



# WRIGHT IN SPRINGFIELD

## DANA-THOMAS HOUSE FOUNDATION

FALL 2017

### LEADERSHIP CIRCLE MEMBER EVENT

Members of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation Leadership Circle were treated to the premier display of some of the most important papers from the Earl Bice Collection recently donated by Daniel Greer. The event was graciously hosted by Laura and Tony Nestler at their newly remodeled Helmle and Helmle designed home.

Beside letters, this collection includes documents some of which have completely new information. Also on display were snippets of Susan Dana's hair saved along with snippets of hair from her two

deceased infant children (a very typical method of remembrance) and a shoulder strap from a WWI German uniform, sent to Mrs. Dana as a token of affection.

In addition to viewing the donated articles, guests received an early update on the progress of the Neighborhood Improvement Project and property acquisition. The Annual Leadership Circle Event is a member/ donor privilege at the Leadership and Lifetime levels and by invitation to significant donors during the year.



Clockwise from top left: Bill and Mary Denham; Dr Nate Blaustien; Caren Mansfield and Tim Smith; Tom Ryder, Michael Dunbar and Regina Albanese; and Dr. Dyanne Ferk and Bruce Hogan.

***Dana-Thomas House a Midwest Travel Treasure AAA has selected the house as one of the featured attractions in the November/December issue of AAA Midwest Traveler. The article may be viewed online on the Dana-Thomas.org website.***

## Dana-Thomas House Foundation

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### Contributors to this issue:

Regina Albanese, Doug Carr, Marty Duling,  
Caren Mansfield and Tim Smith

**Wright in Springfield** is a publication of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation, a not-for-profit organization. The Foundation supports the preservation of the Dana-Thomas House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1902 for Susan Lawrence Dana. Located at Fourth and Lawrence Streets in Springfield, the 12,000 square-foot house has 450 art glass windows, doors and light fixtures and 100 original Wright-designed oak furniture pieces. The historic site is owned and administered by the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Members of the Foundation receive **Wright in Springfield**, discounts on items in the Sumac Shop and Foundation tours, invitations to "members only" events and special opportunities to become involved in the activities of the Dana-Thomas House. Individual memberships begin at \$50. For more information about the Foundation or on becoming a member, please contact:

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e-mail: [dthf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dthf@sbcglobal.net)

## LAWRENCE BUSSARD

## IN MEMORIAM

Larry Bussard was a fixture on Wednesday mornings at the Sumac Shop for over a quarter of a century. When Jubelt's bakery was open, Larry brought breakfast treats for the volunteer lounge every time he volunteered. He and his wife Connie are founding members of the Dana-Thomas House Foundation and Connie served as one of the signers on the Articles of Incorporation. Always the first to donate and to volunteer, Larry and Connie have attended numerous events over the past thirty-five years and may be recognized by many of our members.

A native of Virginia, Larry moved to Illinois where he worked in Human Services and had a long and distinguished career. In addition to his work at the Dana-Thomas House Sumac Shop he also served as a Red Coat Escort at Memorial Medical Center, clocking over 15,000 hours and walking over 17,000 miles.

As Connie has said, "the Dana-Thomas House meant so much to Larry. He so enjoyed working in the shop. We have many happy memories there."



Larry and Connie Bussard at the Foundation Dinner at the Table event in 2013

### Tribute Gifts

**In Memory of Lawrence Bussard  
Regina and Nick Albanese**

**In Memory of Wilma Ulak  
Regina and Nick Albanese**







***Holiday Season 2017***

***Decorative Artistry  
Springfield Civic Garden Club***

***Open for tours daily  
Monday & Tuesday 10 AM - 2 PM  
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***Until 8 PM for Evening Holiday Tours  
Wednesdays through December 20  
Luminaria Sunday December 17***

