

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| STATE:<br><b>Wisconsin</b> |                             |
| COUNTY:<br><b>Iowa</b>     |                             |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY           |                             |
| ENTRY NUMBER               | DATE:<br><b>MAR 14 1972</b> |



**1. NAME**

COMMON: **Taliesin** AND/OR HISTORIC: **Congressmen to be notified:  
Sen. William Proxmire  
Sen. Gaylord Nelson  
Robert Kastenmeier, 2nd Cong. Dist.**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: **T8N, R4E, Section 30, Wyoming Township (2 mi. south of Spring Green) on W 156<sup>th</sup> St**  
CITY OR TOWN: **Spring Green**  
STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55** COUNTY: **Iowa** CODE: **049**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP   | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress | Yes:<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

|   |                                     |   |   |                                   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural           | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Park                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation             | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial             | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Military   | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious                    | <b>Architectural</b>                                |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment          | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum     | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific                   | <b>Office</b>                                       |                                   |

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: **Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation**  
STREET AND NUMBER: **Taliesin**  
CITY OR TOWN: **Spring Green** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Iowa County Courthouse**  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN: **Dodgeville** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Wisconsin Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings**  
DATE OF SURVEY: **1969-72**  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **State Historical Society of Wisconsin**  
STREET AND NUMBER: **816 State Street**  
CITY OR TOWN: **Madison** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Wisconsin  
COUNTY: Iowa  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

|           |   |   |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|-----------|---|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                   |   |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                   |   |                               | (Check One)                           |   |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Altered              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered |                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Taliesin was a third-century Welsh poet whose name, meaning "shining brow," caught Frank Lloyd Wright's fancy and found new life in the rolling hills of the Wyoming Valley, just south of Spring Green. The buildings of the original Taliesin flank the prominence of a hill overlooking the Wisconsin River valley and, metaphorically, are an architectural beacon... a "shining brow."

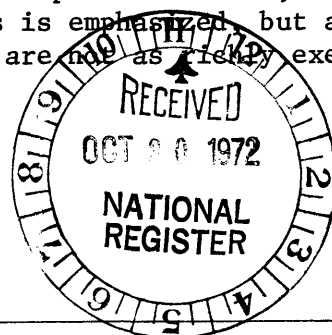
Taliesin is a rambling and complicated arrangement of buildings and complexes of buildings which is hard to view in its totality or describe simply. Basically, there are three major complexes of buildings and a number of outer buildings and structures. A description of these follows.

[1] Taliesin III. This is the most northerly group of structures, and here is where the original Taliesin home and office was built in 1911. Since then, the buildings have gone through two fires, multiple remodelings and many additions. Construction on this group was continuous until shortly after Wright's death in 1959. Since then, nothing new has been designed for this area. Presently, the offices of Taliesin Associated Architects are located here as are some residential quarters. In plan, Taliesin III has a squat and flat "U"-shape with arms opening to the south-southwest. Exterior walls are of rough, horizontal native limestone. Above the masonry hovers soaring hipped roofs which intersect each other, change levels and turn corners in a way both romantic and geometric. Massive masonry chimney-piers seem to draw the roofs together and give solidity and unity to the whole.

[2] Hillside Home School. This most southerly complex at Taliesin houses the Hillside Playhouse theater and the apprentices' drafting room and living quarters. In general, this is the only portion of Taliesin open to summer tourists. Originally built in 1902 as a boarding school, Hillside received a major remodeling and expansion in 1933 in preparation for the first class in the Taliesin Fellowship. The Hillside Playhouse was destroyed by fire in 1952 and rebuilt. Remodeling and expansion of this complex was also carried on by Wright until his death, and it is now a very rambling affair. The stonework here is more restrained and archaic Wright than that used at Taliesin III, in deference to the original 1902 masonry of the old school. A portion of the old school is now used as a dining room and remains today very much as it was when Wright built it in 1902.

