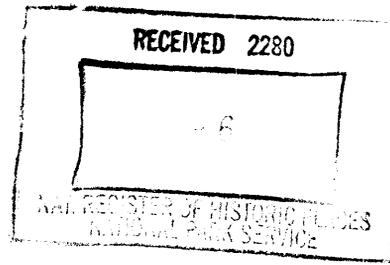


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 417 Hogue Drive NA not for publication

city or town Modesto NA vicinity

state California code CA county Stanislaus code 099 zip code 95350

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Steph A. Mikseco 11/1/06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

12/14/2006

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
	2	structures
		objects
1	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof composition

walls concrete block

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1961

Significant Dates

1961

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Wright, Frank Lloyd

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property** 5 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	676800	4179620	3		
2				4		

 See continuation sheet.**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared Byname/title **Carol Roland**organization **Roland Nawi Associates**date **May 8, 2006**street & number **956 Fremont Way** telephone **916-441-6063**city or town **Sacramento** state **CA** zip code **95818****Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name **Dr. Robert and Mary Walton**street & number **417 Hogue Drive** telephone **209-571-5602**city or town **Modesto** state **CA** zip code **95350****Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Walton. Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

Description

The Robert and Mary Walton house is a Frank Lloyd Wright Usonian style house located in Modesto, California, on the eastern periphery of the city. One of the last houses of this type that Wright built in California, the house is an excellent example of the architect's late residential work. L-shaped in plan, the house is "zoned" into three distinctive areas, the core family area on the north side of the building, which includes the living room, kitchen and family room, a semi-private space on the west which includes the master bedroom and bath and a study, and a private wing that includes five bedrooms and two baths. The building is set on a gravel foundation. The house is steel framed and is constructed of concrete block which is painted an off-white, a color specified in the design documents. The roof is flat and multi-level with a prominent two-story tower which rises near the intersection of the L-plan. The roof has wide overhanging eaves which are embellished with a wooden geometric patterned decorative fascia. The front elevation is plain with a clerestory that runs the full length of the front wall. The clerestory consists of a horizontally emphasized double row of windows recessed into concrete casings. The entry is very plain with an unembellished wood door. The glazing at the rear of the house is extensive with three-quarter length windows extending across the north end of the rear elevation and full-length glazed doors with sidelights extending along the south end of the elevation. On the north façade full-length glazed French doors open out onto a walled concrete terrace. In addition to the terrace on the north side of the house, an elevated concrete terrace runs along the bedroom wing on the east façade. The carport is connected to the house and is an integral part of the design, a common feature in Usonian houses. In the rear yard the swimming pool is a central focus of the landscape. The house is located on a rural property near the Stanislaus River, in an area surrounded by orchards and agricultural fields. Decorative concrete block walls are used to demarcate the entry drive to the house which lies some distance off the public road. There are no out buildings.

Wright experimented with several different floor plans for the Usonian houses. Wright scholar, John Sergeant, was the first to develop a classification for these plans, dividing them into six basic types. The Walton house has an L-shape plan. The living/dining area, master bedroom and study are concentrated at the base of the L with a linear bedroom wing extending to the south. This was the ground plan that Wright employed in the first Usonian house, the Jacobs House in Madison, and was the most frequently repeated plan among his Usonian houses. Like all Usonian houses, the Walton residence is laid out on a grid system which is inscribed in the concrete floor and delineated on the working drawings (see Walton House Drawings, Sheet 3). Throughout the house the floor is made of concrete plates colored the characteristic red that Wright used in a majority of his houses.

The house has a multi-layer flat roof with broadly extended eaves and a concrete soffit. The roof is finished with a decorative wooden fascia that has a distinctive geometric pattern. At the east end of the house the roof steps up over the living/dining area and has a tall tower over the kitchen. On the exterior the tower rises well above the rest of the roof and provides a strong visual focus at the juncture of the two

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Walton. Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

wings. Wright had originally proposed a roof terrace over the living room that could be accessed from the tower, but considerations of local climate made that suggestion impractical.¹

The relative isolation and privacy of the Walton's rural site removes the necessity of shielding the front of the house from visual intrusion. Wright, however, designed the front elevation to shut out the world. The front façade of the house has a high cement block wall with a clerestory directly under the eaves. The clerestory extends the full-length of the elevation from the carport to the entry door. A small number of the windows open outward while others are fixed. The entry to the house is at the east end of the long concrete block and clerestory wall. It is accessed by a red concrete walk from the entry court. The entry is very simple with a slightly recessed wooden door.

The rear elevation is the most important façade of the building. Unlike the guarded front facade, the rear elevation consists primarily of glass walls opening out to the sloping yard and pool. The rear of the house realizes Wright's goal of integrating interior and exterior space and situating the house in the land. The house is oriented so that it has excellent views of the Sierra rising in the background. The living/dining area is rectangular and is surrounded on three sides by windows. These are three-quarter length and create an unbroken ribbon of fenestration on the east side looking out into the yard and eastward to the mountains. The windows are casement style with transoms at the bottom divided with steel sash.

On the north end of the living room floor to ceiling glazed French doors open out onto an elevated terrace with low walls that extends toward the drop off to the Stanislaus River bed. Rectangular windows like those of the front clerestory are used on the east and north walls both above and below the interior soffit. At the corners of the room the glass is mitered to open vistas and break down the perception of the room as a box. The roof over the living/dining room extends two feet beyond the rear wall with an extremely wide concrete fascia. This extended roof is supported on "screens" of perforated cement block which are set perpendicular to the rear wall. These occur between each of the casement windows. These concrete screen supports extend to the east facade framing the exterior of the French doors. The effect is of open piers or columns that support the roof and at the same time filter light into the house and focus views outward. The large extent of glass, the mitered glass corners and the perforated concrete screens create a space that is extraordinarily light and open.

The northwest end of the L-plan is occupied by the entry hall, master bedroom and a study. This zone of the house opens directly off the front entry. It is a more private space with three quarter height concrete block walls and clerestory windows.

The interior of the house is consistent with Wright's goal of creating a small, informal house in which functions were not necessarily segregated into separate enclosed spaces. The living/dining room is the center of the house. With its light and views it is a natural gathering place. At the south side of the living room a large cement block fireplace anchors the room. The ceilings are plaster. There is a lowered

¹ Personal communication, Mary Walton, March 16, 2006.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Walton. Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

wooden soffit above the built-in couches. The dining area is not separated from the living room although it is placed in the south corner of the room near the fireplace and adjacent to the kitchen. In his recitation of requirements for the house, Dr. Walton indicated that he and his family did a lot of entertaining, particularly formal dinner parties.² The dining area with a large multi-unit table and high back chairs, similar to those designed for Wright's Price House, is both imposing and informal. The table can be separated into smaller sections to change the seating arrangement. The dining area can be closed off from the living room with a folding wooden door, something that Wright used in a number of the Usonian houses.

