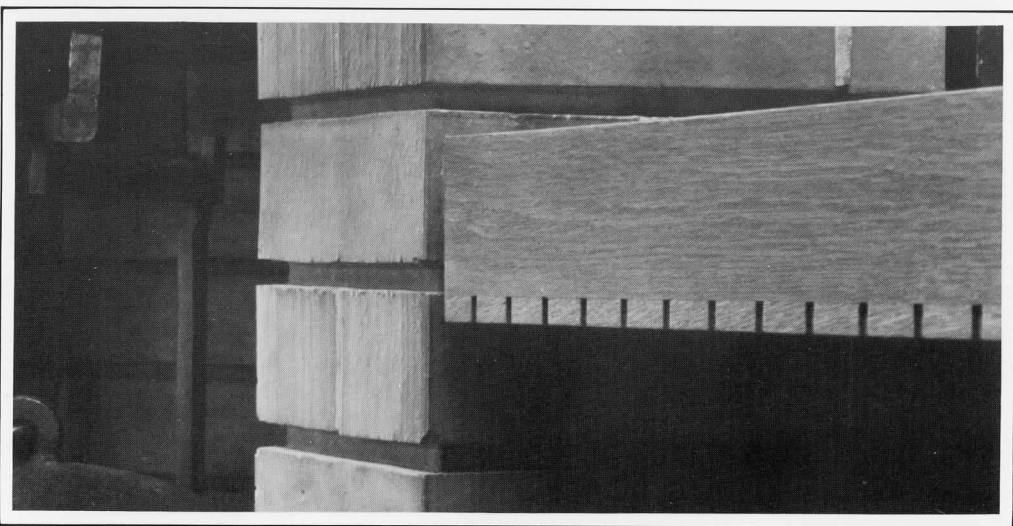






The horizontal emphasis noted from outside is observed inside, but the exception to these earthbound lines is the living room and its 30-foot high chimney tower. The brick piers and high windows of the sidewalls reinforce this uprightness. But even in the living room, the horizontal bespeaks itself by various means. The dividers and built-in sofas, desks, and shelves are one method, but the strongest level lines are those of the mezzanine which stretches across the eastern side of the living room. (This mezzanine continues on into the north wing, Wingspread's only second level.)

An often unnoticed detail counteracting the verticalness of this room is the deep recessing of the brick mortar on the horizontal. Throughout the building the brickwork is so treated, while the mortar on the vertical is trowelled flush and tinted red.



THE LIVING ROOM. This is what the visitor sees stepping from the vestibule. The iron-work was designed by the architect. The photographs on these pages show how the brick mortar is treated to emphasize the horizontal.

THE LIVING ROOM, facing east toward the mezzanine.

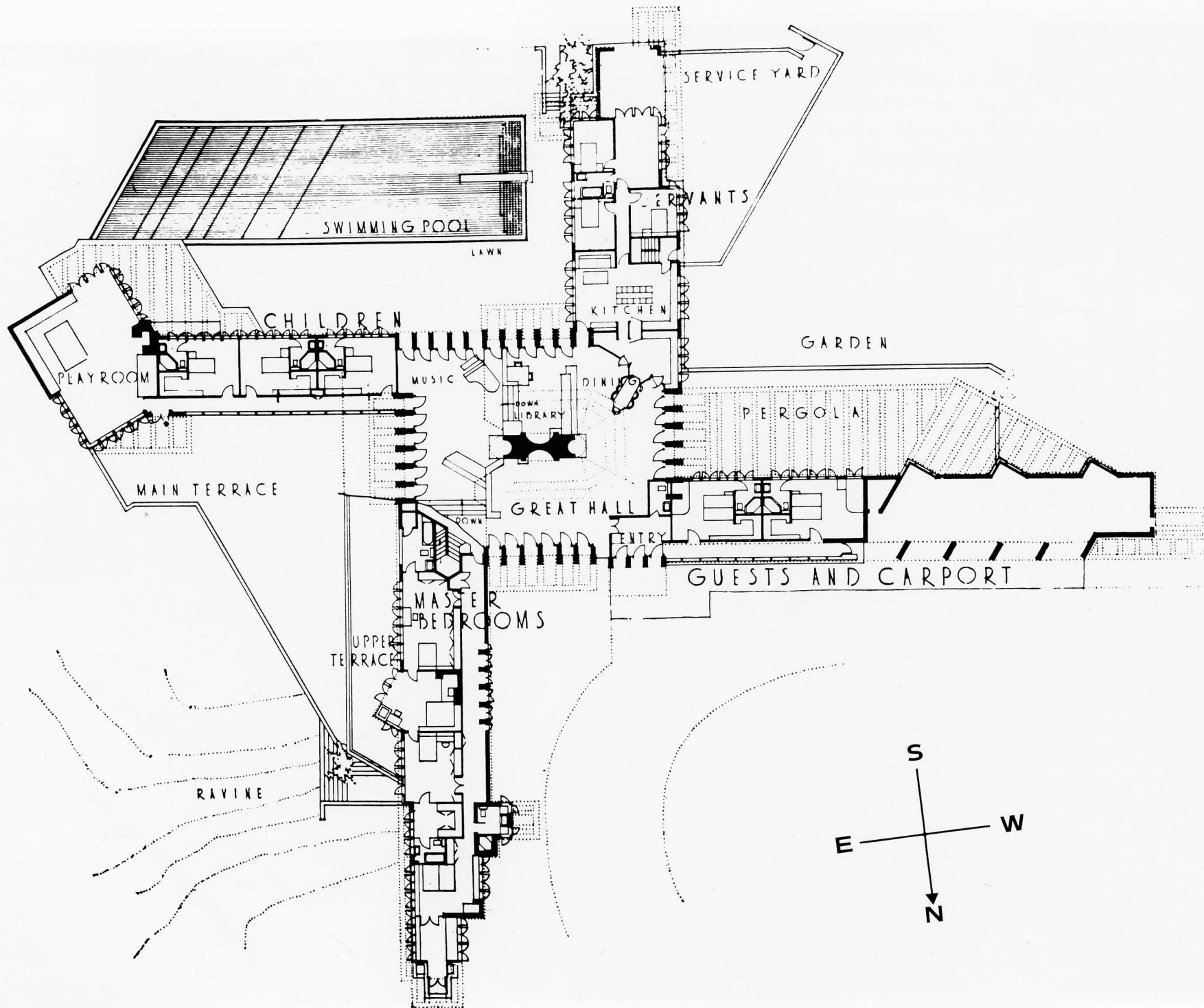
DETAIL. Note the spaced wood blocks, called the "dentil," which are a modification of a motif common in Greek and Roman building. As a molding, the dentil is used throughout Wingspread, even on the Wright-designed furniture and built-ins. See also pp. 13, 14, and 26.

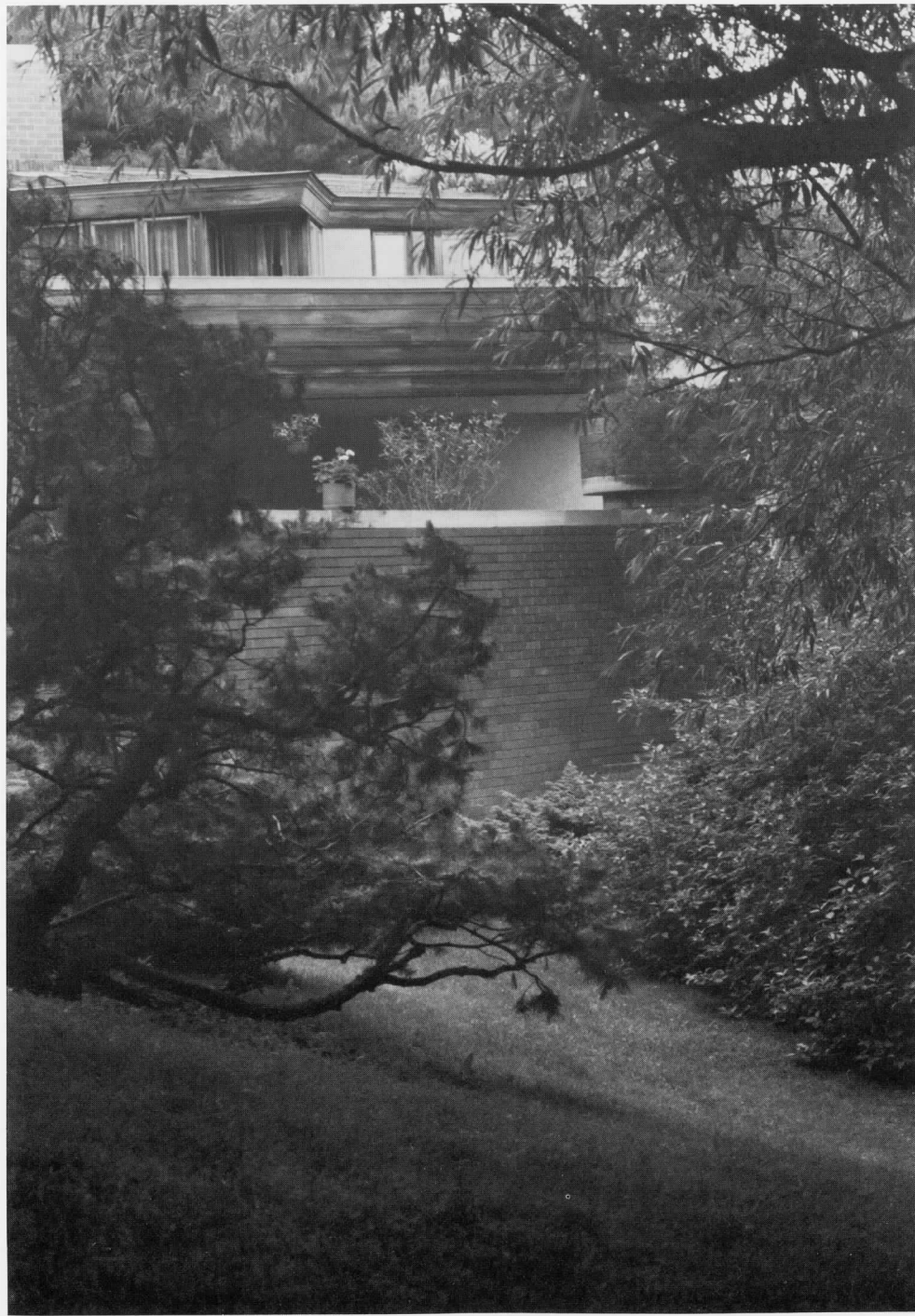
The living room of Wingspread is impressive, and, like Wright's rooms generally, is no mere box with window openings cut through. The visitor may be dazzled or intrigued, even, at first, confused. One might pause to notice, however, that this space is not oppressive, nor does it exceed the human scale. It can shelter and provide intimacy, especially in its eastern part, three shallow steps lower and beneath the mezzanine. The living room seems meant in part for display, seems almost a public atrium articulated by a virtuoso designer, but there are other, more private areas in Wingspread.

