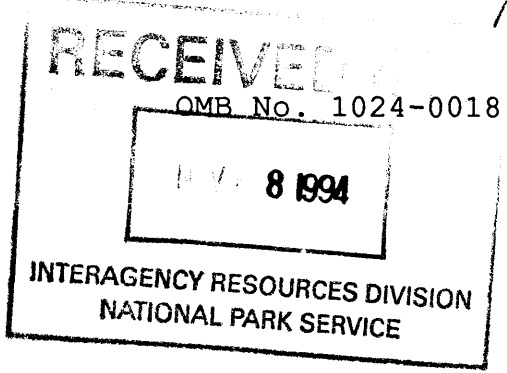


1436

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: BRANDES HOUSE _____

other name/site number: _____

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number: 2202 - 212th Avenue SE _____

not for publication: _____

city/town: Issaquah _____

vicinity: _____

state: WA county: King _____ code: 033 zip code: 98027

=====

3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: Private _____

Category of Property: Building _____

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____ 1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____ 1	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA _____

Name of related multiple property listing: NA _____

=====

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date 10/12/94

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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 Keeper Date of Action 12-14-94

6. Function or Use

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

Current : DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification:

MODERN MOVEMENT/Wrightian _____

MODERN MOVEMENT/Usonian _____

Other Description: NA _____

Materials: foundation: concrete_ roof: unknown

walls: concrete_ other: wood _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: State _____.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C ___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : G ___

Areas of Significance: Architecture _____

Period(s) of Significance: 1953 _____

Significant Dates : 1953

Significant Person(s): NA _____

Cultural Affiliation: NA _____

Architect/Builder: Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect _____

Ray Brandes, Builder _____

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

X See continuation

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Deborah Vick and Jack Cullen

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property: Approximately eighteen acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
 1) 10 /571000 /5271080 2) 10 /571260 /5271080
 3) 10 /571000 /5270820 4) 10 /571260 /5270820
 ___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

Lot 4, King County short plat no. 680028, recorded under recording number 8211090758; said short plat being a portion or the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 4, township 24, north, range 6 east, W.M.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

These boundaries coincide with current ownership and represent the remaining parcel of the original estate.

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Marilyn Sullivan

Organization: Preservation Consultant

Date: April 8, 1994

Street & Number: 5505 40th Avenue NE #7

Telephone: (206)522-6686

City or Town: Seattle

State: WA ZIP: 98105

Owners: Deborah Vick and Jack J. Cullen
2202 - 212th Avenue SE
Issaquah, Washington 98027
(206) 392-6140

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

8 1994

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Section number 7 _____

Brandes House Page #1

=====

The Ray Brandes House is situated on a twenty acre rural site on the plateau east of Lake Sammamish and north of Issaquah, Washington. Not visible from the road, the horizontal massing of the house hugs the terrace of a slope to the southwest. Natural landscaping characterizes the property.

The one story house has a flat steel-supported roof allowing long spanning sections and wide eaves that cantilever seemingly unsupported over great expanses of glass including mitered glass corners.

The walls of the Brandes House are 8" cinder blocks tinted a rose beige by ash from the coal mines of Cle Elum, Washington where they were made. They are battered; each block course set 3/4" back from the preceding course. Horizontal mortar joints are raked while vertical joints are flush. The shadow created by raking contributes to the horizontal lines of the house. Original plans specified a wall height of ten blocks but Brandes gained Wright's approval to increase the height by one additional block.

The Brandes House rests on a slab-on-grade foundation built according to Wright's specifications for "dry wall footings." A gravity heating system built into the foundation circulates hot water underneath the concrete slab to warm the house. The exposed concrete slab floor is tinted a warm terra cotta color and is scored into large blocks indicating the planning grid Wright used in his design.

Interior spaces are open; the living and dining areas combined. A kitchen-utility work area is adjacent, separated by a massive fireplace or hearth. A portion of the ceiling is raised creating clerestory lighting and natural ventilation.

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Section number 7 _____ Brandes House Page #2
=====

Three bedrooms and two small baths are connected to the public areas by a narrow gallery finished in horizontal mahogany paneling with redwood battens.

Two of the bedrooms are small, almost like ship's cabins, while the master bedroom is larger and has a private adjoining bath. All of the bedrooms have built in redwood cabinets and closets and all are seemingly enlarged by expanses of floor to ceiling windows and doors which open onto the southwest terrace.

An open carport connects the main mass to an ancillary wing originally used as a workshop and dark room. It is now a guest room and office.

The entire house is furnished with Wright-designed redwood furniture, built-in cabinets and bookcases. Brandes built all of the furniture on the premises.