The kitchen, or as Wright called it, the "workspace" is small and very compact, especially when one considers that the Waltons eventually had six children. The small size is visually offset by the two-story tower that rises at the east end of the room with a large skylight. Part of the upper wall is finished with the same wood as the built-in kitchen cabinets and functions to reflect and refract light. This sudden shift in height creates the illusion of the kitchen being much larger than it actually is. Built-in wooden cabinets provide large amounts of storage space throughout the house. Consistent with Wright's belief that the kitchen and utility core should be placed at the center of the dwelling, the Walton house has a small "family room" with a laundry space directly across the family room from the kitchen. This space was intended to meet the needs of the several Walton children while permitting Mary Walton to move easily between kitchen and laundry while having her children within sight. Although the space appears small by today's standards, Mary Walton says it worked extremely well for its intended purpose.³

A narrow hallway provides access to the bedroom wing which has five bedrooms and two baths. The bedrooms are quite small with room only for the built-in bunk bed, closet and desk that furnished each room. Again Mary Walton attests to the functionality of these spaces and says that Wright was quite adamant that each child should have a private space to which he/she could retreat.⁴ The outer wall of the bedroom hall is lined with built-in cabinets that rise to the bottom of the clerestory windows.

In addition to the dining furniture and built-in cabinets, the majority of furniture in the house was designed by Taliesin. It was Mary Walton's wish that the furnishing be designed to go with the house to the greatest extent possible. This reliance on the architect(s) extended to requesting advice on the best arrangement of the movable pieces that were eventually provided. Due to Wright's death while the house was in construction, most of the furnishing decisions were made by Cornelia Brierly, a Taliesin fellow, in consultation with Wes Peters who, with Mrs. Wright (Olgivana), took over management of Wright's projects. The shelving along the east wall of the living/dining room was the suggestion of Peters and was not a part of Wright's plan, although they were added in the context of the original construction.

The Walton House does not have the radiant heating system characteristic of many Usonian houses.

² Robert Walton to Frank Lloyd Wright, January 25, 1957. Letter in the possession of Robert and Mary Walton.

³ Personal communication with Mary Walton, March 16, 2006.

⁴ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Walton. Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

The original plans made provision for a swimming pool at the rear of the house. This was delineated on the plan as a rectangle, but was actually built in a slightly altered configuration. The pool was not installed until 1966 and was designed by Mary Walton's brother, N. Douglas Lee, who studied architecture at MIT and served an apprenticeship at Taliesin. It has an L-shape that mirrors the ground plan of the house.

Terraces play an important role in the transition between the interior and exterior in the Walton House. The north terrace extends out from the living room to the edge of the river bed and takes advantage of the drama of a steep drop off. The entire rear family room and bedroom wing opens onto an elevated terrace that steps down to the pool and the large lawn. The rear (east) views are oriented toward a large grove of native oak trees that line the riverbed on the far side of the pool. Wright's specifications called for careful treatment of all the large trees on the site and he limited removal to the immediate building area.⁵

The front drive and courtyard were a part of Wright's original plan. Access to the house from the public road is via a long curved drive that opens between two ungated walls or partial fences of perforated concrete block. The entry wall extends between two newel posts of solid concrete block. The wall itself consists of three tiers of the perforated concrete block like those used in the house. Unconnected to a continuous fence and without gates the walls serves more as a demarcation of the entry road than as a barrier. At the end of the curved drive there is a graveled court in front of the carport. The carport is attached to the house. Designed to accommodate two cars, the carport's flat roof is supported on the south side by a concrete block storage room and on the north by the terminal wall of the house. It is open back to front providing a walk-through directly to the rear yard.

Aaron Green, a former Taliesin apprentice, prepared a landscape plan for the house in the 1960s. Green's landscape plan was predominantly a planting plan that called for extensive use of juniper in the front, large clusters of Pampas Grass along both sides of the drive, and understory flower and shrub plantings close to the house on both primary elevations. The Pampas Grass and much of juniper are still in evidence, the latter very formally trimmed. However, the understory landscaping is no longer present. In addition, the landscaping plan indicates the presence of a large number of orchard trees directly in front of the house. These have been removed and replaced by grass, although a large orchard is visible just outside the perimeter fence on the west side of the yard.

The Walton House retains excellent integrity. There have been no major changes to either the exterior or interior, and very few minor alterations. It retains its original design, materials, furniture and finishes. Although the landscape does retain the natural features that were present prior to the construction of the

⁵ *General Conditions and Specification for the Walton House.* Document in the possession of Dr. Robert and Mary Walton.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Walton. Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

house, as well as the major plantings established as a part of the landscape plan, the smaller ornamental plantings called for in Green's plan are no longer in evidence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

Significance

The Walton House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under all three of the sub-categories of Criterion C and consideration G. It is an excellent example of its style, type and period. It is one of a number of Usonian style residences designed between 1936 and 1959 by Frank Lloyd Wright. The Walton House exemplifies all the major characteristics that define the Usonian style. It is a modest house with strongly horizontal lines that is integrated closely with its environment and which is organized to facilitate an informal, family oriented life-style. The Walton House, constructed between 1959-1961, also is an example of Wright's particular expression of the Modernist movement, a movement that gained wide acceptance in the 1940s and 1950s. The Walton House exemplifies the innovations in construction and technology that Wright sought to introduce into home design with the object of significantly reducing costs for the average buyer. Among those found in the Walton House are the use of concrete flooring which extends beyond the envelope of the house onto the exterior terraces, concrete block construction, use of steel structural materials, and the organization of the building on a geometric grid system. Finally the Walton House is the work of a recognized master that possesses high artistic value. The Usonian house has been widely recognized as one of Wright's most important design innovations and one of the major achievements of his long career. Each Usonian house was an individual expression of an architectural philosophy regarding how the American family should live and be housed. The Walton House aptly illustrates Wright's conviction that small, economical houses could be realized through the use of beautiful natural materials, careful spatial organization, and simplicity of design. The Walton House is eligible at a State level of significance as one of the small number of Usonian houses that Wright designed in California.

Historic Background and Context of the Walton House:

Robert and Mary Walton moved to Modesto, California, a small town in California's Central Valley, in the early 1950s when Robert was advised that it would be good place to establish a medical practice. Mary who had grown up in Midland, Michigan, was familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright's work. Her parents had had a house designed by Wright which was never built. Her brother, N. Douglas Lee, an architect, apprenticed at Taliesin for a few years before going into practice. Midland was a major location for work by Alden Dow who had apprenticed at Taliesin and whose work was heavily influenced by Wright. He designed most of the college campus in the town as well as a number of other buildings. When the Waltons purchased several acres of land seven miles out of town, they sought out Wright to design a house for them.

In November, 1955, Dr. Walton wrote to Scottsdale:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

My wife and I are interested in building a house in the near future. We both admire your work and we would be very grateful if you would consider designing our home...If you can possibly find the time to design a house for us, we would willingly come and see you in Arizona.¹

Eugene Masselink, Wright's secretary, responded, saying that Wright was interested and requested that the Waltons send a list of requirements, site information and photographs.²

Robert Walton responded describing their five acre property on a ridge overlooking the Stanislaus River bottom surrounded by almond and peach orchard and pasturage, stating his intention to raise Hereford cattle. Walton indicated that they wanted a large living room with a fireplace and separate dining room, a small study, a master bedroom with a fireplace, a family room for "feeding the children," and as much built-in furniture as possible. Referencing the Central Valley's notoriously hot summers, he indicated that they would like a patio facing a pool, although, for reasons not stated, the pool was to be added later.