THE LIVING ROOM. Wright said that this house had the "best brickwork I have seen in my life." Early in the century, the deposits of clay along Lake Michigan had made Racine a center of brick manufacture and therefore of the masonry trades. The red brick used at Wingspread, however, as well as at the Johnson Wax Administration Building, is not the local product, but was (and is) made in Illinois. The visitor will note that the Wingspread brick comes in various sizes and shapes. Wright chose not to use firebrick in the fireplaces, thus avoiding additional textures and colors.







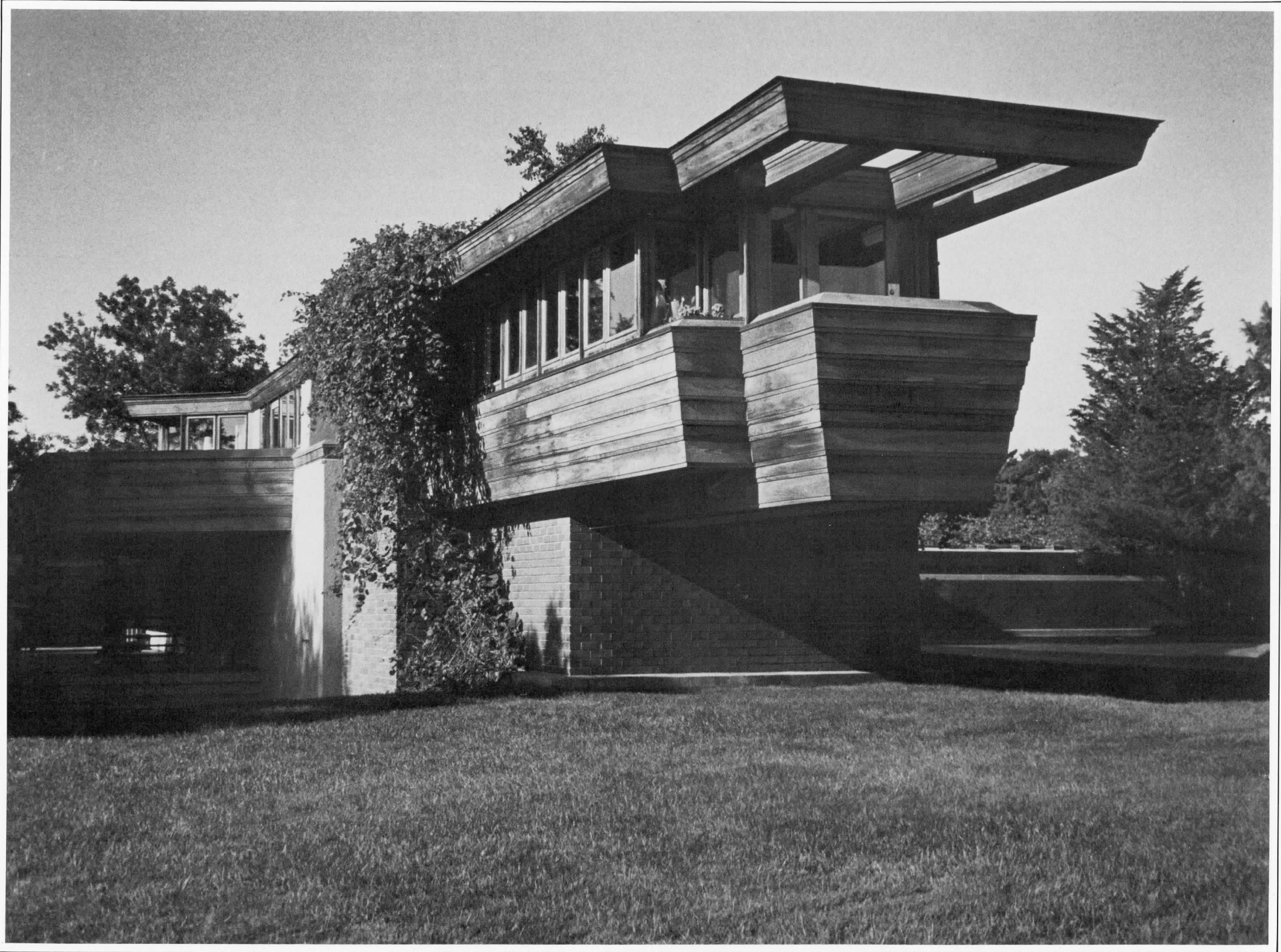


The wings were planned for various uses. The south was the service wing; the first half is still kitchens, but the further half has been converted to office space. The west wing, beside which visitors walk to reach the entrance, included guest rooms and garages, and now houses Johnson Foundation offices. The further portion of this wing included four garage bays, which were converted to offices when Wingspread became a conference center.

The east wing, originally the children's wing, terminates in the terrace room, which is now used for plenary sessions of Wingspread conferences. In the quadrant bounded by the east and north wings lies the main terrace, which overlooks the lagoons and ravines that twist their way across the Wingspread grounds.

Frank Lloyd Wright's FLOOR PLAN FOR WINGSPREAD.

THE CANTILEVERED WING, FROM THE EAST. The siding boards are cypress and are without finish.





The north wing contains Wingspread's only second level. This second story terminates in a cantilevered extension that has been compared to the prow of a ship floating over the sea of the prairie. As noted, this level extends across the eastern side of the living room to form a mezzanine. Originally the master's wing, it now provides a series of meeting rooms. It is floored with strips of 2½-inch laminated wood cut crosswise. A wide balcony on the east side of the north wing overlooks the main terrace, the extensive grounds, and, a half-mile off, Lake Michigan.

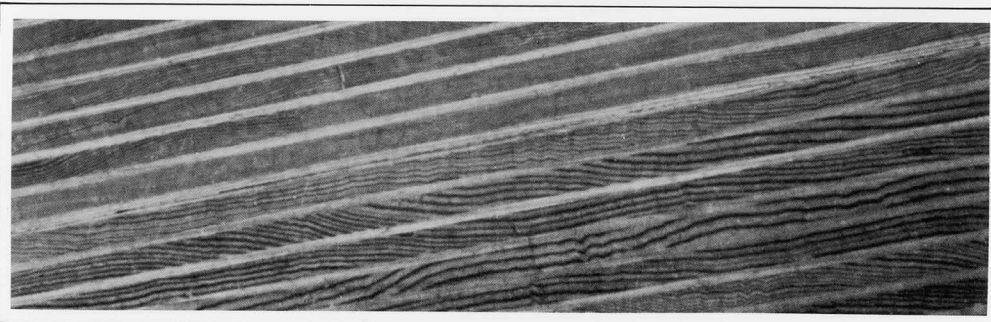


WINGSPREAD FROM THE NORTH. It was a common feature of Wright's earlier prairie houses to have the living areas placed thus above a raised basement. When Wingspread became a conference center, this ground floor space, which had been used for storage, was rebuilt to provide lavatory and cloak room facilities. In other parts of the building garages were made over into offices, several small bathrooms were removed, and some rooms were expanded by the elimination of interior walls. These alterations were carried out with careful attention to the integrity of the building, and with authoritative advice.