[3] Midway Farm Buildings. Midway between Taliesin III and the Hillside group is a complex of farm buildings built in 1938. Not as lush and dramatic in texture or form as the other two areas, these buildings are not used now for farm purposes but house old drawings and exhibit material. Below the farm buildings are fields which Taliesin no longer farms, but which are farmed by nearby local farmers. The Midway Buildings are mostly wood, with little of Wright's characteristic stone used, except for a small, barrel-like milk house. Again the horizontal line and mass is emphasized, but as these buildings had a more utilitarian purpose they are not as richly executed as other parts of Taliesin.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

|                  |           |             |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| STATE            | Wisconsin |             |
| COUNTY           | Iowa      |             |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |           |             |
| ENTRY NUMBER     |           | DATE        |
|                  |           | MAR 14 1973 |

(Number all entries) 7

Taliesin

[4] Romeo and Juliet Windmill and Tan-Y-Deri House. Further up the hill above the Hillside and farm groups is a 1907 Wright house built of shingles and called Tan-Y-Deri. It was built for Wright's sister, Mrs. Andrew Porter, and stands today in original condition serving as a residence for apprentices and architects. A few yards from this house is the now-famous Romeo and Juliet Windmill, built in 1896, and "still one of the conspicuous landmarks of his [Wright's] career."<sup>1</sup> It is, in plan, an octagon with a diamond-shaped projection to windward. Wright claimed the diamond and octagon were necessary to each other, "a composition of forces,"<sup>2</sup> thus the name, Romeo and Juliet. The body of the tower is sixty feet high, and it was built with a wooden frame and horizontal battens. The top of the tower sways several inches in a good wind, initially causing local residents to fear the structure would not last.<sup>3</sup> It has.

[5] Other structures. The Taliesin Dam was built just north of Taliesin III in 1945. Originally, County Highway "C" passed adjacent to the dam, but it has been moved further north. Now the entrance driveway to Taliesin III passes over a bridge immediately adjacent to the dam. The dam was built with indigenous, stratified limestone, and resembles stonework elsewhere at Taliesin.

Other small houses are scattered about the Taliesin grounds. All presently house Taliesin apprentices and architects.

One of the last designs done by Wright before his death was for a swimming pool and garden court for Mrs. Wright. After his death this was built just south of Taliesin III, and was the last new work done at Taliesin.<sup>4</sup>

- 1 - Hitchcock, p. 42.
- 2 - Jacobs, p. 65.
- 3 - Ibid.
- 4 - Montooth conversation.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1896, 1902, 1911, 1914, 1925, 1933, 1938

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Taliesin is to be found rather upon the map of the United States or the map of the world than on the map of Wisconsin."<sup>1</sup>

To say that Taliesin is the most important architectural site in Wisconsin may well be accurate. Taliesin was the home, workshop, laboratory and retreat for one of the world's most renowned architects and certainly one of Wisconsin's most significant historical personalities. It is a site of international significance, a global pilgrimage-magnet for architectural historians, students and practitioners. Taliesin was synonymous with Wright for forty-eight years, its form reflecting the thoughts and schemes of the architect, and on two occasions itself influencing Wright's own life. Taliesin sits among the hills of Wyoming Valley, just south of Spring Green, its rolling landscape reflecting that of nearby Richland County where Wright was born in 1867. Wright's original move to rural Wisconsin from Oak Park, Illinois, which he placed on the architectural map, symbolized a turbulent period in his practice and, indeed, in the history of modern architecture. It was after this move that the Prairie School, born and nurtured by revolutionary Chicago architects, ceased to be a viable phenomenon.

The original Taliesin, later called "Taliesin I," was built in 1911 as a combined workshop-and-home for Wright. According to Hitchcock, Wright originally intended the building to be a home for his mother, but he decided to live there himself.<sup>2</sup> As Wright left a suburban Chicago setting for rural Spring Green, so the materials used to build Taliesin changed from the smooth, sophisticated and geometric to the rugged, tactile and random. This was the "first use of stratified limestone wherein the wall and stone masses reiterate, in an abstract sense, the manner in which the native stone is found in the quarry."<sup>3</sup> On August 15, 1914, Taliesin I's living quarters were burned to the ground by a servant-gone-mad who felt "the Lord had commanded him to do something about the unconventional household in which he worked."<sup>4</sup> The fire and the servant, wielding an axe, took the lives of seven Taliesin residents, including that of Wright's mistress, Mrs. Mamah Borthwick Cheney, former wife of a former client.