By way of family details he told Wright that they had four small children and that since they enjoyed large families, they might have more. He also added that they entertained a good deal, including formal dinner parties. There also were a number of other small requests including a bar and BBQ which Wright declined to in his design. The Waltons expressed interest in adobe construction and exposed redwood beams was met with the response that Wright was a practitioner of scientific architecture.³ Although Wright rejected his client's choice of materials, the predominant use of concrete block construction may have been influenced by the client's initial preference for masonry building material.

At this time Wright was working on the Price Towers as well as a number of other projects and nearly a year passed before the Waltons received preliminary plans. They arranged a meeting with Wright at Taliesin West.⁴ Working drawings were another year in production, arriving in January 1959. Wright died in April, before construction began.

Immediately following Wright's death the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation contacted the Waltons assuring them that the staff of the Foundation and the Taliesin Associated Architects would fulfill all existing contracts. The Foundation had been established in 1940. With Wright's death it was reorganized into two entities, a school of architecture and the associated architects, a firm consisting of Wright's former staff and apprentices.⁵ The foundation was headed by Wright's widow and by his son-in-law, William Wesley Peters. In addition to the Walton House, there were five other Usonian Houses that were

¹ Robert Walton to Frank Lloyd Wright, November 26, 1955. Correspondence in the private collection of Robert and Mary Walton. All letters cited are from the same source unless otherwise specified.

² Eugene Masselink to Robert Walton, January 7, 1956 (#5623 W255A04). Correspondence in the collection of the Getty Research Institute.

³ Personal communication, Mary Walton, March 16, 2006.

⁴ Walton to Wright, January 28, 1958.

⁵ Twombly, Robert, *Frank Lloyd Wright: His Life and His Work*. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1979) 400.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

beginning or were under construction at the time of Wright's death, including the Ablin House in Bakersfield.

The Waltons maintained a close relationship with Taliesin during the construction of the house, its furnishing and decoration, and the resolution of several problems that arose shortly after the house was occupied. In turn Taliesin expended considerable resources to see that Wright's design intent was fully realized.⁶ During the course of construction which extended to 1961, several of Wright's former students were involved with the house. Robert Beharka who had served as the resident apprentice on the Fawcett House in Los Banos, made inspection visits as the building progressed. Beharka had settled in Los Banos and established his architectural practice there. Aaron Green, another former apprentice who had established offices in San Francisco, completed the landscape plan. Cornelia Brierly, a Taliesin Fellow, supervised the furniture and textiles, making several visits to the house.

Although the completion of the house under the supervision of assistants was necessitated by Wright's death, the role of the assistants in developing and realizing projects had been institutionalized at Taliesin long before the master's death. As Alan Hess points out, the expansion of Wright's practice in the 1940s and 1950s necessitated that Taliesin operate more like a large architectural office, although his model was still grounded in the 19th-century atelier rather than in the modern corporate model developed by such firms as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Wright depended on his fellows and apprentices to carry out the more routine aspects of the work.⁷ Twombly further elaborates on Wright's increased reliance on his assistants, particularly in the residential work, by pointing out that while Wright continued to get to know his clients and their needs, by the 1950s the Usonian House was nearly 20 years old and had become a definite and carefully worked out type. He adds that Wright's failing sight also made it difficult for him to labor long hours over the drafting table attending to small details.⁸ As with all the Usonian Houses, Wright designed the Walton's house with reference to their stated needs and to the immediate landscape and siting of the building. While it is Wright's design, its execution relied heavily on his trained assistants, a situation that was fairly typical of his late houses.

The Walton's were living in the house by spring, 1961, although the furnishing of the house continued through 1963. In addition there were several problems that required the continued involvement of Taliesin. The most serious was the paint which failure, permitting water leakage into the concrete blocks. Nearly three years of testing and investigation were necessary until the problem was adequately solved. In 1966 the Walton's installed the planned pool completing the original design.

⁶ They paid particular attention to the details of the project to make sure that Wright's specifications and high standards of workmanship were maintained. A good example was Wes Peters' objections to the contractor's failure to properly countersink screws and his request that this be done over consistent with Wright's specifications. Peters to Walton, November 9, 1960.

⁷ Hess, 235.

⁸ Twombly, 343.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

In spite of the initial problems, the Waltons continue to express satisfaction with the house. Mary Walton testifies to its functionality as a place to raise a large family. She did not find the small kitchen an impediment, felt that the small family room off the kitchen worked very well as a place for the children to play and eat, and says that the small bedrooms with their built-in furniture were highly functional and very easy to clean and maintain.

The Walton House as an Example of Its Style, Type and Period

The term Usonian which Wright employs in his 1932 *Autobiography* has no clear definition. In his National Register nomination of the Jacobs House, Paul Sprague defined it as “an *artistic* house of low cost for an average citizen of the United States of North America.”⁹ Contemptuous of Beaux Arts classicism and the historical revivalism that dominated domestic architecture in the 1920s and 1930s, Wright conceived of the Usonian house as a dwelling whose form and spacial organization would be uniquely American. For Wright the critical problem was to find a style and form of construction that would make artistically interesting designs accessible to ordinary middle-class families. Wright’s own credo stated that “...a house is more a home by being a work of art.”¹⁰

The Usonian house represented a natural evolution of ideas Wright had been working out since the beginning of his career. These included concerns with how families live in and use domestic space, the break down of the “box” as the unit of interior organization, the organic relationship of the house to its site, the expression of natural materials, structural innovation, and the integration of ornament into the architecture itself. The Great Depression and a resultant lack of commissions forced Wright to turn to more theoretical work. During the period between 1932 and 1936 Wright explored his earlier concerns in more depth and, influenced by the economic conditions of the time, focused more acutely on the issue of cost and accessibility to the middle class. Out of his lectures and essays his mature ideas emerged regarding both the ideal American home and its place in an ideal larger social context he called the Broadacre City.

Wright’s Usonian designs fundamentally reorganized domestic space. In the Prairie Houses Wright had first explored this reorganization using an open plan to promote human interaction and to break down the specialized function of individual rooms. As Robert Twombly describes it, the multi-purpose space within the Prairie House “...minimized the singularity of an event’s location but increased the importance of the time it was performed.”¹¹ The Usonian House sought to create an even more interactive family space. The living room, always the largest space in the Usonian, became a space for “...eating, relaxation, cooking, play, entertainment, cultural enrichment, and with the patio appended, for virtually all other family functions.”¹² By moving the kitchen, renamed by Wright the “workspace” from the back

⁹ Sprague, Paul. *National Register Nomination Jacobs House, Madison Wisconsin*. July 31, 2003.

¹⁰ Wright, Frank Lloyd, *The Natural House*. (New York: Horizon Press, 1954).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

to the center of the house Wright enabled the wife/mother to continue to interact with her family or with guests while preparing meals. The success of Wright's approach to integrated space was attested by Herbert Jacobs, the journalist for whom Wright built the first Usonian design. Jacobs observed that "...it does something to you subconsciously. I think it did something to my children. Living in that house was fantastically wonderful."¹³

The Usonian House had many plan variations, but whether L-shape, round, hexagonal, or a hemicycle, all the Usonians were "zoned" with a tightly organized core containing the kitchen, bath, and utilities at the center of the plan, a gathering area characterized by the large living room which usually incorporated the dining functions, and a private zone of bedrooms, sometimes including an office or study. These were distinct and separated public and private areas of the house. In all of the plans, the emphasis is clearly on the gathering space which is invariably large, well-lit, with varied height ceilings, and open, often dramatic, vistas on the outdoors.¹⁴ The workspace (kitchen) is small and compact, not unlike a ship's galley, and the bedrooms are generally small, in the case of children's rooms sometimes almost cabin-like with built-in bunk beds, closets and desks.

