

Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.

JANUARY 1995

Ypsilanti, MI

MEETING: Wednesday, January 25, 1995, 7:30 pm

LOCATION: Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington
Ypsilanti, Michigan

PROGRAM: Great American Cheeses: The Return to
Traditional Cheesemaking in the U.S.

SPEAKER: Ari Weinzweig, Co-Owner, Zingerman's Deli

At first glance, cheese and traditional cheesemaking might strike the reader as unlikely topics for a general meeting of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. However, when you think about it, they're part of the overall preservation movement in this country which encompasses not only architecture but the environment, folk arts and crafts, and food production as well. And when it comes to talking about food, few people are better at it than Ari Weinzweig.

Ari, a native of Chicago, didn't start out to be in the food business. Russian History brought Ari to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan as an undergraduate and left him--without a marketable skill--washing dishes in a restaurant. He and two friends, Paul Saginaw and Mike Monahan, borrowed \$20,000 to open the deli in 1982, and the rest, as they say, is history. Zingerman's has now grown to include the original deli, a catering business, a mail order business, a bakery, a coffee, tea, and pastry shop, and a produce business. It's become an Ann Arbor landmark, with 125 full- and part-time employees and annual sales of \$5 million.

Despite this remarkable success, Ari remains a down-to-earth, regular guy, who happens to be a gifted writer and a dogged researcher on the subject of food (as anyone who has read Zingerman's monthly newsletters and the store's flyers can attest). He's also an engaging speaker, and for the January program he'll talk to us about the reemergence of farmstead cheeses--cheeses produced on family farms using traditional methods--that are a far cry from the factory-made, plastic-wrapped cheese found in today's supermarkets.

So, if you want to hear about preservation from a different perspective, join us on January 25th!



**JOINT FUNDRAISER PLANNED FOR GENERAL YPSILANTI SCULPTURE
AND RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER**

April 1st (April Fool's Day) is the date! The Riverside Arts Center is the location! The event is a fundraiser to benefit the General Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture restoration and the Riverside Arts Center (RAC). Co-sponsored by the Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture Commission (DYSC) and the RAC, this event will feature a live auction and entertainment and promises to be full of surprises! (It is, after all, April Fool's Day, so anything could happen!)

Subcommittees are forming now, so if you'd like to volunteer for this event in the areas of the auction, entertainment, publicity, food and drink, decorations, set-up/clean-up, or in any other way, contact Peg Du Fresne at 482-8666 or Art McVicar at 484-3903.

There'll be more about the event in the March newsletter, but mark your calendars now!





BREAKEY HOUSE UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

The James Breakey Inn has undergone a change of management and a change of name. Late last year, Zack's Distinctive Catering, of Detroit, took over the business and has renamed it The James Breakey Manor. A grand "re-opening" is planned for late February, at which time the new sign will be unveiled.

Chef Christian Todorov, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, and his wife Mary, manager of the Breakey Manor, report that they will continue to handle private party, on-premises catering for groups of 12 or more. In addition, the Breakey will schedule special events, open to the public, on a monthly basis. On February 12th, they've scheduled a Valentine's Brunch and on February 14th, a Valentine's candlelight dinner. For more information, or to make reservations, call the Breakey at 483-2300.



1995 CALENDARS STILL AVAILABLE

Just a few 1995 Heritage Foundation Calendars are still available. Contact Lisa Walters at 485-3683 or pick one up at the January meeting.

We'd like to thank the following sponsors for enabling us to continue calendar production: Councilmember Barry La Rue, the Ypsilanti Gaelic League, Hon's Flowers and Fancies, The Normal Park Neighborhood Association, WEMU, Councilmember Kevin McCormick, Freeman-Bunting Insurance, Haab's Restaurant, Remington-Walker, and the Sidetrack. We look forward to another successful calendar for 1996!

**THANK
YOU**

FOUNDATION TO ELECT BOARD MEMBERS

At the January 25 meeting, the general membership of the Heritage Foundation will vote to fill four seats on the board. Board members up for re-election, whose terms are expiring this year, are Peg Du Fresne, Rick Leyshock, and Bill Nickels. And even though we know Jack Harris is irreplaceable, we would like to welcome a new member onto the board to fill the vacancy Jack left and function as a secretary. Volunteers? Come to the meeting or call Penny Schreiber at 483-5688.



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
Heritage News
102 N. Wallace Blvd., Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Lisa Walters, Editor (485-3683)
Peg Du Fresne, Assistant Editor (482-8666)



Ypsilanti Historic Museum
220 N. Huron St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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MARCH 1995

Ypsilanti, MI

MEETING: Tuesday, March 28, 1995--7:30

LOCATION: Brown Chapel AME (African-Methodist Episcopal)
401 S. Adams
Ypsilanti, Michigan

SPEAKER: A. P. MARSHALL

PROGRAM: "THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN YPSILANTI AND THE GROWTH OF BLACKS IN WASHTENAW COUNTY"

A. P. Marshall, retired Eastern Michigan University faculty member, local author, and Ypsilanti's unofficial historian of Black history, will be our guest speaker at this month's general meeting held on Tuesday, March 28, at the Brown Chapel AME.

The Brown Chapel was organized in 1843, twenty-two years before the start of the Civil War, and is the oldest Black church in Washtenaw County. The brick church was built in 1900 and is on the National Register of Historic Buildings. It is the third building for the congregation, which is planning to move again at an unspecified date to Second Avenue on the city's South Side. Unfortunately, it can no longer accommodate the demands of a modern church congregation. Church members are currently trying to come up with a plan for the future use of the old building. (It would make a fine museum.)

Marshall describes himself as an Okie from Muskogee, Oklahoma. He attended high school in Kansas City; he received his undergraduate degree from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, and his advanced degree from the University of Illinois in Champaign. He was a librarian for most of his life until he was promoted at EMU to Dean of Academic Services, the job he retired from in 1980. He promptly turned his avocations--public speaking, writing, and Black history--into his vocation and has been going strong ever since.

Marshall is the author of two books, *The Real McCoy of Ypsilanti* and *Unconquered Souls: The History of African Americans in Ypsilanti*. The first book is about Elijah McCoy, famous lubrication engineer and inventor, who many do not realize grew up in Ypsilanti and patented his first six inventions here before moving to Detroit. *The Real McCoy* is out of print, but Marshall will bring copies of *Unconquered Souls* to the meeting.

We hope to see you there. As always, membership not required. Bring a friend!
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.

NEWS FROM YESTERYEAR: FROM THE MASONIC TEMPLE TO THE RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER

At the turn of the century, the community of Ypsilanti needed a place where medium-sized theatricals and other social events could be held. At the same time, the Freemasons of Ypsilanti were in need of new quarters. "The present quarters," reported the Ypsilanti Daily Press on January 6, 1906, "are old, unmodern and constantly in need of repair, causing considerable unnecessary expense. What the lodge wants is a modern, up-to-date hall with a club room and dining room in connection, where everything will be pleasant, convenient and handy." The solution to both needs was in one building.

