

= Taliesin (studio) =

Taliesin / ˈtæliːsɪn / , sometimes known as Taliesin East or Taliesin Spring Green after 1937 , was the home and estate of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright . Located 2 @. @ 5 miles (4 @. @ 0 km) south of the village of Spring Green in Iowa County , Wisconsin , United States , the 600 @-@ acre (240 ha) property was developed on land that originally belonged to Wright 's maternal family .

Wright designed the Taliesin structure two years after leaving his first wife and home in Oak Park , Illinois with a mistress , Mamah Borthwick . The design of the original building was consistent with the design principles of the Prairie School , emulating the flatness of the plains and the natural limestone outcroppings of Wisconsin 's Driftless Area . The structure (which included an agricultural and studio wing) was completed in 1911 .

Wright rebuilt the Taliesin residential wing in 1914 after a disgruntled employee set fire to the living quarters and murdered Borthwick and six others . This second version was used only sparingly by Wright as he worked on projects abroad . He returned to the house in 1922 following completion of the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo . A fire caused by electrical problems destroyed the living quarters in April 1925 . The third version of the living quarters was constructed by Wright by late 1925 . In 1927 , financial problems caused a foreclosure on the building by the Bank of Wisconsin . Wright was able to reacquire the building with the financial help of friends and was able to reoccupy it as of November , 1928 . Taliesin III was Wright 's home for the rest of his life , although he began to winter at Taliesin West in Scottsdale , Arizona upon its completion in 1937 . Many of Wright 's acclaimed buildings were designed here , including Fallingwater , " Jacobs I " (the first Wright @-@ designed residence of Herbert and Katherine Jacobs) , the Johnson Wax Headquarters , and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum . Wright was also an avid collector of Asian art and used Taliesin as a storehouse and private museum .

Wright left Taliesin and the 600 @-@ acre Taliesin Estate to the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation (founded by him and his third wife in 1940) upon his death in 1959 . This organization oversaw renovations to the estate until late 1992 upon the founding of Taliesin Preservation , Inc . , a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the building and estate in Wisconsin . Taliesin mostly operates as a museum , however it is still occupied by former students of Wright 's in addition to students at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture on a seasonal basis . The property was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976 and is being considered as part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site .

= = Location = =

Jones Valley , the Wisconsin River valley in which Taliesin sits , was formed during Pre @-@ Illinoian glaciation . This region of North America , known as the Driftless Area , was totally surrounded by ice during Wisconsin glaciation , but the area itself was not glaciated . The result is an unusually hilly landscape with deeply carved river valleys .

The valley , approximately 2 @. @ 5 miles (4 @. @ 0 km) south of the village of Spring Green , Wisconsin , was originally settled by Frank Lloyd Wright 's maternal grandfather , Richard Lloyd Jones , who came from Ixonia , Wisconsin with his family in 1858 to start a farm . By the 1870s , Richard 's sons had taken over operation of the farm , and they invited Wright work during summers as a farmhand .

Wright 's aunts Jennie and Nell began a co @-@ educational school , Hillside Home School , in the family valley in 1887 and let Wright design the building ; this was Wright 's first independent commission . In 1896 , Wright 's aunts again commissioned Wright , this time to build a windmill . The resulting Romeo and Juliet Windmill was unorthodox but stable . In the winter of 1900 , Wright compiled a portfolio of photographs he took of the surrounding area for a promotional brochure for the Hillside School . Unsatisfied with his original design for the Hillside School , Wright replaced the school in 1902 with a Prairie School design . Wright later sent several of his children to receive an education at the school . Wright 's final commission on the farm was a house for his sister Jane

Porter in 1907 . Tan @-@ Y @-@ Deri , Welsh for " Under the Oaks " , was a design based on his recent Ladies Home Journal article " A Fireproof House for \$ 5000 . " The family , their ideas , religion , and ideals , greatly influenced the young Wright , who later changed his middle name from Lincoln (in honor of Abraham Lincoln) to Lloyd in deference to his mother 's family .