The Usonian House was both cause and effect of an emerging informal life-style in which the cocktail party or the buffet were becoming more popular than the formal dinner party. John Sergeant argues that Wright's clients were somewhat ahead of their time in adopting a new social informality, while Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer and David Gebhard point out that Wright's reorganization of household space in the Usonian had a profound influence on contemporaneous post-WWII housing, especially in the open space plan of the ubiquitous ranch house.¹⁵

While Wright opened the interior space into a seamless flow, he sought to isolate the private family dwelling from the street and the uninvited guest. In the earlier Prairie houses the entry was often obscured from immediate view, or indirectly accessed. With the Usonian House, the front elevation becomes a blank wall devoid of fenestration other than a clerestory, which is often screened with wood cut panels or patterned concrete block. The carport, a Wright innovation, is an integral part of the plan, and is often the first thing encountered when entering the property by automobile. Wright, with many of his contemporaries, viewed the automobile as a liberating invention, freeing people from the need to live in compact and crowded urban environments. In a decentralized, essentially suburban world, the carport was the point of arrival and departure from the house, enabling the family to live in and avail itself of the benefits of a more bucolic environment, something that Wright himself strongly preferred.

In turning its back to the street, the Usonian House opened out to the backyard. Siting for the Usonians was an important factor for Wright. Although the houses were to be low cost and often small, he

¹³ Twombly, 243.

¹⁴ Hess, 230.

¹⁵ Pfeiffer, Bruce Brooks, "Frank Lloyd Wright and the American Home," in Alan Hess. Hess, Alan and Alan Weintraub, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Houses*. (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), 49; Gebhard, David, *Romanza: The California Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books), 6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

specified that his clients must have a large building site.¹⁶ He was not interested in designing for urban lots. In most of these houses the principal façade is at the rear, opening onto the landscape, and in the case of many of the California examples, onto the swimming pool. Large expanses of glass “walls” open the living/dining room to expansive vistas, while bedrooms also look out onto the exterior space. The integration of interior and exterior was enhanced by the seamless expansion of the cement floor from the house to the terrace or outside walkways, the extension of the interior soffits above windows to become exterior overhangs, and the elimination of walls or structural elements at corners through the use of mitred glass. The effect of these devices is to unify the house and its surrounding landscape. Towers in the small “workspaces” and clerestories also open the interior to the outdoors. Sergeant notes that the clerestories allow glimpses of sky and trees and that the “interior is also animated by raking sunbeams that can be especially beautiful at the end of the day.”¹⁷

Wright relied on the extensive use of wood and its natural beauty to provide the decorative element of the Usonian houses. He made extensive use of cedar, pine and redwood in the interiors for closets, cabinets, and bookshelves. Even in the concrete block houses, the built-in cabinetry creates the impression of a predominance of warm wooden surfaces. Wright strongly believed that decoration was not an addition to be made after the fact, but was integral to the architecture of the building. Usonian houses were frequently furnished with built-in benches and couches, modular dining tables that could be assembled or disassembled for different purposes and different size dining parties, end tables and lighting. In the Usonian designs Wright achieved his ideal of “organic simplicity seen as the countenance of perfect integration...” in which all superficial decoration was rejected, lighting and heating were made an architectural feature of the house, and all furniture, textiles and hangings were the products of the architect.¹⁸

The Walton House typifies Wright’s zoned organization of interior space. It is organized on an L-plan, first utilized in the Jacob’s House. In the plan Wright zones the living areas of the house by function and reorganizes the Walton’s domestic space into a more informal pattern. Like all Usonian houses, the Walton House has a very tightly organized kitchen, “workspace.” In the case of the Waltons, this workspace included a “family room” adjacent to the kitchen which allowed Mary Walton a maximum amount of freedom to perform essential household tasks while keeping her several children within easy supervision. The Waltons frequently used this space to feed the children, obviating their need to use the more formal dining space at the south end of the living room. Although it is intended as a functional and utility space, the family room with its French doors and the kitchen with the tower and skylight are light filled spaces, in this case further warmed by the red concrete form floors and linoleum counters. The organization of the “workspace” at the center of the house was in a sensitive response to a young couple with a large family that conformed well with Wright’s ideas regarding facilitating family interaction.

¹⁶ *General Conditions and Specifications for the Walton House*, in the possession of Dr. Robert and Mary Walton.

¹⁷ Sergeant, John, *Frank Lloyd Wright’s Usonian Houses*, (New York: Whitney Design, 1975), 186.

¹⁸ Wright, Frank Lloyd, *Autobiography*, (London: Farber and Farber Limited, 1932), 135.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

The living/dining space, as in most Usonian houses, is intended as the center of the house, a place for family gatherings and entertaining. The low entry leads into a remarkably light and inviting space. The Walton house is extraordinary in its sense of openness and light. Its long sweep of windows along the rear and east façade brings light flooding into the living room and dining area and opens the interior directly out onto the lawn and the orchards and native oaks beyond the walls of the house. The feeling of lightness is enhanced by the interior concrete block walls which are painted white and by the light finish on the wood furniture.

In the Walton House the master bedroom/ study is an intermediate space. It is public in the sense that it opens directly off the main entry, without the mediation of a long hall that often marks the private zone in Wright's houses.

In this case the private zoning off a long corridor is reserved for the children's bedrooms and baths. The narrow hallway off of which these rooms open is barely wide enough to pass through between the entry hall and the kitchen. However, the entire corridor while narrow is unusually light. There are five bedrooms and two baths arranged in this wing. At the time the Walton's built the house they had four children and later had two more. Only the last bedroom at the south end of the wing was intended to be occupied by more than one person. These rooms are very small and designed for efficiency of use. All the furniture is custom designed with a built-in closet, desk and bunk bed. Although each room was intended for one child, Wright incorporated a bunk bed so each child could have friends for sleep over night.

Consistent with Wright's belief that ornament and architecture were part of a single whole and with the Walton's request to include as much of the furniture as possible into the design, the living room and dining room are almost exclusively furnished with Wright pieces. Some of these were designed specifically for the Walton house, and some, like the dining chairs, were derived from earlier designs that Wright had executed.¹⁹ All were either selected by Wright or, after his death, by Cornelia Brierly of Taliesin. Furnishings include the multi-part dining table which can be disassembled into three parts, a built-in banquette along the north living room wall, a long coffee table and a number of low square ottomans and triangular end tables that can be moved around to suit immediate needs. These latter pieces particularly exemplify Wright's notion of a house adapted to multiple usages and flexibility. There are built in cabinets and shelves throughout the house. Those under the living and dining area windows were suggested by Wes Peters.²⁰ The furniture in the children's rooms is already described above. Although the built in furniture in Wright's Houses always plays an important role, in the Walton House it is particularly important in establishing the overall aesthetic and a strong sense of coherency between the building and its appointments. The complete integration of architecture and furniture, and the interplay of interior and exterior space in the living/dining area of the Walton House is exceptional and produces an immediate and strong visual reaction.