In May of 1907, the Masons chose the Chidester lot on North Huron Street, across from Pearl, as the site for their new temple. Reported the Ypsilanti Daily Press of May 20, 1907, "The location for a building such as the Masons contemplate erecting is one of the finest in the city. It covers 66 feet front and is very deep, extending back to the flats." The Masons paid \$6,000 for the lot.

The plans for the classical revival-styled temple were the work of Osgood and Osgood of Grand Rapids. The building is 55 by 124 feet, four stories high, and made of pressed brick and trimmed with stone. The plans called for a temple far larger than the Masons required, as it was intended for use by the general public as well. Forty thousand bricks were used in the building of the partitions in the basement. The rooms in the basement included a reception room and a coat room. The main feature was the dining room, able to accommodate 400 hungry persons, and a kitchen fitted out "with all the modern appointments." Another feature was the bowling alley.

"Upon entering the new temple," reported the Ypsilanti Daily Press of January 26, 1910, "a visitor is most favorably impressed with the great width of the main lobby. To the right is the parlor of the ladies of the Eastern Star. To the left is the parlor for the general comfort of the guests." This room opened to the main feature of the first floor, the auditorium, with a seating capacity of 750 persons. The auditorium was two stories high, with a balcony on three sides. On the fourth wall was the stage with fly space for scenery, "making it adapted to amateur theatricals."

A spacious stairway led from the first floor to the second, where the adjoining club and billiard room looked out on North Huron Street. "Here the men may smoke and read and enjoy themselves to their hearts' content." Most of the second floor was taken up by the balcony of the auditorium, with its 21 foot high ceiling.

The third floor served as quarters for the Masonic orders. At the front were a parlor and adjoining Red Cross room, often used as a double parlor. The Ypsilanti Daily Press reported, "Spacious windows let in the light and these rooms will undoubtedly be the most appreciated of any in the building." Most of the third floor was taken up by the mammoth lodge room in the center of the building, two stories high.

There was a gallery at the fourth floor level, seven feet wide against three walls. Passageways ran under the gallery, but were walled off from the lodge room. The walls were painted blue, and the woodwork had the dark rich brown of polished oak. Light was provided by a large electrical dome in the ceiling. On the east wall was the stage where Masonic rites were performed and members were initiated into the degrees of freemasonry. The background of the stage was painted in shades of blue. The blue carpet covering the floor cost \$500.

Most of the fourth floor was taken up by the gallery of the lodge room. Also on the fourth floor was the armory, a 31 square foot room.

The Ypsilanti Daily Press reported, "Hard oak is being used throughout the building in the finishing, and the decorations will be carried out to suit the architectural designs." Cost of the building was about \$60,000. "This affair," reported the Press on July 20, 1909, "is undoubtedly one of the most important Masonic happenings of Washtenaw County as the local temple is the first to be erected for the sole purpose of having the Masons."

The same report listed the items to be enclosed in the cornerstone, including by-laws of the lodge, chapter and council; articles of incorporation; copy of the Ypsilanti Daily Press, July 20; official Masonic penny; Confederate \$100 bill; Professor Cleary's name as president of Cleary College; President Jones' name as president of Michigan Normal College; and lists of members of the Masonic organization.

On the cornerstone are two dates, A.L. 5909 and A.D. 1909. The A.L. 5909 refers to a time when it was believed the earth was created four thousand years before the birth of Christ; the years were numbered from that time, called the year of light.

The temple was formally dedicated, with elaborate Masonic ceremony, on the afternoon of May 6, 1910. The ceremony was carried out in the third floor lodge room, "with an audience of Masons and interested friends." The temple soon proved successful in serving the needs of the Masons and of the community. The building became a social center of Ypsilanti, with the dining room used for banquets and the auditorium for theatrical and musical performances. Civic and church groups frequently used the parlors for meetings.

Over the years, the temple has undergone numerous changes and modifications. Twice it has been damaged by fire. On November 29, 1924, a fire started in the basement and was put out after four hours. The roof was lost, and the upper floors were "a mass of charcoal and debris." The dining room had been damaged by water and lost much of its plaster. The loss was estimated at \$100,000. The building was repaired, and rededicated in June of 1925.

A second fire in 1970 gutted the upper floors, resulting in the loss of the lodge room and the auditorium's balcony. After 75 years of occupancy, the Masons left the temple in 1987 to move to new quarters in the township. The temple was sold to Materials Unlimited and used for storage. The Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority purchased the building for \$290,000 in June of 1994 and began converting it into the Riverside Arts Center.

Once the renovation is complete, the space will be available for use by community groups, theatre, and other arts activity. The temple will once again be used for one of the reasons for which it was built in 1909.

Ed. note--Thanks to YHF member James Mann for his extensive research into the history of this building.

Want to volunteer to help out at the Riverside Arts Center? Interested in booking the hall? Have a question or suggestion? Call one of the following:
Riverside Arts Center: 480-ARTS
Downtown Development Authority: 482-1410
Barry La Rue: 482-2327

YHF MEMBERS PART OF MOTOWN RESTORATION PROJECT AND EXHIBIT

You may have read or heard about the Motown Museum Partnership, a collaboration of the Motown Historical Museum and Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village, which has two exciting projects currently underway. This joint effort is bringing about the restoration of Hitsville, USA, the original home of the Motown Record Corp., located on West Grand Blvd. in Detroit, to its 1960's appearance. In addition, Henry Ford Museum will host a new exhibit, "The Motown Sound: The Music & The Story." Both exhibits are scheduled to open to the public on May 27, 1995, and after 18 months at Henry Ford Museum, "The Motown Sound" will move permanently to a new, expanded Motown Historical Museum to be located in Detroit.

This is great news for everyone interested in the preservation of this part of Detroit's history and especially exciting for those of us who grew up listening to all the Motown artists. But what you may not know is that three of the Foundation's members, who are also Henry Ford Museum employees, are part of these two projects. **Blake Hayes** is guiding the research and historical restoration efforts on the Hitsville, USA project, while his wife, **Mary Seelhorst**, is heading those efforts for the "Motown Sound" exhibit. **Don Randazzo** is providing rough and finished carpentry work, and mill work, at the Hitsville site.

The restored Hitsville, USA will be a permanent enhancement to a growing number of Detroit area cultural attractions and educational institutions, while "The Motown Sound" is expected to be a major draw for Henry Ford Museum, with some two million visitors anticipated during its first 18 months.

This is the kind of story, about members' involvement in preservation projects, that we'd like to cover more often in this newsletter. So, if you're involved in anything that would be of interest to readers, or if you know someone who is, let us know!