INSIDE VIEW OF CANTILEVERED WING. This is obviously no "box with holes cut through for windows."

THE MAIN TERRACE. The stairs lead to the upper terrace. Note the four-foot concrete squares, used inside the building and out.

DETAIL. Flooring in the north wing, 2½-inch laminated wood cut crosswise into flooring strips.



Wingspread is Wright's largest single-family home, over 14,000 square feet. Its very size suggests the monumental: "this tremendous house," as one scholar called it. But in no conventional sense does Wingspread suggest the grand manner. It does not overwhelm, except perhaps on first acquaintance. It conveys the sense of an elegant, complex, and sophisticated unity, and it invites sociability in its impressive living room and privacy in its wings.

LOOKING DOWN FROM THE MEZZANINE. The "barrel chairs," footstools, and coffee tables were designed by the architect, as were the built-in sofas, desks, and dividers. See also pp. 14, 15, and 21. Photo taken about 1940.

VIEW TOWARDS THE NORTHEAST. This photograph was taken about 1940. The pergolas are now covered with wild grapevines.

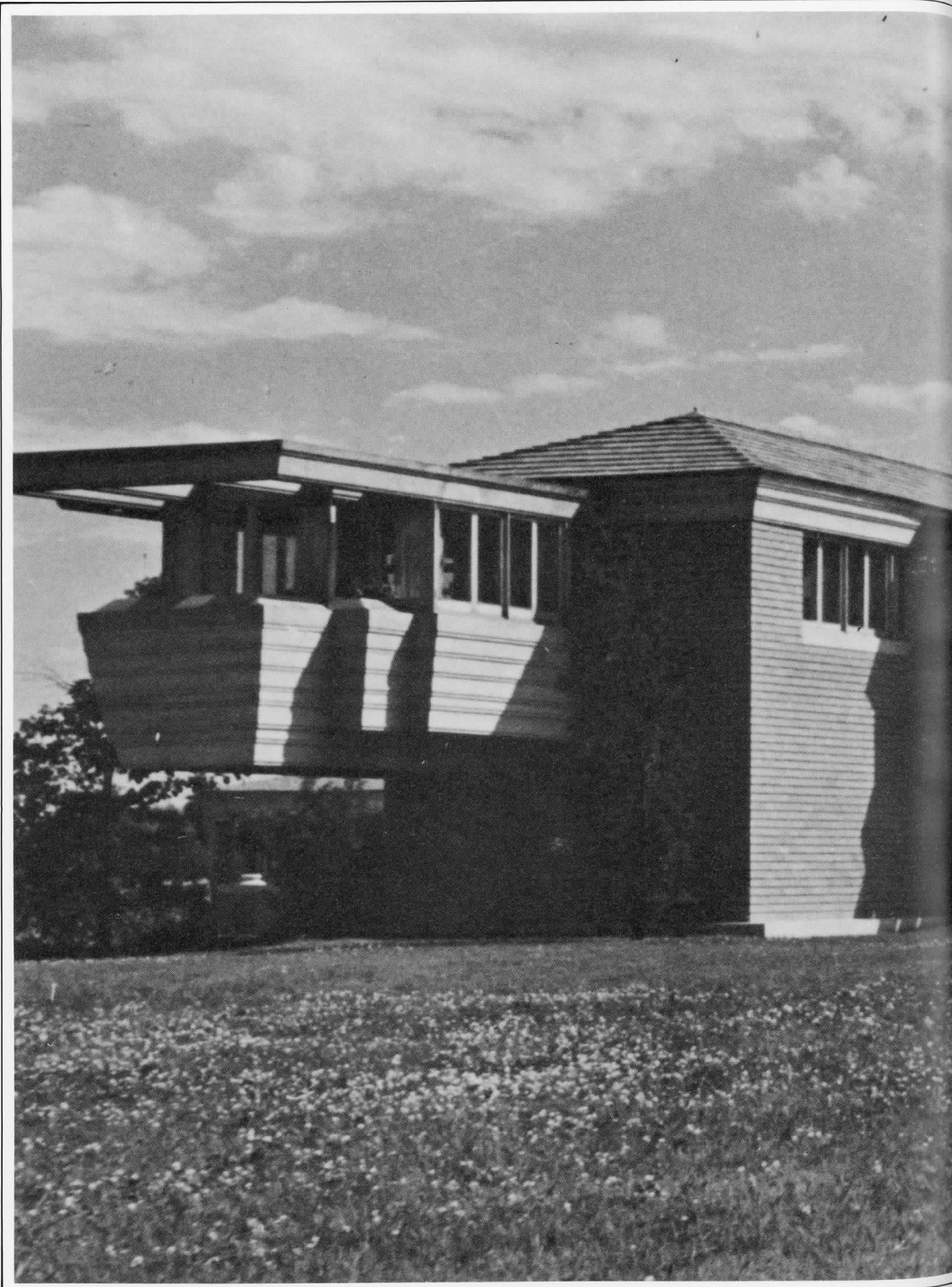




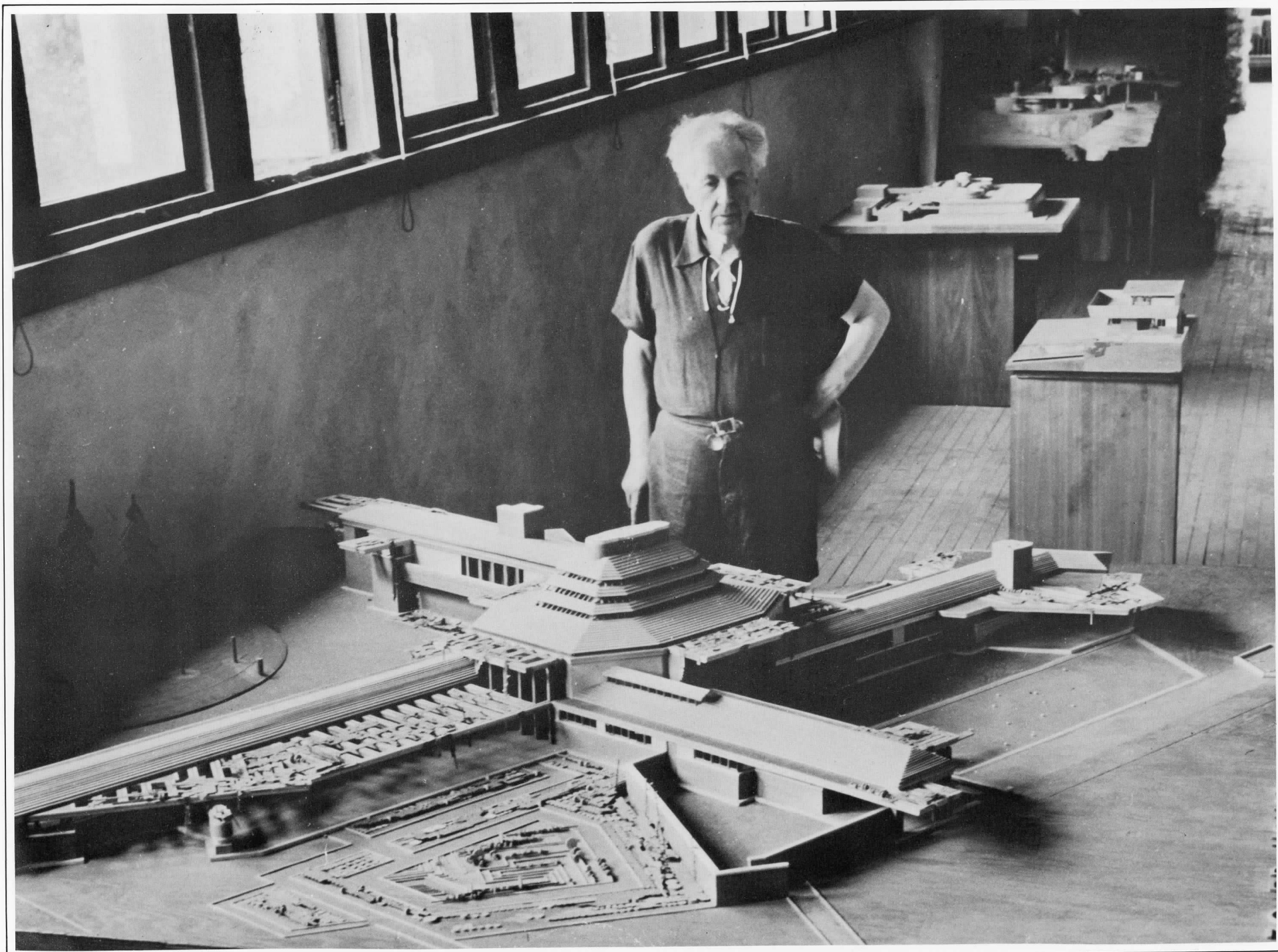
Although designed as a home, it has a full history as an extraordinary facility for conferences, so that one may wonder that it has served so well for two disparate purposes. Words fall short, pictures less so, at conveying a sense of this structure. It is certainly a presence, an insistent presence, and will defy any effort to put it into a paragraph or a picture frame.