¹⁹ Brierly to Mary Walton, September 25, 1961.

²⁰ Peters to Walton, March 20, 1962.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

The Walton House as an Example of Wright's Construction Methods

In his attempt to create a house that could be individual and artistic while at the same time low in cost, Wright introduced a number of novel construction techniques that strongly affect the appearance and feeling of the buildings. All Wright's houses were built on a geometric grid, a modular system that determined the placement of walls and dimensions of materials, cutting waste and hence cost.²¹ These modules varied in size and shape depending on the scale of the house.²² While this grid system was first developed in the Prairie Houses, Wright took its development much further in the Usonian designs with the grid clearly laid out on the plans and inscribed or stamped into the concrete floor. The use of steel beams and cantilevers allowed Wright to eliminate structural walls and columns. Small homes, some such as the Jacobs House and the Pope-Leighey House were only about 1500 square feet, but could be made to feel much larger than they actually were by eliminating the traditional four cornered box and using the exterior construction material as the interior finish. He developed a system that made extensive use of exposed masonry walls. In many of his later Usonian Houses he relied on this concrete block construction as a primary construction material. Wright also introduced into the Usonian Houses a unique radiant heating system in the floor. An idea he derived from his experience in Japan, the system of heating pipes was laid on a drained gravel bed and then covered with a thin concrete "floormat" which provided a uniform level of heat throughout the house. Although not every Usonian, including the Walton House, had radiant heat, a large enough number of them utilized this system for Wright scholars to consider it a general characteristic of the house type.

The materials and construction details of the Walton House are exemplary of the building systems that Wright employed to achieve cost efficiency, visual character and interest in his small houses. Typical Usonian House features include the use of concrete block, a multi-level roof with wide fascia, roof levels carried into the interior to create varying ceiling height and spatial perception, clerestories to provide light and privacy, and concrete Cherokee Red floors stamped with the organizing grid.

Concrete block is one of Wright's most characteristic materials and is used throughout the Walton House which included little use of wood in the exterior design. In Wright's later Usonian Houses, concrete block plays a more important role than it did in the earlier houses of this type. They are a character defining feature of the Usonian "Automatics," where Wright devised a block system that interlocked. A more extensive use of concrete block and other masonry materials, especially brick, may have been influenced not only by aesthetic considerations, but also by the rising price and limited availability of straight grain wood products. The most extensive exterior wood element of the house and one of its most outstanding character defining features is the fascia which extends along the front and south facades of the house and along the eaves of the bedroom wing at the rear. Its repeated geometric pattern creates a relief that immediately draws the eye.

²¹ Sergeant, 19.

²² Hess, 231.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

All Wright's houses were built on a geometric grid, a modular system that determined the placement of walls and dimensions of materials, cutting waste and hence cost.²³ These modules varied in size and shape depending on the scale of the house.²⁴ While this grid system was first developed in the Prairie Houses, Wright took its development much further in the Usonian designs with the grid clearly laid out on the plans and inscribed or stamped into the concrete floor. The use of steel beams and cantilevers allowed Wright to eliminate structural walls and columns. Small homes, some such as the Jacobs House and the Pope-Leighey House were only about 1500 square feet, but could be made to feel much larger than they actually were by eliminating the traditional four cornered box as the basis of the room. Wright eliminated the need for plastering and interior finishes by using board and batten, or lap siding wall systems on both the exterior and interior.²⁵ In many of the later Usonian houses he relied on concrete block as a primary construction material.

The Walton House exhibits a typical Wright grid, marked out on the concrete plate floor, although the house lacks radiant heating. Although the rooms in the Walton House are very traditionally geometric in form, Wright opens up the rectangle of the room using mitred glass which has the effect of dissolving sharp corners.

As with many of Wright's construction innovations, concrete block construction which formed both exterior and interior walls performed less than reliably. In the Walton's case leakage proved to be very troublesome until it was found that the paint was defective. Once this problem was properly diagnosed and repaired, the house functioned well with its system of dual block walls.

The Walton House as the Work of a Master

Wright's stature as a master of his craft is well recognized and has been examined by numerous scholars in literally hundreds of works. He is the best known American architect of the 20th century. Many of his works are icons, including the Marin County Civic Center, the Guggenheim Museum, the Johnson Wax Buildings, and Fallingwater to list only a few.

In addition to his monumental work, Wright created a highly distinctive body of residential work that are united by artistic and technical innovation and by Wright's life-long interest in the interplay of domestic space and family life, a subject about which he wrote and lectured extensively. Wright continued to design and execute houses, both large and small, from the beginning of his career in 1887 until his death in 1959. Of 430 Wright designs that were constructed, 260 were homes.²⁶ Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, the noted Wright scholar, has catalogued over 600 residential designs that Wright produced over his career.²⁷

²³ Sergeant, 19.

²⁴ Hess, 231.

²⁵ Sergeant describes this system as consisting of a plywood core which was covered on each side by a dampproof membrane with the board screwed to it on both sides. This construction provided strength and gave insulation.

²⁶ Hess, Alan, 13.

²⁷ Pfeiffer, "Frank Lloyd Wright and the American House," 44.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

As Allen Hess describes it, “Wright found his art in the intersections of American life, in the boundary between society at large and private life, in the suburbs between city and country.”²⁸

Wright’s domestic architecture falls within three main periods of extraordinary innovation: the Prairie Houses (1893-1910), the Textile Block Houses (1917-1924) and the Usonian houses (1936-1959). The Usonian houses express an important phase in Wright’s career. They are the culmination of his continual experimentation with the form and content of residential architecture. While aesthetically masterful, Wright’s houses were driven by large controlling ideas regarding the relationship between architecture, the way people lived, and inter-familial relationships. The Usonian houses were his last major attempt to give voice to his mature ideas on these subjects.

Each of the Usonian houses that Wright designed in California was a response to his search for a house that would function best for the unique American family. At the same time each design considered the needs, family situation, and desires of the individual client. This is clearly illustrated in the Walton House in the many ways he incorporated accommodations for their large family. Each house was carefully designed to its site to take advantage of the topography, maximize privacy, and ground the house in its natural environment. Each of the houses, including the Walton House, is the work of a master that embodies his basic philosophy of residential design at the same time that it is a unique and individual response to a specific client and a specific setting. John Sergeant concluded that “The interpretation of the need for a small, informal house was the greatest achievement of Wright’s late architectural career.”²⁹

Wright designed and constructed twenty-four buildings in California in the course of his career. Five of these were civic or commercial buildings, including the monumental Marin County Civic Center, five were the experimental textile block houses of the 1920s, one was an early Prairie Style in Montecito (the George Stewart House, 1909). The largest single body of his California work is expressed in the Usonian house. Beginning in 1936 and extending until his death in 1959 he executed twelve Usonian houses in the state.³⁰ The predominance of Usonian houses in Wright’s California work is in part a reflection of the general increase in Wright’s commissions that followed World War II. As Alan Hess observed:

“Wright was sixty-eight years old –Sullivan’s age when he died –the year that Fallingwater was built (1935) in the forested western Pennsylvania countryside. By whatever random coincidence, or unfathomable equilibrium of history, Wright’s sixty-eighth year opened a chapter that was to make him the most celebrated architect of the century.”³¹

The year after the completion of Fallingwater, Wright built the Hanna House, also known as the Honeycomb House, for Paul Hanna, a professor at Stanford University. His first California house since

²⁸Hess, 13.