When Wright decided to construct a home in this valley , he chose the name of the Welsh bard Taliesin , whose name means " shining brow " or " radiant brow " . Wright learned of the poet through Richard Hovey 's Taliesin : A Masque , a story about an artist 's struggle for identity . The Welsh name also suited Wright 's roots , as the Lloyd Joneses gave Welsh names to their properties . The hill upon which Taliesin was built was a favorite from Wright 's youth ; he saw the house as a " shining brow " on the hill . Although the name was originally only applied to the house , Wright later used the term to refer to the entire property . Wright and others used roman numerals to distinguish the three versions of the house .

= = Early history = =

From 1898 to 1909 , architect Frank Lloyd Wright lived and worked out of his home and studio in Oak Park , Illinois . In Oak Park , Wright had developed his concept of Prairie School architecture , designing houses primarily for local clients . In 1903 , Wright began designing a home for Edwin Cheney , but quickly took a liking for Cheney 's wife . Wright and Mamah Borthwick Cheney began an affair and separated from their spouses in 1909 . They met up in Florence , Italy , in February 1910 , where Wright made sketches of his future studio . He was particularly inspired by Michelozzo 's Villa Medici in Fiesole because it was built into a hill , had commanding views of its surroundings , and featured gardens on two levels .

In 1911 , the pair sought to return to the United States , but knew they could not escape scandal if they returned to Oak Park . Wright saw an alternative ? his family 's ancestral farm near Spring Green , Wisconsin . On April 3 , Wright wrote to a friend requesting money to purchase " a small house " for his mother . By the 10th , Wright 's mother Anne had a signed deed for the property . By using Anne 's name , Wright was able to secure the 31 @. @ 5 @-@ acre (12 @. @ 7 ha) property without attracting any attention to the affair . Late in the summer , Mamah quietly moved into the property , staying with Wright 's sister at Tan @-@ Y @-@ Deri . However , Wright and Borthwick 's new property was discovered by a Chicago Examiner reporter that fall , and the affair made headlines in the Chicago Tribune on Christmas Eve .

= = Taliesin I = =

The Taliesin house had three sections : two broad portions on either end and a narrow connecting loggia . Typical of a Prairie School design , the house was , as Wright described , " low , wide , and snug . " As with most of his houses , Wright designed the furniture . One of these broad sections was used as Wright 's studio and workroom . A small apartment wing juts out of this wing ; the apartment may have originally been intended for Wright 's mother , but was used by Wright 's head draftsman . Wright and Borthwick lived in the other broad portion . The one @-@ story complex was accessed by a road leading up the hill to the rear of the building . The estate gateway was on County Road C , just west of Wisconsin Road 23 . Iron entry gates were flanked by limestone piers capped with planter urns .

Wright chose yellow limestone for the house from a quarry of outcropping ledges on a nearby hill . Local farmers helped Wright move the stone up the Taliesin hill . Stones were laid in long , thin ledges , evoking the natural way that they were found in the quarry and across the Driftless Area . Plaster for the interior walls was mixed with sienna , giving the finished product a golden hue . This caused the plaster to resemble the sand on the banks of the nearby Wisconsin River . The outside plaster walls were similar , but mixed with cement , resulting in a grayer color . Windows were placed so that sun could come through openings in every room at every point of the day . Wright chose not to install gutters so that icicles would form in winter . Shingles on the gradually @-@ pitched roof were designed to weather to a silver @-@ grey color , matching the branches of nearby

trees . A porte @-@ cochère was built over the main entrance of the living quarters to provide shelter for visiting automobiles . The finished house measured approximately 12 @,@ 000 square feet (1 @,@ 100 m2) of enclosed space .