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Section number 8 _____

Brandes House

Page #1

=====

Significance

Criterion C: Architecture

The Brandes House, 1953, is an excellent example of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian solution to the problem of the small, single family residence. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of the type including definitive horizontal massing; slab on grade foundation with exposed concrete slab floor; flat roof with no attic; open carport; flowing interior spaces with combined living and dining areas; kitchen-utility "workspace"; small bedrooms along a gallery; gravity heating; fenestration grouped in continuous horizontal bands; a dominant fireplace; and Wright-designed furniture. The Brandes House also expresses Wright's Usonian ideal that the house should be situated on a country site and be open and connected to the outdoors. Loggias with terraces connect the Brandes House to the natural landscaping.

Frank Lloyd Wright used the Brandes House to exemplify Usonian concepts in his 1955 treatise on the "small house" in An American Architecture. It is the first of only three Wright-designed houses in the state of Washington and remains in original condition.

Criterion Consideration G:

Although less than fifty years of age, this property is of exceptional importance as one of only three known Frank Lloyd Wright houses in Washington. Despite its recent history, sufficient scholarly analysis exists to assess Wright's work and its seminal importance in the history of American architecture. Specifically, the Usonian House gives form to 20th century housing ideals and trends and had major influence on the development of contemporary housing. Wright used the Brandes House to illustrate his Usonian concepts in the 1955 publication An American Architecture.

Locally, the Brandes House has been of continuous public interest since its construction.

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Context

Somewhere in the evolution of the "American dream", individual home ownership became more than a simple need for more housing. It became a singular symbol of democracy's success. By the 20th century, great hopes were held that affordable housing could provide "images of democracy on its way to fulfillment" and foster social stability. During the 1920s, this idea became conventional wisdom when the Federal government established specific programs and agencies to promote affordable individual housing for all who wanted it.

In 1923, Herbert Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, stated government policy when he asserted that "maintaining a high percentage of individual homeowners is one of the searching tests that now challenge the people of the United States. The present large proportion of families that own their homes is both the foundation of a sound economic and social system and a guarantee that our society will continue to develop rationally as changing conditions demand." Thus, Hoover promoted government programs that would encourage single family construction and the Federal government endorsed private efforts and local initiatives to do the same.

These efforts included the "Own Your Home" campaign started by the Department of Labor and an expanded Bureau of Standards which tested and encouraged standardization of such things as building materials. The Division of Building and Housing, established in 1921 "sought to modernize American building practices" and Homemaking Information Centers offered a variety of public education opportunities on topics such as family budgets and house planning. And the Better Homes in America movement which had begun in 1922 provided a cooperative link between private and government housing promotions by sponsoring local committees that encouraged modest, affordable housing primarily through National Better Homes Week.

The government's efforts to promote the "small house"; that is, moderate-cost dwellings, dovetailed with, and was, perhaps, highly influenced by the already popular mail-order house industry which reached its heyday in the early twenties. Major retailers such as Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward as well as numerous specialty firms had begun selling

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everything from house plans to entire houses by mail in the late 19th century. Catalogues and plan books reflecting popular architectural tastes proliferated.

It is important to note that none of the housing-by-mail catalogues offered innovation in architecture. Rather, they followed popular culture which sometimes meant copying designs out of popular women's magazines as well as from Craftsman and Bungalow Magazines, magazines which were advocating simple efficient houses "free of senseless ornamentation."

One of the leading magazines in establishing popular tastes was the Ladies Home Journal which began its own "model Journal houses" campaign in the late 1890s and offered designs by some of the best architects of the day. The idea was to present innovative designs which cost between \$3,500 and \$5,000. For \$5.00 readers could order an entire set of plans and specifications with which to build copies of the designs.

In 1901, Edward Bok, editor of the magazine, launched the first of a series of designs for modern dwellings by young Frank Lloyd Wright, an architect, who for the rest of his career would demonstrate passionate concern for the problems of the small, single family house.

Indeed, half^a century later Wright said "the American 'small house' is still a pressing, needy, hungry and confused issue."

"The house of moderate cost," he said, "is not only America's major architectural problem but most difficult for her major architects."

"As for me," he continued, "I would rather solve it with satisfaction to myself and Usonia, than build anything I can think of at the moment..."

In making this statement Wright was prefacing a discussion of his solution to the problem - his Usonian house. "Usonia" was Wright's euphemistic term for the United States.

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Section number 8 _____ Brandes House Page #4
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Wright, too, held to the notion that housing was an expression of democracy. Architecturally, the typically long, low Usonian designs were greatly influenced by Wright's early 20th century Prairie designs, particularly their horizontal massing. But Wright saw this massing as representative of freedom. "I see this extended horizontal line as the true earth line of human life, indicative of freedom. Always. The broad expanded plane is the horizontal plane infinitely extended. In this lies such freedom for man on this earth as he may call his."

Thus it was that in 1937, Frank Lloyd Wright at age 70 began producing designs for modest, single family dwellings which would, for the next three decades, give form to twentieth century ideals and trends in housing and powerfully influence contemporary housing.

