



# WRITINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE SETH PETERSON COTTAGE CONSERVANCY

Vol. XVII, Issue I

## COTTAGE COMMENTS BY CLAIRE

Welcome to the new Summer edition of *Writings*! Those of you who are life members may be wondering about the change. (The rest of you already know from a recent renewal or membership invitation letter you received.) We realized that with a Spring and Fall newsletter, we never really got to post some of the beautiful photographs of the cottage in its winter setting. In the autumn of the year, no one wants to be reminded of colder weather ahead, and by spring, everyone is tired of winter and doesn't want to be reminded of it. And, of course, although fall colors are beautiful, most pictures in the newsletters never showed how green the cottage area is in summer, since our spring pictures were usually of budding trees or work projects. So, changing to a Summer and Winter publication schedule seemed best, since now we can show pictures of *all* the seasons to you!

founding board members who was very active in the days of the cottage restoration. Jill contacted our State Representative who arranged for the matching grant that enabled the Conservancy to begin its fundraising and restoration work, and she found the information for the Andy Warhol Foundation grant that eventually financed the replacement of the cottage roof. Jill also arranged catering for several fundraising house tour events, and personally catered the Eric Lloyd Wright presentation at the State Historical Society. Sadly, she died in late 1992, shortly after the cottage dedication. Audrey Laatsch, (our founding president) and I, as Jill's good friends, conceived the idea of finding a way to enable students to spend nights in the cottage at no cost to them, an idea that Jill felt strongly about. After several false starts, and the difficulty of how best to choose candidates, the award became one for Taliesin architectural students. Each year, an outstanding student or student couple is chosen by Taliesin staff to receive the award. Details



*Seen from below, the cottage is reduced to a roof floating over a terrace wall in a spring forest.*

Comments from our cottage guest book are always included, because I think that other people's experiences and words best convey what it is like to stay at the cottage. Over the past six months, there were so many good entries about personal renewal, that I decided to focus more of this issue on our guests' experiences.

There are also some guest photos. One of this year's Jill Vladick Memorial Scholarship Award winners, Huiee Wong, is an excellent photographer, and she has given me permission to use some of her cottage photos in this issue. She also made a unique guest book entry that I will share with you.

For our newer subscribers, I want to say a few words about the Jill Vladick Award. It was begun to honor one of our

about this year's recipients are included in this newsletter.

Our Fall Boat Tour will be held as usual, since the repairs to the Mirror Lake dam will not necessitate lowering the level of the lake as was previously thought. The lake lowering would have made boarding the boats nearly impossible.

I like to close with a short quotation from the guest book—anonymous because I could not read the names.

*"All our focus here has profoundly affected my life. We have benefited from this experience and Wright's message. I feel forever changed."*

Claire Barnett  
President, Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy

## NEWS FROM THE MIRROR LAKE ASSOCIATION

Mark Blakeslee

**M**embers of the Mirror Lake Association (MLA) had an active and productive spring. Many of them took part in "Project C.L.E.A.N." (Combined Local Effort for Aquatic Nurturing), a one-day annual event of the MLA, cleaning up parts of the state park and area roads. Participation in this event has been growing in recent years, allowing us to cover more areas around the park. This past year we were surprised and thrilled when the Wisconsin Dells High School allowed several hundred students out of classes on Earth Day to help remove litter around the park and other areas in the Dells. We were very grateful for their help.

At the June MLA annual meeting, Michael Cain, a retired attorney for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, spoke about Wisconsin's "Public Trust Doctrine," a part of the state's constitution that assures that the state's waters remain "common highways and forever free" to all people. This law also regulates development around lakes, so that the natural scenic beauty of each lake is preserved for everyone to enjoy.

The MLA annual picnic will be held on August 21<sup>st</sup> at the beach area in Mirror Lake State Park. All who are interested in the MLA are welcome to attend.

