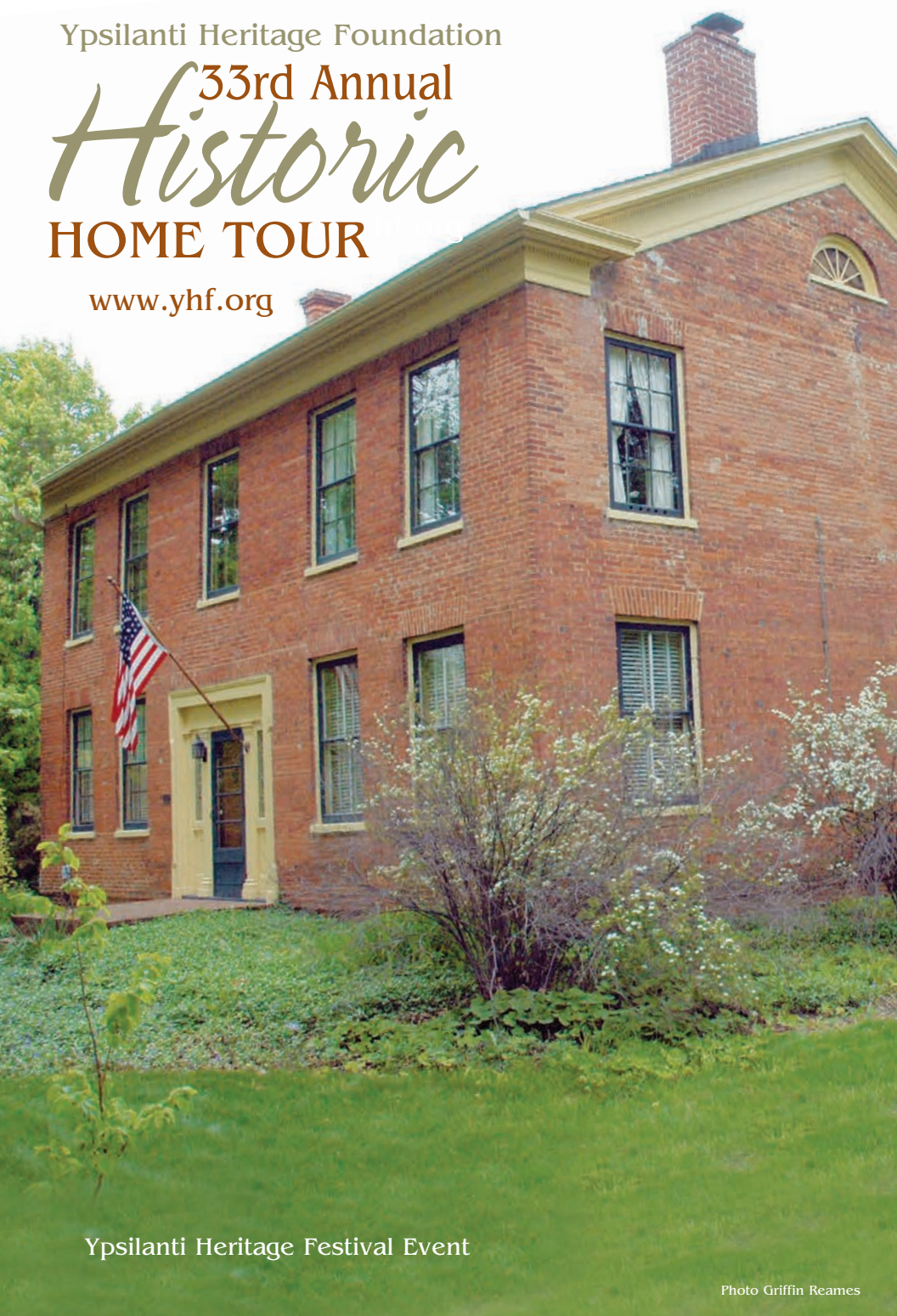


Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

33rd Annual  
*Historic*  
HOME TOUR

[www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org)



Ypsilanti Heritage Festival Event

Photo Griffin Reames

SUNDAY AUGUST 22, 2010 • NOON-5 P.M.

