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TEA TIME AT WESTCOTT HOUSE

PHOTOS BY TEESHA McCLAM



A JAPANESE TEA HOUSE and gardens behind the Westcott carriage house will serve as a transition space between the older home and a series of new interconnected buildings spanning Greenmont Avenue.

Famed architect will help landscape Frank Lloyd Wright house

By **SAMANTHA SOMMER**
News-Sun Staff Writer

The Westcott House stood out as avant-garde when Frank Lloyd Wright designed it at the start of the 20th century.

At the start of the 21st century, many see it as an old house undergoing preservation with plans for new buildings stretching along Greenmont Avenue.

A Japanese tea house and garden there can

serve as the bridge between the past and present.

"It's a transition space," said John Zukowsky, director of the Westcott House Foundation.

Architect Kisho Kurokawa will design a Japanese garden and tea house behind the Westcott carriage house.

Kurokawa is internationally acclaimed and has designed the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, the new wing of the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and the Pacific Tower in Paris.

He also has a passion for Japanese tea houses

and gardens, Zukowsky said.

The tea house and gardens will attract people to visit the house, he said, which will open as a museum on Sept. 18.

"There are very few Japanese public gardens in America," Zukowsky said. "You can probably count on two hands the ones accessible to the average person."

In addition to Kurokawa's work, master architect Stanley Tigerman and three teams of young architects will design a series of interconnected

See WESTCOTT on Page 3A



SHAWN BECKWITH, project manager with Durable Slate, shows how crews working on the Westcott House used marks on the wall to find where built-in furniture, such as this cabinet, should go.



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT designed the bookcases that have been replicated and installed this week in the Westcott House.

Westcott site manager, Turner Foundation official win preservation awards, 3A.



SHAWN BECKWITH, project manager with Durable Slate, shows where an awning will soon shade the porch that will look out over a reflecting pool.

WESTCOTT

Continued from Page 1A

buildings spanning Greenmount Avenue, dubbed the Innovation Initiative.

The designs for all the new structures will be revealed at a gala on Sept. 17 before the public opening.

The house is nearly finished

and will be ready by the opening, Zukowsky said.

Crews are plastering the outside, regrading the land and staining the wood floors.

This summer work will focus on landscaping and furniture.

The foundation also has hired Marta Wojcik as curator of interpretation and is looking for two more employees.

Wojcik is currently an interpreter

for the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust in Chicago. She will be responsible for tours, exhibitions and public programs.

Tigerman came to Springfield last month for a series of town hall meetings and focus groups to determine what to build for the Innovation Initiative. Many mentioned wanting a Japanese garden.

The tea house also reflects Wright's trip to Japan, he said,

which influenced the design of the Westcott House.

The garden and tea house will play off another aspect of Japan — making efficient use of space.

"In Japan they have such tight pieces of property," Zukowsky said. "This will be a creative use of the land."

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Westcott site manager, Turner Foundation official win state preservation awards

The site manager charged with restoring the Springfield house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright won a statewide preservation award this week, as did the executive director of the Turner Foundation, which contributed funds to the project.

Matt Cline, site manager at the Westcott House, was honored as Staff Member of the Year by

Heritage Ohio at the 2005 Annual Preservation & Revitalization Awards.

John Landess, executive director of the Turner Foundation, received the Preservation Hero Award for its contributions to numerous preservation projects, including Westcott House.

Workers began construction on Westcott House in 1907. The

house on East High Street took its name from the owner, Burton J. Westcott, head of the Westcott Motor Car Company from 1915 to 1924.

Wright visited Japan shortly before designing the house, and the trip influenced his work. Westcott House resembles a Shinto temple.

In addition to the work on

the Wright building, Landess and the Turner Foundation have supported the restoration of the Geiger House, the Gammon House, and houses on East High Street and South Fountain Avenue. The foundation also contributes to the Cultivating Neighborhoods Program and the Springfield Preservation Alliance.