## WRITINGS

is a publication of The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. for the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright in Mirror Lake State Park.  
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Visit us on the web at: [www.sethpeterson.org](http://www.sethpeterson.org)  
Cottage Voice Mail: 877 466-2358

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

President: Claire Barnett  
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John Muchow

### **Ex-officio members**

Mark Blakeslee, President, Mirror Lake Association  
Paul Zajackowski, Superintendent, Mirror Lake State Park

### **Conservancy Staff**

Office Manager: Ron Dakter  
Marketing Coordinator: Gail Kohl

**For cottage reservations call the Sand County Service  
Company, Lake Delton, Wisconsin: 608 254-6551.**

Next year will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mirror Lake Association. We are very proud of our accomplishments, and plan to celebrate with many different activities on the lake during the year. If you have any questions about the MLA or would like membership information, please feel free to contact me at [mblakeslee@uwalumni.com](mailto:mblakeslee@uwalumni.com). ■

## MIRROR LAKE STATE PARK REPORT

Paul Zajackowski

**T**he summer is in full swing and Mirror Lake State Park is in a flurry of activity as visitors come to enjoy a few nights of camping, hike the nearly twenty miles of trails, spend a few hours at the beach, or paddle the calm lake waters. This keeps the park staff busy in assuring that the grounds are clean and safe, the facilities are in working order, and in preparing the park for the busiest time of the year.

Thankfully, we have many dedicated volunteers to help out. This past April we had several groups helping the staff prepare the park for the upcoming months, by painting, raking campsites, planting trees, picking up debris, making firewood, pulling invasive plant species such as garlic mustard, and a number of other chores that needed to be completed. These groups included the Friends of Mirror Lake, employees from Land's End, local Boy Scouts, and school groups from Sacred Heart Elementary in Reedsburg. In April, the park also hosted the statewide "Work - Play Work Day" when more than 40 volunteers from across the state came to help clean up the park for the summer. Without volunteer help, much of this work would not have been completed.

Another project was finishing and opening the remaining portion of the Ishnala Trail, linking the Cliff Wood Camping area to an area of the park that has come to be known as the Ishnala property. Ishnala, which means "stand alone" in the native Ho Chunk language, is also the name of the well-known Ishnala Restaurant. Hikers can now cross a gorge via a 155-foot suspended bridge and visit the restaurant as well as enjoy 2.5 miles of added trails. The park staff has also continued prairie restoration efforts in the southwest corner of the park, planting 17 more acres to native prairie, and performing invasive plant species control on approximately 100 acres.

Both of these projects create an excellent opportunity for visitors to enjoy the new trail, view a scenic gorge, and visit the prairie, where wild flowers are now in bloom. ■





## APRIL WORK WEEK

The big project this year was the repair work on the large terrace overlooking the lake. Its stone walls needed tuck pointing, and many flagstones were reset and sealed. In addition to the usual leaf raking and outside cleanup, the cottage upholstery was cleaned, the fireplace grate repaired, some roof fascia boards replaced and stained, and the roof membrane was cleaned and patched.



Work Week 2010 included resetting the terrace flagstones...

The Mirror Lake State Park crew came by to remove some damaged trees, and to bring a load of wood chips for the trail leading to the lake. Bill Martinelli, Vice President and Facilities Manager, stayed at the cottage as usual and coordinated the activities of the contractors and volunteers. ■



...and splitting wood for cottage visitors to enjoy next winter.

## JILL VLADICK AWARD

This year's Jill Vladick Award was presented jointly to Taliesin students Daniel Dillow and Huiee Wong.

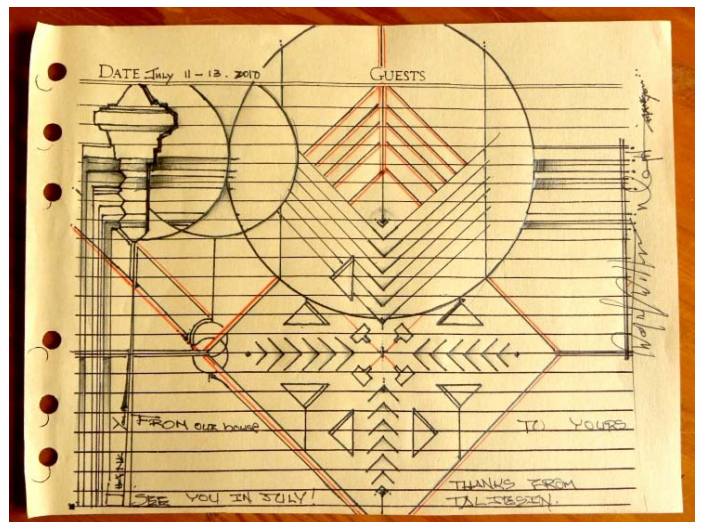
Daniel has been at Taliesin for four years, has received a bachelor's degree, and will graduate with a master's degree in a year or so. His area of interest is the built environment versus the natural environment.

