

# MODERN LIVING LIVING MODERN

DOCOMOMO/US, Georgia Chapter



## Welcome

DOCOMOMO/US, Georgia Chapter welcomes you to our second annual *Modern* Open House. We hope you enjoy this new event, and will return each year as the event evolves and grows. Let us know what you thought of the tour and preceding reception.

Atlanta's diverse tradition of Modern residential design is often overlooked and forgotten. We hope that this event will highlight Atlanta's Modern homes, and demonstrate what it means to be "Living Modern."

And a big "Thank you" to all the homeowners, sponsors, and volunteers who have made this event possible.

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### GEORGIA CHAPTER

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## About the Tour

This tour is to be taken at your own pace and in no particular order, although it is logical to visit the homes clustered in the Amberwood neighborhood together. Homes will be open from 10 AM to 4 PM Saturday, September 29. Parking arrangements are noted for each location. Although public transportation is accessible for the Plaza Tower site (via MARTA bus lines), driving is the easiest means to access most sites.

Portions of the Plaza Towers site are wheelchair accessible. Other homes have stairs and level changes are not wheelchair accessible.

The self-guided driving tour of Amberwood sites includes private homes that are not open to the public, and these should be viewed from the sidewalk or street **only**.

Look for directional signs at each site.

Wear your wristband – this identifies you as a tour participant!

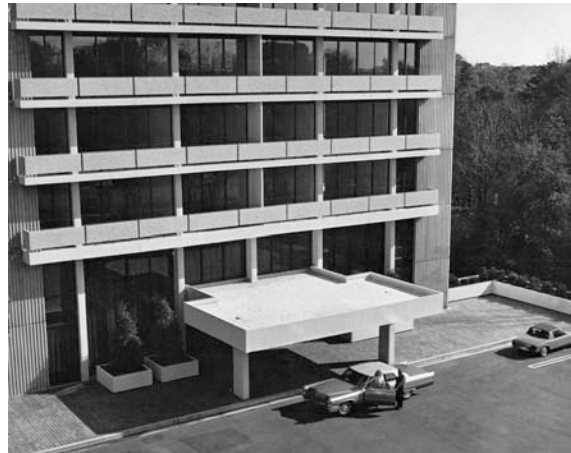
## The Rules

- Follow directions given by your hosts and guides
- No smoking at any tour location – inside or outside
- No food or drink allowed, unless provided as part of the tour
- Toilet facilities are available at Plaza Towers
- No photography allowed inside homes, unless specifically noted
- To protect flooring in each home, we ask that you wear provided protective booties or remove your shoes as you enter the home **if requested by docents**
- Do not open closed doors, cabinets, or drawers – or enter rooms that are marked off limits. Be a good guest!
- Be courteous and don't block driveways or sidewalks. Park in designated areas
- Upon arrival, wait for directions from DOCOMOMO volunteers before beginning your tour
- Note that some homes include stairs and level changes, use care and follow your guide's directions before entering these areas
- Wear your wristband – it identifies you as a tour participant!
- Ask questions and enjoy!



## Plaza Towers

2575 PEACHTREE ROAD  
1970



This condominium development has long been a favorite of Atlanta's Modernists due to its careful siting and landscape design and its elegant, restrained use of cast-in-place and precast concrete. Designed by Atlanta architect Ted Levy and completed in 1970, the

complex was originally marketed as luxury rental apartments, and was later converted into a condominium. The complex consists of two similar towers arranged about an entry court and partially below-grade parking and service levels. The complex once housed a restaurant (the Plaza, later renamed the Tango) in the north tower.

When Plaza Towers was completed, few other high-rise residential towers were located in Buckhead. Marketing brochures show units decorated with "traditional" furnishings and accessories. Later, marketing brochures deemphasized the building, focusing on a carefree lifestyle one might imagine as a resident of the building.



The building's exterior uses a simple palette of color, pattern, and material to great effect. Note the strong corners of cast concrete with their ribbed vertical patterns. Bronze color aluminum windows and doors and the cantilevered concrete balconies balance this with precast, exposed aggregate that appear to float – a perfect compliment to the mass of the tower.

Interior spaces have been modified over intervening years, as one would expect. Original wood paneling remains in public spaces, and the elegant reception areas and elevator lobbies remain.