²⁹ Sergeant, 14. Underscore added for emphasis.

³⁰ One additional house, a Prairie Style studio constructed for Aline Barnsdall, was demolished in the 1950s.

³¹ Hess, 377.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

the 1920s, the Hanna House was built on a hexagonal grid that determined the placement and angles of the walls and rooms. One of the largest of the Usonian houses, at 4,285 square feet, it was widely publicized in architectural publications with a complete issue of *House Beautiful* (January 1963) eventually devoted to it. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark. Two years later Wright designed a smaller version of the hexagonal house for Sydney Bazlett in Hillsborough. The Sturges house in Los Angeles with its dramatic cantilever over a hillside was completed the same year. The Obler Gatehouse in Malibu was built on a Usonian plan in 1940. In 1948 Wright embarked on two California Usonian projects, one for Della Walker on a dramatic site on the beach in Carmel, and one for, Maynard Buehler and his wife Katherine. In the 1950s he completed approximately forty-six Usonian Houses of which five are in California. These include the Pearce House in Bradbury, the Berger House in San Anselmo, the Fawcett House in Los Banos, the Ablin House in Bakersfield, and the Walton House.

The Walton House is one of a small number of buildings that Wright designed in California. It is an excellent example of his late residential design work which is considered by many scholars to one of the major achievements of his long career. The Usonian houses were Wright's expression of Modernism while at the same time they continued to develop themes that occupied his entire life in architecture. The Walton House is an excellent example of this important phase in the work of an acknowledged master, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ungated Entry Walls

The concrete block walls that demarcate the entrance to the Walton House driveway are composed of blocks similar to those used in the house. However, they are not a part of the original plan. They do not appear on either Wright's site plan or on the later landscape plan prepared by Aaron Green. They do not contribute to the significance of the property.

Swimming Pool

The swimming pool is a central focus of the rear yard. It extends east from the terrace almost to the retaining wall at the rear of the yard. Wright placed a rectangular pool in his site plan. However, the pool was not executed in conjunction with the construction of the house. In 1966 the Waltons had a pool installed. The pool was designed by Mary Walton's brother, N. Douglas Lee, who had been a Taliesin apprentice before establishing his own practice in San Francisco. The pool is very sympathetic to the architecture of the house, but varies slightly in shape, from that delineated on the Wright plan. Both because it was not installed at the time the house was built and because of the design variation from the original it does not contribute to the significance of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

The Walton House and Exceptional Significance Criterion

The Walton House meets criteria consideration G because the house is part of a recognized body of work from a Master architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, that has been highly scrutinized and praised by scholars and architectural historians. The house was fully planned by the Master architect, and it is one of a small number of California examples of this important phase of Wright's work.

The Walton House was initiated fifty years ago in 1955, but was not completed until 1961, six years later. There are a number of practical reasons that the Walton House project proceeded very slowly to fruition. In the last few years of Wright's life he undertook a large number of projects and carried on an extremely busy schedule, particularly for a man in his nineties. His age and health, most notably his failing eyesight, were also factors that often led to long delays between a project concept and working drawings. Finally, following Wright's death in April, 1959, construction was slowed by the organizational problem of transforming Taliesin into an architectural firm which could complete the projects in process when the master died.

Although Wright died before the project was completed, there is no doubt that the Walton House reflects Wright's design intent and resulted from a direct collaboration between Wright and the Waltons, who commissioned the house. As indicated earlier in this section, the Walton's approached Wright in 1955 and worked directly with him. There is extensive documentation of their communications both in the Walton's personal papers and in the collection of the Getty Institute, both of which were consulted for this nomination. This interaction included Dr. Walton's response to Wright's request for site information, photographs, and a list of requirements and Wright's reaction to his client's requests. The Walton's met with Wright at Taliesin. The architect's acceptance and rejection of the Walton's desires is discussed in more detail on page 2 of this section. Mary Walton recalls that in designing the house Wright was very adamant about the need for children to have their own private space, although in the case of the Walton's this meant a number of bedrooms to accommodate their large family. In developing the final plan for the house, Wright experimented with several possible zoning arrangements. Among the large number of Wright drawings for the project there are early variations on the final plan which was delivered in January, 1959.

Following Wright's death in April, 1959, the Walton's maintained close communication with Taliesin which continued to supervise all aspects of the projects that were underway when Wright died. Wes Peters, Wright's son-in-law and the Director at Taliesin, made more than one visit to the construction site, as did Cornelia Brierly, a Taliesin Fellow. These visits and their role in completing Wright's work are detailed on page 3. Finally, the close involvement and inspections of Robert Baharka, a former Taliesin apprentice who had set up practice in Los Banos, helped to insure that Wright's design intent was carried out despite his death. Baharka supervised a number of the master's California projects during Wright's lifetime and some that occurred immediately following his death.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

Although Wright did not live to see the project to completion, it should be noted that Wright's involvement with all of his residential projects was most intense in the planning stages. Wright had little interest in the construction phase of projects which were usually supervised by apprentices at Taliesin. Even in such early Usonian residences as the Buheler House in Orinda, Wright played a distant role in the actual building of the house, although he retained close control over any plan changes.³² As Wright's practice expanded after World War II he relied more and more heavily on his associates to see to the more mundane details of executing his work.³³ In this regard, the Walton House is typical of all his later residential work.

The Walton House is part of a recognized body of work from a Master architect that has been highly scrutinized and praised by scholars and architectural historians. Wright's domestic architecture falls within three main periods of extraordinary innovation: the Prairie Houses (1893-1910), the Textile Block Houses (1917-1924) and the Usonian houses (1936-1959). The Usonian houses express an important and final phase in Wright's career. Critics and historians agree that the Usonian house constitutes one of the major achievements of Wright's long career. The literature pertaining to Wright that currently exists has provided more perspective on his career than most architects will ever be afforded. Wright's career, including his Usonian house period, has been the subject of hundreds of scholarly works. The first book devoted exclusively to the Usonian house, by John Sergeant, was published in 1975, over thirty years ago. Since then any number of works have been devoted to an analysis of the Usonian genre. These include recent works by Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer/ Yukio Futagawa and by Alan Hess. The Usonian phase of Wright's work has been extensively documented, its place in his overall career has been repeatedly analyzed, and the architectural literature on the subject has been widely peer reviewed. No scholar has challenged the view that Wright's Usonian designs constitute one of the most important segments of his overall work. Within the confines of his residential design they are generally considered to be of equal significance with his earlier Prairie style houses or with his experimental textile block houses. It should be noted, that with the exception of Sergeant's work which was published in the 1970s, all of the recent literature on Wright's residential work include the Walton House as an example of the Usonian type, most notably Alan Hess' recent comprehensive study of Wright's residential architecture, Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer's study of the Usonian House, and Thomas Heinz well regarded *Field Guide* to Frank Lloyd Wright. Many of Wright's Usonian houses have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Among these are the Jacobs House, the Pope-Leighy House, the Brandes House, the Gordon House, and the Hanna House. The latter is a National Historic Landmark. Those that were less than fifty years old at the time of listing were deemed to meet the exceptional criteria.³⁴

The Walton House is an excellent example of the Usonian property type. It exemplifies the Usonian ideal as a whole and its embodies all of the specific attributes that define the type while at the same time it illustrates the manor in which Wright individualized each of these houses as a unique aesthetic creation

³² Walter Olds, personal communication, April 12, 2006.

