

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 689467

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
NOV 6 1978  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED DEC 19 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Stanley and Mildred Rosenbaum House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

117 Riverview Drive

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Florence

— VICINITY OF

5

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Lauderdale

077

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

—DISTRICT

—PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

—AGRICULTURE

—MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

—UNOCCUPIED

—COMMERCIAL

—PARK

—STRUCTURE

—BOTH

—WORK IN PROGRESS

—EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

—SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

—ENTERTAINMENT

—RELIGIOUS

—OBJECT

—IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

—GOVERNMENT

—SCIENTIFIC

—BEING CONSIDERED

—YES: UNRESTRICTED

—INDUSTRIAL

—TRANSPORTATION

—NO

—MILITARY

—OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Stanley and Mildred Rosenbaum

STREET & NUMBER

117 Riverview Drive

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Florence

— VICINITY OF

Alabama

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lauderdale County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Court Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Florence

Alabama

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	by 1948 additions by FLW	

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rosenbaum House is a one-story structure designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in his Usonian style. Of "L" shape, it is set on a corner lot so that the interior of the "L" faces away from the streets. The street walls are unfenestrated except for a narrow strip of clerestories while the walls along the back are glazed providing both great privacy and openness. An addition to the original house, also "L" shaped and designed by Wright, is placed so that the house now forms an approximate "T".

The house is built directly on the ground on a concrete slab under which are the heating pipes. The walls are of a special sandwich construction devised by Wright for his Usonian houses and consist of a plywood core covered on both sides with building paper to which are screwed, inside and out, horizontal panels of cypress to create a board and batten effect. Massive brick chimney walls at the end of each wing provide structural support for the flat roofs with their extreme cantilevered eaves.

The original house contained a living room and study in the west wing, three bedrooms in the south wing, and the kitchen and bath as a brick service core in the angle. The house is one story but the bedroom wing is three steps lower than the living room while the study is down two steps; the addition is built on still another level. The house is constructed on a two foot by four foot module. Each room, except the kitchen and bath, opens onto the yard through a series of ceiling height glass doors that open outward and allow for the movement of furniture into the house. The concrete floors extend past the walls to create terraces overlooking the back yard. The ceilings are door height along the exterior walls but raised above the center of the rooms creating clerestories that are treated with a fretwork frame. The lighting is recessed in the ceiling as long strips which are decorated with the same jigsaw pattern as the clerestories. The main brick bathroom in the service core is skylit. The dining room is not a separate room but merely a nook at the end of the living room; the built-in table remains, but the Wright designed chairs are no longer in use.

The Wright designed addition of 1948 provides an enlarged kitchen and laundry area, a guest room with bath, and a den. The courtyard created between the den and guest room was landscaped as a Japanese garden. The corner of the guest room is formed by glass doors which, when opened, provide unobstructed access into the garden as there is no corner post. In the dining niche, the exterior corner is formed by mitred full length glass panes. The brickwork of the house is laid with flush vertical joints and raked horizontal ones to further emphasize the horizontal character of the board and batten walls and the layers of flat roofs separated by their thin clerestories.

The house contains four brick fireplaces; the concrete floors have been carpeted; and the hardware is of brass. A cantilevered roof of twenty-foot span provides a carport on the main street facade while the sunken front door is hidden at the end of the carport. Air conditioning has been discretely added, and in 1966, the house was restored under the supervision of the Taliesin Foundation. The extensive grounds behind the house have been planted and landscape to create a park-like setting.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1940 (addition 1948) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank Lloyd Wright

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rosenbaum House is an outstanding example of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian designs of the late 1930's, the only Usonian house to have been enlarged with a major addition by Wright, and the only Wright structure in Alabama. It has been scrupulously maintained in its original condition by the first owners.

The house is a mature statement of the Usonian phase of Wright's career when he was examining the problem of low cost housing. It exhibits all of the elements, in a refined form, that were characteristic of Usonian designs such as the concrete slab with underfloor heating, sandwich wall panels of cypress, structural brick chimneys to support the multiple flat roofs, a brick service core, and a modular planning grid. The overriding horizontal motif is emphasized by the massive projecting eaves, the raked joints of the brickwork, the board and batten walls, and the shifting floor and ceiling levels which create layers of space and light. The recessed lighting fixtures and clerestories are framed by a distinctive fretwork pattern designed by Wright specifically for this house. The sitting illustrated Wright's ideas of facing blank walls to the street while opening up the rear walls to the privacy of the garden through continuous spans of window-doors. The inter-relationship of interior and exterior space is further heightened by the continuation of the floor slab into the yard as surrounding terraces. The house retains some of the Wright designed furniture, and the long wall spans are stabilized in a typical Wrightian manner by bookcases which run the length of the exterior and hall walls.

In 1939, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Rosenbaum contacted Frank Lloyd Wright about designing a house for their property in Florence. Wright agreed and, working from topographic maps of the property, provided the plans for the house. The structure was completed under building supervisor Burton Goodrich in 1940. Within a few years the Rosenbaums outgrew the house. They took their problem to Wright again, fully expecting him to suggest building a new house; instead he designed an addition that nearly doubled the previous floor space and provided a large modern kitchen and laundry, a big den for use by the children, and an isolated guest room. The addition was built in 1948, incorporating the same materials and stylistic features as the original. In 1966 the house was carefully restored by the Taliesin Foundation. Construction and restoration supervisors at various times included Burton Goodrich, Aaron Green, Ben Dunbar and Arnold Roy.



