



Lonnie Lovness grew up with her sister Ty in the Frank Lloyd Wright home their parents built in 1956-57. After a 32-year career as a jewelry designer, she spent six years compiling material and writing this book with her husband, Gordon Maltby.

In 2017 Lonnie (left) and Ty made a return to Taliesin in Spring Green, a place they had visited many times as children and young adults.



Don and Virginia Lovness went to see Frank Lloyd Wright in 1955 at Taliesin, where he agreed to design a home for them. Over the next two years they built the "studio" by hand - laying stone, concrete, framing and finishing the wood and even building the furniture. Wright called them his "Do-it-yourself Couple" and in 1975 they finished a second Wright home, the "cottage". Over the years they became part of the Taliesin inner circle, becoming close to Mrs. Wright, Wes Peters and all of the others at Spring Green and Scottsdale. Their two girls grew up immersed in the Wright culture and here, eldest daughter Lonnie tells the story of a dynamic couple from humble origins who built two homes, and a lasting relationship with the Taliesin Fellowship. Hundreds of unpublished photos, letters and documents help tell this fascinating story of a young couple who built a "Wright" life.



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Growing Up WRIGHT

Lovness

# Growing Up WRIGHT



Building a dream by hand with the world's greatest architect

Lonnie Lovness



Don and Virginia Lovness were a 30-year-old couple in 1955 when they went to see Frank Lloyd Wright, asking him for advice on remodeling their walk-out basement. Virginia sat down with the architect, and after crossing out each element of her drawing, Wright declared, "We'll have to design a house for you." They built that first house by hand, against all odds, and later built a second Wright-designed home on their Stillwater, Minnesota property.

After Wright's death in 1959 they remained close to Mrs. Wright and the entire Taliesin Fellowship. Emulating Mr. Wright, they became avid and knowledgeable collectors of Oriental art, and as Wright home owners they got to know many fascinating people in the world of art, architecture and beyond. Don was instrumental in saving some of the Francis Little house and in re-creating Wright's "sprites" and significant furniture designs.

Their daughter Lonnie tells the compelling story, from their modest origins; to building two Wright homes by hand; the stream of visitors and Taliesin apprentices who came to Woodpile Lake over the years; and the many adventures they had as emissaries of Wright's concepts and "unofficial" members of the Taliesin Fellowship. A final chapter details the renewal of both homes after 60 years.



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