³³ Hess, 235; Twombly, 343.

³⁴ Paul Lusignan to Cynthia Howse, July 13, 2006, email correspondence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

and as a specific response to his client's needs. A discussion of the Usonian house and of its place in Wright's oeuvre is provided in this section under the headings "The Walton House as an Example of Its Style, Type and Period," and "The Walton House as the Work of a Master." This discussion explains in detail what Wright was trying to achieve in the Usonian house. It also should be noted that the Usonian is important as Wright's particular contribution to the broader Modernist Movement. The Walton House derives its exceptional significance from the interplay of its of attributes as a manifestation of the Usonian ideal and its attributes as a specific building.

Wright designed and executed approximately 109 Usonian houses in the United States. Twelve examples are located in California. Each is unique and yet embodies the salient characteristics that define this very important phase of Wright's work. The Walton House, designed in the last two years of Wright's life, is an exceptional example of a limited body of residential work that has received extensive scholarly attention and has been found to be of exceptional merit.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

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Architectural plans, correspondence and miscellaneous materials belonging to Dr. Robert and Mary Walton were made available for this project. In addition, Frank Lloyd Wright correspondence in the Frank Lloyd Wright Collection of the Getty Research Institute supplemented the Walton's letters.

Joe Monroe, photographer, generously shared his circa 1961 photographs of the house. Several of these are included in the nomination under "Additional Materials."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

Mary Walton generously contributed her time to answer questions and to provide information.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Additional Items

Page _1_

Walton, Dr. and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

Additional Items: Architectural Drawings

3 Sheets

Site Plan
Floor Plan
Elevations

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Walton, Dr Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the property are those of the legal parcel which includes 5 acres within the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, California. The Assessor Parcel Number is 074-002-020.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 3

Walton, Dr Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County, California

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundary encompasses the legal parcel which is occupied by the house as recorded by the County Assessor's Office, Stanislaus, County. The parcel boundary takes in the house and its immediate domestic environs. The area within the boundaries includes the swimming pool, entry area, and landscaping. As indicated in the property description, the house and yard are set within the larger context of adjacent pasture and orchards. The house and its immediate setting, included within the boundaries, are visually, as well as legally distinct from the surrounding agricultural land.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Additional Items Page 1

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County

INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS:



Figure 1. Living Room Built-in banquette, tables, ottomans and Bookshelves designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. view northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Additional Items Page 2

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County



Figure 2. Living room fireplace and chairs. View west.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Additional Items Page 3

Walton, Dr. Robert and Mary, House
Stanislaus County

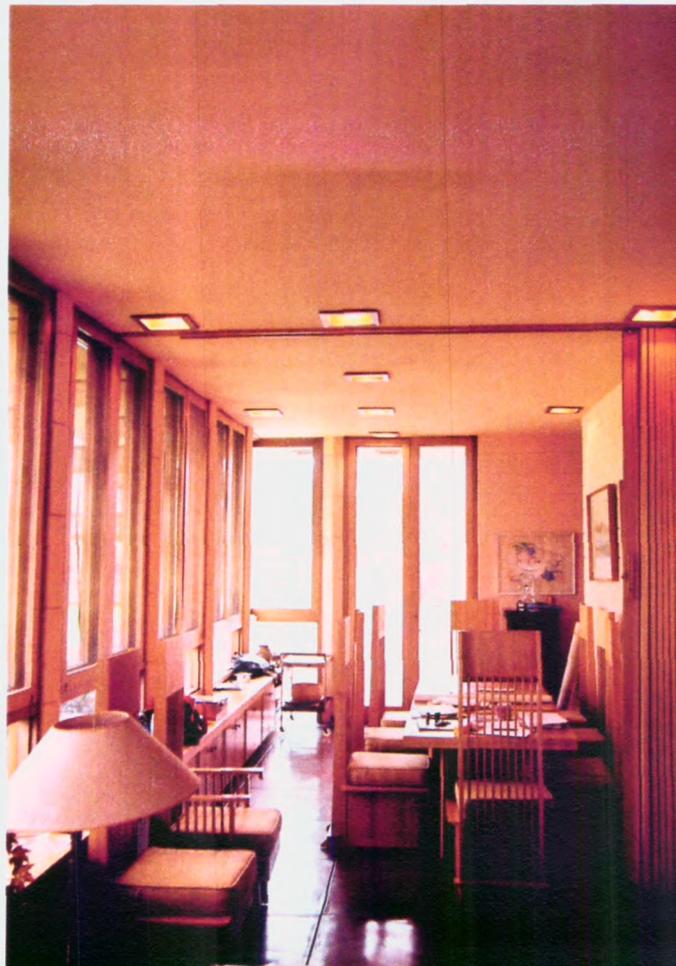
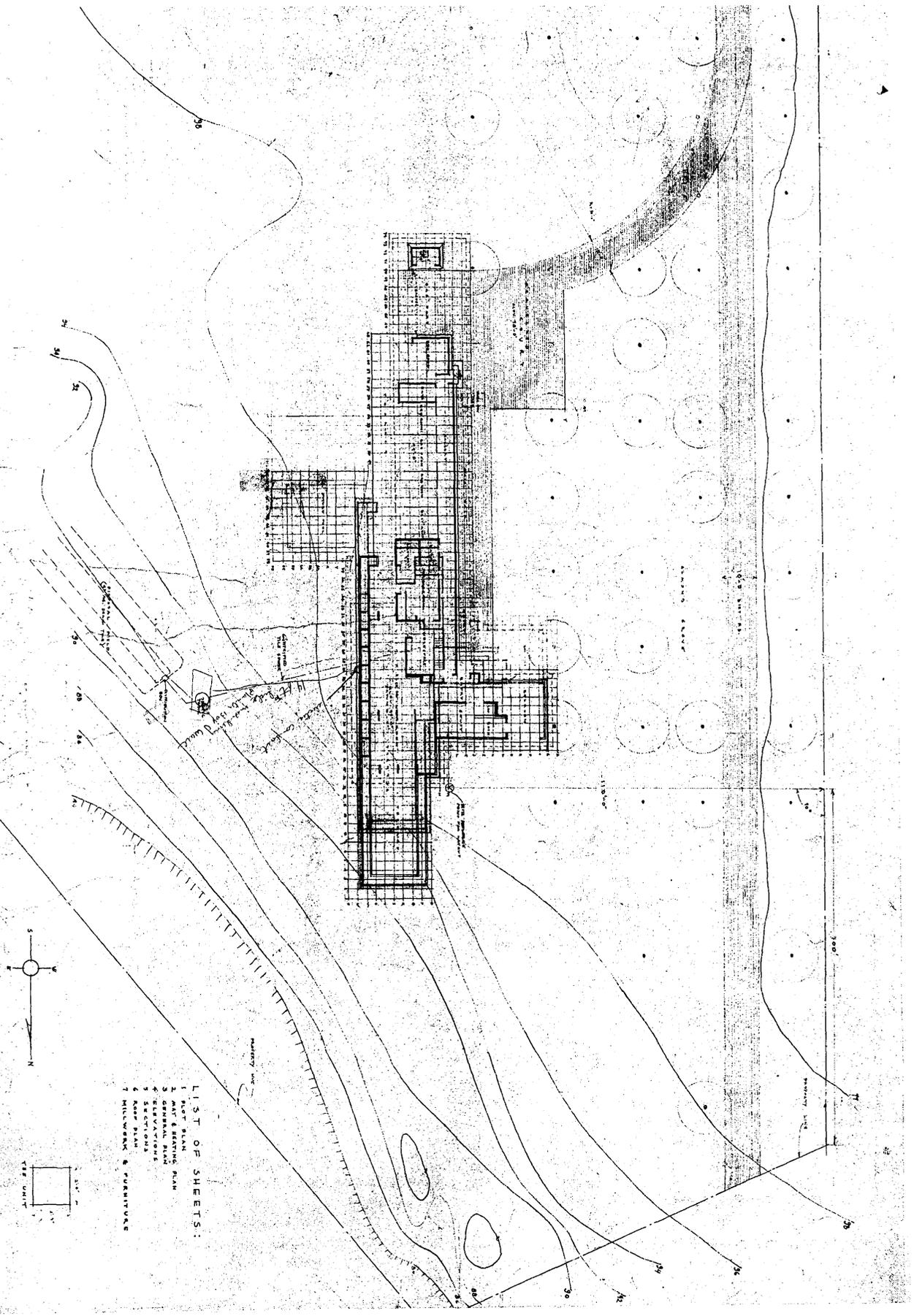


