



42ND ANNUAL

History

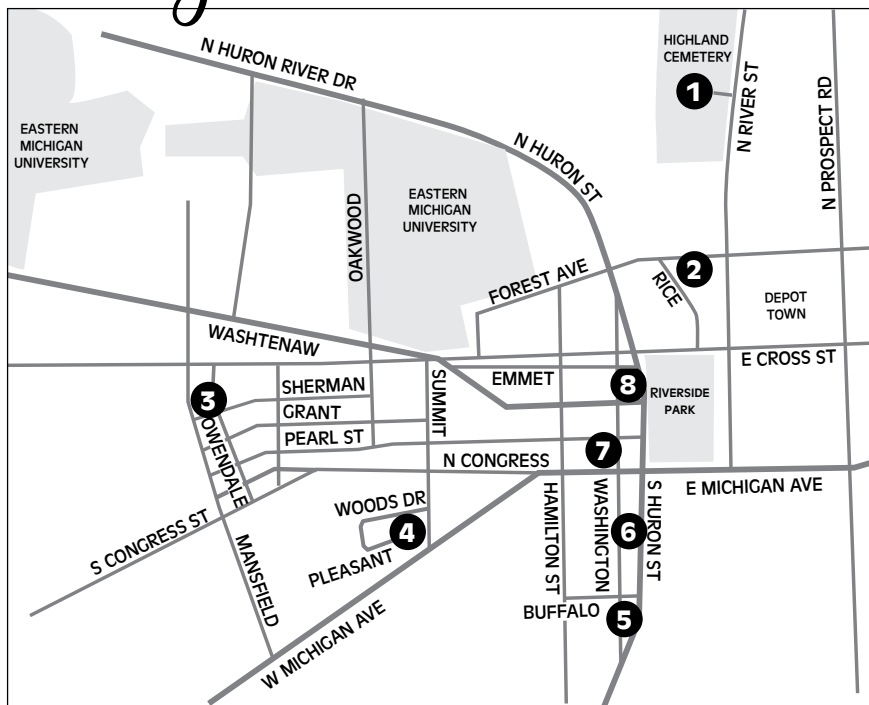
HOMES + HERITAGE
TOUR



SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2019
NOON-5 P.M.

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Guide to the Tour



- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Starkweather Chapel
943 N. River Street | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. 113 Buffalo Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Michigan Ladder Co.
12 E. Forest Avenue | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. 215 S. Washington Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. 1301 Sherman Street | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Back Office Studio
13 N. Washington Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. 904 Pleasant Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. 216 N. Washington Street
(Carriage Barn) |



History

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
HOMES + HERITAGE TOUR

Welcome

to the 42nd Annual Ypsilanti History, Homes + Heritage Tour! Since 1977, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation has been pleased and proud to present one of the community's most important resources, its wealth of historic architecture. This year's homeowners and business owners have graciously agreed to open their doors so that we all may see and appreciate the results of historic preservation and investment efforts in our Ypsilanti community. We thank them for their generous hospitality and invite you to enjoy the tour!

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

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

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 abundance 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. Since 1977, the Foundation's Historic Structure Marker Awards Program has recognized the owners and proprietors of more than 150 homes, businesses, churches, and other buildings in Ypsilanti for preserving their architectural character and continuing to do sensitive maintenance. The Foundation sponsors its annual History, Homes + Heritage Tour to promote Ypsilanti's architectural treasures. Proceeds from the tour fund the Marker Awards, community projects, and occasional education programs on preservation-related topics. For more information on the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation or to find out about becoming a member go to our website www.yhf.org, or follow us on Facebook.



John Harrington

1

Starkweather Chapel

Highland Cemetery • 943 North River Street

The Starkweather Chapel in the Highland Cemetery was designed by George Dewitt Mason and Zachariah Rice of Detroit in the late nineteenth century Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style, and it was dedicated in 1889. The Chapel was the gift of Mary Ann Newberry Starkweather, niece of Chicago entrepreneur and philanthropist, John Newberry. The principal memorial windows are by the Tiffany Glass Company.

Long out of use, the building and its ornaments and contents have fallen into a state of serious disrepair. Barry LaRue, a Highland Cemetery Board Member and long-time preservationist, has taken on the challenge of organizing the restoration of the chapel on behalf of the cemetery board of directors. So far, many emergency repairs have been made to protect the structure and its contents. The most recent restoration task has been the replacement of the roof with tiles that are similar to the original.

Much remains to be done, and if you are interested in contributing to the restoration of Starkweather Chapel see the online GoFundMe page or contact Barry LaRue by email at blarue@umich.edu.