By late 1915, Taliesin II had risen from the ashes of the fire, modifying and expanding the original design. The second Taliesin was destroyed by a second fire in 1925, started by defective telephone wiring, but again only the living quarters were ruined. Immediately, the complex standing today, Taliesin III, was begun. Since that time considerable

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, In the Nature of Materials, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York (1942).  
 Wright, Olgivanna (Mrs. Frank Lloyd), Frank Lloyd Wright: His Life, His Work, His Words, Horizon Press, New York (1966).  
 Eaton, Leonard K., Frank Lloyd Wright and Howard Van Doren Shaw: Two Chicago Architects and Their Clients, MIT Press, Cambridge (1969).  
 Jacobs, Herbert Austin, Frank Lloyd Wright: America's Greatest Architect, Harcourt, Brace & World, New York (1965).  
 Wright, Frank Lloyd, "Frank Lloyd Wright," Architectural Forum, January, 1938.

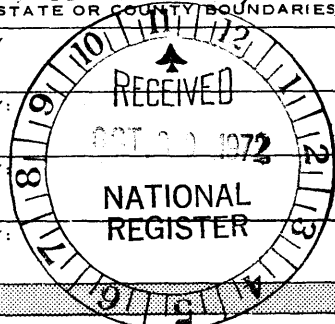
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | N43° 08' 50"            | W90° 04' 28"            |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| NE   | N43° 08' 50"            | W90° 03' 17"            |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| SE   | N43° 07' 58"            | W90° 03' 17"            |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| SW   | N43° 07' 58"            | W90° 04' 27"            |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **490 acres (approximately)**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY  | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Jeffrey M. Dean, Preservation Planner**

ORGANIZATION: **State Historical Society of Wisconsin**      DATE: **July 10, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**816 State Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Madison**      STATE: **Wisconsin**      CODE: **55**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: James Morton Smith  
**James Morton Smith**

Title: Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Date: OCT 19 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 3/14/73

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3-8-73

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(Continuation Sheet)

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|------------------|-------------|
| STATE            |             |
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| COUNTY           |             |
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|                  | MAR 14 1973 |

(Number all entries) 8

Taliesin

expansion and remodeling has been done, making it difficult to distinguish the two original Taliesins.

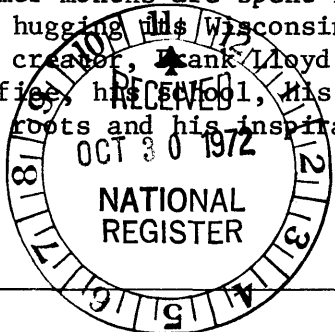
Later work included the remodeling of the Hillside Home School in 1933 shortly after Wright founded the Taliesin Fellowship, the 1938 construction of the Midway Farm Buildings, and the 1952 rebuilding of the Hillside Playhouse after a fire.

Though fundamentally a Prairie School design, Taliesin III was really post-Prairie in date. Wright was the only Prairie architect to survive after 1917 without compromising his ideals by adopting resurgent eclecticism that was the day's fashion. "It is a suggestive fact that between the Allen House of 1917 in Wichita and the Willey House in 1934 in Minneapolis, he [Wright] did no building in the Midwest other than additions to his own headquarters at Taliesin."<sup>5</sup> Confronted with an increasingly female-dominated clientele (traditionally unsympathetic to Prairie architects) and largely ignored by the national architectural press after 1917, Prairie School architects either reverted, as did George Maher and William Drummond, or left the profession, as did William G. Purcell, in taking up advertising.<sup>6</sup> Wright was spared by the eclectic resurgence by chance when a Japanese architect-selection committee heard about him in Europe, where Wright was always respected, and traveled to Taliesin to hire him to design Tokyo's Imperial Hotel. Thereafter, during much of the 1920's, Wright was in Japan working on various commissions, and when he returned to the United States he did work mostly in California for a while.

