

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

28th ANNUAL

# *Historic Home*

• Ypsilanti Heritage Festival Event •

## TOUR



SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2005 • NOON-5 P.M.

28th ANNUAL  
*Historic Home Tour*

- ❑ 1. 1206 Westmoorland Road
- ❑ 2. 702 Collegewood Drive
- ❑ 3. 703 Cambridge Road
- ❑ 4. 310 South Huron Street
- ❑ 5. 306 South Huron Street
- ❑ 6. 200-208 West Michigan Avenue
- ❑ 7. 217 West Michigan Avenue

# Welcome

Welcome to the 28th Annual Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour. Since 1977, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation has been pleased and proud to present one of our community's most important resources, our wealth of historic architecture. Once, again, Ypsilanti residents have graciously agreed to open their doors so that we all may see and appreciate the results of this community's historic preservation efforts. We take this opportunity to thank them. This year's tour features seven historic properties located throughout the city. Enjoy the tour!

Although the structures are numbered for your convenience in the brochure, you are free to visit them in any order you wish.

Visitors may be asked to remove shoes. As a courtesy to the homeowners, PLEASE no food or drink, smoking, pets, unsupervised children, strollers, or photography inside the homes.

The ticket holder expressly assumes all responsibility for any personal injury or property damage occurring while on tour.

# About the Foundation

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the idea that one of Ypsilanti's greatest resources is its wealth of historic architecture. The Foundation seeks to increase public understanding and appreciation of these architectural links with our past and works to promote the conservation,



rehabilitation, and utilization of these important community assets. The Foundation publishes its newsletter, *Heritage News*, six times a year and distributes it free of charge to its membership by mail and to the general public at various locations throughout the City. The Foundation's website is [www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org). Since 1977, the Foundation's Historic

Structure Marker Awards Program has recognized more than 145 homes, businesses, churches, and other community buildings in Ypsilanti for significant historic architecture and continuing, sensitive maintenance. The annual Historic Home Tour is sponsored by the Foundation. Proceeds from the tour fund the Marker Awards, community projects, and education programs on preservation-related topics, which are held throughout the year and are open to the public. For more information on the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation or to find out about becoming a member, contact Henry Prebys, president, at 487-0595.



1206 Westmoorland Road

## *Kathy & Mike Bodary*

The house at 1206 Westmoorland nestles into a beautifully landscaped lot that highlights its neoclassical architecture. Ward G. Swarts, an Ypsilanti architect well known in his day, designed the house. It was built in 1949 for local merchant Ben Kaplan. There is no record that the Kaplan family ever lived there. The first known resident was Harold Miller, president and general manager of United Stove Works in Ypsilanti. Fred Peters, Jr., a founder of the Ypsilanti Dairy, who later helped launch Washtenaw Community College, was the house's second owner. Chris Sorrick and Mary Jo Oke lived there from 1991 until the Bodarys purchased it in 1999.

When tourgoers approach the house they will notice the mostly yellow exterior brick, which also includes the colors of plum, brown, and gold. The Bodarys have used these colors inside and out as accents. For example, the wood shutters, original to the house, are painted a deep plum to pull out the color in the brick. The large front portico invites visitors to step inside.

Even after four owners, the home retains nearly all of its original features, including oak floors, birch fluted molding, birch cupboards and doors, ceiling fixtures, and steel casement windows with copper screens. The bathroom has all of its original blue and pink tiles and fixtures. Don't miss the pictorial tiles that surround the room—they depict a courtship story. The built-in vanity has its original marble counter.

Mike and Kathy's style of decorating is classic. Kathy, an interior decorator, believes a home should be "dressed to suit itself." Tourgoers will see throughout the house antique textiles, china, pottery, artwork, and furniture. Of particular interest in the dining room is a needlework still life that dates back to 1788. Kathy rescued this wonderful piece from a friend's great-grandmother's trash.

Tourgoers will notice and enjoy how the Bodarys' home reflects their appreciation of it and its architecture.





702 Collegewood Drive

## *Cheryl & Vincent Zuellig*

Clever and classic unite to give this Dutch Colonial in the College Heights neighborhood touches of warmth and whimsy. Making sure that the home remains functional for their family of four but not afraid to experiment with design, Vince and Cheryl Zuellig have turned their 1926 house into a twenty-first-century haven that would rival any of the new builds under construction a short drive away.