Of the some 400 Usonian Houses he designed, three were built in Washington State. The Brandes House near Issaquah was the first of these and is an excellent case study.

On September 10, 1951, Ray Brandes wrote Frank Lloyd Wright at the Taliesin Fellowship in Spring Green, Wisconsin. "My wife and I have long been intensely interested in your simple Usonian houses, and hope that we are nearing our goal to own one." Their interest had been piqued when Mrs. Brandes read Wright's biography.

A typically concise response dated only five days later stated "Mr. Wright would like to help you and asked me to send you the enclosed term sheet. Before he could proceed he, of course, would need a survey of your property and photographs of the site." Mr. Wright's secretary signed the note.

In December of that year, Brandes wrote to provide the required information, an aerial photograph of the site and an outline of his and his first wife, Mimi's plans and dreams for the future. True to Wright's specifications, the Brandes had purchased twenty acres of land with a gentle slope to the southwest. They dreamed in very specific terms about raising a family, farming for their needs and attending to the wildlife.

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Brandes stated he would be his own contractor and that he would work as one of the carpenters. After World War II, Brandes, who had previously been in the camera business in Tacoma, went to vocational school for a year to study construction. He discovered sheer pleasure in building and enjoyed the challenge of building the difficult. Brandes, in reflecting on his career, said he preferred building architect-designed houses. "If an architect could think of how he wanted it to look," he said, "I could figure out a way to build it."

In fact, as a beginning contractor, Brandes hoped that building a Frank Lloyd Wright house would showcase his work. He believes that it did. Indeed, in a career that spanned the next three decades, Brandes built a second home designed by Wright as well as homes designed by local Wright apprentice, Milton Stricker and by Bellevue architect, Jerry Gropp.

By March of 1952, preliminary studies were in the mail to the Brandes and on July 5, 1953 grading began. On December 18, 1953, the Brandes entertained their first dinner guests in the new house.

Mimi Brandes died before the couple realized the dream of building a family in their new home. In 1966, Brandes remarried. His wife, Helen remembers how wonderful the house was for entertaining because of the open areas which spilled into the outdoors. She describes the house as a "winter wonderland" because it was so open and yet "warm and cozy" because of the huge hearth.

Frank Lloyd Wright featured plans and an elevation of the Brandes House as exemplary of his "small houses" in the 1955 publication, An American Architecture. (Copy attached)

And the Brandes House generated immediate interest locally as well. In 1956 a feature in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer opened by stating "America's most distinguished architect, has contributed a note of special interest in Northwest residential building...typical of the timeless quality which is traditionally associated with the work of Mr. Wright and his staff, the home melds the beauty of simple natural materials with the skill of modern building techniques to result in quiet good taste and subtle elegance."

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An addendum to the article indicated that the Brandes "have had numerous requests from persons wishing to see this unusual house." They requested that groups should please make tour arrangements in advance!" Indeed, the Brandes report that from the day the house was built they had a steady stream of announced and unannounced visitors from architectural students to curious Sunday drivers.

Today, the Brandes House is owned by Deborah Vick and Jack Cullen. Cullen is Ray Brandes' stepson. This National Register nomination was initiated by the Vick-Cullen's as part of their long-range plan to preserve the house and grounds.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 _____ Brandes House Page #1

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An American Architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright, Horizon Press, 1955.

Seattle Post Intelligencer. July 29, 1956.

Multiple Properties Documentation, Usonian Houses of Iowa, Iowa State Office of Historic Preservation.

Brandes Papers in possession of Deborah L. Vick and Jack J. Cullen.

The Natural House. Frank Lloyd Wright, 1954.

Donovan District Context Statement (A discussion of the development of the "small house") Marilyn Sullivan, 1993.

Interview with Ray and Helen Brandes, April 2, 1994.

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Section number: Photograph Key

Brandes House

Page #1

PHOTOGRAPHS

All photos:

Brandes House
Issaquah, King County, WA
Photographer: Marilyn Sullivan
Date of photographs: May 1994
Negative location: Marilyn Sullivan

1. Viewed from the southeast.
2. Viewed from the southwest. Eave detail.
3. Viewed from the southwest.
4. Viewed from the west.
5. Viewed from the east.
6. Detail of guest room/office viewed from the south.
7. Exterior detail viewed from the southeast.
8. Guest room/office viewed from the northeast.
9. Viewed from the northwest.
10. Living room/dining room area.
11. Built-in dining table adjacent to hearth with living area to the left and kitchen to the right.
12. Opening to kitchen/utility area.
13. Living area.
14. Kitchen detail.
15. Living area viewed from entrance. Notice clerestory windows.
16. Entrance loggia viewed from living area.
17. Entrance loggia/gallery looking toward master bedroom.
18. Wall paneling detail.
19. Master bedroom detail.
20. Master bedroom detail.
21. Built-in dining table detail.
22. Detail of other Wright-designed furniture.

BRANDES HOUSE / AN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE / 1935