Taliesin seemed to build and grow most actively when Wright was in relatively lean years. Then he could devote his attention to it. After the rebuilding in the 1920's during the eclectic period, the depression slowed work to a trickle. Then, in 1932, Wright founded the Taliesin Fellowship. The original "class" had twenty-three members, including William Wesley Peters, now chief architect of Taliesin Associated Architects. The Hillside Home School, built by Wright in 1902 and unused for many years, was rebuilt to accommodate the students, including a playhouse, a dining room and rooms for the apprentices. The concept behind Taliesin was broader than that of a traditional architectural school, which Wright always distrusted. The apprentices lived communally and, in addition to drafting and instruction, undertook manual labor, such as quarrying, carpentry, farming, masonry, landscaping and cooking. It was Wright's belief that every architect directly should handle and confront the materials for which he would be designing.

In 1938 a second headquarters in Arizona, Taliesin West, was begun. During the winter months the Taliesin Fellowship moved there. As the years have passed, more and more time has been spent in Arizona and less and less at Taliesin III. Today, only a few summer months are spent in Wisconsin.

Complicated, ever-changing, and hugging the Wisconsin landscape, Taliesin is the physical manifestation of its creator, Frank Lloyd Wright. For several decades it was Wright's home, his office, his school, his farm and his solace. Perhaps, above all, Taliesin was his roots and his inspiration.



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| STATE<br><b>Wisconsin</b> |                    |
| COUNTY<br><b>Iowa</b>     |                    |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY          |                    |
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|                           | <b>MAR 14 1973</b> |

(Number all entries) 8

Taliesin III

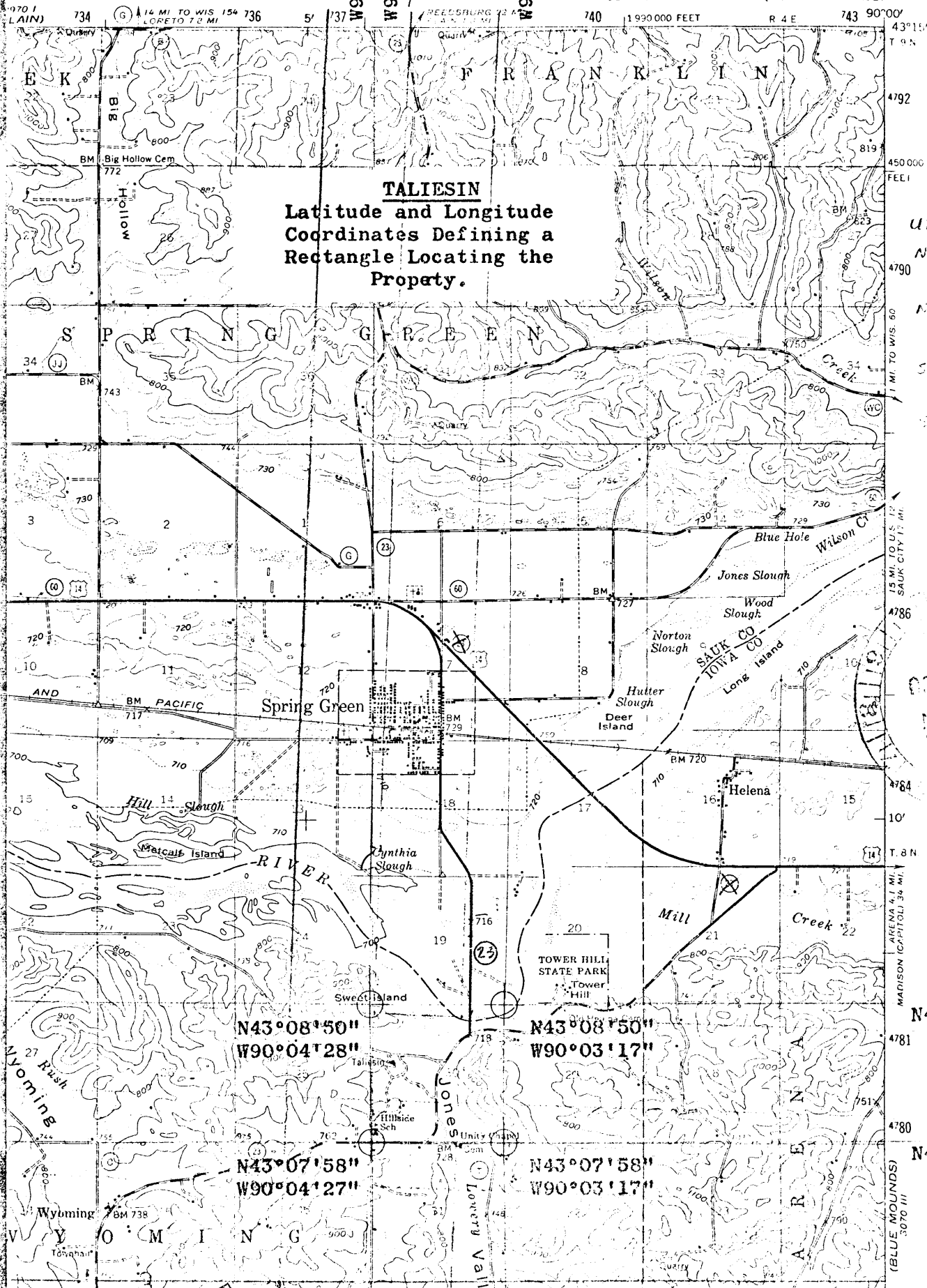
Footnotes:

1. Hitchcock, p. 64.
2. Ibid.
3. Wright, Olgivanna, p. 210.
4. Jacobs, p. 85.
5. Eaton, p. 235.



WISCONSIN

SPRING GREEN QUADRANGLE  
WISCONSIN  
15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



**TALIESIN**

Latitude and Longitude  
Coordinates Defining a  
Rectangle Locating the  
Property.

N43°08'50"  
W90°04'28"

N43°08'50"  
W90°03'17"

N43°07'58"  
W90°04'27"

N43°07'58"  
W90°03'17"

N43°

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N43°

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N43°

3070 III

(BLUE MOUNDS)

3070 III

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FEET

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743 90°00'

1990 000 FEET

W90°03'17"

W90°04'27"

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W90°04'27"

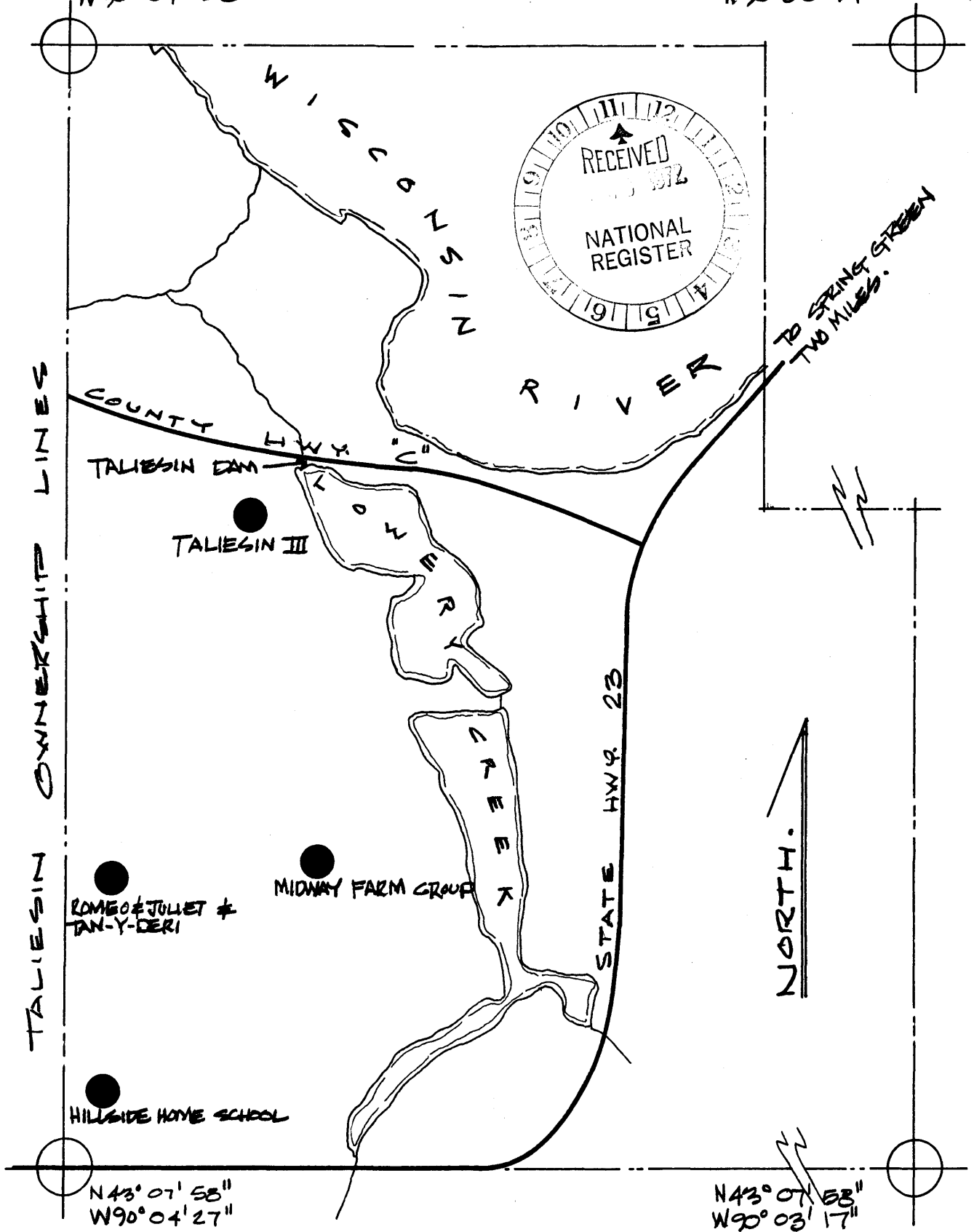
W90°04'28"