Michigan Ladder archives

2 Michigan Ladder Company

12 East Forest Avenue

Imagine three entrepreneurs obtaining prime land (near the Huron River and adjacent to the railroad depot) from the city of Ypsilanti, on the promise that they would each invest \$3,000 of their own money and on the condition that they employ ten men for three years! You would have to go all the way back to 1901, at the beginning of the twentieth century, to discover Melvin Lewis, A.G. Huston, and Edgar S. Geer doing just that. While none of the three had any experience making ladders, Lewis had a newly issued patent and a talent for invention. He began as president in 1901, holding the office until his retirement in 1945. His later patent for an extension ladder with the first automatic locking catch would set the standard for safety in the industry.

So much has changed in 118 years. The original wood-clad building was extended twenty-five times for needed storage and to accommodate assembly lines. The power was originally generated by a railroad boiler until electricity was finally brought into the building (apparently one of the building extensions was built around the power line). Today the plant is heated using recycled wood.

In the early days of the business, wood was delivered locally from a sawmill east of River Street. Today high quality wood comes from all over the country. Deliveries were first made using horse-drawn wagons, then railroad cars, and now trucks. The company expanded into the production of ironing boards, toys for kids, boats, and a popular ping pong table named "the Detroiter." Today, the company produces only ladders, although fiberglass has replaced wood as the largest seller. From 1901 until 1941 salesmen sold ladders to individual retail markets in an ever-widening area, including the Midwest and eastern states. But during WW II, the U.S. government became Michigan Ladder's sole customer. Today, distribution has changed to the wholesale market, with inventories in nineteen locations around the country and ladders exported to markets around the world.

Ypsilanti native Tom Harrison has been owner and president of Michigan Ladder since 2004. Harrison is the grandson of Ypsilanti's first city manager, Naseeb G. Damoose. Michigan Ladder is the oldest ladder company in the U.S., earning a well-deserved reputation for safety and for quality products. The company is also deservedly proud of its diverse workforce that includes many loyal long-term employees. The company has grown with Ypsilanti, reflecting the values of our city.



John Harrington

3

Mary O'Neill and Dan Stritmatter

1301 Sherman Street

Genevieve and Maurice Faupel built this house as their dream home in the 1940s. Maurice had worked at the Bomber plant from 1935 through World War II, when he left to open his own insurance agency, where Gen worked by his side. They raised their two children, Kirk and Myrna, here.

Bob and Pat Parks bought the house from the Faupels in the 1970s and happily raised their four children here. Both were well-known faculty at Eastern Michigan University for over thirty years; Pat taught chemistry and Bob was the head track and cross-country coach.

In August of 2000, Pat and Bob retired, sold the house to Mary O'Neill and Dan Stritmatter, and moved permanently to their summer house in White Lake, Michigan. Mary and Dan bought the house in anticipation of their upcoming wedding. They combined their families (seven children and fourteen grandchildren), and that is the reason for the remodeling you will see at the back of the house. Although they are empty nesters, the kids and their kids visit often enough that they needed to add another bedroom, enlarge the kitchen, and create some backyard activities to keep the children and adults entertained. Please feel free to take in that area when you walk through. Keep in mind, though, the backyard is still a work in progress.

During the remodel, considerable effort was made to keep most of the older house intact. The old wood windows stayed but new storm windows were added. Some thought was given to replacing the front door, but Mary decided to strip and restain the original door. The one structural change to the original first floor was moving the dining room wall back four feet into the old kitchen, allowing for more seating during the holidays at an extended dining room table. The old kitchen was extended outward fourteen feet, which required the removal of Dan's beloved Tiki Bar (the bar is now reopened for business at the back of the garage). The openness between the kitchen and family room was the one change Mary insisted on. She is no longer working alone in the kitchen during family gatherings.

While Mary and Dan love old houses and vintage pieces, their focus is on a livable house, where their grandkids (ages six months to twelve years) can be themselves.



Zachary Moore

4

Kathleen Dvorak

904 Pleasant Drive

Beloved Ypsilanti schoolteacher, Florence Eddy, built this charming brick home in 1931. Its high peaks exemplify the French Norman Country style, often replicated in America in the 1920s and 1930s. As the Depression came on, the romance of historic European homes prompted people to replicate them on a small scale. In 1975, Kathleen Dvorak became this well-built home's second owner.

This little gem is no stranger to Ypsilanti's various home tours. It was included in the 2006 YHF tour, the 2008 Meals on Wheels Holiday tour, and the Ypsilanti Garden Club tours of 2002 and 2013. Careful planning and attention to detail have rendered the need for very little change over the years. That being said, Kathleen asserts that refinishing the hardwood floors tops her current wish-list!

The roof, windows, built-in bookcases, and mantel, as well as many of the lighting fixtures are original to the home. The completely updated galley kitchen, planned and designed by Kathleen, was finished shortly before the 2006 tour. She has been happily cooking, baking, and entertaining in this much more functional space ever since.