**Parking:** Park in the rear parking lot at the plaza level (enter from Peachtree Street, parking lot to the rear)

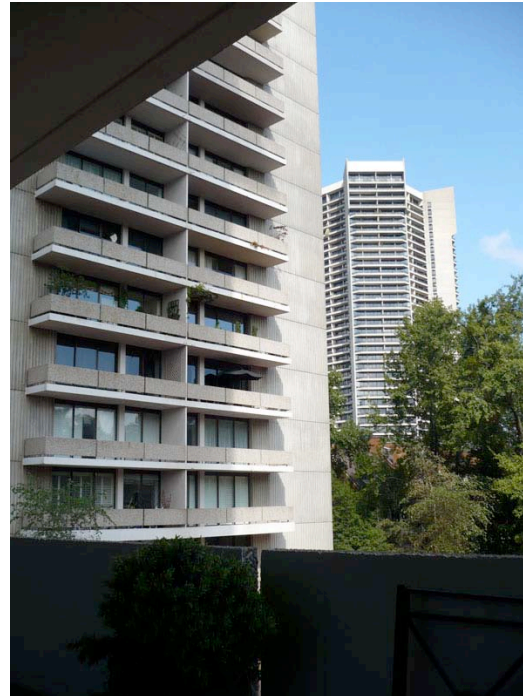
**Please check-in at the South Tower.**





## Hayes Residence

PLAZA TOWERS



Located in the South tower, the Hayes Residence reflects the owner's interests in interior design, art, and architecture. Filled with light from full height windows and doors facing north and east, the apartment is furnished with a variety of styles and types of furnishings, from a Venetian console to a Mies van der Rohe daybed upholstered in white leather.

The collection of art includes paintings by Georgia Artist Herbert Creecy, sculpture by Victor Robinson, and photographs by Horst, Richard Avedon, Arnold Newman, and Peter Lindberg.



## Copeland House

1885 WALTHALL DRIVE  
1960



The Copeland House at 1885 Walthall Drive is a compelling example of a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired, "Usonian" style home, designed to integrate residential living into the landscape. Robert Green designed and supervised the construction of the house for Atlanta banker William Copeland and his family in 1960, immediately after Mr. Green returned to Atlanta from his apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin West in 1958-59.

The house is sited below street level and built into a hillside, so that the living areas of the house look out over terraces, gardens and undeveloped land that is now Tanyard Creek Park. The Copeland House demonstrates the strong influence of Frank Lloyd Wright on Robert Green, with its low roof, large cantilevered overhangs, open living areas,

central chimney, variable ceiling heights, and abundant use of brick, wood, and glass. The interior of the house features elaborate shiplap cypress planks, dentate wooden moldings, and furniture and fixtures designed for the house by Mr. Green, including a large built-in banquette in the living area.



The Copeland House has been renovated twice – both times with a commitment to preserving the original character of the house. In 1987 Mr. Green created an upstairs study/den by enclosing a porch above the carport. Then in 1998, Herbert Brito, ASID with Margaret Serrato, AIA, ASID, created new kitchen, bath, and master bedroom spaces within the existing floor plan. After this renovation, the house received a preservation award from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.





# Amberwood Subdivision

NORTHWEST METRO ATLANTA



Amberwood is often a topic of discussion among local architects when the subject is mid-century Modern residential architecture. Unique in Atlanta is Amberwood's diverse collection of mid-century styles: Porticoed two-story homes; the ubiquitous (in Georgia, at least) "red brick ranch"; classic Eichler influenced ranch houses; and a collection of remarkable

Modern homes, many designed by Robert Green. The signage design at the entrance to Amberwood has been attributed to Green.



In addition to the Doud/Conner and Arrowhouse, both part of this year's tour, the attached map identifies a representative selection of Modern homes, including the following Robert Green designs: The Nicoll house at 2016 Castleway Drive, 2000 Castleway Drive, a speculatively built house at 2001 Castleway Lane, a home on Castleway Lane adjacent to the Arrowhouse, and a spec house at 2078 Parkview.

Enjoy a drive around the neighborhood – but remember that these homes are on private property and should only be viewed from public streets.

**Parking for tour sites:** Street parking is available. Do not park in driveways or block access to mailboxes or adjacent homes.

## Robert Green

1935-2003

After a frustrating period of study at Georgia Tech's College of Architecture (Green once stated that "the all glass buildings of Mies van der Rohe" were favored at the time), Robert M. Green wrote Frank Lloyd Wright two letters regarding studying at Taliesin. After a long wait with no response, Green wrote "...a short, nasty letter saying '...at least you should show me the common courtesy to answer my letter...' " and sent along drawings of his only completed project from Georgia Tech he "still liked." He got a response a week later – an appointment with Mr. Wright and an application form.