JOINT FUNDRAISER FOR GENERAL YPSILANTI SCULPTURE/RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER RESCHEDULED

Due to some unforeseen problems with advance publicity efforts, the date of the upcoming joint fundraiser for the Ypsilanti Sculpture and the Riverside Arts Center (RAC) has been changed. The event will now take place on **Saturday, May 13th**, from 7:00 pm to Midnight, at the RAC.

It'll be an evening full of food, drink, fun, and entertainment! The live charity auction starts at 8:00 pm, with local auctioneer Steve Gross taking the bids. There'll be plenty of great items to bid on, and it all benefits two very worthy causes. Following the auction, dance the night away to the "Motown Classics" sounds of the Steve Somers Band.

Tickets are \$30.00 per person and can be purchased at the door. There will also be an announcement going out to YHF members in early April regarding advance tickets. In the meantime, if you'd like more information on the fundraiser or if you'd like to volunteer to help, contact Peg Du Fresne at 482-8666 or Art McVicar at 484-3903. See you there!



CITY HALL "CHEESE-GRATER" REMOVAL SLATED FOR MAY

Yes, after years of wishing and hoping and thinking and budgeting, plans are currently underway to remove the "cheese-grater" from City Hall during the month of May. With luck, it will be off before the Gus Macker tournament; if that isn't possible, the city will wait until after the tournament to minimize downtown congestion as much as possible. The goal is to avoid the presence of scaffolding or the inconvenience of lane closings during Gus Macker. City officials, including Economic Development Director Jennifer Goulet, have met with representatives from architects Quinn-Evans and the Michigan Department of Transportation to discuss the timeline. We're waiting now to hear from M-DOT to learn whether bid specifications have been approved. We need state approval in order to send out bid requests to qualified demolition contractors.

The entire removal process should take less than a week. This will necessitate minor street inconvenience at the southeast corner of South Huron and Michigan Avenue, probably just one lane closing on one street at a time.

Because of possible damage which may have occurred when the cheese-grater was added in 1966, there is some concern about the condition of the building's windows. On the first floor behind the granite panels, the frames and glass of the original windows are gone. Passersby will see cement blocks in the original window openings and some damage to the rusticated stone. Don't despair; this will be repaired. The Historic District Commission is also working closely with the architects to determine the appropriate color for the bricks and trim, and the type of signage to be used. We will most likely see flat signboards with projecting lights on the south and east facades, similar to signs currently at the Sidetrack.

City officials are concerned as to whether our budget will allow removal of ceramic panels from the south and east facades. The budget for the project was scaled back from \$225,000 to \$190,000 due to a reduction in the amount which the Downtown Development Authority was authorized to bond. There will probably be exploratory removal of panels in the back to determine the extent of the damage. If there's little, they will be removed; but if damage is too extensive, the panels will just be painted to blend in with adjacent upper story brick. This, of course, is not ideal, so let's keep our fingers crossed that panel removal can be accomplished on our budget.

After demolition work has occurred, we may see porch lights and first floor window awnings similar to the curved, striped awnings which adorned the building at one time. The HDC is discussing these and other esthetically-pleasing options.

If the cheese-grater removal has not occurred by the time we print our next newsletter, we'll bring you the latest information then. But keep an eye on local papers for more frequent updates. Let's all meet at Haab's to watch this long-awaited and hoped-for dream become a reality.

Ed. note--Many thanks to Barry La Rue for the above information and especially for his tireless work on this project.



ON THE ADVANTAGES OF LEAVING YPSILANTI

Jack Harris, Editor Emeritus

As everybody knows by now, Cliff and I have left Ypsilanti and moved, at least temporarily, to Brockport, New York, a village with a college that is part of the State University system. We are about 25 minutes west of Rochester and ten miles south of Lake Ontario. It takes perhaps an hour and a half to get to Niagara.

Brockport (pop. 9500) is a typical upstate New York town, from what I've seen. (If you've seen the film *Nobody's Fool*, you have an idea of what it looks like, though there are no hills here.) It has its surviving nineteenth century Main Street and some quite attractive historic houses. It is one of many towns that were born out of the building of the Erie Canal in the early nineteenth century, and its name derives from the Brockway family, among the founders, and its "port" status. The countryside, or what's left of it, is not all that attractive, though we had what everyone recognized as a magnificent fall.

Since the college expanded under the leadership of Al Brown, formerly of EMU in the early seventies, Brockport has been both kept alive and devastated by the college, which has about 6500 students. We live near the campus, and students fill many of the houses around us. There are the ubiquitous sofas, barbecues, and other bits of scattered junk on the front porches, and we were warned that weekends were particularly bad for noise.

We came in mid-August and prepared ourselves for the worst. To our surprise, the raucous weekends, for the most part, didn't develop; in fact, most of the time this past fall it was at least as quiet as the cottage up north. I was at first in extreme depression over the house we had taken, what I would call a canal builder's cottage, tampered with nearly out of recognition, with aluminum siding and replacement windows on the outside, and deep and dirty shag carpet on the inside. I couldn't bear it, that night after my first sight of it.

Now, six months later, the place doesn't look so bad. Franklin Case, who visited in late August, helped me tear up the carpet, under which we found wonderful oak flooring, which needed only Mop and Glo. We had the walls of the dining and living room painted off-white, and I brought with me a few smaller oriental carpets from Pearl Street and some plants I didn't want to lose. When we were back home in September, I went round the house, thinking: what should I take to "hang on the walls"?--as Whitman put it.

I wasn't going to raid the most visible elements of that menage that makes up Pearl Street. Instead, I started with a fairly large engraving that has hung unseen at the top of the back stairs. I bought it years ago in a St. Vincent de Paul's store in Saginaw for a dollar. It's early nineteenth century, and it's a view of The Grand Canal at Venice. That did it: I decided to look for other Venice pictures around the house. To my surprise, I came up with eight! One was a precious gift from the late Art Howard, one of our finest calendar artists. Most of them are of the canals--and, of course, it didn't take my imagination long to know why I was taking THEM to BrockPORT. They now adorn my living room walls, and therein lies the first great advantage of leaving Ypsilanti.

I mean, you are forced to reassess your life, by little things--even by what you hang on your walls. You also reconsider what you have and what it means to you. You make new discoveries. You test yourself and the world you live in.

First, moving out of Ypsilanti and away from all our friends has had the great advantage of making us realize more than ever how much those friends mean to us. We realize that we could never again form such close ties with friends as we did over the twenty years we have lived in Ypsilanti. At the same time, living here in relative isolation has brought us even closer together, so that we better know of what our relationship is made.

Another advantage of leaving Pearl Street is that I find I CAN: I can wrench myself away from that old house and make a life elsewhere! I always said they'd have to carry me out of there in a box, but it didn't happen that way--not yet. I find, on the other hand, that I can live in a much smaller space, find peace, and, in fact, perhaps as much or more happiness than I have experienced in a long time (some of which, I admit, is due to RETIREMENT!). The lesson is that as we age, a smaller space is not such a bad idea after all, at least if it is necessitated (see House Beautiful for March, pp. 18-24).