The house offers a delightful visual experience. Unexpected perspectives await the observant visitor who takes the time to wander inside and out with a keen eye and mind.

THE NORTH, OR CANTILEVERED WING. The cantilevered porch points north. Today the visitor approaches Wingspread from the north and west, but the original entrance drive started at Lake Michigan, a half-mile to the east. This drive gave a view of the house like that shown on pages 6 and 7, bent north along the far side of the ravine, turned south to cross the lagoon, and then climbed a long clear slope from north to south. Visitors thus saw the cantilevered north wing as the front of the house, like the "prow of the ship." This view was and is spectacular. Photograph taken about 1940.







Frank Lloyd Wright

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) was a son of the Midwest and of Wisconsin. Much of his childhood and youth were spent in the southcentral part of Wisconsin, on and near the Wisconsin River, considered by many the loveliest region of the state. He was especially fond of Spring Green, his mother's home, where he spent summers and to which he returned in his 50s.

Wright studied for two years at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, 30 miles east of Spring Green. In 1887 he moved to Chicago and a year later joined the renowned architectural firm of Adler and Sullivan. For five years Wright worked under Louis Sullivan, whom he called his master, and continued to develop his skills as designer and draftsman. Adler and Sullivan were usually occupied with large commercial commissions, but Wright was interested in domestic projects.

In 1893 he set up his own practice in suburban Oak Park, which was his base for nearly 20 years. Oak Park is the location of several early Wright homes, including the architect's own home and studio. Here, at the beginning of the new century, Wright developed the "prairie house," suited for the relatively flat Midwestern landscape. A celebrated example is the 1909 Robie House, on the University of Chicago campus.

There are over 100 extant Wright buildings in the Chicago area, and another 40 in Wisconsin, built over a period that lasts up to, and beyond, the architect's death in 1959, at age 91. The catalog of the constructed works of Wright, by William Allin Storrer, lists 433 projects, most of them private homes. It may be noted that over the years more than 50 Wright buildings have been demolished.

Wright's career falls naturally into two periods, divided by an interim of relatively few completed projects; this interruption, which lasted from the late 1920s to the mid-30s, was caused in part by the Depression. In the early part of the century Wright had become internationally known and had travelled extensively, living for several months in Europe and for five years in Japan. In the mid-20s he returned to Spring Green and occupied his home overlooking the Wisconsin River, "Taliesin." In 1932 he was 65 and had few commissions, but was nevertheless about to begin a new period of creativity.

In the mid-30s he founded the Taliesin Fellowship, which brought talented young architects to Wright as apprentices. He also began to develop new methods for relatively inexpensive construction; the first of these "Usonian" houses was built in Madison, Wisconsin (1936). Two of Wright's most famous works belong to 1935-36, including his best known house, the Kaufmann residence, "Fallingwater," in southwestern Pennsylvania. Then came the commission for the Administration Building of S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. (Johnson Wax), in Racine, Wisconsin, and in 1937 the commission for Wingspread, which would be the home of the H.F. Johnson family and later of The Johnson Foundation.

The collaboration of Frank Lloyd Wright and Herbert Fisk Johnson provides a noteworthy example of a fruitful architect-client relationship. About the Johnson Wax Administration Building many have agreed with Wright's own assessment that it is "one of the world's remarkably successful structures." After World War II, the adjacent Research Tower was constructed, a 15-story cantilevered laboratory facility. These two and Wingspread are the results of the remarkable collaboration of Wright and his client.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT.
Note that the model of Wingspread does not include the lookout tower added at the suggestion of H.F. Johnson.



The Johnson Foundation

The Johnson Foundation, established in 1959 by the late Herbert Fisk Johnson, is an operating foundation devoted primarily to conferences at Wingspread. It is supported by income from endowments, and by contributions from S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. (The Johnson Wax Company) and by descendants of the founder.

In addition to sponsoring conferences, The Johnson Foundation has a modest program of publications and produces a weekly public affairs radio program. Broadcast under the title "Conversations from Wingspread," these half-hour programs are carried by radio stations across the nation. The publications and radio productions are ancillary to the conferences, which represent the principal concern of the Foundation.

With few exceptions, the conferences are held at Wingspread. This architectural landmark, supplemented in 1980 by the gift of the neighboring former residence of H.F. Johnson, is located in the Village of Wind Point, just north of Racine, Wisconsin. Over the years conferees have found Wingspread to be a supportive setting for discussions, one which has repeatedly elicited creative responses to the problems or issues addressed there.

Wingspread conferences are usually relatively brief, intensive meetings of a small number of experts gathered to address a well-defined issue or problem. Although occasional exceptions are made, The Johnson Foundation usually restricts conference size to groups of 60 or less, for periods of time ranging from one to four days. Most conferences represent a collaboration between The Johnson Foundation and some other institution or association addressing a goal consonant with the Foundation's mission.

Wingspread conferences have explicitly stated goals and projected results. Explaining these purposes, the founder quoted Francis Bacon as saying: "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man." That belief still directs the work of the Foundation, which seeks to help men and women become "ready" to improve society by identifying and addressing important national or international issues, and by developing appropriate strategies for their resolution.

WINGSPREAD



Text:

Richard Kinch, Program Associate,
The Johnson Foundation.

Design:

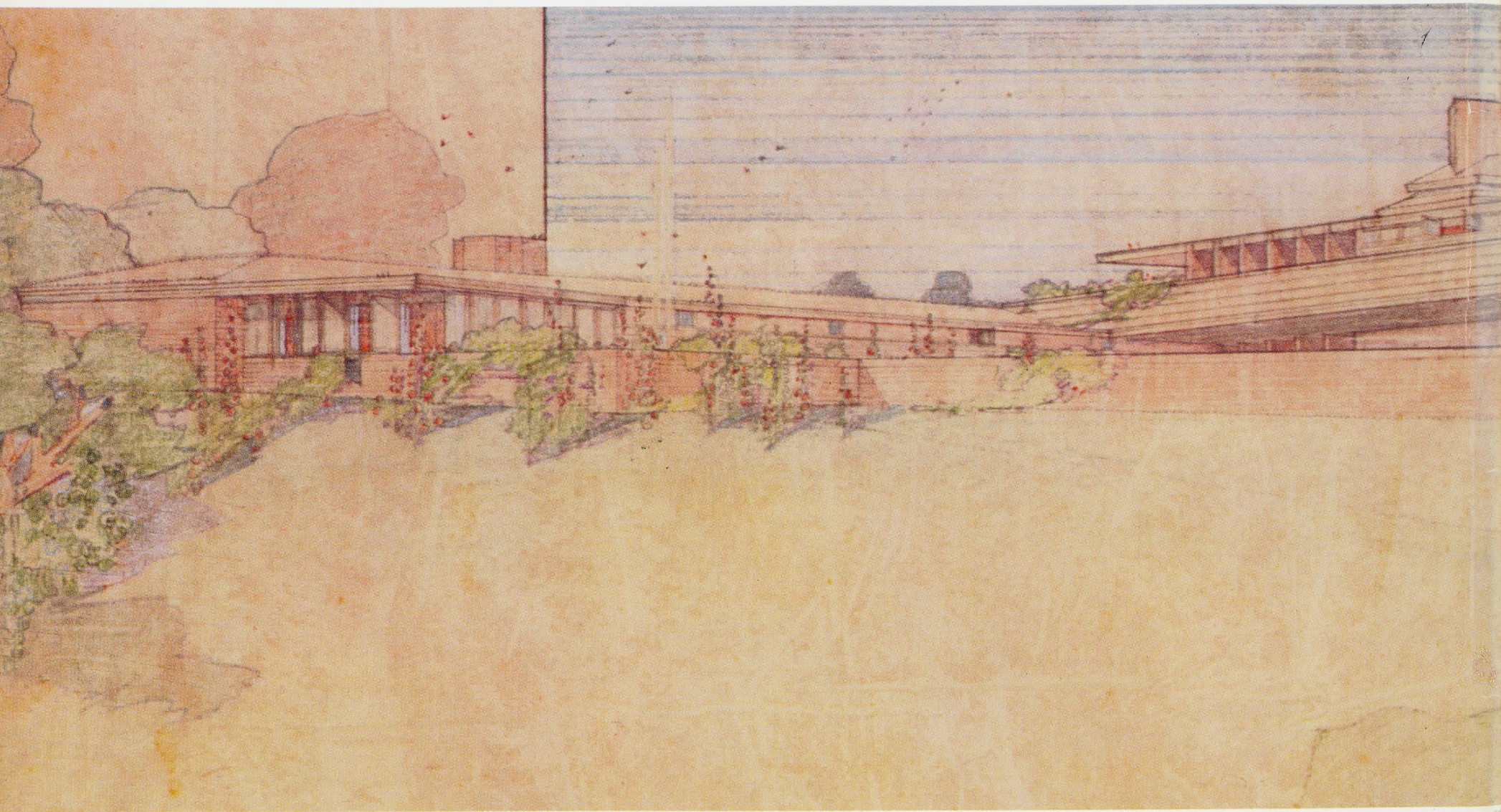
Synergy Design,
Racine, Wisconsin.