= = = Life at Taliesin = = =

Upon moving in with Borthwick in the winter 1911 , Wright resumed work on his architectural projects , but he struggled to secure commissions because of the ongoing negative publicity over his affair with Borthwick (whose husband , Edwin Cheney , maintained main custody of their son and daughter) . However , Wright did produce some of his most acclaimed works during this time period , including the Midway Gardens in Chicago and the Avery Coonley Playhouse in Riverside . He also indulged his hobby for collecting Japanese art , and quickly became a renowned authority . Borthwick translated four works from Swedish difference feminist Ellen Key .

In his spare time , Wright developed a fruit farm on the property with over a thousand fruit trees and bushes that he ordered from Jens Jensen in 1912 . It is unknown exactly how many were planted , because part of the order was destroyed during a railroad strike . Wright requested two hundred and eighty @-@ five apple trees planted , including one hundred McIntosh , fifty Wealthy , fifty Golden Russet , and fifty Fameuse . Among the bushes were three hundred gooseberry , two hundred blackberry , and two hundred raspberry . The property also grew pears , asparagus , rhubarb , and plums . The fruit and vegetable plants were placed along the contour of the estate , which may have been done to mimic the farms he saw while in Italy . Wright also dammed a creek on the property to create an artificial lake , which was stocked with fish and aquatic fowl . This water garden , probably inspired by the ones he saw in Japan , created a natural gateway to the property .

In 1912 , Wright designed what he called a " tea circle " in the middle of the courtyard , adjacent to the crown of the hill . This circle was heavily inspired by Jens Jensen 's council circles , but also took influence from Japanese wabi @-@ sabi landscape architecture . Unlike Jensen 's circles , the rough @-@ cut limestone tea circle was much larger and featured a pool in the center . The circle featured a curved stone bench flanked with Chinese jars built during the Ming Dynasty . A large oak tree stood at the center until it blew down in a storm in 1998 . The tea garden also included a large plaster replica of Flower in the Crannied Wall , a statue originally designed by Richard Bock for the Susan Lawrence Dana House ; the namesake poem is inscribed on its rear .

= = = Attack and fire = = =

Julian Carlton was a 31 @-@ year @-@ old man who came to work as a chef and servant at Taliesin for the summer . Carlton was of African American descent , ostensibly from Barbados . He was recommended to Wright by John Vogel song , Jr . , the caterer for the Midway Gardens project . Carlton and his wife Gertrude had previously served in the house of Vogel song 's parents in Chicago . Originally a genial presence on the estate , Carlton grew increasingly paranoid . He stayed up late at night with a butcher knife , looking out the window . This behavior had been noticed by Wright and Borthwick , who issued an ad in a local paper for a replacement cook . Carlton was given notice that August 15 , 1914 would be his last day in their employ .

Before he left , Carlton plotted to kill the residents of Taliesin . His primary target was draftsman Emil Brodelle , who had called Carlton a " black son @-@ of @-@ a @-@ bitch " on August 12 for not following an order . Brodelle and Carlton also engaged in a minor physical confrontation two days later . He planned the assault , targeting the noon hour , when Borthwick , her children , and the studio personnel would be on opposite sides of the property awaiting lunch . Wright was away in Chicago completing Midway Gardens while Borthwick stayed at home with her two children , 11 @-@ year old John and 9 @-@ year @-@ old Martha . On August 15 , Carlton grabbed a shingling hatchet and began an attack . He started with the Borthwicks , who were waiting on the porch off the living room . Mamah Borthwick was killed by a single blow to the face , and her son John was slaughtered as he sat in his chair . Martha managed to flee , but was hunted down and slain in the courtyard . He then coated the bodies in gasoline and lit them on fire , setting the house ablaze .

Carlton then turned his attention to the other six residents , pouring gasoline underneath the door of the far end of the residence and setting it on fire . Draftsman Herbert Fritz managed to break open a window and escape , though he broke his arm in the process . Carlton then entered the other dining room and killed Brodelle . He then hid , waiting for the other residents to try to escape . As foreman William Weston and his 13 @-@ year @-@ old son Ernest ran through the door , Carlton attacked with the hatchet . The Westons escaped , but Ernest died from his wounds hours later . Carlton sought out the final two residents , laborer Thomas Bruner and gardener David Lindblom . Bruner and Lindblom managed to fight off Carlton and escape , but died days later from their burns and injuries . With the house empty , Carlton ran to the basement and into a fireproof furnace chamber . He brought a small vial of hydrochloric acid with him as a fallback plan in case the heat became too much for him to handle . Carlton did attempt suicide by swallowing the acid , but it failed to kill him .