Relaxing tones of green dominate. The Zuelligs like to entertain and they've moved walls to allow guests to flow between the living room, dining room, and kitchen. Dark hickory arts and crafts cabinets are plentiful in the kitchen and Motawi tiles provide accents. The expansive cooking island, affectionately called the "aircraft carrier," allows the designated cook to conjure up dinner while looking through a wall of windows. A charming stone wall runs along the perimeter of the back yard. Installed when EMU chemistry professor John Sellers owned the house, the Zuelligs use it as a backdrop for flowering plants, trees, and bird feeders. A screened-in porch attached to the back of the home is a favorite breakfast nook and game area.

A recently redone area above the garage is now an entertainment center and guest quarters; this hide-away can be reached from a staircase adjacent to the kitchen. World War II aficionados will appreciate the prints of vintage aircraft that decorate the walls.

The Zuelligs continue to upgrade their home; they've completed a major project for each of the ten years they've lived there. When renovating the downstairs bathroom, they couldn't resist keeping the hand-painted bathroom tiles with water-molecule configurations, a reminder of the former chemist in residence.



703 Cambridge Road

## *Terry & Maxe Obermeyer*

In 2002 Terry and Maxe Obermeyer became the third owners of this custom-designed 1952 brick ranch house. The house is well built, with large windows and spacious rooms. Before moving in, the Obermeyers customized it for themselves. They reconfigured the interior a bit, combining a bedroom with the dining room to gain a large enough space for their spectacular antique dining room pieces. They redid the kitchen. And they added a wing for a family room and a master bedroom.

The Obermeyers are world travelers with astonishing taste. Tourgoers will be amazed and delighted by what they have collected over forty years. Wooden bowls, paperweights, kaleidoscopes, bronzes, Russian boxes, animals from Africa, and pottery are just a few examples of the collections artfully arranged throughout the house. Splendid antique furniture is another specialty of the Obermeyers, much of it once owned by long-ago Ypsilantians. "We have something from most of the old families in Ypsilanti," notes Maxe. "I feel very fortunate to be able to preserve these things, to keep them in Ypsilanti."

In their basement, which will be open for the tour, the Obermeyers feature a room filled with art by Ypsilantians. They also have masks, dolls, miniature collections, and more in the basement.

The Obermeyers' house would make a great museum. But it is first and foremost a warm, personal, and livable family home. The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation is fortunate that Maxe and Terry have agreed to share their home with all of us today.

*Your*

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# Guide to the Tour



## Key to the

## Tour

1. 1206 Westmoorland Road
2. 702 Collegewood Drive
3. 703 Cambridge Road
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5. 306 South Huron Street
6. 200-208  
West Michigan Avenue
7. 217 West Michigan Avenue





310 South Huron Street

## *Robert & Betty Two Miller*

This two-story brick Italianate was built in 1865 for woolen manufacturer Lucian Bonaparte Keif and his wife, the former Corina Howland. The couple had moved to Ypsilanti from Manchester. Three of their children continued to live in the home until the early 1930s. After a 1935 fire, some of the original Italianate features, like the wraparound gingerbread porch, were removed. Also at that time, two exquisite Italian marble fireplaces were moved into the house from homes on Detroit's Jefferson Avenue. The fireplace on the first floor is Carrara marble and the one on the second floor is gray marble. The home has had many owners since, including the Huron Valley Child Guidance Clinic in the 1950s and the Huron Valley Girl Scout Council in the 1960s. During those years, the house had plush carpeting and matching draperies in some of the offices.

In 1978 Lolly and Tom Mindel bought the house and restored many of the rooms. It was on the home tour when the Mindels lived there. The Millers moved in ten years ago. Betty Two is the decorator and restorer—she takes pride in doing much of the work herself, including tiling. The Millers own many fine antiques; their favorite is the cherry-wood bar in the dining room. The house's floors are original throughout, and the furnishings complement the historic details. Of special note is the "smoking parlour" upstairs, which surely could tell tales of many interesting parties from years gone by. The master bedroom has the beautiful marble fireplace, which the Millers use. The carriage house in the back has been rebuilt. The Millers are thankful that the Historic District Commission did not allow them to tear it down.



306 South Huron Street

## *Diana Green*

Built in 1888, this lovely Italianate home was a diamond in the rough when Diana Green purchased it in 2001. The third owner of the house, Diana chose it for its charm, character, and quality workmanship. Shortly after moving in, she went to work restoring it to its original grandeur.