Green was 23 when he arrived at Taliesin, and recounted his experience in his brief memoir **Studying Personally With Frank Lloyd Wright** (originally posted on Mr. Green's website, now archived at [www.modusmodern.com](http://www.modusmodern.com)). Green would draw from this experience his entire career, designing a diversity of building types. Mr. Green studied at Taliesin during 1958-1959.

Other Green projects exist in the area, in addition to sites included on this year's tour, including multi-family housing, private residences, and commercial structures.

## Arrowhouse

2026 CASTLEWAY LANE  
1960-62



Designed by Robert Green and completed in 1960-62, Arrowhouse (also referred to as Arrowhead) serves to demonstrate many of the design principles Mr. Green learned while studying at Taliesin. Designed for the original developer of Amberwood, the home exhibits extensive use of natural materials; specific relationships of interior/exterior and public/private spaces; a dramatic sequence of arrival and entry; custom designed furniture and accessories (including the mailbox);

and functional zoning of the home common to Frank Lloyd Wright and other Robert Green homes.

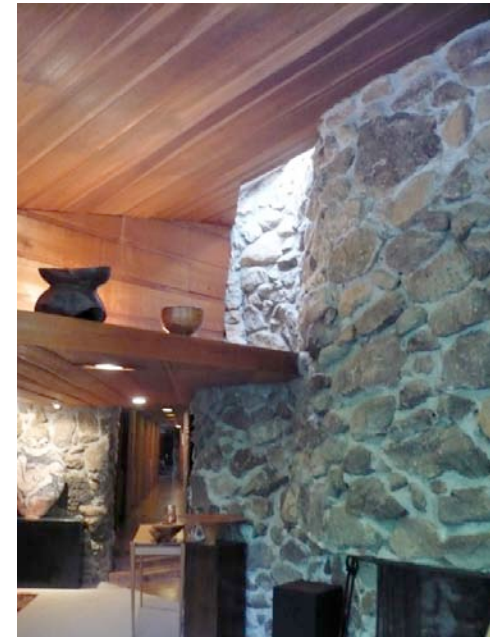
As you approach the home, notice the natural cypress used for siding and decoration and the deep roof overhangs over the main entrance. As you enter the home, be aware of the low-ceilinged entry foyer. As you move towards the living room, note this compression giving away to the soaring ceilings of the living room. This compressed entrance sequence is often found in Frank Lloyd Wright's designs, as in the work of his associates and students, and is key to the experience of a visit to Arrowhouse.

Kitchen and fireplace are central to the composition, a common theme in both Green's and Wright's residential designs. Notice the cantilevered stone fireplace and the stone walls of the skylit kitchen as you walk through the house.

A low-ceilinged corridor leads to the more private spaces – bedrooms, bathrooms, and family room. Along this hallway Green integrated storage and spaces for display of artwork. As you enter the bedrooms, also note the recurring theme of compressed entrance – the lower ceiling of the corridor gives way to the high-ceilinged bedrooms, which in turn focus on exterior spaces with tall windows and doors.

As you complete your tour of the home, walk along the sidewalk to the left for a spectacular view of the home from the backyard.

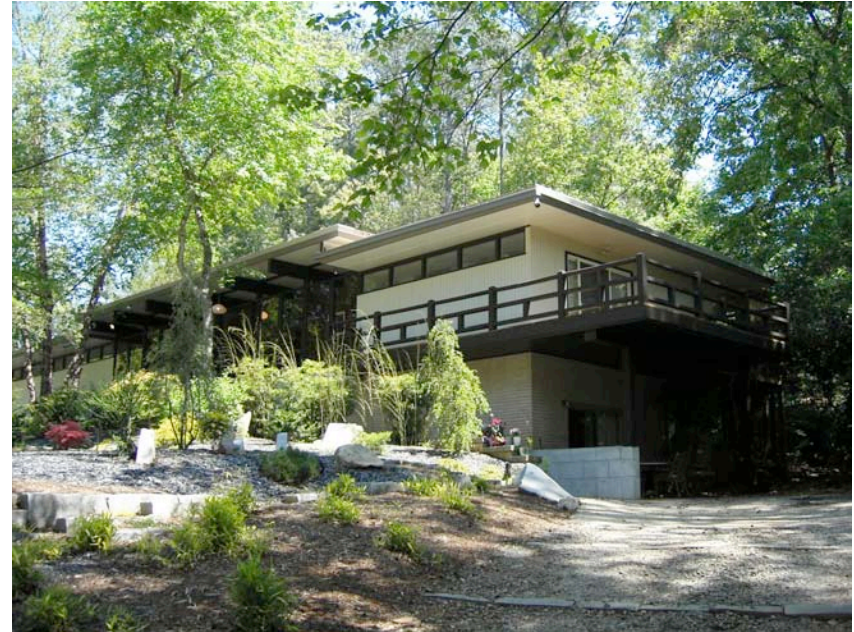
Several modifications have occurred to the home and its site. In the 1970s the original carport and its sun-deck roof were replaced with a new addition. The original carport/porte-cochère was modified to serve as a den/family room. In the 1980s, a pool pavilion and studio structure was added. Additionally, the kitchen has been remodeled and some areas of the original red colored concrete floors have been covered with quarry tiles, wood floors, and carpeting.