Lindblom and Weston alerted a neighboring farm of the attack . Weston then returned to the studio and used a garden hose to help extinguish the flames . His efforts saved the studio portion of the building and the many Wright manuscripts . Eventually , neighbors arrived to assist putting out the fire and search for survivors . Iowa County Sheriff John Williams located Carlton and arrested him . Carlton was transferred to the county jail in Dodgeville . Gertrude was found in a nearby field , apparently unaware of her husband 's intentions . She was dressed in travel clothes , expecting to catch a train to Chicago with Julian to seek a new job .

Gertrude was released from police custody shortly after the incident . She was sent to Chicago with \$ 7 and was never heard from again . The hydrochloric acid that Carlton ingested failed to kill him , but did badly burn his esophagus , which made it difficult for him to ingest food . Carlton was indicted on August 16 and was charged with the murder of Mamah Borthwick , the only death that was directly witnessed by a survivor . Carlton entered a not guilty plea . Forty @-@ seven days after the fire , before the case could be heard , Carlton died of starvation in his cell .

= = = Aftermath = = =

Bodies of the dead and injured were brought to Tan @-@ Y @-@ Deri , the nearby home of Wright 's sister , Jane Porter . Wright returned to Taliesin that night with his son John and Edwin Cheney . Cheney brought the remains of his children back to Chicago while Wright buried Mamah Borthwick on the property . Heartbroken over the loss of his lover , Wright did not mark the grave because he could not bear to be reminded of the tragedy . He also did not hold a funerary service for Borthwick , although he did fund and attend services for his employees . Wright struggled with the loss of Borthwick , experiencing symptoms of conversion disorder : insomnia , weight loss , and temporary blindness . After a few months of recovery , aided by his sister Jane Porter , Wright moved to an apartment he rented in Chicago at 25 Cedar Street . The attack also had a profound effect on Wright 's design principles ; biographer Robert Twombly writes that his Prairie School period ended after the loss of Borthwick .

= = Taliesin II = =

Within a few months of his recovery , Wright began work on rebuilding Taliesin . The new complex was mostly identical to the original building . The dam was rebuilt ; Wright added an observation platform , perhaps inspired by the one he designed in Baraboo . Later , he built a hydroelectric generator in an unsuccessful effort to make Taliesin completely self @-@ sufficient . The generator was built in the style of a Japanese temple . Within only a few years , parts of the structure eroded away . It was demolished in the 1940s .

While designing the new residence , Wright received a sympathetic letter from Miriam Noel , a fan of his architecture . Wright exchanged correspondence with the wealthy divorcee and met with her at his Chicago office . Wright was quickly infatuated , and the two began a relationship . By Spring 1915 , Taliesin II was completed and Noel moved there with Wright . When Wright 's first wife Catherine finally granted him a divorce in 1925 , Wright and Miriam married . Although Wright admired Noel 's erratic personality at first , her behavior (later identified as schizophrenia) led to a

miserable life together at Taliesin .

In the new Taliesin , Wright worked to repair his tarnished reputation . He secured a commission to design the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo , Japan ; when the building was undamaged following the 1923 earthquake , Wright 's reputation was restored . Although he later expanded the agricultural wing , Wright spent little time at the second Taliesin house , often living near his construction sites abroad . Instead of serving as a full @-@ time residence , Wright treated Taliesin like an art museum for his collection of Asian works . Wright only truly lived at Taliesin II starting in 1922 , after his work at the Imperial Hotel was completed .