Exiting through the back door, you will notice the home's Asian-influenced decor continuing onto the deck and into the garden, which for Kathleen represent another "room" of the house. Peaceful for meditation, perfect for parties! The original garage roof was flat-topped. When it needed replacing, Kathleen added the peak, which provides welcome rafter storage space. A custom-designed garden gate featuring a Ginkgo leaf is now echoed in the front yard by a Ginkgo tree, a gift to her a few years ago.

A 2006 quote from Kathleen, a chiropractor, still applies: "My vocation is manipulating the spine, but my passion is manipulating the elements of design." The truth of this remains evident throughout her lovely home and garden.



John Harrington

5

Kathlynn and Stewart Beal

113 Buffalo Street

This grand brick Queen Anne with its Romanesque details was built in 1892 by Ypsilanti contractor Frank W. Glanfield. He incorporated into the large seven-bedroom house opulent touches like the mosaic design in the gables and the ornate wooden front doors. The beautifully crafted arched windows are enhanced by the distinctive beveled glass in the shape of an Arabic arch, a strong focal point from both outside and in the parlor.

In 1900, William and Mary Campbell, well-known in the community as the owners of Cobblestone Farm in Pittsfield Township and as activists in local education, retired to this house with their daughter Sarah, leaving their son Robert Clair to run the farm. Mr. Campbell died in 1914 at age eighty-five, but Sarah continued to live here until 1965. After that, the house stood vacant until 1973, when the Buffalo Street Commune moved in for a five-year stay. The trend of indifferent owners continued with a series of people who left the house in a state of disrepair. Someone had just abandoned a renovation when it was purchased in 2009 by Stewart Beal, Ypsilanti developer and business owner, as a gift for his now wife, Kathlynn. The Beals immediately averted certain catastrophe by securing the masonry of the southeast corner, which had been in danger of collapse.

In the last ten years, they have restored many of the beautiful original features, like the elaborate woodwork of the entrance and grand staircase, and the parlor and dining room. They have also transformed three additional rooms, including the old butler's pantry (now a stunning kitchen) and they have made three of the bedrooms into a master bedroom suite that lacks nothing. Their newest project has been to rebuild the massive porches, which had disappeared. They now recall the glory of entertaining on a summer's day at the turn of the last century.



John Harrington

6

Pace and Chantal Nielsen

215 South Washington Street

Featured as a work-in-progress on last year's tour, this home returns this year to share the next chapter of its transformation. This stately Victorian house was built between 1893 and 1894, and was the home of William Kishlar, a dry-goods merchant. This house and the house next door, at 221 South Washington, were built by George Kishlar, William's father, a well-known carpenter and building contractor in Ypsilanti.

A grand old mansion with five bedrooms, it was divided into efficiency apartments in the 1970s. The previous owner purchased it in 2012 with the hope of returning it to a single-family home, and he got started by completely gutting the house. The Nielsens purchased the house in this condition and are working to restore it to its previous splendor as one of the gems on South Washington Street. The porch has been restored, and the exterior has come to life with a colorful palette of fresh paint and new landscaping. The carriage house, too, shows new life with the beginnings of a new coat of paint, new wooden doors, and a new roof. Inside, Chantal has painstakingly been working to strip paint from the original doors, windows, floors, and woodwork. Original wood floors in the kitchen and the back entry hall have been creatively stenciled, and new tile has been installed in the bathroom. New electrical service and HVAC ductwork are in place. The third floor has been transformed to accommodate the Nielsen's family.

The Nielsens are looking forward to being part of this wonderful neighborhood and plan to move into 215 as soon as they can. For now, this labor of love is a weekend and weeknight project for the family, and they are making steady progress toward their goal of calling it home. We're excited to see how this home has evolved in the past year, and we hope to have it back on the History, Homes + Heritage Tour once it is finished.



John Harrington

7 The Back Office Studio

13 North Washington Street

Between 1895 and 1929 this building was the waiting room for the interurban. Through the 1970s, it housed the Food Mart, which was a grocery store with a lunch counter and a soda fountain, and then most recently Pub 13. The building remained vacant after Pub 13 closed in 2010.

The Back Office Studio opened in the building in 2018, and today it is the premier coworking studio in Ypsilanti. Promotional materials for the space describe it as “a charming restored freight depot.” The building’s owners, Sun Chao, Wayne Millette, and Diana Wong purchased the distressed property in 2015. They formulated a business plan that focuses on community. Their extensive renovations, funded with help from a community revitalization grant, included replacing the roof, windows, lighting, and ductwork, and restoring the storefront. The renovated building includes 9,000 square feet on two floors. The ground floor has four conference rooms of various sizes, a kitchenette, restrooms, and shared workspaces. The second floor offers thirty sit-to-stand desks, four private offices, two phone booths, café seating, and a nap room. Also available to members are bicycle racks and a foosball table.

