

= Heller House =

The Isidore H. Heller House is a house located at 5132 South Woodlawn Avenue in the Hyde Park community area of Chicago in Cook County , Illinois , USA . The house was designed by American architect Frank Lloyd Wright . The design is credited as one of the turning points in Wright 's shift to geometric , Prairie School architecture , which is defined by horizontal lines , flat or hipped roofs with broad overhanging eaves , windows grouped in horizontal bands , and an integration with the landscape , which is meant to evoke native Prairie surroundings .

The work demonstrates Wright 's shift away from emulating the style of his mentor , Louis Sullivan . Richard Bock , a Wright collaborator and sculptor , provided some of the ornamentation , including a plaster frieze . The ownership history of this building demonstrates the property 's evolution and development in the framework of surrounding Hyde Park buildings , and the building 's location in the current community ? near other Prairie School architecture ? includes this building into the overall body of Lloyd Wright 's work . The Heller House was designated a Chicago Landmark on September 15 , 1971 , and added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 16 , 1972 . On 18 August 2004 , the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the house a National Historic Landmark .

= = History = =

Little is known about Isidore H. Heller and his family , but what is known has been compiled through personal interviews as well as census and county records . Heller was born in Austria in 1847 , and his wife , Ida , was born in Wisconsin in 1857 . In America , Heller worked at Wolf , Sayer , and Heller : Packers and Butcher ? s Supplies , which was located on Fulton Street , Chicago , on the northwest side of the city . Heller and Ida were later married and had three children , including Walter Heller , a Chicago investment banker .

Heller purchased land in the Hyde Park area of Chicago from Jonas Hamburger on 2 January 1895 and commissioned Lloyd Wright to design the house in 1896 . A building permit was issued on 13 July 1897 , at a cost of \$ 7 @. @ 70 , and named William Adams as the builder . The building was constructed on the 50 by 175 feet (15 by 53 m) lot in 1897 . The total cost of the work is estimated at \$ 12 @, @ 500 . In 1906 , the lot was enlarged when Heller purchased an additional 25 feet (7 @. @ 6 m) to the north of his original plot .

The Hellers lived in the house for about 16 years , until the death of Ida Heller on October 11 , 1909 . The house was sold to Francis Bickett on 18 June 1913 , as records indicate that by 1915 , Heller had been living in Silver Lake for some years . Bickett sold the house within a year to Charles McFarlane , and from 1924 ? 39 the Heller House was owned and occupied by Joseph Mayer and his wife ; the house became known as the " Joseph Mayer House " to local residents . The Mayers sold the home to Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Fox in 1939 , who reportedly made alterations to the home 's third floor .

In 1948 , George Watson purchased the home from Fox and owned it for the next 25 years , becoming the owner with the longest tenure . Lewis Bradford then bought the house in 1972 , and had the exterior sandblasted . In 1977 , Victor and Danielle Barcion bought the house . They occupied it until 1987 , when it was sold to David and Catherine Epstein , who sold the home to Serafino Garella and Judith Bromley , in 1995 . They restored a bathroom and restored the master bedroom 's fireplace . The building was designated a National Historic Landmark in the same year . The house was then sold in 2004 again to the current inhabitants the Goldstein family , who in 2006 restored the roof of the house .

= = Architecture = =

When Wright designed the Heller House in 1896 , it marked his move away from styles that were popular into an era of geometric and highly modern designs . Wright 's design exhibits the influence of Wright 's mentor , Louis Sullivan , and demonstrates Wright 's move towards Prairie School

homes which would epitomize much of his early work . Sullivan 's influence can also be seen in the floral pattern of the Richard Bock plaster frieze on the home 's third floor , although during the 1970s , restoration work ? which utilized sandblasting ? destroyed much of the detail on the frieze .

The 26 by 98 feet (7 @. @ 9 by 29 @. @ 9 m) rectangular house stands 41 feet (12 m) high and was built with Indiana Limestone , and yellow Roman brick , which emphasizes the geometric and horizontal nature of the home 's exterior . The house was constructed on a narrow lot , so the main entryway is located on the side of the building , similar to Wright 's Warren McArthur House of 1892 . The south side entrance was adorned with Classical detailing and the cantilevered entry lintel , which sits on two ornately detailed stone columns , was decorated with quatrefoils (French : Four leaves) which were set on a stone panel . The front room is not split by a corridor or side hall , making it more spacious .

= = Significance = =

The Heller House was Wright 's first work in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago , an area that was influenced by the Gothic Revival work of Henry Ives Cobb . The house blends together key elements of Wright 's Prairie style and is located within a half mile of other early works . Wright 's Robie House is six blocks from the Heller House , and the Blossom House and McArthur House are nearby , in Kenwood .

Many of the Hyde Park houses of Chicago are surrounded by elaborate gardens , and have been the subject of an ongoing neighborhood revitalization since the late 1950s . Hyde Park experienced an explosion of growth after the Township 's incorporation into the city of Chicago in 1889 , the establishment of the University of Chicago in 1892 , and the Columbian Exposition in 1893 . The design of the Heller House was unlike any other home in Chicago at the time it was built and was called Wright 's most " outrageous " design .