On April 20 , 1925 , Wright returned from eating dinner in the detached dining room when he noticed smoke billowing from his bedroom . By that time of night , most of the employees had returned home ; only a driver and one apprentice were left in the complex . Unlike the first Taliesin fire , Wright was able to get help immediately . However , the fire quickly spread due to high winds . Despite the efforts of Wright and his neighbors to extinguish the flame , the living quarters of the second Taliesin estate were quickly destroyed . However , the workrooms where Wright kept his architectural drafts were spared . According to Wright 's autobiography , the fire appeared to have begun near a telephone in his bedroom . Wright also mentioned a lightning storm approaching immediately before noticing the fire . Wright scholars speculate that the storm may have caused an electrical surge through the telephone system , sparking the fire .

= = Taliesin III = =

Wright was deeply in debt following the destruction of Taliesin II . Aside from debts owed on the property , his divorce from Noel forced Wright to sell much of his farm machinery and livestock . Wright was also forced to sell his prized Japanese prints at half value to pay his debts . The Bank of Wisconsin foreclosed on Taliesin in 1927 and Wright was forced to move to La Jolla , California . Shortly before the bank was to begin an auction on the property , Wright 's former client Darwin Martin conceived a scheme to save the property . He formed a company called Frank Lloyd Wright Incorporated to issue stock on Wright 's future earnings . Many of Wright 's former clients and students purchased stock in Wright to raise \$ 70 @,@ 000 . The company successfully bid on Taliesin for \$ 40 @,@ 000 , returning it to Wright .

Wright returned to Taliesin in the winter of 1928 and began to rebuild the complex , which he named Taliesin III , shortly afterward . Wright 's interaction with Taliesin lasted for the rest of his life , and eventually , he purchased the surrounding land , creating an estate of 593 acres (2 @.@ 4 km ²) . Some of Wright 's best known buildings and most ambitious designs were created at Taliesin III . Works completed during this period include the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum , the First Unitarian Society Meeting House , and Price Tower ; he designed " The Illinois " , a mile @-@ high building , there in 1956 . In its final form , the Taliesin III building measured 37 @,@ 000 square feet (3 @,@ 400 m ²) . All Wright buildings on the property combine for 75 @,@ 000 square feet (7 @,@ 000 m ²) , just short of 2 acres (0 @.@ 81 ha) , on 600 acres (240 ha) of land .

= = = Taliesin Fellowship = = =

Wright inherited the Hillside Home School when it became insolvent in 1915 . The building sat empty until 1928 , when Wright conceived the idea of hosting a school there . He issued a proposal to the University of Wisconsin that would have created the Hillside Home School for the Allied Arts ; however , the plan was later abandoned . In 1932 , the Wrights instead established the private Taliesin Fellowship , where fifty to sixty apprentices could come to Taliesin to study under the architect . Students helped him develop the estate at a time when Wright received few commissions for his work . Once he began Taliesin West , a winter home in Scottsdale , Arizona , in 1937 , Wright and the fellowship " migrated " between the two homes each year .

Wright did not consider the fellowship a formal school , instead viewing it as a benevolent educational institution . He also worked to ensure G.I. Bill eligibility for returning World War II veterans . The town of Wyoming , Wisconsin and Wright became embroiled in a legal dispute over

his claim of tax @-@ exemption . A trial judge agreed with the town , stating that since apprentices did much of Wright 's work , it was not solely a benevolent institution . Wright fought the case to the Wisconsin Supreme Court . When Wright lost the case there in 1954 , he threatened to abandon the estate . However , he was persuaded to stay after some friends raised \$ 800 @,@ 000 to cover the back taxes at a benefit dinner .