The Back Office Studio’s owners aim to attract curious, hard-working, sociable entrepreneurs who wish to focus on creating great innovative products and businesses without worrying about the electric bill or running out of coffee. Their mission is to be the proprietors of a dynamic coworking studio that fosters a strong sense of community among talented professionals working on what they love most.



John Harrington



John Hommes

Carriage Barn • 216 North Washington Street

Ypsilanti has always had many significant outbuildings. This is one of them. This tiny carriage barn, constructed around 1860, is one of the oldest and most unusual barns in the city.

It has just recently been restored, with great care taken to preserve original features. Missing or badly deteriorated elements have been replicated to match the originals. Most of the exterior board and batten is original; some of the battens were replicated to match the unusual curved profile of the originals. The doors and most of the hardware have been reused and the unique opera windows have had nineteenth-century hobnail glass installed.

Even part of the roof underlayment is original; however, the metal roofing itself had to be entirely replaced. The four open circular holes just below the roof at the top rear and the two at the top front allowed birds to fly in and out to feast on the oats and corn that the horse had spilled.

A careful scraping of the paint revealed that gray has always been the color of this tiny barn, and so it remains.

The interior layout allowed the carriage to be parked behind the two sets of double doors. The doors on the north side gave access to the dirt floor of the horse stall and the hay loft. Discovered in the horse stall were horse shoes, iron nails, and a shoeing stone used to rest the horse's foot on. And, if you look closely, you can see the horse tie ring in the stall, as well as cribbing marks on the timbers where the horse chewed.

The carriage area was floored with planks two inches thick by fourteen inches wide, set on four-by-four sleepers. During the 2017-2018 restoration, the plank floor was removed and a concrete floor poured, as well as entrance aprons and a water drainage system. Thus, the barn is now protected from the water at its base that had caused so much damage.

Early in the twentieth century, knob-and-tube wiring was installed, electrifying the entire barn.

This now restored and preserved carriage barn allows the visitor a brief, but fascinating glimpse into the past.

Thank you

Our sincere thanks also to . . .

- Our homeowners, business owners, volunteer guides, and ticket sellers.
- Norton's Flowers & Gifts, for their annual support of the tour, providing stunning and unique floral arrangements for the properties on today's tour.
- Penny Schreiber, for editing this year's tour booklet.
- John Harrington and Zachary Moore for their photography.
- Jan Arps-Prundeanu, for recruiting sponsors for this year's tour.
- Pattie Harrington, for designing our promotional materials.
- Scotty James and Alex Pettit, for marketing and promotions.
- Aubree's (Depot Town and Whittaker Road), Cultivate Coffee and Tap House, Downtown Home & Garden (in Ann Arbor), The Eyrie, Haab's Restaurant, Materials Unlimited, Norton's Flowers & Gifts, and Salt City Antiques, for selling tickets.
- The Ladies' Literary Club, for allowing us to rent their historic house for our History, Homes + Heritage Tour after-party.

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The background of the advertisement is a grayscale photograph of a historic building's exterior. A large, stylized logo for 'Ypsi REAL' is centered over the image. The word 'Ypsi' is in a large, flowing script, while 'REAL' is in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the logo, a small rectangular sign is visible on the building's siding. The sign reads 'HISTORIC STRUCTURE c.1850' and 'YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION' at the bottom. Below the logo, the text 'Sharing Ypsilanti's unique history with visitors from around the world.' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, the website 'ypsireal.com' is displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font.

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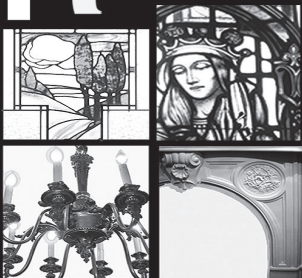
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John Harrington

This year's tour proceeds will be donated to the

Ladies' Literary Club of Ypsilanti

218 North Washington Street

The Ladies' Literary Club of Ypsilanti, organized in 1878, is one of the oldest women's clubs in the state. In 1914 the ladies of the club purchased their 1840s Greek Revival clubhouse on North Washington Street. The house, in 1935, became the first one in the state of Michigan to be placed on the precursor to the National Register of Historic Places.

The clubhouse is a true asset to the City of Ypsilanti, a beloved resource for the many organizations and private individuals who have rented it or attended events there over the years. The cost to rent this lovely house is reasonable, especially when compared to similar venues in the area. Nonprofits and club members are given a special rate.

In 2016, guided by a condition assessment completed in 2014 by an EMU historic preservation student, the club embarked on a plan to restore the clubhouse's historic façade. This year's home tour proceeds will be donated to the ongoing restoration and preservation of this community jewel.



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