Yet another advantage of leaving Ypsilanti--and the state of Michigan: you realize how much of you is there, especially, in our case, since we've both lived all of our lives there. Of course, that's why Joe Lawrence was absolutely right to say, "Don't sell the house!"--and we didn't. That's why I fought the property tax battle at my place at Lake Ann, near Traverse City, where I was taken at six weeks old. I expect to sell some of it this summer and think very hard about doing something creative with the rest. That's why we intended all along to return home during summers, at least.

Of course, we can all think of advantages to leaving Ypsilanti; I've listed only a few. Still, we've decided that it's not such a bad place to be, either; Pearl Street and the lush jungle of a garden and a few good neighbors willing to fight for what is ours. Then there's the Sidetrack and Dalat and Max's and La Fiesta Mexicana. And damn good doctors and hospitals! And Ann Arbor and the Merchant of Vino and an evening coffee and a "read" in a comfortable chair at the Sweetwater Cafe and the Michigan Theatre for a movie.

No, Brockport has its elements of quiet charm, a fabulous historic house museum, one major supermarket. There is also Rochester, with lots of great houses, museums, restaurants, but we've rarely had time to explore them. We have some nice neighbors who apparently don't leave their houses all winter except for Aurora, eighty-four, who went for a walk downtown with me yesterday and who makes the best cherry pie I've ever eaten. I'll miss her dearly, but we're coming back to Michigan, at least for the summer.

One final advantage of leaving: I realize now more than ever that at this stage of my life I prefer to do new things in old places, rather than old things in new.



1995 MARKER BANQUET SCHEDULED

After a one-year hiatus, during which we celebrated the Foundation's 20th Anniversary, the annual Marker Awards banquet is back. We'll be honoring deserving homeowners at the Ladies' Literary Club on Wednesday, May 24, at 6:30 pm. Details will follow in the May newsletter, but mark your calendar now for this important event.



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
102 N. Wallace Blvd.
Heritage News
Lisa Walters, Editor (485-3683)
Peg Du Fresne, Assistant Editor (482-8666)



*Ypsilanti Historic Museum
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MAY 1995

Ypsilanti, MI

MEETING: Tuesday, May 23, 1995 - 6:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Ladies Literary Club, 218 N. Washington

**SPECIAL EVENT: 1995 HISTORIC STRUCTURE MARKER BANQUET
AND AWARDS**

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE!!!

After a one year hiatus during which we celebrated our twentieth anniversary, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation is once again awarding its Historic Structure Markers. Since 1977, the Foundation's Marker Program has recognized more than 100 homes, businesses, and churches in Ypsilanti for their significant historic architecture and continuing, sensitive maintenance.

The following owners of buildings will be awarded Historic Structure Markers this year and will be our special guests of honor, Tuesday, May 23rd, at the Ladies Literary Club:

OSCAR AND KAY HAAB for their building at 125 N. Huron, which houses The James Breakey Inn
Style: Greek Revival

LOUIS AND JANE ROME for their building at 103 S. Huron, which houses The Parish House Inn
Style: Queen Anne

JONNIE BRYANT AND MARK NAMATEVS for the house at 309 E. Cross
Style: Wing and Gable

JOE LAWRENCE for the house at 206 S. Huron
Style: Eastlake

BYRON AND CAROLINE WILLIAMS for their home at 101 N. Summit
Style: Greek Revival

Each year the Banquet becomes more and more a Social Event of the Season, so if you are planning to attend, please call one of the Banquet Chairs--Karen Nickels, at 483-8896, or Penny Schreiber, at 483-5688--to discuss what dish you might like to bring to supplement our table. (The Marker Recipients are not expected to bring a dish, since they are our special guests.)

The evening begins with punch and hors d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m., with dinner following at 7:15 p.m. The Marker program and presentations to recipients will immediately follow dinner. **REMEMBER:** space is limited, so call now.

YCB ANNOUNCES 1995 SUMMER "CONCERTS IN THE PARK" SERIES

It's that time of year again when the Ypsilanti Community Band takes their music out of doors to our neighborhood parks. Mark your calendars with these dates and plan to attend one or more of these concerts. They make great occasions to gather the family and/or friends, pack a picnic basket, and enjoy one of our community's greatest resources: our parks. The concerts are free, but donations to the Band are, of course, gratefully accepted.

THURSDAY, JUNE 1st	Recreation Park - 7:30 pm
THURSDAY, JUNE 15th	Prospect Park - 7:30 pm
THURSDAY, JUNE 29th	Recreation Park - 7:30 pm
THURSDAY, JULY 13th	Prospect Park - 7:30 pm



In addition, the Band will give these special performances:

MONDAY, MAY 29th	Yankee Air Force - time TBD
SUNDAY, JULY 2nd	Belleville (Five Points) - 3:00 pm
SATURDAY, AUGUST 19th	Ypsilanti Heritage Festival - time TBD

YHF BOARD MEMBER UPDATE

As the seasons change, so too does the board of the Heritage Foundation. First, the bad news: While we are still recovering from the departure of Jack Harris last summer, the Foundation announces the "retirement" of two more of its long-time board members, Jane Van Bolt and Denis Schmiedeke. Both cite busy schedules as the culprit; we know they'll continue to support the Foundation as much as possible. Thank you to both of them for their years of dedicated service and contributions to historic preservation.

Now the good news: The Board is pleased to announce the addition of Barry La Rue, lifetime Ypsilanti resident and preservationist extraordinaire. One would be hard-pressed to find a more knowledgeable and enthusiastic Ypsilanti supporter than Barry. Welcome aboard!

PRESERVATION WEEK PROCLAIMED

At the Ypsilanti City Council meeting on May 1, Mayor Cheryl Farmer proclaimed May 14-20 Historic Preservation Week and presented a certificate to Heritage Foundation president Rick Leyshock. The proclamation cited the benefits of historic preservation to all residents of Ypsilanti and noted the Riverside Arts Center/Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture joint fundraiser on May 13. Thanks to Barry La Rue for his assistance with the proclamation and to Lisa Walters, Ward 2 councilmember, for introducing it.

RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER FUND-RAISING EFFORTS

On April 29, the Riverside Arts Center was the site of a "performance buffet" entitled "All You Can Art," featuring dancers, artists, musicians, and actors. After mingling, observing the goings-on, and getting an up-close look at progress made in the Center's decor, guests were treated to a production of Christopher Durang's one-act play "An Actor's Nightmare," followed by the music of the Steve Somers Band. The event was sponsored by P. T. D. Productions. Thank you to their many volunteers.