Huiee, or Ee as she is generally known, is in her second year at Taliesin and is also working toward her master's degree. She is originally from Malaysia and first learned of Mr. Wright when studying architecture at the University of Liverpool in England. She thought the Taliesin program sounded interesting and soon enrolled. She plans to study at Taliesin for four years and currently helps to organize events there.

Both Daniel and Ee find the teaching style at Taliesin to be a good fit with their styles of learning. They also both find the social aspects of Taliesin to be important. ■



Daniel Dillow (l) and Huiee "Ee" Wong (r), students at Taliesin, received this year's Jill Vladick Award.



Huiee Wong's drawing in the Cottage Guest Book "From our House to Yours"





Photo by Huitee Wong

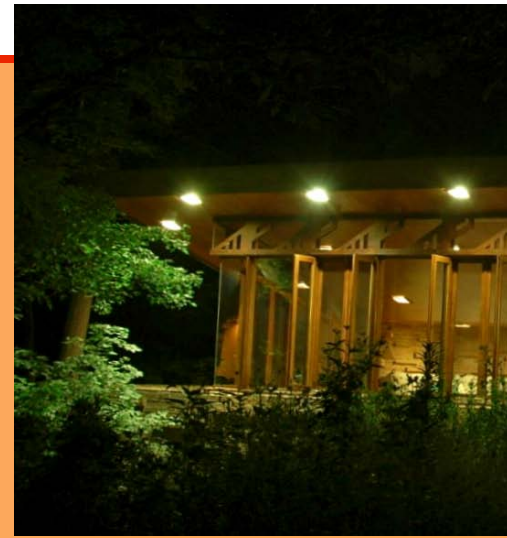
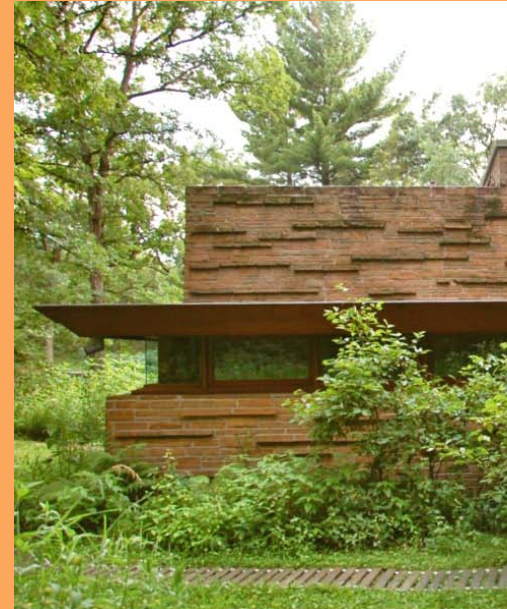


Photo by Daniel Dillow & Huitee Wong



## "SNAPSHOTS" AND SENTIMENT

Staying at the cottage means something different and personal to each of our guests, and the guest book entries provide insight into their experiences. Writers identify themselves in a very general way, often with their last names or locations omitted. It is our policy to use only first names and states when possible. My apologies to those whose writing I was unable to decipher correctly.

Approximately one-half year of comments is to be found in the book itself. Periodically, the older entries are removed and filed away. Some are chosen to share with all of our members and guests through this newsletter. The entries often include thanks to Seth Peterson for commissioning the cottage, to Frank Lloyd Wright for designing it, and to the SPCC for rebuilding it. But there are two other themes that emerge when reading the guest book. The first is that of beauty of place and feeling at home.