*Published by The Johnson Foundation, Inc.,
Box 547, Racine, Wisconsin 53401-0547.*

*HERBERT FISK JOHNSON AND
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT.*

*Theirs has been described as a near-perfect
collaboration of architect and client.*

Photograph courtesy of Al Krescanko.





Left, the angular pool. Above and next page, a spiral stair to an observatory penetrates the skylit living area.

very hard for a year with putty guns on the windows in the roof to keep them from leaking. It was successful until a thunderstorm occurred. I looked around a little nervously, and one leak started in the corner where the end of the table was, and the rain came down right on the top of my father's bald head.

He went into a rage. There was a phone on a desk in a little alcove near the table, and he asked the maid to give it to him. He sat right where he was as the water leaked down. He picked up the phone and said, "I would like to speak to Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright in Taliesin West in Phoenix, Ariz." Amazingly, in about five minutes, he said, "Frank, you built this beautiful house for me and we enjoy it very much. But I have told you the roof leaks, and right now I am with some friends and distinguished guests and it is leaking right on top of my head." Mr. Wright very clearly came back so that we could all hear it at the table: "Well, Hib, why don't you move your chair?"

I have to say that this was a happy place for my sister and me and our father to live. Now as to the Johnson Administration Building, I dug this quote out of Mr. Wright's autobiography: "An experiment in design and construction. There is an important difference between merely experimental and genuine experiment. The one may be a feeling for novelty, the other is rationally based on experience seeking a better way." Pretty good.

There are many things that could be criticized about the administration building: the great workroom, with typewriters going all the time, the OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health

Administration] railing we had to put up. When the building was erected, it was the only airconditioned building in Racine and probably in Wisconsin. Today, the airconditioning system is not as adequate as in some more contemporary buildings, but you live with that.

And the glass tubes, which to my knowledge have never been repeated in any other building. The executives' reaction to the tubes was that they couldn't see out to decide whether it was a good golfing day. If it was a very good day, then you worked anyway because you didn't know it was a good day; if it was a very bad day outside, then you worked because you were not gloomy about its being a bad day outside.

It's an enclosed building, and some of the new people who come here to work stay beyond 6 or 7 o'clock because they don't know it's dark outside.

But it was designed to be an inside building and, while the tubes have leaked, they are a really beautiful structure for the interior wall and, actually, beautiful for the outside as well. What has prevented them from becoming more common is the cost of fabricating those tubes at current labor rates.

On the positive side, however, the most important thing that happened to us was that we became a different company the day the building opened. We achieved international attention because that building represented and symbolized the quality of everything we did in terms of products, people, the working environment within the building, the community relations and—most important—our ability to recruit creative people.

When we get a really good person, he or she walks in that

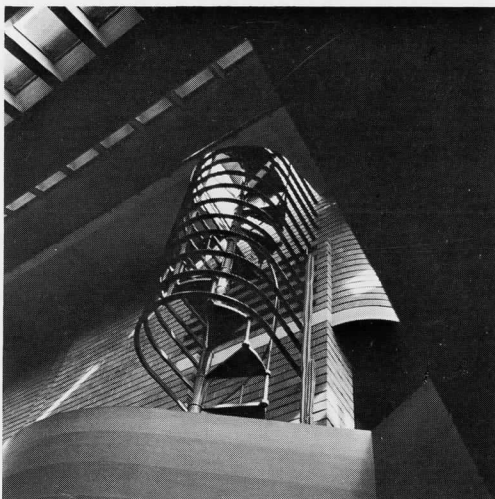
A favorable impact on the family and the firm.

building and looks around, having worked for other companies, and suddenly comes to the conclusion that this place and this organization and the people that created this are different. That somehow this organization is interested in innovation, in new ideas and in the people who work in that enclosure. Over the years, we have been able to employ the most creative people who respond to that building. It's been a very favorable thing for the company. Mr. Wright said in his autobiography that "the Johnson Administration Building is better adapted to worshipful work than the cathedral ever was to workful worship."

Just before the building was completed, my father said, "By the way, Frank, where is the sign going to be on the building?" Mr. Wright looked at my father and said, "Would you put a sign on the Washington Monument?" Not too humble a question, I guess. Mr. Wright said that he was convinced that he would rather be honestly arrogant than hypocritically humble, and then he said, "I've seen no reason to change over the years."

The administration building was built, the war went on and, of course, my father realized he was going to need some new research development space after the war. In the early '40s, he and his officers and Mr. Wright carried on a kind of debate about what kind of research and development facilities ought to be built after the war. And all our very scientifically oriented people argued with my father and they concluded that we ought to have a building designed by somebody who had already built laboratories and who understood how pipes ought to be hooked together and how people should relate to each other functionally within the building. Let's not go through this whole thing all over again, they said.

My father finally agreed and the message went back to Taliesin that the company had decided to use a conventional architect to design the new addition for the research facilities. Mr. Wright wrote my father a letter. It was dated Dec. 14, 1943. Mr. Wright wrote: "Dear Hibbard: It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Aladdin said to the sultan, 'Why build a heavy building sodden upon the ground facing awkwardly upon unsightly streets when, by creating a charming interior court space for parking, the lighting would come from above or from the court? A gallery would follow above and around the court space, O Master, and bridge tunnels would be seen connecting this space and the administration building itself to the research laboratory which has a tall shaft that would rise from the center of the court, etc., my lord, etc. Thy subjects would like to traverse the bridge tunnels even similar to the one thou now hast, etc., etc., from which to look down upon a goodly garden from the center of the spacious parking and, O Kelif, why not broad-



cast the year round your good tidings and amusing, too, from the top of the 18 stories from an inexpensive but beautiful radio mast rising out of the utmost height. And should not thy research extend to packaging containers, etc., etc., etc., and define a complete little printing plant where brochures by thy worthy self such as thou hast sent me to read could be executed? What a miracle of beautiful planning will be there to instruct thy foes, delight thy friends and convince thy subjects of the illustrious character of thy reign, O my Kelif, and in all arguments as to thy power, excellence and majesty. Affection, Frank Lloyd Wright."

Pretty good salesman. Unbelievable! My father decided to build the tower in spite of everybody who vetoed him in the company. The original tower cost was estimated to be about \$2 million. There was a heating and airconditioning contractor from Chicago who had bid, I think, \$60,000. As the project progressed, which was normal with design changes and additions made, it escalated the total cost to about \$4 million, which was par for the course with Frank Lloyd Wright. At the completion of the project, the heating and airconditioning contractor sent a letter to Mr. Wright, asking for more money because of the changes and indicating that he was in bad financial shape because of the contract. Frank Lloyd Wright telegraphed back immediately: "I don't have any money either. Frank Lloyd Wright."

But the tower, in a really positive sense, became a symbol of our commitment to innovation as a company. I remember Mr. Wright saying something like this to my father: "You can raise it like a torch—the tower—to inspire your people around the world." And it did, and it still does.

There was an interesting bit of publicity about the research building and the tower. Alistair Cooke, whom you may have heard on the air and read, arranged to have a radio interview with Mr. Wright in 1959. He said that he blocked out the feature, arranged rehearsals and went around for weeks in euphoria which was shattered when Mr. Wright passed down an ultimatum through an emissary: "No rehearsals; rehearsals freeze the natural flow of the human personality."

Cooke wrote of the interview that Wright "delivered it in the delicate and warmly modulated voice which had for 50 years seduced wax manufacturers, oil tycoons, bishops, university boards of trustees and at least one emperor of Japan into commissioning cantilevered Aztec structures, most of which were later rescinded, condemned as unsafe or merely paid for and deplored. . . ."

I recently found a letter written by Bill Connolly, our public affairs director, to Alistair Cooke. Bill wrote: "Dear Mr. Cooke: I enjoyed your piece on Frank Lloyd Wright in the April 26 issue of the *Washington Post* and the *Times-Herald*, but I must set you right on one point. If we were seduced by Wright, you should know that following the injunction of Confucius we relaxed and enjoyed same, and it is a fact that the beautiful buildings he designed for us here have neither been rescinded, condemned as unsafe nor deplored. They were, of course, paid for. Some day why don't you come out and see us?"