If you missed that fundraiser, you have another chance to show your support of both the Riverside Arts Center and the Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture Restoration by attending the "Save Our Structures" fundraiser on Saturday, May 13, from 7:00 to midnight. Plans call for a full evening of drinks and hors d'oeuvres. A live charity auction, conducted by Steve Gross, begins at 8:00, followed by music and dancing to the "Motown Classics" sounds of the Steve Somers Band. Heritage Foundation members should have gotten an invitation separate from the announcement in the last newsletter, but if not, you can still attend and pay at the door. For more information, call the Community and Economic Development Department at 483-9646 or the Riverside Arts Center at 480-2787.

On a related note, the Riverside Arts Center Foundation recently held an informal board meeting which included a tour of the building and discussion of fundraising techniques. Among the board members present were Cynthia Wilbanks, Doug Harris, George Goodman, Ben Koerber, Bill Kinley, Jim Nelson, Ron Miller, and Al Shelton. Thanks to all of them, and anyone else whose name we inadvertently left out, for their part in this important restoration effort.

PEASE RESTORATION UPDATE

In addition to the Riverside Arts Center, let's not forget our other local performance space, Pease Auditorium. For 80 years, Pease Auditorium has been the cultural center of the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti communities. Its closing in 1990 affected all of us. You may remember that in 1993, the Heritage Foundation donated a portion of its Home Tour proceeds to the restoration of Pease. A \$5.8 million restoration effort is currently underway and, in fact, has escalated with a challenge from the Kresge Foundation. The foundation has contributed a \$320,000 challenge grant to complete the restoration effort. Pease supporters need to raise \$750,000 between now and June in order to receive the grant money.

All gifts and pledges, regardless of the amount, will count toward this goal. However, your gift of \$500, \$1,000, or \$2,500 will name a seat in the auditorium and identify you as part of the Pease legacy. Payments can be spread out over a five-year period. Make your pledge or gift now and enjoy a gala grand re-opening in the fall. For more information, call the Pease Campaign, Office of Development at 487-0252.

MAGAZINES AVAILABLE

Heritage Foundation member Wanda McGlasson is offering copies of "Old House Journal" to any interested member. The selection dates from 1976-1992; these magazines are especially useful to people restoring old houses. If interested, call Wanda at 485-0728.

CITY HALL FACADE REMOVAL UPDATE

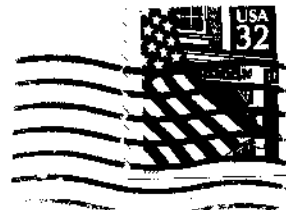
A brief update: the latest word at press time is that we anticipate removal of the "cheese grater" soon after the Gus Macker tournament in late May. Right now it is unclear which contractor will be awarded the bid; this is in the hands of Quinn-Evans Architects, who are sorting through bid proposals. You may have noticed a section of paneling on the corner of the building has fallen off of its own accord; it appears that the building is tired of waiting and is trying to shed its own skin. At any rate, keep a lookout for progress soon.

YPSI FOOD CO-OP NEWS

The Ypsilanti Food Co-op presents a "Spring Greens" orientation and cooking encounters on June 10 at 12:00 noon and from 10:00 am-3:00 pm, respectively. According to a press release from the Co-op, wild greens are a great tonic for purifying the blood in the spring. Full of vitamins and minerals, they are fun to find as your first crop of the season. The Co-op will have samples, so you can learn their identity, and recipes in which you can use them.

The Ypsi Food Co-op is located at 312 N. River in Historic Depot Town. For more information, please call 483-1520.

YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION
102 N. Wallace Blvd.
Heritage News
Lisa MillsWalters, Editor
Peg Du Fresne, Assistant Editor



Ypsilanti Historic Museum
220 N. Huron St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.

AUGUST 1995 ** GOOD NEWS EDITION!! ** Ypsilanti, MI

THE YPSILANTI HERITAGE FESTIVAL August 18, 19, 20

SPECIAL EVENT: 18TH ANNUAL YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION HISTORIC HOME TOUR

DATE: Sunday, August 20, 1995, Noon to 5:00 p.m.

TICKETS: Adults \$8.00 - Seniors \$7.00 - Children Under 12 \$5.00

Tickets available during Festival at YHF booths:

1. on the right at the entryway to Riverside Park
2. in front of the Historical Museum, 220 N. Huron

FEATURING:

122 Linden Court

Roger Maki, Lorelei Crawford, and Edward Schramm
Post-Victorian -- 1930

The youngest home on tour, 122 Linden Court is a prime example of the solidly built houses, with comfortably designed interiors, from this era. The current owners have converted the attic into living space and added a second floor walk-out deck over the garage, while keeping the original architectural feel of the house.

315 N. Grove

Terry and Mary Ann McDonald
Folk Victorian Wing and Gable -- c. 1890

With its vertical lines, peaked roofs, charming front porch, and lovely gardens, this house makes a pleasing, old-fashioned impression from the street. Following the current owners' extensive renovation campaign, the interior is now beautifully highlighted with refinished wood floors and faux paint and wallpaper finishes.

322 Maple

Jim Soraruf and Marjean Rose Soraruf
Wing and Gable Greek Revival -- c. 1850

Built for a local shoemaker, this house was later the home of one of Ypsilanti's 19th century mayors. It has been extensively restored by the current owners, who have also sensitively incorporated a new addition at the rear of the house.

309 E. Cross

Jonnie Bryant and Mark Namatevs
Gary Clark and Glen Sard
Wing and Gable -- c. 1860

Once considered uninhabitable, this restored house now features a richly colored exterior and an eclectic, stylish interior. Care was taken to salvage as much historic detail as possible, including the tulip wood floor in the front parlor and the original front doors. Earlier this year, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation awarded a Historic Structure Marker to owners Jonnie Bryant and Mark Namatevs for their remarkable restoration.

410 Oak (House and Garden)

Warren Lewis
Originally a 19th Century Board and Batten Schoolhouse Moved to this Location

It would be hard to find a more imaginative interior than the one owner Warren Lewis, an interior designer, has created inside his tiny (800 sq. ft.) gem of a home! Combining Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Victorian, and Contemporary furnishings and details, 410 Oak will delight tourgoers. Don't miss the "Rockettes" high-kicking their way around a ceiling border in the living room, complete with tiny footlights!

3401 Berry Road, Superior Township

Springhill Farm
Brad Perkins
Greek Revival -- 1833

Condemned in 1966, this 162-year-old house was purchased for one dollar and moved from East Michigan Avenue to its present location. Widely considered to be one of the outstanding examples of Greek Revival architecture in the Midwest, it has been painstakingly restored, inside and out, and is now a rich backdrop for the current owner's collection of art and antiques.

Note--The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation will donate a portion of the proceeds from this year's tour to the Ypsilanti Public School District to help in the further development of its historic preservation programs for grades K-12.