= = Preservation = =

In 1940 , Frank Lloyd Wright , his third wife Olgivanna , and his son @-@ in @-@ law William Wesley Peters formed the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation . Upon Wright 's death on April 9 , 1959 , ownership of the Taliesin estate in Spring Green , as well as Taliesin West , passed into the hands of the foundation . The Taliesin Fellowship continued to use the Hillside School as the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture . The fellowship allowed tours of the school , but initially did not permit visitation of the house or other grounds . When the group spent two summers in Switzerland , rumors started that they were planning on selling the house to S. C. Johnson , a former Wright client . Instead , the fellowship sold a surrounding piece of land to a developer associated with the company , intending to develop a tourist complex . The 3 @,@ 000 @-@ acre (1 @,@ 200 ha) resort included an eighteen hole golf course , restaurant , and a visitor 's center .

= = = Recognition = = =

On January 7 , 1976 , Taliesin was recognized as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) District by the National Park Service . The nine properties contributing to the district are the landscape , Taliesin III , Hillside Home School , the Hillside Playhouse , the dam , Romeo and Juliet Windmill , Midway Farms , the pool and gardens in the courtyard , and Tan @-@ Y @-@ Deri . This designation also listed the property in the National Register of Historic Places . A National Historic Landmark is a site deemed to have " exceptional value to the nation . "

In the late 1980s , Taliesin and Taliesin West were together nominated as a World Heritage Site , a UNESCO designation for properties with special worldwide significance . The nomination was rejected because the organization wanted to see a larger nomination with more Wright properties . In 2008 , the National Park Service submitted the Taliesin estate along with nine other Frank Lloyd Wright properties to a tentative list for World Heritage Status , which the National Park Service says is " a necessary first step in the process of nominating a site to the World Heritage List . " The properties are expected to first become eligible for the designation in 2016 .

In 1987 , the National Park Service evaluated the 1 @,@ 811 NHLs nationwide for historical integrity and threat of damage . Taliesin was declared a " Priority 1 " NHL , a site that is " seriously damaged or imminently with such damage . " Furthermore , the site was listed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of America 's Most Endangered Places in 1994 , citing its " water damage , erosion , foundation settlement and wood decay . " Taliesin Preservation , Inc . (TPI) , a non @-@ profit organization , was established in 1991 to restore Taliesin .

= = = Rehabilitation = = =

On June 18 , 1998 , a severe storm damaged the estate . Heavy rains caused the drainage system to fail and a cascade of water surged over the retaining wall . This caused a mudslide , damaging the estate 's foundation . Furthermore , the large oak tree at the center of the courtyard fell down on top of the house . The next year , another storm collapsed a tunnel underneath the studio wing . A 1999 grant from Save America 's Treasures helped defray costs to re @-@ roof Taliesin III , to stabilize its foundation , and to connect it to a local sewage treatment plant .

Over \$ 11 million has been spent on the rehabilitation of Taliesin since 1998 . Unfortunately , its preservation is " fraught with epic difficulties " , because Wright never thought of it as a series of buildings with a long @-@ term future . It was built by inexperienced students , without solid foundations . Financing renovations has been challenging because revenue from Taliesin visitation

has been lower than projected .

TPI provides tours from May 1 through October 31 . In April and November , the association provides only an exterior shuttle and walking tour . Because the organization owns the property , it is inaccessible outside the confines of a tour . Roughly 25 @, @ 000 people visit Taliesin each year .

= = = Assessment = = =

Architectural historian James F. O 'Gorman compares Taliesin to Thomas Jefferson 's Monticello , calling it " not a mere building but an entire environment in which man , architecture and nature form a harmonious whole . " He continues that the building is an expression of Romanticism influence in architecture . William Barillas , in an essay of the Prairie School movement , agrees with O 'Gorman 's assessment and calls Taliesin " the ultimate prairie house . " In Taliesin 1911 ? 1914 , a collection of essays about the first house , the authors and editor conclude that Taliesin was " Wright 's architectural self portrait . " In a 2009 publication for the Thoreau Society , Naomi Uechi notes thematic similarities between the architecture of Taliesin and the concept of simplicity advocated by philosopher Henry David Thoreau . Neil Levine highlighted the abstract nature of the complex , comparing it to the works of Pablo Picasso .