33rd Annual  
Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

## *Historic* HOME TOUR

- ❑ 1. 113 Buffalo Street
- ❑ 2. 47 North Huron Street
- ❑ 3. 211-215 West Michigan Avenue
- ❑ 4. 8605 West Ann Arbor Road,  
Superior Township
- ❑ 5. 8755 West Ann Arbor Road,  
Superior Township
- ❑ 6. 9105 West Ann Arbor Road,  
Superior Township
- ❑ 7. 9981 West Ann Arbor Road,  
Superior Township

# Welcome

Welcome to the 33rd Annual Ypsilanti Historic Home Tour. This year's tour is a departure from what we have done in the past. For only the second time, we are leaving Ypsilanti for part of the tour. We are featuring four superb nineteenth-century properties—three homes and a schoolhouse—in Superior Township. Throughout their history, all four have had strong ties to the city of Ypsilanti. A perfect complement to these properties is a wonderful nineteenth-century home on Ypsilanti's south side. Finally, the nonprofit Corner Health Center on historic North Huron Street will be showing off its recent expansion and renovations, and tourgoers will be allowed in to see three beautifully designed modern loft apartments above the Spark East offices on Michigan Avenue.

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. This year's homeowners have graciously agreed to open their doors so that we all may see and appreciate the results of historic preservation efforts in the Ypsilanti area. We take this opportunity to thank them. 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*, several 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 Web site is [www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org). Since 1977, the Foundation's Historic Structure Marker Awards

Program has recognized more than

150 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 every year in September, November, January, and March 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.





113 Buffalo Street

## *Stewart Beal & Kathlyn Macker*

This grand brick Queen Anne with Romanesque overtones was built in 1892 by Ypsilanti contractor Frank W. Glanfield. He incorporated into the house opulent touches like the mosaic design in the gables and the heavy and ornate wooden front doors. It is likely he had the many arched windows cut on site, lending the house a custom look. In the living room, a distinctive beveled-glass window in the shape of a Roman arch is a strong focal point both inside and out (note the view of it from the far end of the kitchen). Elaborate wooden wall paneling in the foyer, typical of upscale Queen Anne design, creates a stately feel. The presence of front and rear staircases will remind tourgoers of nineteenth-century living.

In the late 1890s William and Mary Campbell lived with their family in the house. Their daughter, Sarah, remained in the house until 1965. After that it sat vacant until 1973, when the Buffalo Street Commune moved in. The commune stayed five years, leaving in 1978.

As the years went by, the house suffered under a series of indifferent owners and fell into disrepair. But when Ypsilanti developer and contractor Stewart Beal and his fiancé, Kathlyn Macker, purchased it in 2009, they were lucky that its most recent owners had begun serious renovations. Beal immediately averted certain catastrophe by securing the masonry of the south wall, which had been in real danger of collapse. After that, the couple transformed the old butler's kitchen into a large and stunning galley kitchen.

Tourgoers will enjoy this "work in progress," with its spacious rooms, high ceilings, and glamorous bones. It is clear that the house is on its way back to its glory days as a gracious place to gather family and friends.





Photo Rick Leyschock

47 North Huron Street

## *The Corner Health Center*

For twenty-three years 47 North Huron Street has been home to the Corner Health Center, a nonprofit organization that provides health care, health education, and support services to young people, ages twelve through twenty-one, and their children, regardless of their ability to pay.

The building was constructed around 1890. It was occupied by Bazzette's Notions and Dry Goods in 1893 when a cyclone badly damaged the roof. The building has since housed an engraver, a butcher, several grocers, a contractor, and a hardware store. It was an S & H Green Stamp redemption center in the 1970s. Shaefer Hardware operated in the building for several years in the 1920s and again in the mid-1980s.

In 1987 the Corner Health Center purchased 47 North Huron from the Ypsilanti Board of Realtors. An old supply elevator operated by a manual pulley was in the back of the building; it moved supplies between floors. The Corner removed the elevator and renovated the main floor to function as a health care clinic.

The Corner has since expanded to include 51 and 57 North Huron. It purchased 51 North Huron, in 1990, from a tailor, and 57 North Huron, in 2006, from the Edenburns. The family had operated a locksmith shop there for many years.

The recent expansion and renovation of the Corner, completed in 2009, retained the original brick wall and the archway in the reception area, as well as the high ceilings throughout. The main floor now has thirteen exam rooms, a medical laboratory, and offices for clinicians and staff. The second floor houses administrative offices and meeting space, including a large conference room that is available for community use. The basement is used for storage of records and supplies and additional meeting space.

The Corner provides a valuable service to the community, and it values the community's history as well.