IT HAPPENED IN YPSILANTI IN 1994-95

The Heritage Foundation presents its **ANNUAL GOOD NEWS ISSUE**, reporting on some of the improvements that have occurred in Ypsilanti over the past year, for our own delight and that of our Festival visitors. It also allows us an opportunity to say Thank You to all of those who have helped make this a better place to live. This News issue is the Foundation's gift to everyone who cares for and about Ypsilanti.



DEMETRIUS YPSILANTI BACK WHERE HE BELONGS

This past June saw the **newly restored General Demetrius Ypsilanti sculpture** returned to its post in front of the landmark Water Tower across from the campus of EMU. The sculpture was dismantled on April 6 and transported to the Detroit studio of CASO-IMPEX for the restoration. It was re-installed over the three-day period of June 7-9, one week ahead of schedule. On June 25, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), the organization which presented the sculpture to the city in 1928, held a re-dedication ceremony as part of its district convention. Nearly 100 people, including the Cyprian Ambassador to the U. S., the Archbishop of the Detroit Greek Orthodox Diocese, local dignitaries, members of AHEPA, and members of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation attended the ceremony, welcoming the general back.

As anyone who has walked or driven past the restored sculpture can attest, the results are remarkable. The polished bust now gleams in the sunlight. Details in the general's face, hair, and uniform, worn away over time, have been re-incised and are evident once again. The marble plates making up the base of the sculpture had settled into the earth over the years, but now the entire base is once again exposed so that the general appears taller than he was before the restoration!

The restoration of the General Demetrius Ypsilanti sculpture is a testament to the skills of preservationist Gregory Ryl of CASO-IMPEX. A special thanks goes out to him, and to the members of the Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture Commission (DYSC), the group which oversaw the restoration project and the fundraising efforts, for a job well done.

SAY GOOD-BYE TO THE CHEESE-GRATER!

The City Hall facade restoration project is moving right along. As most of us have seen in recent weeks, the aluminum screening and granite panels have been removed to reveal the building's appearance from the period of 1940 through 1966.

Steve Jones of the architectural firm of Quinn-Evans of Ann Arbor is supervising the job. We're now in the phase of inspecting the current condition of the rusticated stone at the street level to determine the extent of damage and how much replacement stone will have to be re-installed.

The good overall condition of the brick of the upper stories has resulted in having enough funds to reprogram them to remove the enameled panels on the east and south sides and remove the very large and unattractive sign boxes.

The next phase will be determining details, particularly at the street level. The four large arched windows will be restored, but some creativity may be exercised in the size, configuration, and location of additional windows. Appropriate signage will need to be designed as will things like exterior light fixtures and paint colors for the upper stories.

Possible future work that may be considered would be the replacement of the third and fourth story windows. These items could be done on a piecemeal basis as funding allowed. The City will be looking for additional sources of revenue such as Bureau of History CLG (certified local government) or energy conservation grants.

Thanks to all in the Heritage Foundation who have supported this project over the years. The city can finally "put its money where its mouth is" as far as downtown facade restoration!

NICE WORK:

Thanks to all those good folks who plant and TAKE CARE OF flowers at:

the Post Office
the Fire Station on Michigan Avenue
202 South Huron--thanks, Bill Fennel
220 South Huron--Jerry and Sandy Hoag
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, whose red and white petunias brighten the corners of
North River and North Street
The Breaky Manor, where the grounds have never looked so good
Normal Park Neighborhood Association's curbside gardens--they're wonderful!
Marsh Plating for their beautifully planted entry on North Grove
411 North Huron for their new front entry landscaping
all the neighbors who have planted the curbsides along North Huron

Also, a big thank-you to those involved in the planting project at the entryways to the city at the corners of Huron and Harriet Streets and Hamilton and Harriet Streets: Washtenaw County Human Services Department, the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Public Housing, Ypsilanti Public Schools, New Shiloh Ministry, Messiah Temple Church, Catholic Social Services, Hope Clinic, New Horizon Resident Council, Safe Anchor, the students of the University of Michigan landscape architecture program for their design, and Matthei Botanical Gardens for the plants. Also thanks to all residents and volunteers who put their time and energy into this project!

A number of rehabs have been recently completed or are underway:

103 North Adams, where the missing original porch railings have been replicated
314 Washtenaw, where Steve Allen is reconstructing the front porch
108 North Huron, where Dervin Mood replicated the front entry canopy for
Bonnie and Ed Penet
309 East Cross, Mark Namatevs and Jonnie Bryant have rehabbed the house now
occupied and placed on this year's Home Tour by Glen Sard and Gary Clark
402 East Cross, where neighbors are cheering Mark and Julie Fisher's ongoing
rehab
Two long neglected Italianates on North River, one of which was fire-damaged, are
undergoing extensive work this summer
The long-suffering house south of the Post Office on South Adams is being repaired
and painted
315 South Washington, where Clifton and Helen Teall have made such a
difference in their house and such a contribution to the neighborhood

Something else that makes Ypsilanti look better every summer are the new paint jobs:

Thanks to Mayor Cheryl Farmer for her new colors at 214 North Huron
and to Ken Hayes for treating his huge house at 525 North Adams to three
handsome colors
the beautiful Queen Anne at 323 Maple is freshly painted
the red house at 312 Washtenaw is sporting a new coat of its favorite color
210 South Washington is looking wonderful in its new colors
The Queen Anne at Arcade and North Adams is also looking beautiful again

OTHER GOOD NEWS

The Sidetrack's Dave French has just recently introduced his Frog Island Brewing Company's new red English ale to a very enthusiastic and rapidly growing market--ask for Stewart's Ale!

There's another spot to eat outdoors--Cady's in Depot Town.

Plans are almost complete for major improvements to be made to Prospect Park, while plans for Recreation Park are just getting off the ground. Keep your eye on the newspapers for further updates.

The depot is for sale!!

Many thanks to the car wash on Michigan Avenue between Grove and Park for their beautiful flowers and especially for the huge American flag, beautiful during the day, and especially so under lights at night.

RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER: A SUCCESS STORY IN THE MAKING

The Riverside Arts Center Operations Board has been meeting diligently since June to rewrite the by-laws of the RAC Foundation, set up a rate schedule, and generally look at the overall operation. Tom Dodd, Sara Randazzo-Rodriguez, Pam Hamblin, Carolyn McKeever, Linda Yohn, David Freund, Peg Du Fresne, Sue LaPorte and Barry La Rue have met every Saturday for weeks to hash over a myriad of details.

The architectural firm of Mitchell and Mouat were chosen to do the feasibility study. The Bureau of History and the Downtown Development Association split the cost 50/50. When the study is done, RAC volunteers will have an assessment of the building's current physical condition, the code work that will have to be done (such as handicapped access, fire suppression systems, etc.), space allocation, ventilation zoning, signage, items needed to restore the exterior facade, acoustical and lighting considerations, and many more aspects that go into creating a viable cultural center for central Ypsilanti.

