

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0693901

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RECEIVED DEC 13 1978  
DATE ENTERED FEB 14 1979

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 Lewis II, Mr. and Mrs. George, House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER N of Tallahassee at  
3117 Okeeheepkee Road

CITY, TOWN Tallahassee VICINITY OF Second

STATE Florida CODE 12 COUNTY Leon CODE 073

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                   | STATUS  | PRESENT USE   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH               | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                   | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION | <input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED          | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT                   |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                         | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY                     |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM                       |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                         |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS                    |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION               |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                       |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II

STREET & NUMBER 3117 Okeeheepkee Road

CITY, TOWN Tallahassee VICINITY OF Florida 32303

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Leon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Monroe Street

CITY, TOWN Tallahassee Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II House is a two-story residence typical of Frank Lloyd Wright's circular or "hemicycle" mode. It is situated in a wooded setting on the outskirts of the developed suburban area of Tallahassee and sits on a gentle slope overlooking a spring and a narrow stream.

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

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

The house sits on a poured concrete slab with subterranean pilings; red pigment was mixed with the concrete and the smoothly finished slab is exposed as the surface for the first floor. The walls of the first story and the entire height of the utilities core is constructed of "Ocala" concrete block with deeply raked horizontal joints. The unpainted block is exposed on both interior and exterior surfaces. Almost the entire expanse of the arc on the east side of the house is composed of wood-framed fixed plate glass which rises from the first floor to the two-story ceiling. The second story overhang and its cantilevered balconies are of wood frame sheathed by red cypress weatherboard; the second story is supported, in part, by 3/4" steel rods suspended from the steel beams of the roof. The frame walls have no interior finish materials, thus exposing the back side of the weatherboarding and the carefully framed studs and plates. The overhanging flat roof is framed with steel beams and cypress rafters and has a built-up surface.

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

See Continuation Sheet

# 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      1954

BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Wright, Frank Lloyd

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II House, built in 1954, was designed by the renowned American architect Frank Lloyd Wright and remains essentially unaltered from its original appearance. Although less than 50 years old, it is of exceptional importance for several reasons: It is associated with Wright and represents the last and chronologically shortest stylistic phase of his career, the "hemicycle" phase. It is one of only two surviving sites in Florida that were designed by Wright.<sup>1</sup> In addition, it is the only house designed by Wright that survives in Florida.

In 1950, Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II were considering building a new house. Mrs. Lewis had recently been attracted to the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright and had actively studied his work. In part because of the encouragement of an architectural student and family friend, Mr. Ernest Daffin, the Lewises went to Lakeland, Florida to attend a conference of World Federalists and to meet Wright who was to be there to participate in the dedication of his newly completed administration building for the Florida Southern College campus. Mrs. Lewis arranged to accompany Wright on an impromptu tour of the campus, and when the opportunity arose, asked him if he could "design a house for someone with a lot of children and not much money?" Wright indicated that he would undertake the project if the Lewises would first find their building site and send him a topographical map of it. By 1952, Wright had completed plans for the Lewis House.<sup>2</sup>

The unconventional characteristics of Wright's design made it difficult for the Lewises to find a contractor who was willing to project a cost estimate for construction of the house, or even to take on the job. Finally, in 1954 Wright sent Mr. Nils Schweizer, A Taliesin Fellow and his representative in the Southeast, to Tallahassee to assist in the effort to find a contractor. With the help of Ernest Daffin, Schweizer persuaded Jack Culpepper of Culpepper Construction Company in Tallahassee to undertake the project.<sup>3</sup>

Construction of the house began in April of 1954 with Ernest Daffin serving as construction supervisor. Since Wright had never visited the building site, Nils Schweizer continued as liaison for the architect, making adjustments to the original plans to accommodate peculiarities of

See Continuation Sheet

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4.95

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |         |          |      |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 116  | 751970  | 337.5    | 92.0 | B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |      |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C |      |         |          |      | D |      |         |          |
|   |      |         |          |      |   |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Lot 460 in Section 15, Township 1 North, Range 1 West in Leon County, Florida.