Figure 3. Dining area. Table, chairs and cabinets designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The dining chairs are after the chairs designed earlier for The Price House, but the chairs with arms were designed for the Walton house. View west.

HOUSE PLAN FOR LLOYD B. WATSON'S GRIFFIN ARCHITECTS
 PLOTT PLAN
 SHEET 1



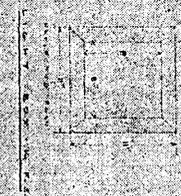
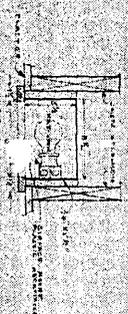
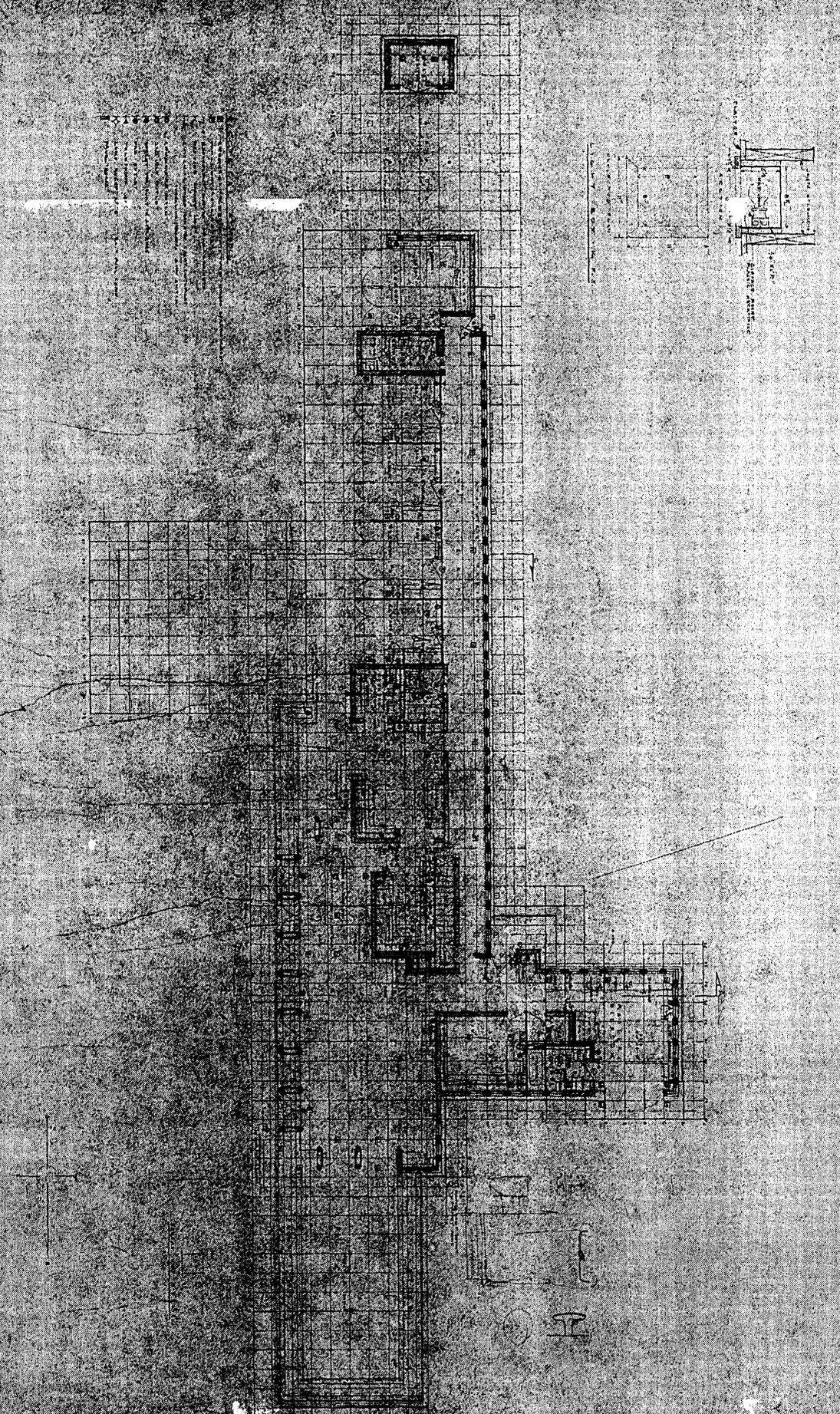
- LIST OF SHEETS:**
- 1. FLOOR PLAN
 - 2. PART SECTION PLAN
 - 3. GENERAL PLAN
 - 4. ELEVATIONS
 - 5. SECTIONS
 - 6. ROOF PLAN
 - 7. MECHANICAL & PLUMBING



GRIFFIN ARCHITECTS
 1234 MARKET STREET
 PHOENIX, ARIZONA

H. O. S. E. F. O. P. O. Y. N. D. R. W. R. I. C. H. T. R. G. W. A. L. L. T. O. N.
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GENERAL PLAN
SHEET NO. 3
THE PENNSYLVANIA ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY
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HOUSE FOR FLORENCE DRA. W. R. MRS. R. C. W. ALTON
FRANK FLOYD WRIGHT ARCHITECT

ELEVATIONS
SECTION

W. R. M.