## Doud/Conner Residence

2025 CASTLEWAY DRIVE  
1963



Attributed to Robert Green by the current owners, the Doud/Conner residence is a flat-roofed home reflecting some key Wrightian concepts – the centrally located fireplace and a close relationship to the geography of the site. The home also expresses themes found in many Modernist homes of its era, including transparency and regular and simply expressed structural system.

Built around a large, open, living space that includes a central fireplace, living room, dining room and kitchen, it features floor to ceiling windows both front and back making the core of the house a see-through structure that blends

the interior with the outdoors. It is placed on a steel joist sub-floor, the roof supported by massive wood beams that span the entire space.

The expansive main living area is joined by bedrooms with lower 'compressed' ceiling heights and a sunken bath, and an 1800' addition with a 12' ceiling and multiple skylights. These three main sections of the house are all joined to the private deck and arbor in the back.

The kitchen features the original built-in and fully restored Frigidaire double oven. The current owners brought a subtle Asian touch to many interior furnishings, the beautiful conifer and maple front landscape (built around 30 tons of granite boulders), and a stunning granite platform entry stairway.

## Resources

### WEB

**Atlanta Housing 1944 to 1965**, based on research conducted by Georgia State university students is available on-line from the Georgia Historic Preservation Division's website:

**[hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=245](http://hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=245)**

**JetSetModern.com** has archived an article "A Line Through History: The Architecture of Robert Green, AIA" at:

**<http://www.jetsetmodern.com/green.htm>**

More about Modern: **[www.modusmodern.com](http://www.modusmodern.com)**, includes an archived version of Robert Green's website, which includes an autobiographical account of Green's time at Taliesin with Frank Lloyd Wright.

More about Wright and the history of Taliesin: **[www.franklloydwright.org](http://www.franklloydwright.org)** (Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation)

An article regarding 1990's renovations of the Copeland House by its prior owners is available on the web:

**<http://www.homeportfolio.com/GetInspired/GreatAmericanHomes/11.30.00/fulltext.jhtml>**

#### **DOCOMOMO on the Web:**

Georgia Chapter: **[www.docomomoga.org](http://www.docomomoga.org)**

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About the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual DOCOMOMO International Conference in Rotterdam, September 2008:

**[www.docomomo2008.nl](http://www.docomomo2008.nl)**

### PRINT

Guggenheimer, Tobias S. **A Taliesin Legacy: The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright's Apprentices**. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1995.

Lerner, Jonathan. "A minor museum of modernist houses." **Atlanta Magazine Home**, Fall 2001.

Modernism Magazine: [www.modernismmagazine.com](http://www.modernismmagazine.com)

Dwell Magazine: [www.dwell.com](http://www.dwell.com)

## **OTHER**

**Usonian** is a term referring to a group of approximately 50 middle-income family homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright beginning in 1936 with the Jacobs House. "Usonian Homes" were typically small, single story dwellings without a garage or much storage, designed to fit around a garden terrace on odd lots, with native materials, flat roofs and large cantilevered overhangs for passive solar heating and natural cooling. A strong visual connection between the interior and exterior spaces is an important characteristic of all Usonian homes.

**Photographs:** Thomas F. Little, AIA unless noted otherwise. Period photographs of Plaza Towers courtesy Plaza Towers Condominium; Doud/Conner residence photograph courtesy Jeff Doud; Copeland house kitchen photograph courtesy Margaret Serrato, ASID, AIA





**DOCOMOMO/US Georgia Chapter, Inc.**

DOCOMOMO US, Georgia Chapter, Inc. is a not-for-profit society promoting research, scholarship, and education concerning the Modern Movement, and the conservation of the buildings, landscape, and built environment of the Modern Movement in the State of Georgia. Membership in the Chapter is included when joining the national component of DOCOMOMO. More about membership is available at this address: <http://www.docomomo-us.org/contact/join>.

Learn more: [www.docomomoga.org](http://www.docomomoga.org)

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