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

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

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Ron Jones, Photographer and J. Rodney Little, Historic Preservationist

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| ORGANIZATION  | DATE                  |
| <u>Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management</u> | <u>6/12/78</u>        |
| STREET & NUMBER   | TELEPHONE             |
| <u>Department of State, The Capitol</u>                             | <u>(904) 487-2333</u> |
| CITY OR TOWN  | STATE                 |
| <u>Tallahassee</u>  | <u>Florida 32304</u>  |

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION | DATE                            |
| <u>[Signature]</u>                             | <u>2/14/78</u>                  |
| ATTEST   | KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER |
| <u>[Signature]</u>                             | DATE                            |
| KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER                | <u>1/28/78</u>                  |

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

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

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

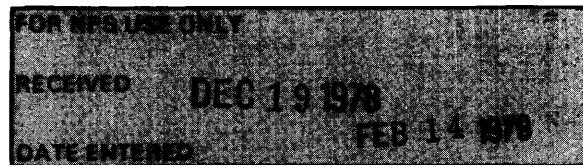
Access to the bedrooms, bathrooms and exterior balconies on the second floor is along a narrow balcony which overlooks a portion of the living room and the glass wall. Two small bathrooms are located within the circular utilities core and are lighted from above by a "bubble" skylight. The master bedroom is immediately to the south of the bathrooms and has a circular hooded fireplace. Next, to the south, is a smaller bedroom; this is followed by a larger bedroom, originally intended for three children, with direct access to the exterior balcony at the south end of the house.

Interior decorative interest is provided by the natural colors, textures and arrangement of the exposed structural materials. Only the ceilings are plastered and these are unpainted. All doors and operable windows are hung with exposed brass piano hinges; all other hardware is also of brass. All lighting fixtures are within 9" square

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

boxes recessed in the ceilings and covered by frosted glass with wood lath frames.

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

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<sup>1</sup>Ocala block is a concrete block made in Florida with certain sands that give the finished material a light tan color.

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Item 9

Page 1

Culpepper, Jack. Personal interview by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little. Tallahassee, Florida, 1976-77.

Daffin, Ernest. Personal interview by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little. Tallahassee, Florida, 1976-77.

Kaufmann, Edgar and Raeburn, Ben. Selected Writings and Buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright. New York City: Horizon Press, 1960.

Lewis II, Mrs. George. Personal interview by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little. Tallahassee, Florida, 1976-77.

Schweizer, Nils. Personal interview by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little. Orlando, Florida, 1976-77.

Wright, Frank Lloyd. Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II House Blueprints of original plans, 1952. In possession of Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis, II, Tallahassee, Florida.

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the site, local building codes and financial requirements. It was apparent that the pipe clay subsurface of the site would require a more substantial foundation than Wright had originally intended. Rather than a simple concrete slab, Schweizer directed that large pits be excavated at close intervals and concrete piers be poured to provide additional support and buoyancy to the slab. The cost of this adjustment and the needs of the Lewises required that other changes be made to the original plan including minor changes to the bedrooms, conversion of the single bathroom area into two smaller bathrooms, and redesign of the utility/tool room. When construction terminated in December of 1954, cost escalation had precluded the completion of certain landscaping features, the terrace pool and portions of the terrace wall.<sup>4</sup>

The Lewis House is similar to the earliest known "hemicycle," the Lloyd Burlingham Residence in El Paso, Texas (1941). That house and subsequent Wright buildings were characterized by plans composed of both concentric and intersecting circles.<sup>5</sup> Atypical of common American building practices of the period, the Lewis House was also a radical statement within the conservative architectural traditions of Tallahassee.