"The best part was being able to go out and explore, and then be able to 'come home' to our cozy cottage to cook dinner and read by the fire. Of all the FLW homes I've seen, this is by far my favorite." *Bill and Keila, Wisconsin*

"Truly a magical place. From the moment you pull up and first walk in, your heart is stolen. Surrounded by a winter wonderland, if you can't truly be in the wilderness, this is the next best thing." *Mike and Renee*

"We've been blessed to spend many days here over the last decade and the thrill of being here never ends. Each time something different catches our eye and we admire and enjoy. This is our first visit that included the light of the full moon—absolutely magical!" *Jayne and Jeff, Wisconsin*

"This place is a palace of nature. The location, the structure, the windows, the preservation. One word comes to mind, and that is a Vision. We are indeed fortunate." *Brent and Jane and Lois*

"The views from the house were breathtaking. What an amazing way to eat all of your meals. We enjoyed celebrating our 2nd anniversary in such a relaxing manner. What a great way to be together with no distractions." *Chuck and Katie, Maryland*

"This place is magical and beautiful being one of Wright's last projects, it benefits from all the other houses. Especially in the way that it fuses with nature so seamlessly. The wood, glass and stone simply provide a shelter from the sun, rain, and 'critters.' All is well with the world." *Mark and Gregory, New York City*





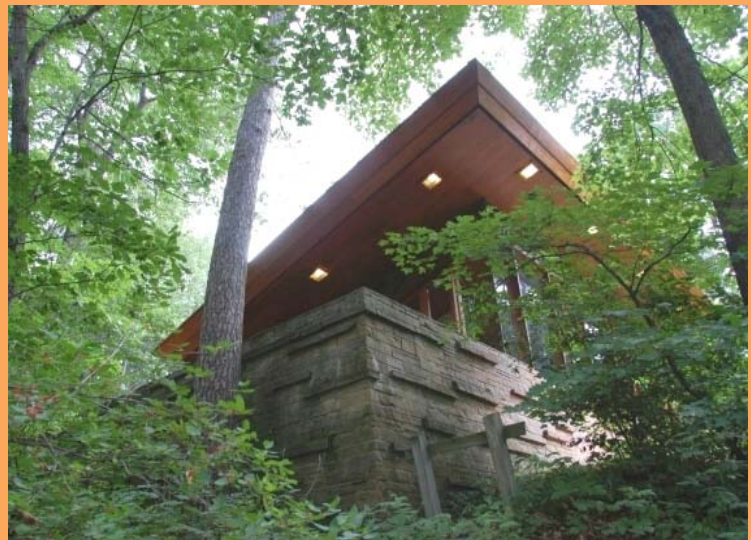
Photo by Daniel Dillow & Hutee Wong



Spring by Claire Barnett



Photo by Hutee Wong



Summer by Hutee Wong

MENTS FROM THE QUEST BOOK

Claire Barnett

“We just pulled up from a morning canoe ride on our last day here. Mirror Lake indeed! What a spectacular place—this morning, the water was still and the sun was rising, and the narrow (channel) to the right of this home was breathtaking. Treat yourself to a 7:30 canoe trip and you will not be disappointed.” *Paul and Jenuak of Minnesota*

*The second theme is personal renewal.*

“6 days and 6 nights and it’s still not enough. I find it difficult to settle in at first, to unplug. But within a couple of days, I find a peace, a simpleness—Back to just being me, fully rested. Watched animals and insects. Finally back to living in the moment. This place is so basic, so down to earth. Makes me wonder why I need so much stuff at home?” *Maria and David, California*

“We all have periodic events at which we take stock of our lives and the passage of time, and look hopefully ahead to the future. For us, that touchstone time, is our biennial trip to the Seth Peterson Cottage. Every couple of years for the past decade and a half, we’ve come to unwind, enjoy the peaceful days, and we always end up talking about the past, present and our hopes for the future.” *Tom and Diane*

*And finally, a note from Lou and Kathy that speaks to both themes.*

“We waited one and a half years for this time at the cottage and it was worth the wait. Spending time together, listening to the bird song, admiring the beautiful scenery, were all part of this lovely weekend trip. Reading in front of the lovely fire, hiking at Mirror Lake, and candlelight dinner while watching the sun go down from the cottage were all moments we will long remember.