Because the September general meeting of the Heritage Foundation will be held at the Riverside Arts Center, those of you who haven't yet had a chance to see it will be able to check out the multitude of prospects this historic building holds. If any of our readers have an interest in renting the facility or, better yet, donating time, materials, or expertise, please call our interim facilities coordinator, Neomi Ybarra, at 480-ARTS. Feel free also to call Barry La Rue, our newest Heritage Foundation board member, as he has been quite involved with the development of the center. Peg Du Fresne, also serving on the Heritage Foundation board, is in charge of fundraising activities and would be happy to field your suggestions and interests in the financial area.





THE TOWNER HOUSE: ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

The following letter, written by Jack Harris and published in the *Ypsilanti Courier*, is reprinted here in its entirety.

Not long ago I saw a woman kick the Towner House. She was undoubtedly only trying to show the person with her how worthless the building really is. Simply her physical act caught my eye as I drove up North Huron Street; but I recalled that I had read a book several years ago, titled *Kicked a Building Lately?* I searched my library to find it.

By Ada Louise Huxtable, the great architecture critic for *The New York Times*, the book contains the essay, "Kicking a Landmark." After reading it and feeling the power of her words, I knew I had to write one more plea, in an effort to save the Towner House.

I also read in the local press recently, a front page headline, "House sales setting pace in Ypsilanti." Did you see it? Anyone doubting that the Towner House would sell should dig out that article or simply talk to those who know what old houses are going for in Ypsilanti today. This is the time to sell the Towner House--not destroy it.

Most of us are acutely aware of how badly America is suffering just now the loss of a sense of community. The nation is being torn apart, with small groups seeing themselves as victims of outside forces that would take away their freedoms. None of us wants to see that, but what we all do want is truth and the spirit of goodwill to work among us. More than anything, we want, and need, the sense of community.

Fortunately, Ypsilanti's sense of community has actually improved over the past several years. Twenty years ago, Huron Street was a shambles. Today it is a treasure of which we can all be proud. The Towner House holds its place on Huron Street beneath those majestic towers of the Presbyterian Church and it should take its place again in that growing sense of community.

Yes, I remember its life in the 70s under the lease held by the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, when it was turned by its tenant, Gary Decker, into a little gem, with its post and beam construction, its low ceilings, its huge central fireplace. But more, I remember it and the life it gave to this community as a children's museum. In the 80s, it became the place where our children could experience what life was like in Ypsilanti 100 years ago--and before.

One woman, Judy White, with her husband Phil, along with a bevy of mostly school volunteers, gave meaning to the Towner House.

At that time I had the good fortune of receiving a generous grant from the Michigan Council for the Humanities to do a series of public programs for the Towner House Children's Museum. It was called *Windows to the Past*.



I treasure most the final event of that series, called "Christmas at the Mayor's House." Decorated for Christmas, the house was hosted by a talented group of Ypsilanti High School students brilliantly playing the roles of Mayor Tracy Towner, his sister Carrie Towner (faculty member of the Conservatory of Music), his other sister Anna Towner and mother Towner. The young players, moving in costume among the guests, carried us back to our 19th century beginnings, as they told us what life was like in Ypsilanti 100 years ago.

On that same occasion, the Ypsilanti High School Chamber Singers sang carols on the front porch, and Bradley Brookshire played a short concert on his harpsichord in the living room. I have the pictures and the program to remember the faces of the children who were impressed by that special event, and I am proud.

I urge anyone who cares about our sense of community to take another look. Park in the lot of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum across the street (avoid "open" hours) and look up and down Huron Street once more. Envision, if you will, the tiny Towner House, looking rather forlorn at the moment, brought to life yet again.

Imagine it a restored residence on that again glorious street, holding so many memories. Envision someone caring for the small space that would need to be sold off with the house, just at the east and the south sides of the building. Envision an old-fashioned garden filling that space, as gardens now grace almost the full sweep of the Huron, and you will know why I cannot bear to see the Towner House lost.

Ypsilanti is poised to receive national attention for its amazing recovery through preservation over the last quarter of a century. The Towner House well deserves a place in that story. This is no time to kick the building. Instead, saving it would heal any sense of alienation that lingers. I believe that the Towner House should stand as a living memorial to a woman who gave a portion of her little fortune to the church to use in its best interests.
Jack Harris

YHF CALENDARS AGAIN AVAILABLE

The Heritage Foundation Engagement Calendar is available again at the Festival, the September general meeting, Hon's Flowers in Depot Town, or by calling Lisa Walters at 485-3683. Thank you to the calendar committee members, Lisa Walters, Bill Nickels, Eric Walters, and to Rick Katon for his photographs. Don't miss this historic edition with photos of the Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture re-dedication and the City Hall facade restoration in progress. Also featured are 1995 Marker and Historic Home Tour houses. Great for gifts for any occasion!



**PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS:
THE SEPTEMBER/NOVEMBER YHF GENERAL MEETINGS**

Tuesday, September 26, 7:30 pm, Riverside Arts Center
Vernacular Houses of the 1830's and 40's in Ann Arbor, Michigan
Susan Wineberg, Historic Preservationist

We all marvel at, and can usually recognize, the mid-to-late 19th Century "High Style" Victorian architectural types, but not many of us are as familiar with what the earliest settlers to this area built after they left the log cabin stage. As **Susan Wineberg**, our September meeting speaker, will tell us, the majority of the early settlers in Ann Arbor (and southern Michigan in general) who arrived in the 1820's and 30's were from upstate New York and New England, and they brought with them the architectural forms with which they were familiar: the Georgian, New England Large, and I-House floor plans. Susan, a graduate of the Masters of Science in Historic Preservation program from Eastern Michigan University and co-author of Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan, will discuss these earliest house forms, identifying with slides those buildings still standing, and with measured drawings from the 1930's, some which have since been demolished.

Tuesday, November 28, 7:30 pm (location TBA)
The Grand American Avenue: 1850-1920
Thomas W. Brunk, Architectural Historian

Only five of the mansions on Woodward Avenue in Detroit are still standing today, out of the sixty which lined this once proud promenade when it was at its peak. Can you name them? You'll get a chance to test your knowledge when our November meeting speaker, **Thomas Brunk**, tells us about the rise and fall of Woodward Avenue as the premier residential address in Detroit, and the similar fates of "grand avenues" in other major cities. Tom, who received his master's degree in art and architectural history from Vermont College, Norwich University, and is author of eight books in the field, is currently doing Ph.D. work on the Ceramic Connoisseurship of Charles Lang Freer, founder of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. As part of his November slide presentation, he plans to include a discussion of the first Freer Gallery of Art, which was located in Freer's home on East Ferry Avenue, in Detroit.

FOR SALE:

Victorian, on corner lot, near EMU campus--clapboard, with stone foundation, unique skirt (screen) on wrap-around porch with round pillars, hood moldings over windows, decorative elements in gables, all original. Interior divided as duplex, convertible to single family. Hardwood floors, bay window, two large turn-of-the-century windows in front. Neighborhood mix of single family and rental. Several Historic Structure Marker Houses in close proximity. With imagination and work, this one could be brought back to the stately elegance of yesteryear. \$93,000--434-4777.