The decision made by my father to join with Frank Lloyd Wright in the beautiful experiment to build an administration building and a home had a most favorable impact on the future of our family and our enterprise at a very critical time—the change from the third generation to the fourth. And I am a member of the fourth. Those buildings have proved to be an inspiration since I have been with the company and to all people who have worked with me in the company. They have contributed to our great growth. When the administration building was completed in 1939, our company had \$6 million in sales worldwide; this year, we are over \$1 billion.

There are many quotes from Frank Lloyd Wright, but the most meaningful one to me was a remark he addressed to me. One day I happened to ask him which he considered his greatest building. And he looked at me and said, "The next one, young Johnson, always the next one." □

The Wrightian presence lingered in the house.

of a waxmaker. Hib's father, so they say around about Racine, Wis. (his old home town), was famous for his 'hunches.' . . . This world-famous modern office building to house the administration of the ancestral wax manufacturing company was one of Hib's hunches. Hib's remarkable house too now [stands] broad, wide and handsome out in the prairie countryside near by. . . . Hib's hunches made him, for one thing, the only Racine boy to do anything really worthwhile to culture that industrial area: The big successful wealthy Wisconsin factory owners by Lake Michigan where millionaires originate and from which they always go somewhere else for fun, to spend their money for culture, if any."

My father and mother were divorced in 1934 when I was 6 years old and in 1936, my father married Jane Roach, who had two sons of her own; that was when my father began to think about a home, before Jane died in 1938. This is what Mr. Wright wrote about Wingspread: "Unhappily the young bride never lived to enter the home. Out of the blue (the house three-fourths finished) one day an old workman on the house told me that a white dove we had seen frequenting the belvedere of the building—in which both Hib and I were interested—had flown away and disappeared. The workman shook his head. A bad omen, said he. 'The young mistress will never live in this house,' and she too, as we soon learned, had passed away.

"Hib's interest in our building went way down. It took good persuasion to get him interested in ever going on with the house again. . . . I, friend now as well as architect, did my best to represent to him what I thought his young wife would wish were she living. . . . We completed the house in every particular as planned for a wife and four children. Hib seemed to sigh with relief upon seeing actually realized the home they had both worked on with me and of which he had fondly dreamed. The house, not yet a home, had begun to justify the hopes from the first invested in it. It turned out a veritable thing of the Spirit: a true consort of the prairie. The 'last of the prairie houses' it shall be, so I said and thought—though I don't know why there should be a last one. . . .

"The site was not at all stimulating before the house went up—but like developer poured over a negative, when you view the environment framed by the architecture of the house from within, somehow, like magic—charm appears in the landscape and will be there wherever you look. The site seems to come alive. Hib saw this. He felt it did express, in a finer sense, human feelings for a young wife lost than anything else he could have done. . . . That house, more than anything else, I believe, brought Hib back again."

And I guess I couldn't argue with the fact that the house had a major impact on my father, rehabilitating him to a new life without his young bride. I wouldn't give the house full credit for his launching himself fiercely and vigorously into the family business.

We moved into the house, and I lived in Wingspread from 1939 to 1952. When my father first informed me we were going to move into this not so modest building, from the south side of Racine, I thought it was a disaster. My friends were there and the house was here. But we soon discovered that my friends liked to be here more than there because we had this unique thing in those days—a private swimming pool—and my friends liked the environment that was somehow created here.

I have many happy memories of living in this house: the pool and the young friends who came to see me; the pond where we could always catch a bass; the playroom which was adequate for any young man; the tower where we used to go up and play war games because you could see everything around, the whole site, and the wigwam which is this room. The principle of the wigwam was that the family had privacy in the wings and could come together from time to time during the day and evening. We could have a family community within this open space

which probably represents one of the great concepts of organic architecture: everything flowing into everything else.

My father later married Irene Purcell, a movie actress and a very talented and interesting woman. She moved into Wingspread, a house not designed for her, and she never felt all that comfortable because she did not relate to it as a part of its creation. But she did try to live here in good grace and she tried to put her imprint on the house. She bought paintings and redecorated the interiors.

My father and Irene invited Mr. Wright to come here after they had been married a few years, and he graciously accepted, staying overnight. The next morning, Mr. Wright got up at 4 o'clock, came out and redecorated the whole main part of the house. He took some of the furniture that he didn't think was particularly appropriate and put it in a storeroom. He changed many of the paintings, and then waited for Irene to come down for breakfast at 8 o'clock. I am certain that she was not too pleased with what was going on, and a rather chilly relationship developed. I don't think she and Mr. Wright ever spoke seriously together after that time. When you lived in a Wright house, in many ways you lived with Frank Lloyd Wright as well.

Some things about the house didn't work out properly—for example, a dining room table that slid out. I think it was my father's idea and not Mr. Wright's, but he agreed to execute it. The idea was that the dining room table would slide out of the kitchen with all the plates on it. When courses were changed, the dining room table was pulled into the kitchen, the plates changed and then pushed out again. One night my grandmother was here for dinner, and she didn't quite understand the drill. She wasn't quite finished with her salad. As the table went out, she was following it with her eyes. Then all of a sudden, she was looking at other people's feet with a fork in her hand. But that was a worthy experiment, and why not?

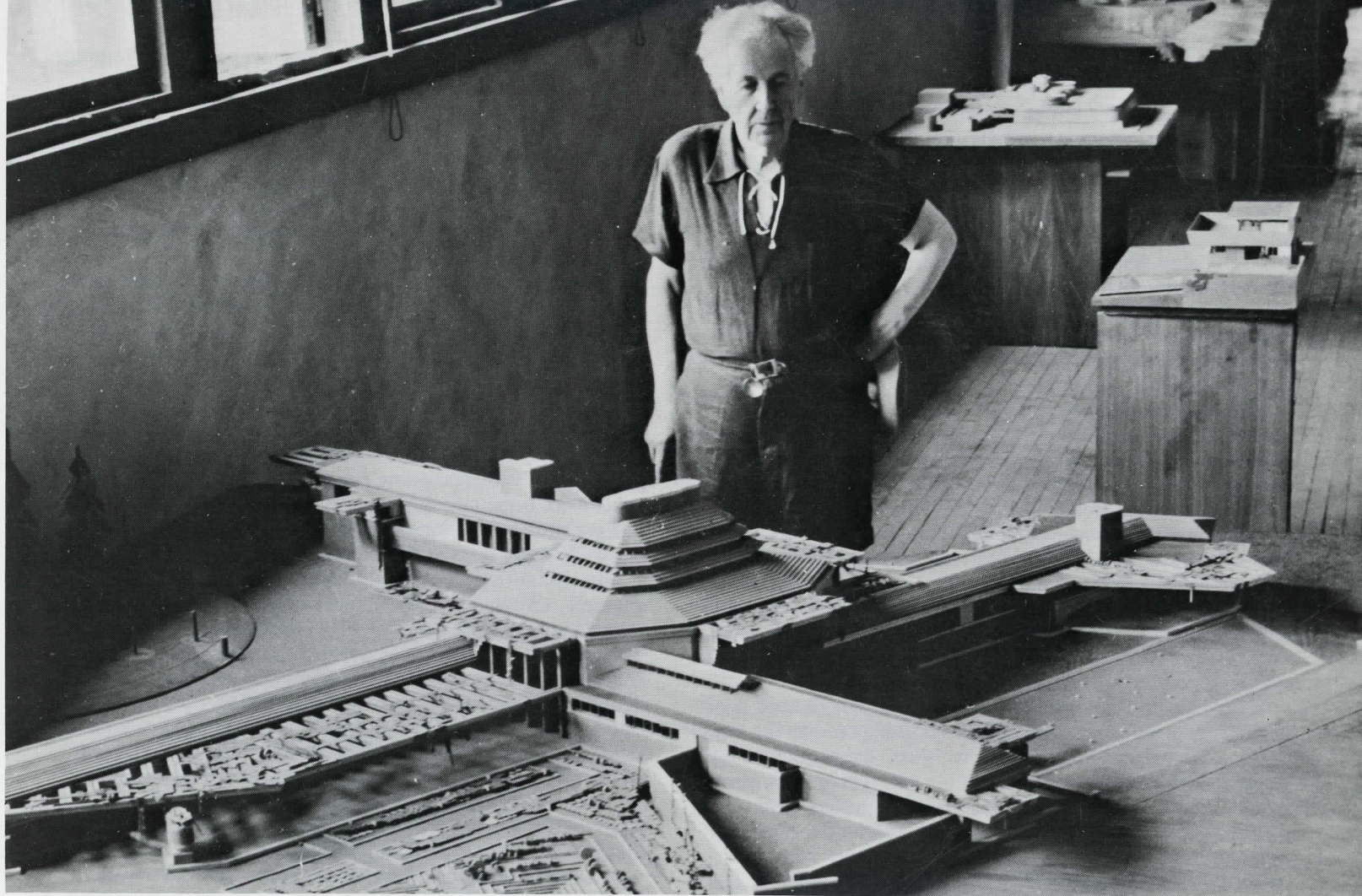
The radiant heating system in the house was way ahead of its time. It was a good idea, but the control systems were not developed in 1939 to give area control; so when it was cold in the



playroom, it was hot in the bedrooms leading up to the playroom, because the heat came from the central system. With today's sophisticated controls, it would have worked admirably well.