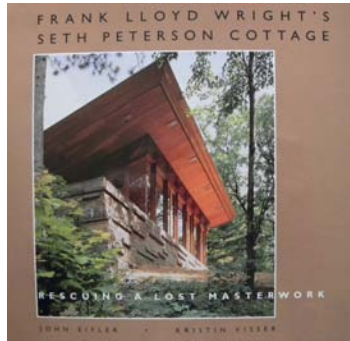
“It is a place for getting in touch—body, mind and spirit—with yourself as an individual and also as a couple. Thank God for the beauty all around us and thank Frank Lloyd Wright for recognizing that beauty and designing a haven that takes full advantage of that beauty.” *Lou and Kathy*

*We of the Conservancy hope that you, too, will come and stay in the cottage to relax and to renew yourself in this beautiful place.*



## RESCUING A LOST MASTERWORK: FUNDRAISING CONTINUED

*This is the eighth in a series of excerpts from the book, Frank Lloyd Wright's Seth Peterson Cottage: Rescuing a Lost Masterwork, by John Eifler, AIA, and Kristin Visser. It is the definitive story of the cottage. The previous excerpt described the beginnings of the fundraising process. This excerpt carries that difficult process further, as the board learns from its mistakes.*



In early 1990 the SPCC board concluded that they did not have sufficient expertise, experience, or time to pursue fundraising on their own. In an attempt to devise a more structured and organized method of seeking funds, they enlisted the help of a small Milwaukee-based fundraising consulting firm willing to take on the effort of raising a “mere” \$250,000. The consultant identified 75 potential grant foundation sources. From a solicitation mailing to the 75 foundations, the SPCC received only three contributions totaling \$5,000. The consultant also arranged a fundraising function with a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1908 Gilmore House and the 1936 Jacobs I House, both in Madison, which raised \$2,050. The consultants also initially consulted Ver Halen, Inc., a Wisconsin-based window distributor, which helped to secure the custom Pella windows for the cottage and the newly designed storage shed.

The consultant, however, was not well-versed in construction and rehabilitation projects. After spending approximately \$12,000 for the consultant’s services, board members realized that the cost was not justified in terms of the grants received and discontinued the consultant’s services. Nevertheless, the consultant taught the SPCC that fundraising needed to be accomplished by the organization itself; the consultant could only identify possible sources. The conservancy continued to seek out grant and foundation sources throughout the remainder of the rehabilitation and well into 1992, sending out 85 letters of request to U.S. foundations and another 33 to Japanese foundations.

To generate further contributions, the SPCC hosted several fundraising events, including a cocktail party, tour, and dinner at the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Bogk House in Milwaukee, a silent auction brunch in Madison, and an evening with Frank Lloyd Wright’s grandson, Eric Lloyd Wright. A fundraising event in November 1991 at Wisconsin Dells Greyhound Race Track netted \$12,000. Reflecting on the fundraising events, Audrey Laatsch stated that “fundraising events are hard work, and usually brought in less money than anticipated. However, these events were great for publicity and spread the word to potential donors.”

*Next time: Enlisting the help of the State Historical Society, Tom Garver, and the Andy Warhol Foundation.*

## FALL COLOR TOUR AND RECEPTION

The Fall Color Boat Tour will be held on October 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 4:15 pm, following the Sunday cottage open house tours. The \$25 fare includes a pontoon boat tour of Mirror Lake as well as hors d’oeuvres inside the cottage. The festivities in the cottage will take place rain or shine, as will the boat tour, unless there are dangerous weather conditions present on the lake. The path down to the lake is steep, and is not handicapped-accessible.

Attendance is limited to the first 24 paid reservations. Leave a message at 877 466-2358, and we will return your call with instructions for payment. We regret that we can accept neither credit cards nor cancellations.

## ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual Meeting of the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy will be held on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm. It will include annual and financial reports, and the election of board members and officers. Any member of the Conservancy whose annual dues have been paid may attend and vote on any motions made at the meeting.

The meeting will be approximately an hour long, followed by a private party for cottage tour guide volunteers. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should send an email to [crmrogan@yahoo.com](mailto:crmrogan@yahoo.com), with Annual Meeting as the subject.

## MERCHANDISE NEWS

New brown and tan t-shirts have been added, including a V-neck in women’s sizes. Cottage jewelry prices reduced!

## RENEWAL AND MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

You recently received a renewal letter from us, or for recent cottage guests, a request to join the Conservancy. An individual membership is only \$15 (tax deductible) and helps make this newsletter possible. Unlike multiple reminders from other charitable organizations, we only send our letters once. If you have been putting off renewing or joining, why not do so now?