<sup>1</sup>

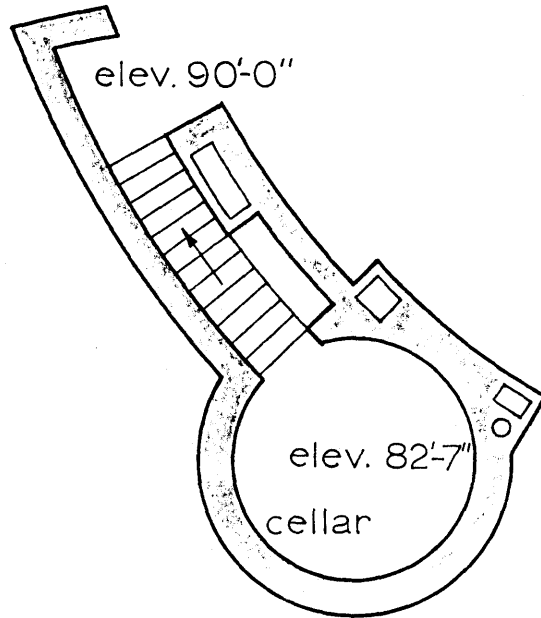
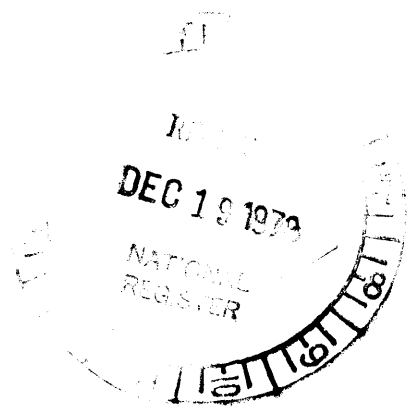
The other site is the Florida Southern College Architectural District (National Register) in Lakeland. Another building, the Villa Koehne, built in Palm Beach in 1913, was a Wright commission probably designed by Walter Burley Griffin; however, this building was demolished in 1975.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. George Lewis, II, personal interview by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little, Tallahassee, Florida, 1976-77.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Jack Culpepper, Mr. Ernest Daffin, Mrs. George Lewis, II, and Mr. Nils Schweizer, personal interviews by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little, Tallahassee and Orlando, Florida, 1976-77.