The fireplace in the balcony was to have 12-foot logs leaning vertically against the firewall. One day, after we had been in the house for about three months, my father said, "Well, we should try the fireplace up on the balcony." So we fired it up, and the logs burned. All of a sudden, the logs started falling out into the room as the bottoms burned and broke. So we threw them out the window. There it was, a worthy experiment.

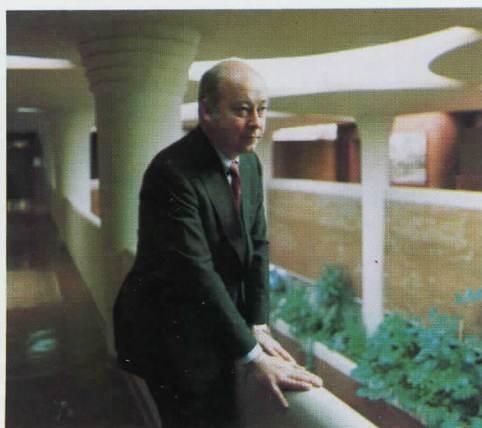
And, of course, there is the famous leaky roof story which has many versions. I have my own, and I believe that mine is the authentic one. One night, my father had some distinguished guests to dinner, and as a 13-year-old I was invited to sit at the side of the table and keep quiet. My father had men working



Mr. Wright and the Johnsons of Racine, Wis.

Reminiscences of 'Wingspread' and its architect.

Photos courtesy the Johnson Foundation



Wright inspects a model of Wingspread which shows its 'zoned' plan (top) while Samuel Johnson (above), a 'fourth generation waxmaker,' surveys the company's headquarters, also designed by Wright.

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Wingspread, the Johnson house (1937) north of Racine, Wis., is one of Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpieces. Appropriately named, the wings of the house "ride the grassed slopes as if they were floating on waves" (Henry-Russell Hitchcock). Now owned and maintained by the Johnson Foundation, the house was the site of a meeting in July of AIA's committee on design.

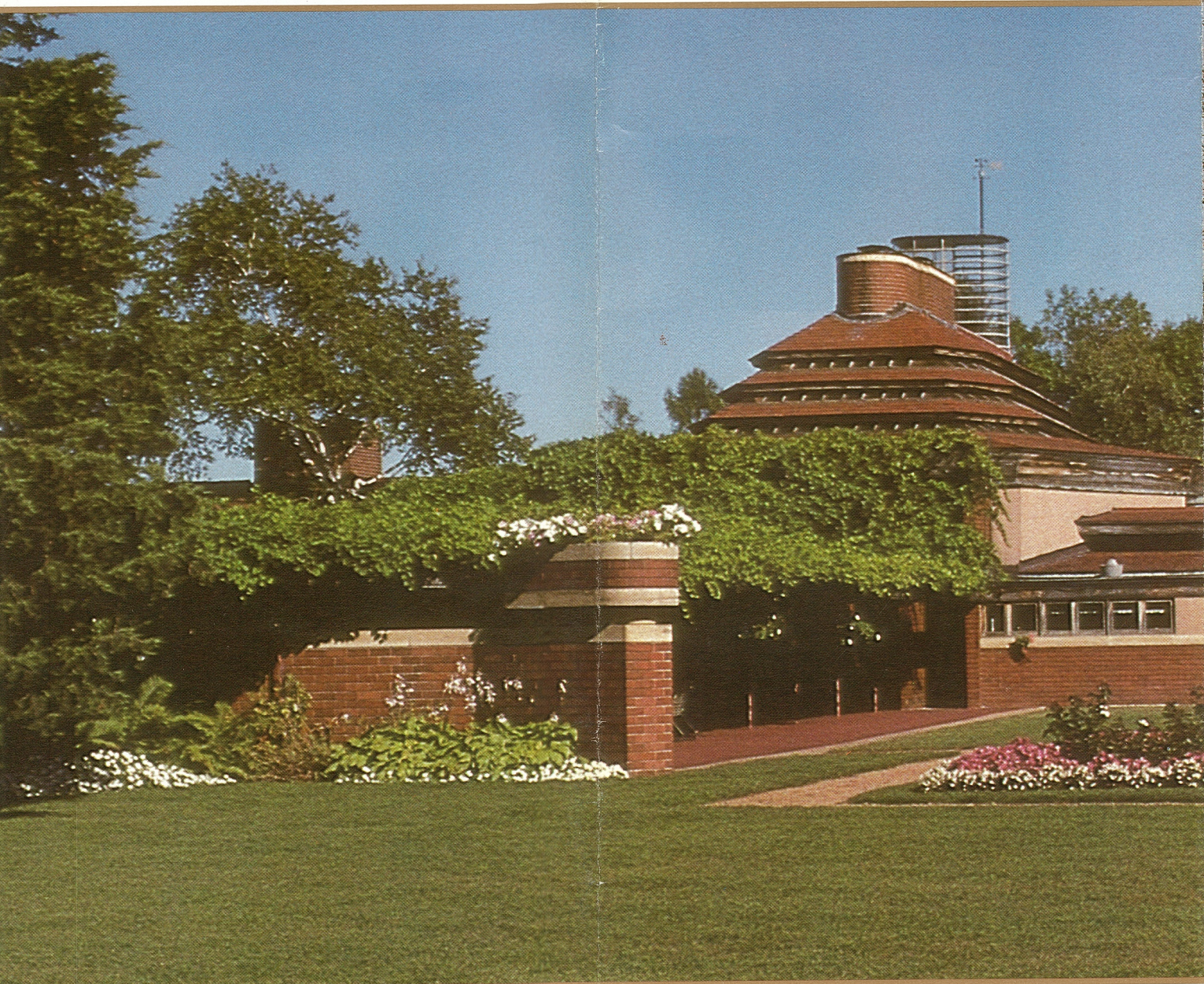
Committee members studied the house and the Johnson administration building and research tower, also designed by Wright, and made a trip to Taliesin East, Spring Green, Wis.

A highlight of the occasion, sponsored by the AIA Foundation and the Johnson Foundation, was an informal talk by Samuel C. Johnson, a fourth generation "waxmaker," who is chairman and chief executive officer of S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc., and chairman of the board of trustees of the Johnson Foundation. His reminiscences about FLW and comments on the Wright architecture commissioned by his father follow. The quotes from Wright's autobiography are used with permission (Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, © 1977). Ed.

This occasion gave me the opportunity to rummage through some of the Frank Lloyd Wright memorabilia that we have in the company archives. One of the first things I did was to look through Mr. Wright's autobiography, published in 1943. There is a chapter in the book entitled "The Story of Hibbard the Johnson Who Did So Much for His Old Home Town—Wax Officiating." That is my father. I had a lot of fun, boning up on some of the great things Mr. Wright wrote.

In his autobiography, Mr. Wright says: "Hibbard (alias Hib), attractive young son of a great waxmaker, who was also the son

"Wingspread" NHL Wi



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WINGSPREAD[®]





Wingspread was the last of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Houses and his largest single-family residence. Designed for the family of H.F. Johnson, Wingspread was built in 1938-39, at about the same time as the Johnson Wax Administration Building in downtown Racine.