*A lovely Spring  
Hepatica  
along the path  
to the lake.*

# SPRING/SUMMER 2010

## Membership Renewal and Merchandise Order Form

The Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. for the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright in Mirror Lake State Park

Item	Choices	Quantity	Unit Price	Subtotal	Total
Individual Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$15.00		
Household Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$25.00		
Friend Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$50.00		
Preserver Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$100.00		
Life Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Gift		\$250.00		
<b>Membership subtotal</b>					
Members receive 10% discount on merchandise.					
"Audrey's Star" unframed print, 6" x 8".			\$35.00		
"Audrey's Star" unframed print, with tri-color mat.			\$80.00		
"Audrey's Star" print, matted and framed.			\$100.00		
Unframed limited edition rendering print of the Cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright.			\$70.00		
Official SPCC Visor. Tan w/bright red logo. One size fits all. Official SPCC Cap. Forest Green or Tan w/bright red logo. One size fits all. Forest Green or Tan <b>Circle Visor or Cap &amp; Circle Color if selecting Cap.</b>			\$15.00		
100% cotton pique polo shirt w/Cottage logo and name in red. Forest Green or Natural <b>Circle color &amp; size.</b> M L XL XXL			\$32.00		
Beige & Rust or Brown & Tan T-shirt w/Cottage perspective. <b>Circle color &amp; size.</b> L XL XXL			\$15.00		
Sweatshirt w/red logo. <b>Circle color &amp; size.</b> Black Tan Red Natural M L XL XXL			\$35.00		
<b>NEW!</b> Women's V-neck Brown & Tan T-shirt w/Cottage perspective. <b>Circle size.</b> S M L XL			\$15.00		
Elegant Silk Tie. Black design based on clerestory panel design. Beige or Blue <b>Circle background color.</b>			\$25.00		
Cottage Jewelry of black, white and silver, based on design in the clerestory panels.					
Letter Opener		<b>Reduced !</b>	\$17.50		
Long Earrings		<b>Reduced !</b>	\$20.00		
Short Earrings			\$20.00		
Cuff Links		<b>Reduced !</b>	\$20.00		
Bar Pin		<b>Reduced !</b>	\$14.00		
Cottage Pin, red logo/black background			\$5.00		
Book: <i>Frank Lloyd Wright's Seth Peterson Cottage: Rescuing a Lost Masterwork</i> by John Eifler, AIA and Kristin Visser. <b>Softcover Edition</b>			\$15.00		
Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly Magazine with Seth Peterson Cottage articles <input type="checkbox"/> Summer 1993 B & W <input type="checkbox"/> Winter 2007 Color			\$5.00 \$5.00		
<b>Merchandise subtotal</b>					
<b>Member discount 10%</b>				-	
<b>Shipping &amp; handling</b>					
Under \$10			\$4.00		
\$10-\$30			\$5.00		
\$30-\$100			\$8.00		
Over \$100			\$10.00		
<b>Total (membership + merchandise - discount + shipping)</b>					

Please make checks payable to: Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Inc. **Send to: SPCC, 400 Viking Drive, Reedsburg, WI 53959**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

# WRITINGS

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

Forwarding Service Requested.



**What's Inside...**

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- Mirror Lake State Park Report
- April Work Week
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- Centerfold: "Snapshots" and Sentiments from the Guest Book
- Rescuing a Lost Masterwork Excerpt
- Fall Color Tour and Reception
- Annual Meeting Notice
- Merchandise News
- Membership Renewal & Merchandise Order Form

New Item.  
Reduced prices!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sunday, **August 8**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **September 12**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **October 10**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4  
4:30-7:30, Fall Color Boat Tour & Reception, \$25
- Sunday, **November 14**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **December 12**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4  
Directors/Members Annual Meeting 4:30-5:30 pm
- Sunday, **January 9**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **February 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **March 13**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4
- Sunday, **April 10**, 1-3:30 pm, Open House, Guided Tours, \$4

Join us at one of our monthly open houses.

[www.sethpeterson.org](http://www.sethpeterson.org)

Visitors find touring the cottage to be a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon. Take a scenic drive and experience first hand this restored Frank Lloyd Wright-designed cottage during the cottage open house tours. (See schedule at left).