W90°03'17"



N43°08'50"  
W90°04'28"

N43°08'50"  
W90°03'17"



TALIESIN OWNERSHIP LINES



TO SPRING GREEN  
TWO MILES.

NORTH.

ROMEO & JULIET &  
TAN-Y-DERI

MIDWAY FARM GROUP

HILLSIDE HOME SCHOOL

N43°07'58"  
W90°04'27"

N43°07'58"  
W90°03'17"

TALIESIN.

IOWA COUNTY  
SPRING GREEN VICINITY

OCT. 12, 1972  
NO SCALE.

WD

Form 10-301  
(July 1969)

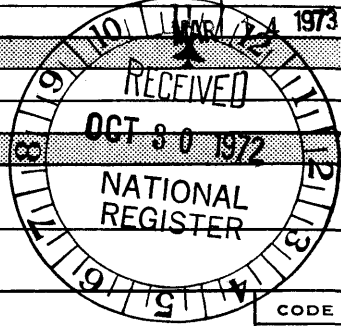
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| STATE<br>Wisconsin |          |
| COUNTY<br>Iowa     |          |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY   |          |
| ENTRY NUMBER       | DATE     |
|                    | 10/12/72 |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

|   |      |         |      |
|---|------|---------|------|
| <b>1. NAME</b>  |      |         |      |
| COMMON: Taliesin  |      |         |      |
| AND/OR HISTORIC:  |      |         |      |
| <b>2. LOCATION</b>  |      |         |      |
| STREET AND NUMBER:  |      |         |      |
| T8N, R4E, Section 30, Wyoming Township                        |      |         |      |
| CITY OR TOWN:   |      |         |      |
| Spring Green  |      |         |      |
| STATE:  | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| Wisconsin   | 55   | Iowa    | 049  |
| <b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>                                       |      |         |      |
| SOURCE: Jeffrey Dean [Hand Drawn]<br>State Historical Society |      |         |      |
| SCALE: None   |      |         |      |
| DATE: October 12, 1972  |      |         |      |
| <b>4. REQUIREMENTS</b>  |      |         |      |
| TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS                                    |      |         |      |
| 1. Property boundaries where required.                        |      |         |      |
| 2. North arrow.   |      |         |      |
| 3. Latitude and longitude reference.                          |      |         |      |