211–215 West Michigan Avenue

## Mack and Mack Lofts

### *Eric & Karen Maurer*

Eric and Karen Maurer have been creating loft apartments in historic buildings on Michigan Avenue in downtown Ypsilanti for five years. Last summer they turned the space above the Spark East offices in the former Mack and Mack Furniture building (one of the oldest structures in the city) into eleven apartments. The apartments range from a studio with 550 square feet to a bi-level with 1,300 square feet; four are on one floor, seven are bi-levels. All were leased by the time they were ready for occupancy.

Eric Maurer had definite ideas about how he wanted the apartments to look, and he worked closely with architect Stephan Hoffman of Hoffman Design to bring his ideas to fruition. Each apartment is unique and artfully designed to highlight unusual spaces, but all utilize brick walls, skylights that open, and custom-made aluminum balustrades to create a modern industrial vibe. All also have nifty kitchens.

The three apartments on today's tour each use space very differently. A bi-level has the only outdoor access—a huge deck. The apartment was particularly suited to its first tenant, a bachelor dental student, who moved out just before the tour. Another bi-level makes use of a skylight to bring light into its main room. Medical resident Jeanie Cote was about to move in on the day a member of the home tour committee came by to see it. The third apartment, also a bi-level, has two bedrooms, and its tenant, Samkeliso Mawocha, has created a charming and appealing home.

Eric Maurer says he and Karen continue to buy historic buildings in downtown Ypsilanti and turn their upper floors into loft apartments because they are able to maintain almost 100 percent occupancy. The Maurers currently lease thirty loft apartments and are developing another eleven or twelve in the former Mellencamp Building on Michigan Avenue.



Photo Rick Leyschock

8605 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township

## Geer-Miller House

### *Glenn and Jeanine Miller*

This picturesque farmhouse, urban in style and form, is one of the finest examples of Italianate architecture in Superior Township. It stands as evidence of Michigan's proud and prosperous nineteenth-century rural past.

Milton and Kittie Geer hired Ypsilanti contractor Herschel Goodspeed to build the house in 1884. The young couple had married the year before, settling on 146 acres purchased from Milton's father. (The son of Watson Geer and Mary Jane Pray, Milton grew up in the Pray house on Ann Arbor Road, also featured on this year's tour.) The Geers had three children. The signatures of their two youngest, Roy and Hazel, can still be seen upstairs on the plaster walls of a bedroom.

The Geers operated their farm for about twenty years, raising livestock and growing crops. They left farming for the city about 1903, moving to a house on Congress Street in Ypsilanti. Milton served as secretary of his brother-in-law's business, Ypsilanti's Michigan Ladder Company. The Geers rented their farm to tenants until 1923, when they sold it to George and Mary Barnes. The Barnes family operated it as a dairy farm until the mid-1970s. The family changed the house very little in nearly eighty years of occupancy by two generations.

When Glenn and Jeanine Miller purchased the home from the Barnes estate in May 2000, they began an extensive restoration of this long-neglected gem. The house's second floor never had electricity or central heating. A bathroom had been awkwardly added in the best parlor in 1950. Yet the home retained many of its fine original features, including the walnut, butternut, and oak woodwork.

Over the past ten years, the Millers have carefully restored the house, doing most of the work themselves. They have enjoyed researching the home, gleaning information about its past inhabitants from census records, newspapers, and city directories. This research led them to descendants of the Geers, one of whom will share photographs and history of the Geer family during today's tour.





8755 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township

## Esek Pray-Van Bolt House

### *John and Jane Van Bolt*

Long a landmark on the busy road that connects the cities of Ann Arbor and Plymouth, the Esek Pray House has stood since 1839 as a testament to the wealth and sense of style of one of Superior Township's most prominent founding families. Built of red brick in a very traditional classical style, it is among the oldest remaining dwellings in the township. Both floors of the house have two rooms on each side of a central hall.

Among the house's many interesting architectural features are its wonderful Greek Revival details: wrap-around frieze board with cornice returns at the gable ends; dentil molding; a lunette in each gable; and an elaborate extra-wide front entry, with a two-panel door and sidelights.