***Closing at noon on Christmas Eve  
Closed on Christmas Day***



# NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION CONTINUES

**Tim Smith, AIA**

It has almost been a year since the Dana-Thomas House Foundation acquired the properties across the street from the Frank Lloyd Wright house from the Hofferkamp Estate. In total, the organization has acquired eleven properties in the neighborhood surrounding the historic site. They continue to improve the area directly surrounding the Dana-Thomas House and much progress has occurred since then. Three structurally unsafe houses (835 South Fourth Street, 812 South Third Street and 816 South Third Street) were cleared and seeded. Two of the three properties facing Lawrence Avenue directly facing the historic site, have been remodeled (302 and 308 East Lawrence Avenue). These two properties have been rented and are now occupied. One is rented to an artist's studio and the other to a resident. These properties have not had tenants in them for over four and a half years. Upkeep on the third property (306 East Lawrence Avenue) continues. Once funding is in place, this property is currently planned to be renovated and rented. The property at 830 South Third Street has been remodeled. Additional improvements are being completed to make it more desirable. Hopes are to rent this house in the very near future.

In addition to the purchased properties, two parcels on South Fourth Street have been generously donated to the Foundation by Bill and Lois Moore. These are currently grass lots that will be maintained



Rick Musgrove refinishing the ceiling at 308 E. Lawrence. This house has been rented out as well as 302 E. Lawrence. 830 S. 3rd is currently available for rental. Potential renters may call the DTHF office at 217-788-9452 to arrange a showing.

by the Foundation until plans for their future are established. Plans to develop the property at 227 East Lawrence Avenue are ongoing. The Dana-Thomas House Foundation purchased that site in 2009 and later donated the property to the state for the purpose of expanding the site parking lot and adding an access on Lawrence Avenue to ease bus parking and drop off.

Fundraising efforts continue. If you are interested in making a donation, please contact the Dana-Thomas House Foundation at 217.788.9452.

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## Year End Giving Options

### ***Tax Advantaged Donations of Appreciated Securities***

In addition to cash donations the Dana-Thomas House Foundation, can now accept direct donations of appreciated securities such as stocks, bonds, and mutual fund shares. The federal tax code allows taxpayers who make such charitable donations to avoid paying capital gains tax as long as the taxpayer itemizes deductions. The more your security has appreciated the more beneficial this strategy becomes. Using this strategy can be a win-win because you get more of a tax deduction and the Foundation receives the full value of the appreciated asset!

### ***Taxpayers 70 ½ and Older Eligible for Tax Advantaged Qualified Charitable Deductions from IRA's***

Taxpayers 70 ½ years or older can make a direct transfer donation of up to \$100,000 a year from certain tax-free IRA's and avoid paying federal income tax on the IRA withdrawal. Donations may be counted towards any "IRA required minimum distribution" a taxpayer has to make for the year.

As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization the Dana-Thomas Foundation qualifies for donors to use both of the above tax advantaged donation strategies. If you are interested in making a donation using either of these tax advantaged options, contact the Foundation office so we can put you in touch with the Foundation's broker. As with all donations, we recommend you discuss the personal tax implications of these strategies with your tax advisor.

Contact the office to start your donation today, 217-788-9452 or [dthf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dthf@sbcglobal.net).



## ■ Wright Inspired Events

**Wright by the Garage Sale** - the first ever event sponsored at the recently purchased properties on Lawrence Avenue was a great success. Although the weather closed operations down a bit early, lots of participants found treasures among the collection of donated articles.

Thank you to our In-Kind Donors  
County Market                      HyVee  
Michael Dunbar                      Don and Allicent Smith  
Westminster Presbyterian Church



Above L-R Bob Marcy, Ken Gilmore, Regina Albanese, Laura Nestler, Caren Mansfield, Dave Truesdell, Celeste Pankey and Sue Dey

Top photo -- Michael Dunbar surveys the donated treasures stored at his studio. Bottom, a happy customer enjoys his purchases.