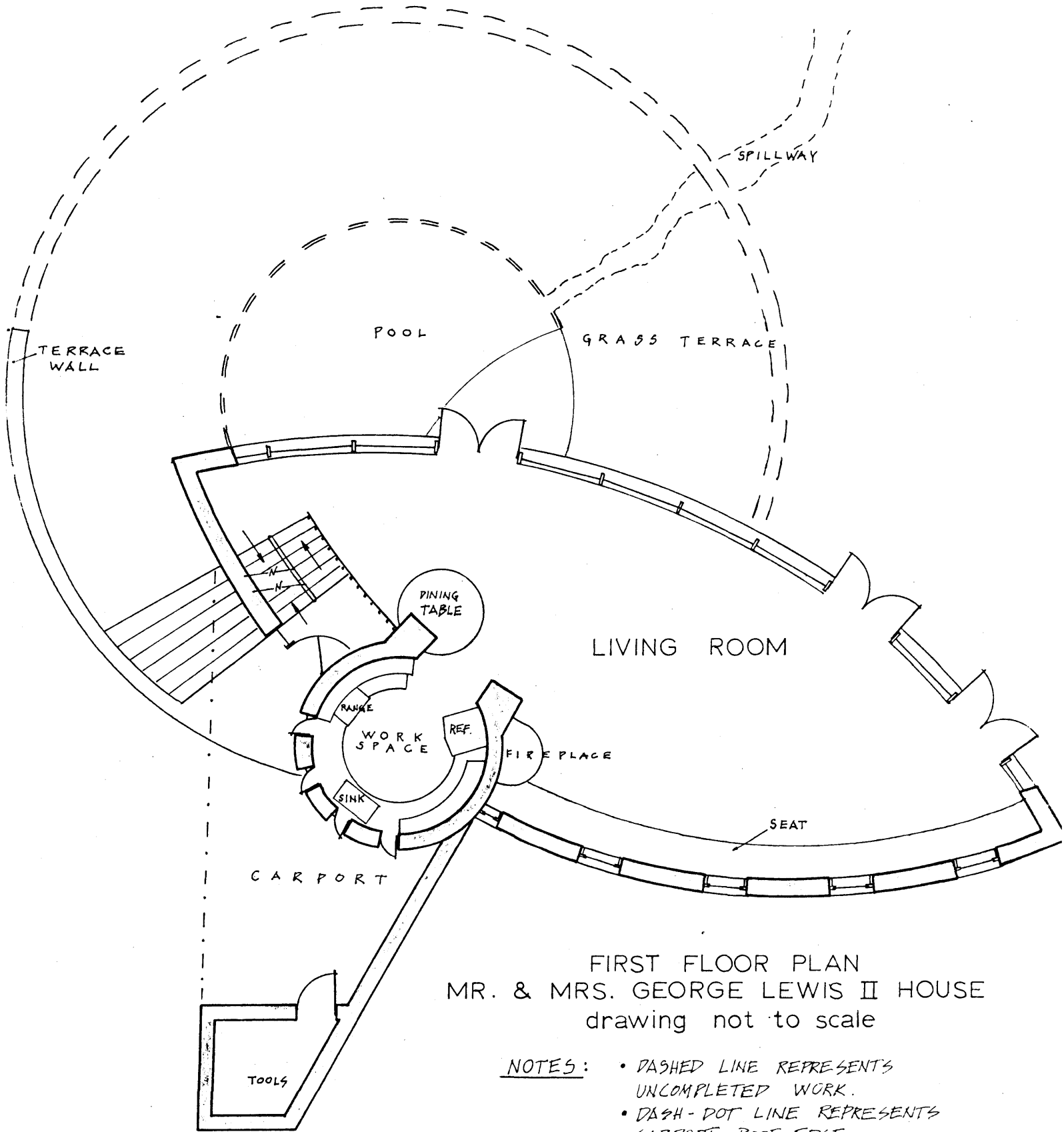
<sup>4</sup>Mrs. George Lewis II and Mr Nils Schweizer, personal interviews by Ron Jones and J. Rodney Little, Tallahassee and Orlando, Florida, 1976-77; Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis II House Blueprints of original plans, in possession of Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis, II, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>5</sup>Edgar Kaufmann and Ben Raeburn, Selected Writings and Buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright (New York City: Horizon Press, 1960), pp. 148, 234.