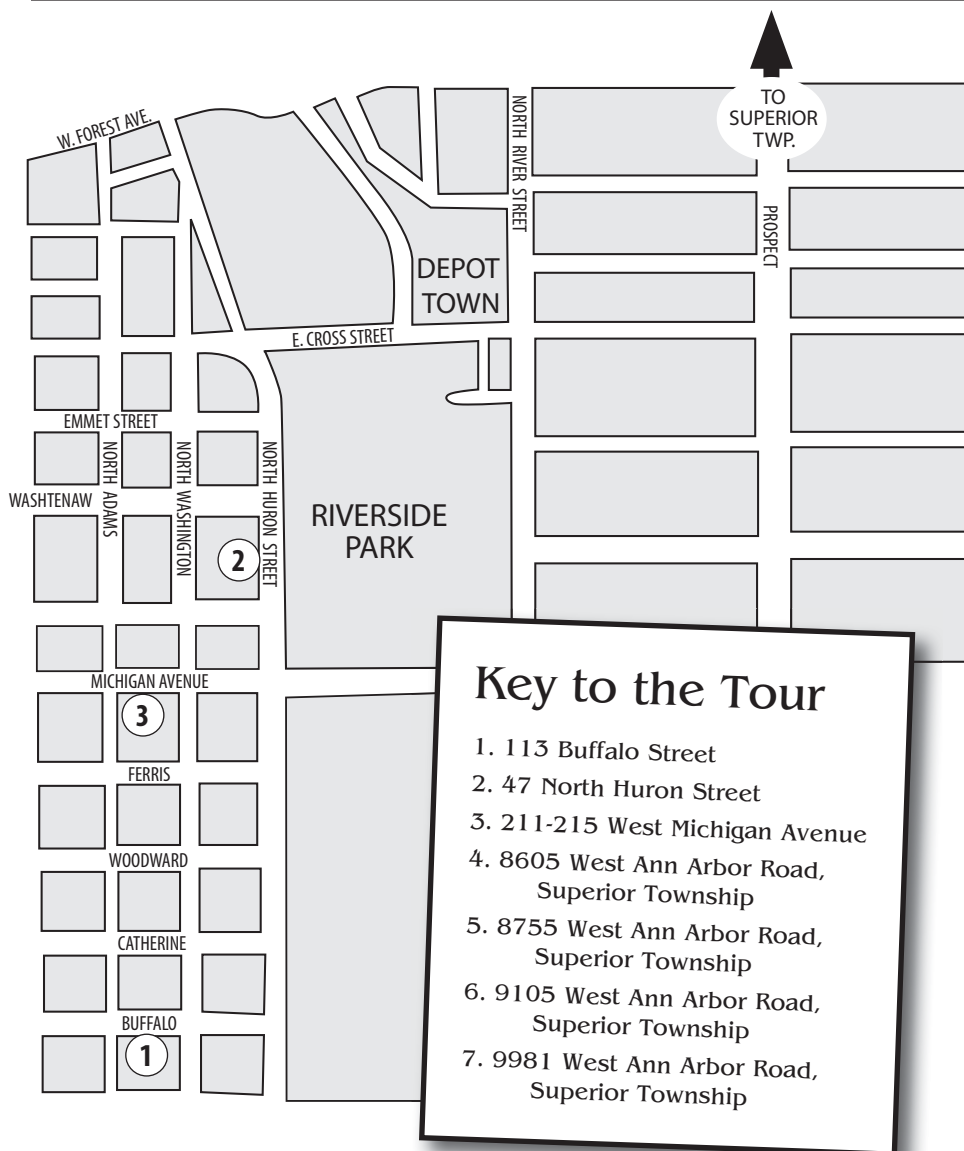
Esek Pray participated in township, county, and state politics in the 1830s and 1840s. He was a member of the fabled "Frostbitten Convention," of December 14, 1836, which enabled Michigan to become a state. He participated in the first state legislature and was justice of the peace of Superior Township for twenty-four years. Pray also developed his farm into a highly successful operation, and he and his wife, Sally Ann, raised eight children. All of them married into neighboring families. His great-grandson Carl Esek Pray was the extremely popular head of the Social Science and History Department at Eastern Michigan University from 1914 to 1938. EMU's Pray-Harold classroom building is named after him.

John and Jane Van Bolt have owned the property since 1987. The interior is wonderfully decorated in a style appropriate to its age. The couple has a terrific collection of period furniture, including family items. They have taken loving and imaginative care in developing the original part of the house, paying close attention to wallpapers and appropriate paint colors. In 2001 they added a marvelous new kitchen and screened porch. The addition blends with the spectacular setting, which is in itself a delight.

Esek and Sally Ann Pray would still recognize their home, and they would be pleased with its evolution.

# Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

## 33rd Annual *Historic* HOME TOUR





TO SUPERIOR  
TWP.  
FROM  
YPSILANTI  
APPROXIMATELY  
9 MILES

When visiting the homes on West Ann Arbor Road we discourage you from walking from house to house as there are no sidewalks and the road can be dangerous.

#### **Parking for West Ann Arbor locations**

- 4 & 5 : available along the side streets and by the cemetery.
- 6: available at the homeowners' property
- 7: available at the church on Gottfredson Road

*Your Guide to the Tour*



Photo: Alice Ralph

9105 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township

## McCormick-Williams Farm

### *Karl and Kay Williams*

This property, currently owned by Karl and Kay Williams, became the William and Jane McCormick Farmstead Historic District in 2002. It is cited as an excellent example of a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century farmstead. With its 1837 “Upright and Wing” farmhouse built in a vernacular style and its collection of original outbuildings, the farmstead represents living farm history. Notable among the outbuildings is a large and exceptional old barn that dates from the 1860s (it was modified in the 1920s).

William McCormick left Phelpsstown, New York, in 1931, to follow his sons to the Salem Township area. He built the large, two-story brick house and, according to McCormick family history, the bricks for the house were made on the 160-acre farm. In its early days the house featured Greek Revival details, including cornice returns, six-over-six square window openings, and a front door flanked by sidelights. The original construction details and the remaining original staircase suggest that the house was first built as an inn. William McCormick had reportedly owned one in his previous life in New York State.

In his day McCormick was one of the area’s most successful farmers; he died in 1850. His heirs owned the property and ran the farm until 1874 (his widowed daughter-in-law in 1870 married into the Pray family next door). The Grammel family owned the farm from 1917 to 1965. They removed the Greek Revival trim and added a Dutch colonial revival hood above the door. The Grammels sold the farmstead to Kay Williams’s father, William Sempliner, and Karl and Kay quickly purchased it from him. Before she would agree to the deal, Kay had one requirement: her dining room furniture had to fit into the house’s dining room. When tour-goers see this beautiful and very historically interesting furniture, they will understand why.



9981 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township

## *Geer School*

The 1880 Geer School at the corner of Gotfredson and West Ann Arbor roads is a typical nineteenth-century brick one-room schoolhouse. The school was named after its first superintendent, William Geer, who donated the land for the building and hired Ypsilanti contractor Joseph Warner to put it up. The school served what was known as the “Geer Community,” which included the post office and general store located in Geer’s nearby home.

Geer School was required to meet standard requirements. It had to have at least a one-acre yard, coatrooms, outdoor toilets, a washbasin, a good water supply, and ample lighting. It is interesting to note that the prescribed size for a schoolhouse of that era matched the distance that a woman’s voice was expected to carry. Geer School was uncommonly well-funded for a nineteenth-century school, and it provided its students with free textbooks. The building, which is lit by tall round-top windows, features side-by-side entrances for girls and boys, a slate blackboard, and a woodshed and two outdoor privies in the back.

A social center for the surrounding farm community, Geer School hosted meetings, dances, fund-raisers, spring picnics, and annual Thanksgiving Day dinners. The son and daughter of Kay and Karl Williams, whose house down the road is on today’s tour, attended Geer School in the 1970s. The school continued to educate students until 1982, when it was closed. The community restored it in the late 1980s. Today Geer School provides a history lesson and a one-room school experience for fourth graders in Plymouth-Canton Community Schools.



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A sincere thanks also to . . .

- ⑤ Norton's Flowers & Gifts for their stunning and unique floral arrangements for the homes on today's tour
- ⑤ All of the homeowners, tenants, volunteer guides, and ticket sellers
- ⑤ Penny Schreiber, for editing the home tour booklet
- ⑤ Rick Leyshock, Griffin Reames, and Alice Ralph, for their outstanding photography
- ⑤ Glen Sard, for heading up day-of-tour ticket sales
- ⑤ Pattie Harrington of Standard Printing in Depot Town, for her terrific design of the home tour booklet & poster
- ⑤ M. J. Dennison and Jan Arps-Prundeanu, for selling the ads for the home tour booklet
- ⑤ Salt City Antiques, Norton's Flowers & Gifts, Haab's Restaurant, and Nelson Amos Studios, in Ypsilanti; Saxtons Garden Center, in downtown Plymouth; Downtown Home & Garden, in Ann Arbor; and Superior Township Hall; for selling tickets before the day of the tour

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Home Tour Committee:

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