## Frank Lloyd Wright's B. Harley Bradley House *An American Home*



Above film Director/Producer Tom Desch during the post film Q & A. Above right L-R Richard Herndon, Leah Duling, Carol Herndon, Caren Mansfield and Regina Albanese at the Illinois State Museum.

The Dana-Thomas House Foundation was pleased to offer the screening of a new documentary by Tom Desch in November. **An American Home** tells the story of the Bradley House in Kankakee. This early Prairie style house was restored by Gaines and Sharon Hall and now operates as a house museum open for tours.

The Dana-Thomas House Foundation would like to thank Norm Strasma, President of Wright in Kankakee for his assistance in bringing the film to Springfield and the Illinois State Museum for hosting the event. If you missed the showing of **An American Home**, the DVD is set to be released



by the end of the year. Anticipated cost to be \$24.95.

The foundation also offered a second screening of **Masterpieces** in October. A release date for sale of that film is pending but the Dana-Thomas House portion has been released and is for sale at the Sumac Shop. That DVD sells at \$29.95 and includes 58 minutes of extra footage and interviews.

## ■ Wright Around the Corner

### ***The Lewis Spring House Tallahassee, Florida***

The Clifton and George Lewis II house, known as Spring House, is a two-story home designed in the pod-shaped and hemicycle style, which is important among Wright's designs in that it represents the last and chronologically shortest stylistic phase of his career. In addition, it is the only house that was designed and built by Frank Lloyd Wright in Florida. Although the house was originally known as the Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II House, George named it Spring House, for the natural spring and small stream that flows from the property.



***The Spring House Story*** Clifton Van Brunt Lewis and her husband, George Lewis II, met Frank Lloyd Wright in 1950 at Florida Southern College, in Lakeland. The world-renowned architect was there for the dedication of one of his "Child of the Sun" buildings, and the Lewises were there for an unrelated conference. The Lewises met Mr. Wright at a reception and asked him to design a house for them. He said, "Find your ground, not on a lot, then get in touch."

In 1952, the Lewises found their ground -- a beautiful five acre parcel on the outskirts of Tallahassee.



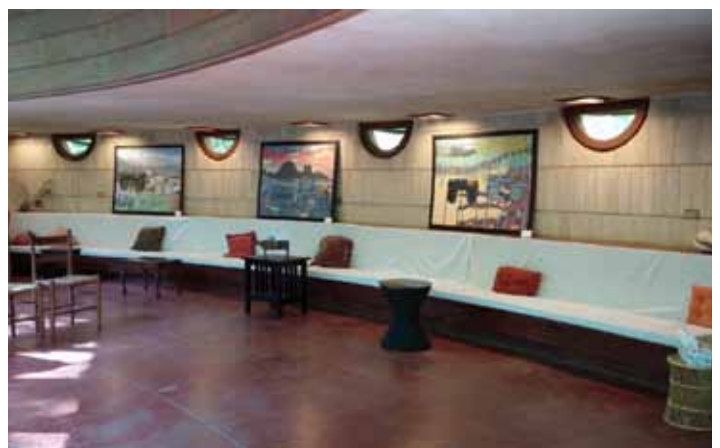
They sent Mr. Wright the topographical drawings and photographs of the property that he had requested, and provided him with information about their life in Tallahassee. The great architect incorporated a nautical theme into the design, derived from what he learned about George's love of boats and the family's fondness for the Gulf coast and offshore islands. He completed the plans in 1952.

The unconventional passive solar "pod-shaped" design and curvilinear shape (one of only two such designs by Wright) made it difficult to find a builder willing to commit to a price to build it. In 1954, Mr. Wright arranged for Nils Schweizer, one of his apprentice architects who was overseeing construction at Florida Southern, to travel to Tallahassee and find a qualified builder.

Contractor Jack Culpepper agreed to undertake the project. Ernest Daffin, a local architect and Lewis family friend who worked for Mr. Culpepper, served as construction supervisor; and Mr. Schweizer drove up from Lakeland at the end of every week, worked with the construction workers, planned the following week's work and acted as Mr. Wright's onsite representative.