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Figure 1: Original Floor Plan

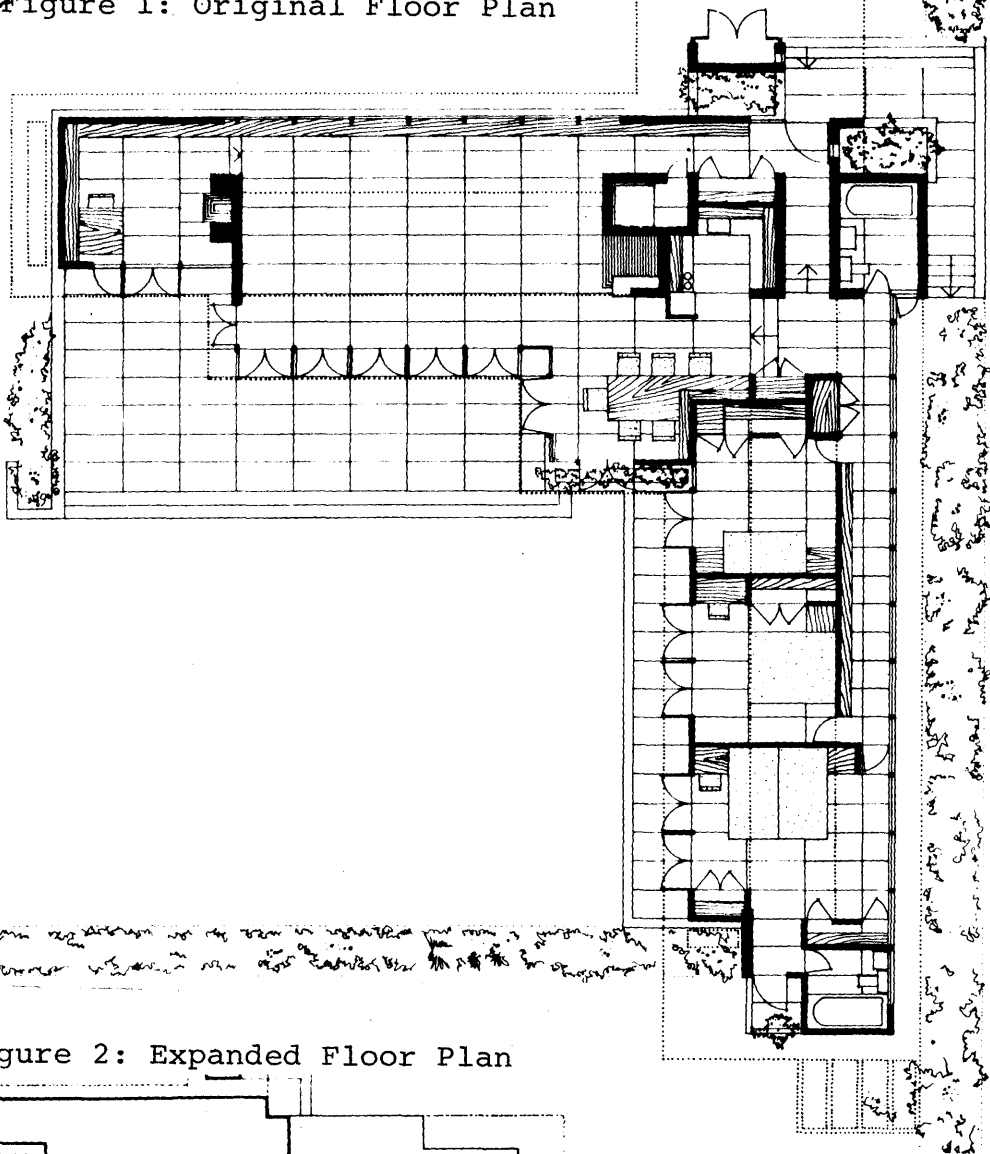
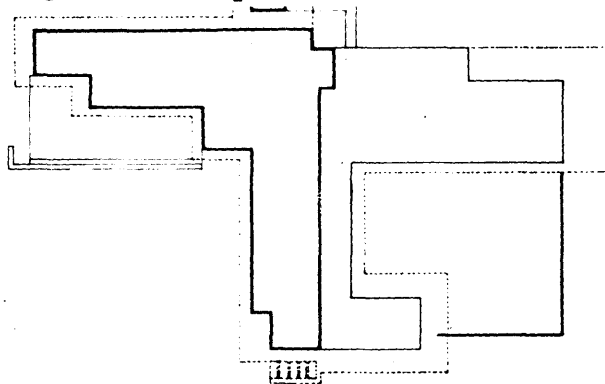


Figure 2: Expanded Floor Plan



Clients: Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Rosenbaum  
Profession: College professor  
Location: Florence, Alabama  
Year of design: 1939  
Best source: *Architectural Forum*, January 1948; Henry Russell Hitchcock, *In the Nature of Materials*  
Builder/supervisor: Burton Goodrich  
Cost: \$12,000  
Floor area: 1,540 sq ft; 143.1 sq m