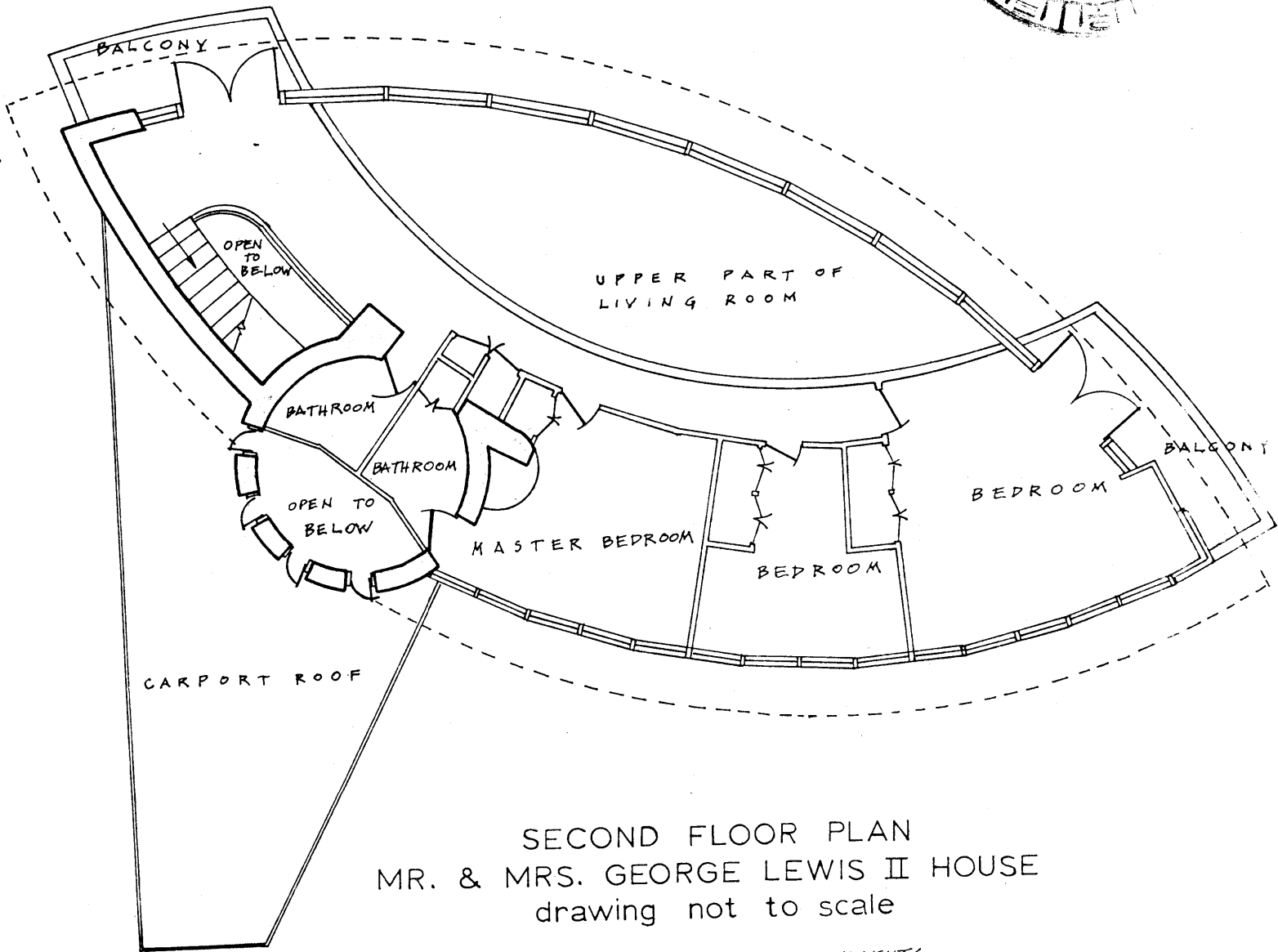
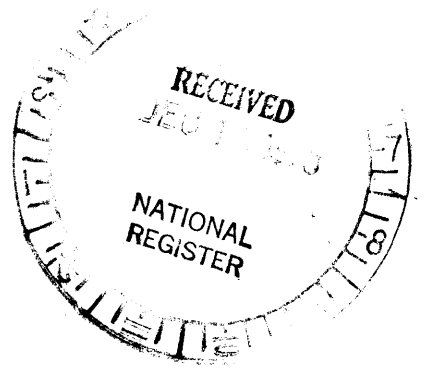
BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
MR. & MRS. GEORGE LEWIS II HOUSE  
drawing not to scale





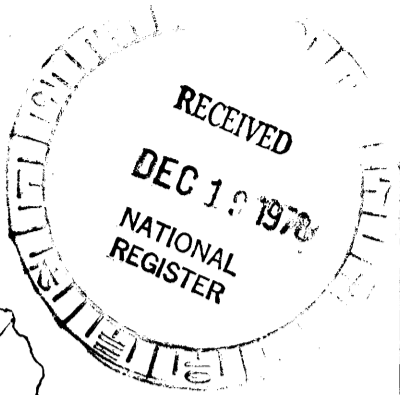
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 MR. & MRS. GEORGE LEWIS II HOUSE  
 drawing not to scale

- NOTES:
- DASHED LINE REPRESENTS UNCOMPLETED WORK.
  - DASH-DOT LINE REPRESENTS CARPORT ROOF EDGE.