The house's exterior had been severely neglected. The wood on the L-shaped, double porch was rotted and drooping and had to be torn out. New cement footings and flooring were installed. A previous owner had enclosed the south portion of the porch from the front door to the railing and painted it white. Once this enclosure was removed, the house became symmetrical and the gables above are once again visible. Diana spent her vacation in 2003 scraping, sanding, and painting the exterior, choosing five custom-mixed colors. The dominant color is a burgundy-plum and the trim is cream with subtle green undertones.

As tourgoers enter the front door, they will see a beautiful curved staircase. The interior remodeling has consisted almost entirely of painting and decorating. Diana has introduced a contemporary look to her home with furniture, her own photography, and framed vintage magazine covers.

Through determination and hard work, and with youth on her side, Diana Green has transformed her gem of a nineteenth-century house.



**West Michigan Lofts**  
200-208 West Michigan Avenue

*Karen, Eric, & Walter Maurer*  
*Stewart Beal & George Fotiadis*

Eric and Karen Maurer have great vision. While out one evening, a series of vacant buildings along Michigan Avenue caught their eye. The For Sale sign provoked an immediate reaction and just one idea: sophisticated, urban living spaces above fashionable street-level shops.

Converting dilapidated buildings into homes is nothing new for this creative, hardworking duo, but they knew this challenge would be much bigger than any of their previous projects. Along came another interested party, Stewart Beal, an ambitious developer with a boyish grin, and together the team forged ahead to make their dream a reality. The trio has combined four individual buildings into one common project. The result is twenty beautiful apartments with soaring windows, hardwood floors, expansive ceilings, and chef's kitchens.

The most recognizable section of the Lofts is known to many as the "Kresge Building." For reasons unknown, it was named the "Union Block" in 1879 when it was built by Josiah Fish Sanders. The space, along with the adjoining buildings, has housed many businesses, including a clothing store, furniture shop, meat market, and, most memorably, Kresge's, which opened in 1929. For decades this was the most popular corner in Ypsilanti. Unfortunately, Kresge's closed in 1966 and so, too, did many of the retail businesses along Michigan Avenue. With the completion of the West Michigan Lofts, residents and businesses will continue to return to the area.

As you enter the Lofts, you'll quickly notice the exposed red-brick walls framing the distinctive apartments. The extensive restoration includes reclaimed wood that was milled into railings around loft spaces as well as reused for hardwood flooring. In some cases, brick walls were opened into dramatic arches, adding panache and personality. No two units are alike, but you'll find that the upscale, urban feel binds the entire space together. Four years after the Maurers' dream began, we're pleased to be showing off the West Michigan Lofts on the Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour.



**Bombadill's Neighborhood Coffee House**  
217 West Michigan Avenue

## *Peter Reinhart & Lesley Chase*

As you step inside this circa 1922 building, the inviting décor and soothing java aroma will delight you. Owner Peter Reinhart took great pains when he converted this space in the heart of downtown Ypsilanti into a specialty coffee house.

When Peter began the renovations, the interior was a disaster. The space needed so much work that he didn't even photograph the "before," but instead only visualized the "after." He started with the old-growth maple floors, which were in rough shape due undoubtedly to multiple businesses and years of use.

At one point, the building was home to a butcher's shop. The hardwood floors still bear faint marks from the butchers tossing their cutting knives. Other parts of the floor were distressed as well. One theory is that wooden barrels filled with oil were used to store nails. When they leaked, they left rust marks everywhere. As a result, some of the original floorboards had to be discarded. Luckily, Peter's design plan included a carpeted area in the café, so those boards were removed and seamlessly patched in where needed. Even with the extensive renovations, Peter was able to preserve a unique piece of history: the concrete floor that still bears the handwriting of the builder, H. C. Howard.

While looking at photographic archives of Michigan Avenue, Peter noticed that the Dawson building next door once had windows lining its western wall. He decided to honor the past by incorporating a similar set of windows along Bombadill's western wall. The extra sunlight and view of the adjoining courtyard are most enjoyable.

When you visit Bombadill's on today's tour, you'll get an insider's view of the renovations and workings of a downtown coffee house. This would also make a great stop for a bite to eat. The delectable sandwiches, soups, and desserts, accompanied by one of the café's signature coffee drinks, all in a historic setting, are sure to please.

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