

## New initiatives for the Friends of the Manchester Library

Over the course of the past year, the Friends of the Library have been dealing with a lot of issues, but we have also been looking toward the future. We have undertaken three major initiatives specifically addressed at the future of our library.

Funding the operation of the building is a constant worry. At a member's suggestion, we looked into forming an Endowment Fund. Such a fund allows donors to make gifts that will sustain operations into the future: donations are invested for growth and a portion of that growth is used each year to support operations. The recently completed FOML Endowment Fund Policy will be announced in the very near future.

Another effort has to do with planning for the future. One of our members, Thomas Uemoto, is a professional architect and he has donated his time to help us define and visualize our ideas for a new library in Manchester. This effort will continue through this year.

Further to planning the future of our library; we have hired a grant writer, Kathleen Byrne-Barrantes, to help find funding sources for additional land and a new structure. This process will take a significant amount of time, but will lead us to the future that we are envisioning.

If you would like to be involved in this planning, please let me know!

John Winslow-President

\* \* \* \* \*

## Beyond the Sum of Its Parts by Thomas T. Uemoto

Starting last month, we introduced a 3-part essay -- an investigation into a portion of the explosive parallel Lives and Works of Ayn Rand and Frank Lloyd Wright. This series mainly draws from two literary sources: Rand's *The Fountainhead* and *Truth Against the World*: a compilation of speeches presented by Wright throughout his career. This issue presents

### Part 2: 'Truth Against the World'

In 1867, the beautiful, rural Wisconsin countryside provided the backdrop in which Frank Lloyd Wright was born. Wright was an American architect, interior designer, writer and educator, who designed more than 1,000 projects, which resulted in more than 500 completed works. ... His work includes original and innovative examples of many different building types, including homes, offices, churches, schools, skyscrapers, hotels, and museums as well as methods of construction and community planning. Wright also often designed many of the interior elements of his buildings, such as the furniture and stained glass. ...

**Nature** ... Wright spoke of the influence of nature on his work and attributed his love of nature to those early years in the rural Wisconsin countryside. During summers on his uncle's farm he learned to look at the patterns and rhythms found in nature - the branch of a tree (a natural cantilever), outcroppings of limestone, and the ever-changing sandbars. Wright advised his apprentices to "study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you." ...

**America & Democracy** ... Wright strived to create a new architecture that reflected the American democratic experience, not based on failing European and foreign models (such as Greek, Egyptian and Renaissance styles) but rather one based on democratic values and human dignity. He referred to the United States as Usonia and called his prototypical home for an American a 'Usonian Home'. Wright's regional residential designs were known as "Prairie Houses" because the design is considered to complement the land around Chicago. These houses featured extended low buildings with shallow, sloping roofs, clean sky lines, suppressed chimneys, overhangs and terraces, using unfinished materials. The houses are credited with being the first examples of the "open plan". Windows, whenever possible, are long, and low, allowing a connection between the interior and nature outside. This addition to western architecture reflected the influence of Japanese architecture on Wright. Manipulation of interior spaces in residential (and public) buildings are hallmarks of his style. Commercial buildings in the Prairie style include Unity Temple. As a lifelong Unitarian and member of Unity Temple, Wright offered his services to the congregation after the

church burned. Many architects consider it the world's first modern building, using unique construction of only one material: reinforced concrete. "A building is not just a place to be. It is a way to be."

**Organic Architecture** Wright's philosophy on Organic Architecture should not be confused with a singular school of thought or style. Like his Unitarian upbringing, he saw Organic Architecture as a unique style -- a personal form of spiritual expression and a path that was adaptable to all solutions. "Given similar conditions, similar tools, similar people, similar language, . . . architects will [produce] . . . buildings sufficiently harmonious with each other" Wright said. The litmus test is how the relationship of an idea to its natural site plays out. The aim is "to make the landscape more beautiful than before that building was built." . . . Wright's Organic style fully matured with the design of Graycliff, Fallingwater, and Taliesin West (From 1937 Wright's winter home and studio complex in Scottsdale was a laboratory and continues today as the site of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture).

**Fallingwater, Bear Run, Pennsylvania (1937)** One of Wright's most famous private residences, Fallingwater was built from 1934 to 1937 for Mr. and Mrs. Edgar J. Kaufmann Sr., at Bear Run, Pennsylvania. It is designed to place the occupants close to the natural surroundings, with a stream and waterfall running under part of the building. The construction is a series of cantilevered balconies and terraces, using limestone for all verticals and concrete for the horizontals.

**Developing a Vision & the Human Spirit** Wright saw Developing a Vision and Human Spirit as two perpetually advancing elements that went hand in hand in order to evolve a better human being. For Wright, Vision starts with inner strength and the investigation of the 'nature of things' - it's Inner Truth. . . . Wright urged: "If you invest in beauty, it will remain with you all the days of your life." . . . In the realm of art, architecture and ideas, Wright referred to the Truth + Integrity of an object as a level of understanding attained by understanding the nature of that object and having the strength to stick with it. The recurring theme of Taliesin came from his mother: Taliesin in Welsh mythology was a poet, magician, and priest. The family motto *Y Gwir yn Erbyn y Byd* means "The Truth Against the World".

**Collaboration and influences** Wright routinely claimed that the other architects and architectural designers were merely his subordinates. But it is clear, as with any successful architect, Wright worked in a collaborative process and drew his ideas from the work of other strong designers and artists. . . . Wright rarely credited any influences, but most architects and scholars agree he had four major influences:

§ Louis Sullivan, his 'Lieber Meister' (dear master),

§ Nature, particularly shapes, colors, patterns of plant life,

§ Music (his favorite was Beethoven),

§ Japanese art, prints and buildings.

Wright had a noble vision and, like nature, he never peaked. Some of his greatest works - like the Marin County Civic Center, Solomon R.



Guggenheim Museum in New York City, Broadacre City, an opera house, cultural center, museum, university in Baghdad, Iraq, and Mile High City for the State of Illinois were in

process or completed while in his 80s and he was working right up until his death at 92, in 1959.

'*Truth Against the World*'-Part 2 will be followed by Part 3 - 'Worlds Collide' in our next issue where Ayn Rand and Frank Lloyd Wright meet. See the March 3 Issue for Part 1.