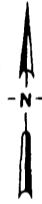
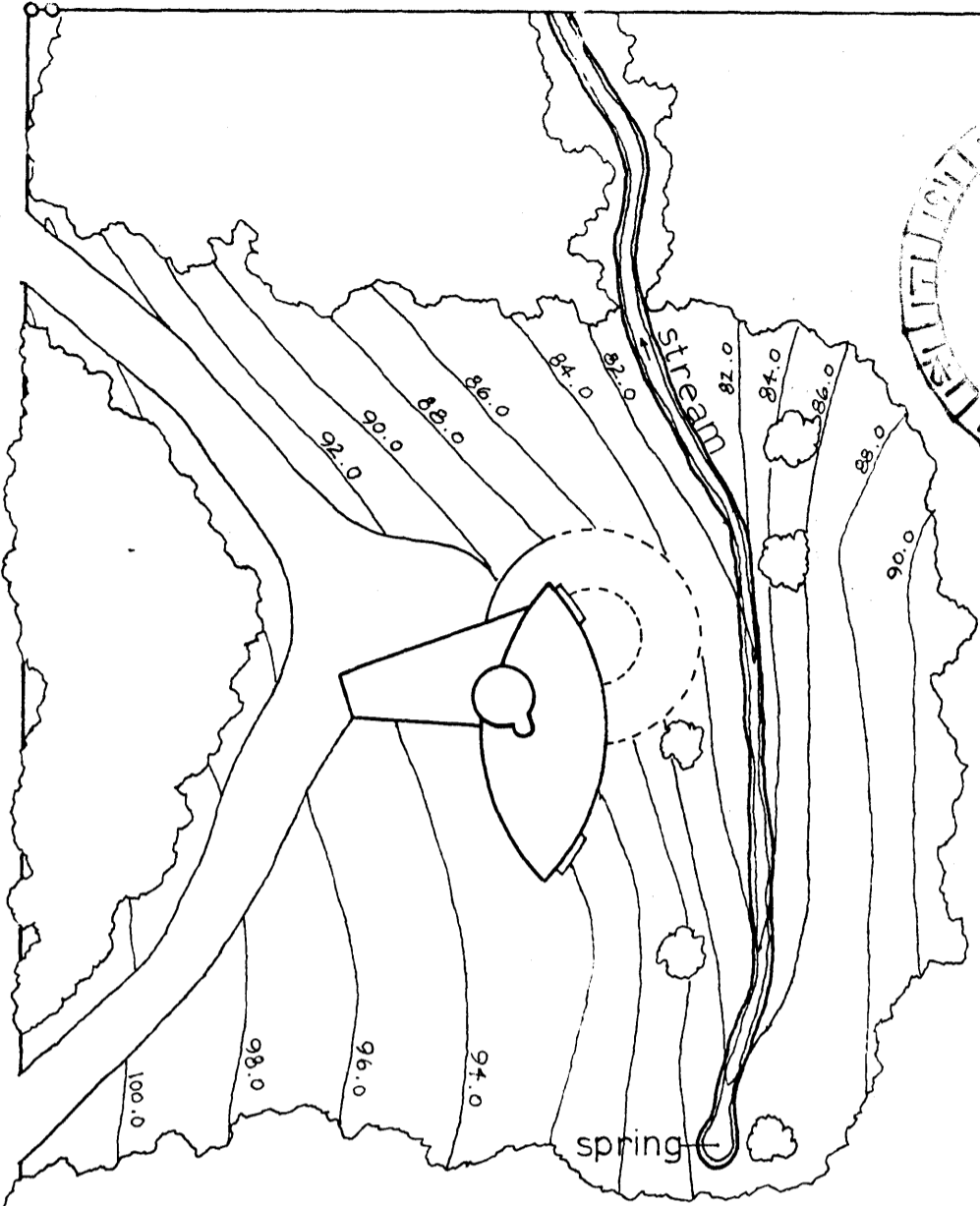


SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
MR. & MRS. GEORGE LEWIS II HOUSE  
drawing not to scale

NOTES: • DASHED LINE REPRESENTS  
ROOF LINE.



ROAD



646.0'

SITE PLAN  
MR. & MRS. GEORGE LEWIS II HOUSE  
LOT 460, SEC. 15, T01N-R01W  
4.95 AC.±  
LEON COUNTY  
FLORIDA

NOTES: • DRAWING NOT TO SCALE.  
• DASHED LINE REPRESENTS UNCOMPLETED WORK.

334.0'