Construction was completed in late 1954 and the Lewis family moved into their new home. Frank Lloyd Wright died in 1959 never having visited the property. In 1979, Spring House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places when it was just 25 years old.

George Lewis died in 1996 and Clifton passed away in 2014. But before she died, Clifton and others formed Spring House Institute, Inc (SHI), a 501(c)(3) tax exempt not-for-profit organization, intending that SHI would buy the house and host classes, musical events, poetry readings, community meetings, seminars, and other activities associated with the arts, the environment, and social justice.





## About the Building

The following description is from the original 1979 application prepared by J. Rodney Little, Historic Preservation Officer with the Florida Division of Archives.

The plan of the house is characterized by both concentric and intersecting circles. The plan of the main bloc is composed of intersecting circles resembling a boat. A circular form intersects the main bloc on its west side and houses the kitchen, bath, heating, plumbing, and ventilation facilities for the house. A wedge-shaped carport extends from the west side of the main bloc and terminates with a storage room. Most of the northern half of the house is clasped by a circular form containing a grass terrace.

The Lewis house exhibits many of the characteristics consistent in Wright's designs. Horizontal lines are emphasized both in the overall composition and in the treatment of surface materials. The circular forms of the plan are echoed in the elevations in the treatment of some windows and fixtures. Surface interest is derived from normally treated and strongly contrasted structural materials.

The walls of the first story and the entire height of the utilities core are constructed of "Ocala" limestone concrete block with deeply raked horizontal joints. The unpainted block is exposed on both interior and exterior surfaces. Almost the entire expanse of the arc on the east side of the house is composed of wood-framed, fixed-plate glass, which rises from the first floor to the two-story ceiling.

The long horizontal lines of the west or entrance façade of the house are interrupted by a low carport and the circular utility core, which rises approximately 2 feet above the main roof. The windows on the entrance façade are typically Wrightian—relatively small and situated at the top of the wall sections. The windows on the first story are wood-framed inverted circular arches that terminate at the overhanging second story. The windows on the second story are rectangular, wood-framed awning windows that run in a continuous ribbon immediately below the ceiling line.

The east garden façade of the house is composed almost entirely of a curtain wall of fixed plate glass. The wood framing of this glass is articulated primarily by a fixed-glass transom, which is a continuation of the narrow ribbon windows that occur on the second story of the entrance façade. This glass wall is penetrated at its north and south extremities by cantilevered balconies on the second story.

The main entry is situated under the carport roof and immediately to the north of the utility core. The wood-framed glass door opens to a landing from which stairs ascend and descend to the first and second floors. Under these stairs another flight descends to a small circular cellar that houses the oil furnace forced-air system and some storage space.

The first-floor space is entirely open except for the partial enclosure of the circular kitchen. Spatial definition is provided by the walls of the kitchen, the circular fireplace hood, the ceiling under the second-story space, and the built-in dining table and the living room bench. Primary seating in the living room is adjacent to the fireplace on a low wood seat that runs the entire length of the west wall. This area is provided a strong sense of enclosure by the low ceiling under the second story, but the vista is toward a two-story space and the glass "rear" wall. A pair of tall wood-framed, glazed double doors lead from this living space to the terrace on the east side.

A circular terraced area was established on the east side and north end of the exterior. However, a low block wall intended to enclose the terrace and a semi-circular pool were never completed.



The floor to ceiling windows on the east side of the Lewis House. Growing up in the house, Byrd Lewis Mashburn said that these windows and the open feeling in the house, "just drew you outside."

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**Visit The Lewis Spring House** Open for tours on the second Sunday of each month along with private tours and special events. Tour reservations may be made online at [preservespringhouse.org](http://preservespringhouse.org).

Text courtesy of the Spring House Institute, photographs copyright Byrd Lewis Mashburn and Krystyn Pecora.

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