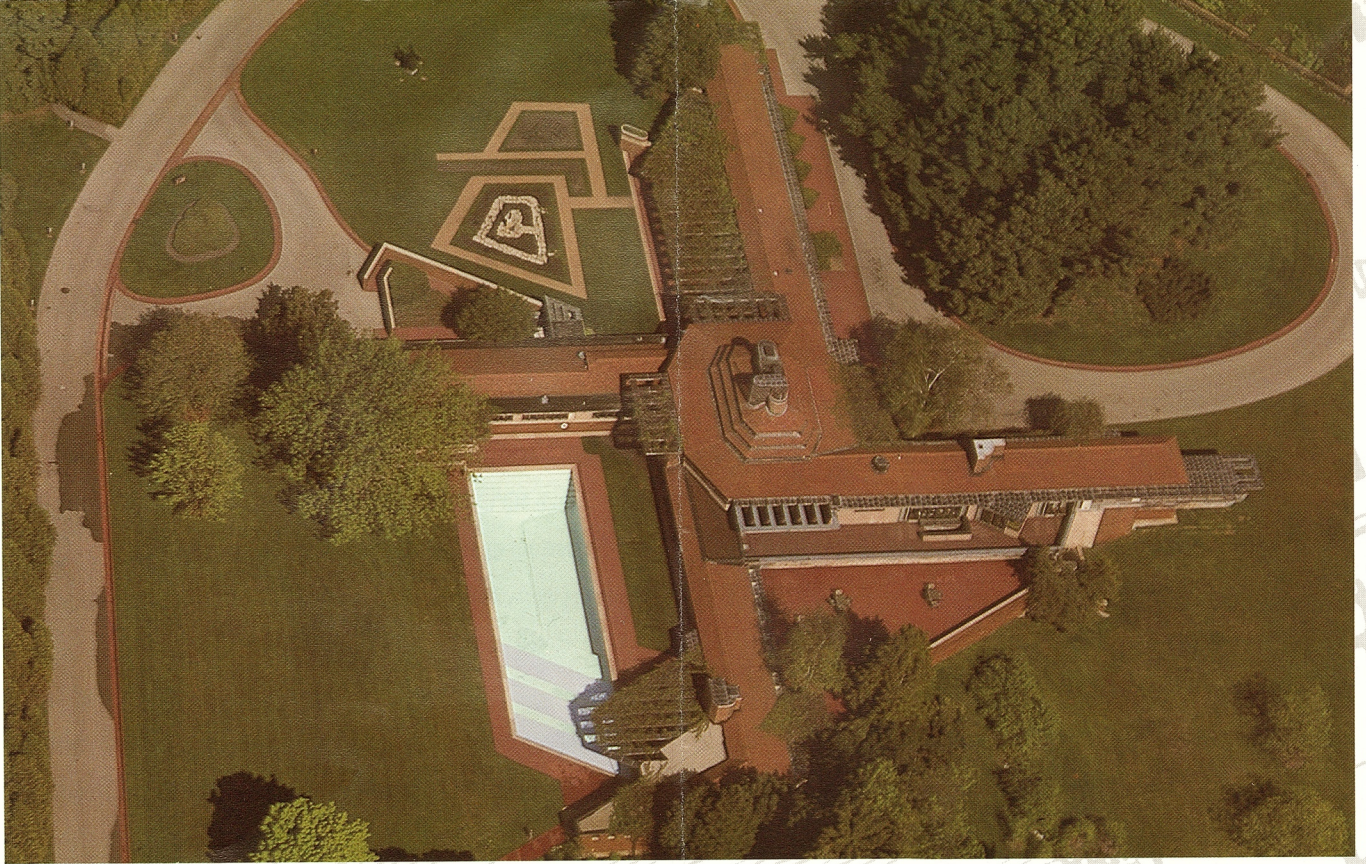
"We called it Wingspread because spread its wings it did," Wright said in his autobiography. "The site was not at all stimulating before the house went up, but ... when you view the environment framed by the architecture of the house from within, somehow, like magic, charm appears in the landscape. ... The site seems to come alive."

The Johnson family lived in Wingspread from 1939 to 1959, when H.F. Johnson established The Johnson Foundation. The 14,000-square-foot building now serves as an international educational conference facility.

The cantilevered north wing, above, juts out over the rolling lawn like the prow of a ship over the sea.

"Amanti," at right, a cast bronze sculpture by Milton Hebard, is near Wingspread's front entrance. It is one of five outdoor pieces of sculpture donated to The Johnson Foundation by Irene Purcell Johnson, wife of H.F. Johnson.





“Consort of the Prairie”

Wingspread nestles amid 30 acres on Wind Point, a peninsula that juts into Lake Michigan. The lakeshore is three-tenths of a mile away.

An aerial view of Wingspread shows the configuration of its four wings, which fan out like a pinwheel from the central dome. Each wing is a “zone”: the master bedroom wing, children’s wing, kitchen wing, and guest/carport wing. The arrangement of the wings allows nearly every room easy access to a patio or balcony.

The center of Wingspread is a living space Wright dubbed a “wigwam.” From a low, barely six-foot-high entry, the soaring space in the central

living area is stunning. The 40- by 60-foot octagonal room is dominated by a 30-foot high chimney, around which are ranged four distinct “zones”: a dining area, an inglenook, a cozy den-like library,



and a formal living room. Each space features a fireplace and built-in furniture that Wright designed specifically for Wingspread.

The dome of the wigwam consists of three tiers of clerestory windows through which ever-shifting natural light fills the room. Tall brick piers separated by 15-foot-high windows form the wigwam's outside walls, creating a continuum between interior and exterior and giving the building the feeling of transparency.

The master bedroom (north) wing contains Wingspread's only second level. This level extends over the eastern side of the living room to form a mezzanine from which one can climb a spiral staircase to an observation tower, which Wright added at Johnson's request.

The mezzanine also features a fireplace that may be one of Wright's less successful innovations. It was designed to burn 12-foot logs leaning vertically against the firewall. Unfortunately, when the fireplace was lighted, the logs burned from the bottom, broke, and fell into the room.

Wingspread Today



A conference in The House, above; below, The House overlooks a prairie and lagoon providing refuge for wildlife, fish, and waterfowl.

According to its founder's wishes, The Johnson Foundation is devoted primarily to cosponsoring conferences. Wingspread now serves as an incubator of ideas generated by individuals and organizations from around the world. Conferences are expected to result in tangible, constructive outcomes such as developing action plans or building coalitions or consensus to affect issues of public interest and importance. A Wingspread conference is more than merely good talk.

Conferences are held both in Wingspread and in an adjacent building, "The House," which was the residence of H.F. Johnson and his wife from 1959 to 1978. The House allows seating for more conference participants than any single room in Wingspread can accommodate; it also has an audio recording studio.

The Foundation's conference support offices are in Wingspread; its administrative offices are housed in the Karen Johnson Boyd Building, a two-story structure built in 1959 as a garage for The House.





The children's (east) wing included three bedrooms and a large playroom opening onto a patio and swimming pool, also designed by Wright.

Guests and automobiles were housed in the west wing, while kitchen facilities and servants' quarters filled the south wing. In the pantry wall was an opening to the dining area through which the dining table was designed to slide, allowing kitchen staff to remove plates and replace them with the next course. Some uncertainty exists about whether the sliding table was Johnson's idea or Wright's. It was a worthy experiment, but unwary diners occasionally were left with fork in hand as their salads slid slowly away.

The dining table and vertical fireplace were not Wingspread's only innovations. The floor is made of four-foot-square concrete slabs, colored Cherokee red, under which Wright laid pipes for radiant heating. The system provided adequate but uneven heat, lacking the high-tech regulating mechanisms available today, and it is no longer used. Flooring in the master wing and mezzanine consists of strips of 2 1/2-inch crosscut plywood.

And yet, amid the most modern features, Wright also included details from the past. The spaced wood blocks, dentils, are a modification of a motif common

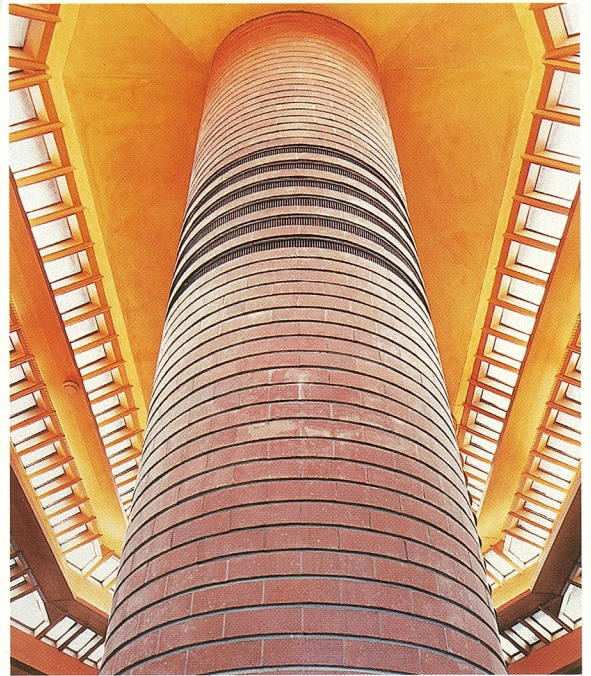
in Greek and Roman building; Wright used them in his own Oak Park home in 1889. The Wingspread barrel chair is adapted from a heavier version he designed for the Darwin Martin House in Buffalo, New York, in 1904.

Other details help make Wingspread the masterpiece that it is. The bricks were specially made, the vertical mortar tinted red, and the horizontal mortar raked deep to emphasize the building's horizontal lines. Wright said that Wingspread's brickwork was the best he had ever seen.

Wingspread possesses many of the characteristics associated with Wright: its horizontal lines, its integration with the land, its long, low silhouette. It is, in Wright's words, "organic," featuring natural materials and earthtone colors, continuous interchange between exterior and interior, and easy movement from space to space.

The Johnson Foundation has made as few alterations as possible in turning what was a residence into a conference center. Guest quarters and garages were transformed into office space, and a storage area beneath the master wing was remodeled to provide lavatory and cloakroom facilities. Several small bathrooms were removed, and some rooms were expanded by the elimination of interior walls.







Wright designed much of Wingspread's furniture, including the built-in desks and sofas, above and at right, and the barrel chair, left, as well as octagonal ottomans, coffee tables, and the dining table (not pictured).



Photos by Ray Hartl, Thomas A. Heinz, and Imagehaus.