YOU'RE INVITED: THE YHF'S FIRST HOLIDAY HOUSE

Kick off the fall and winter holidays in grand style! Plan to attend the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation's first **Holiday House**, at the James Breakey Manor. This event will take place on Saturday, October 21st, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and on Sunday, October 22nd, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. A fundraiser for the Foundation, the Holiday House will feature the design and decorative talents of several Ypsilanti businesses and Foundation members, who will decorate table-tops, mantels, staircases, and even entire rooms at the Breakey Manor in holiday related themes. You're sure to find plenty of ideas for your own holiday decorating and entertaining at the Holiday House!

Visitors to the Holiday House will also enjoy light refreshments served by the Breakey Manor and can include a walking tour of the surrounding Huron Street/Riverside Park/Depot Town area as part of their visit. Visitors may take self-guided tours or join one of the guided tours, conducted by members of the Foundation, which will be held at designated times throughout the two days.

Tickets to the Holiday House will be \$8.00 per person and will be sold in advance and at the door. There'll be more on the Holiday House in the September newsletter, but mark your calendars now for what promises to be a great event!

YPSILANTI: IT'S EVEN BETTER THAN WE REALIZE

This past May, *Newsweek* magazine featured a cover story dealing with the problems of the suburban areas of our country. Look at just a few of the ideas they suggested in an accompanying story, *15 Ways to Fix the Suburbs*:

1. Plant trees curbside
2. Mix housing types
3. Give up big lawns
4. Drop the cul-de-sac
5. Hide the garage

Sound familiar? Look around Ypsilanti at the multitude of tree-lined streets. Notice the large number of different architectural styles on any given block. Front lawns are relatively small, keeping residents close to each other and those passing by, contributing to a sense of community. See any cul-de-sacs? Not many. Instead, notice residents engaging in that old-fashioned pastime of walking around the block. On sidewalks. Garages? Most of them are hidden by the houses, as garages were meant to be; *Newsweek* states: "Neighborhoods look more pleasant when garages are put behind the houses, accessible by side yards or by alleys."

Life here--or anywhere--isn't perfect, but maybe we need to be reminded occasionally of all of the things we've got going for us in Ypsilanti.

FIRE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES 100TH

1995 marks the 100th anniversary of the Ypsilanti Fire Department. On Saturday, October 17, Riverside Park will be the site of a celebration featuring historical fire engines from Greenfield Village. For more information and an interesting history of Ypsi's fire department, see the August 1995 *Depot Town Rag*.



MESSAGES FROM YESTERYEAR

With the selection of an old Ypsilanti post card as the basis for this year's Heritage Festival poster, we've seen a renewed interest in these collectibles. Two Foundation board members, Lisa Walters and Bill Nickels, boast extensive collections of post cards, most of them dating from as early as 1905 to the 1920's and beyond. In addition to the historical significance of the pictures featured on these cards, some of them have stories to tell as well. In keeping with the spirit of this--and every--year's festival, we present some of the interesting messages to be found on the backs of these cards.

July 7, 1908

"Dearie: Tell Mrs. Pavey there is only one Quaker in Ypsilanti and that he is an old bachelor. Lulu"

October 23, 1911

"Dear Cousin: I am well started in school now. Started a week late. Sorry I did not see you a second time at the Fair. How are you getting on now? Adrian defeated the Normal here Sat. 9 to 0. No score till last quarter. Write if you get time. Yours, Verne H. Wyble"

August 2, 1906 (Card featuring Main Building, MSNC)

"Here's whar you git larrin"

November 17, 1912 (Card featuring Starkweather Hall)

"Friend your pretty card rec'd have none of the State Normal on hand but this is one of the many buildings that belong to the Normal i thank you for the pretty card you sent come again soon. Sincerely Mrs. Nellie Tripp"

(Ed. note: Why do we assume people used to learn to write better than we do today?)

May 29, 1907 (Card featuring Washtenaw Country Club)

"This is where we are going to trip the light fantastic tomorrow night."

August 4, 1907

"Lois--Of course I have seen all there is to see of this town which is not much as it is vacation and there is no one here. Am being good. Yours, O. W. W."

January 12, 1907 (Card featuring Starkweather Hall)

"I went to this place last night to a reception given by the YMCAs to the YWCA. This is the home of the two associations, called Starkweather, being named after the lady who donated it. Mary B."

September 10, 1908 (Card featuring Water Tower)

"This is where we get our House Water ain't it nice."

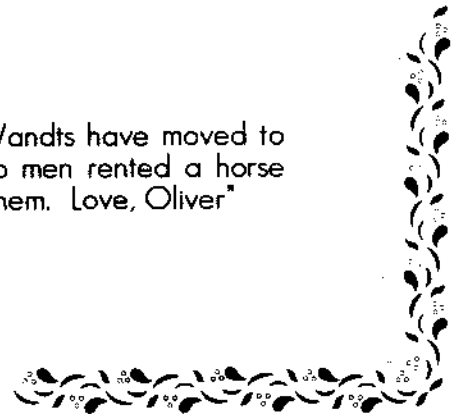
And on another Water Tower card, July 3, 1909

"The water here is all pumped from deep wells. It's fine."

And your editor's favorite:

March 19, 1914

"Dear Brother: How are you? Mrs. William Burrel is dead. And Wandts have moved to Mt. Clemens. Uncle William is going to Nebraska. There was two men rented a horse from Clark's livery and did not return it and the sheriff is hunting for them. Love, Oliver"



THE KING HOUSE--MORE NEWS FROM THE PAST

The following story appeared on the front page of the "Saturday morning, April 18, 1885," edition of the *Ypsilanti Commercial*. We reprint it here in its entirety for your information and enjoyment. Thanks to Foundation member James Mann for passing it along to us.

"By the first of May, Messrs. C. S. Warner and Charles Fleming will have completed their contract for building that handsome and convenient residence on Pearl Street, for Miss Julia A. King, preceptress at the Normal. The house is situated on the south side of Pearl, just above Perrin. It has a frontage of 45 feet and depth of 52 feet, two stories high all but the woodshed under one roof with four ornamental gables, entirely American in style.

"The front entrance into a spacious hall is through a portico 7 x 20 feet. Rolling back the doors to the right, we find ourselves in a large but cozy appearing dining room with a register, and neat mantel piece, dish cupboard, etc. This opens into a pantry, conveniently arranged, leading into the kitchen, which in turn opens into the woodshed. From the kitchen there is a back stairway, and also a door leading into a handy bath room which is also connected with the bedroom situated on the east side of the house.

"Going back to the front entrance and opening the folding doors to the left we enter the parlor, to be separated from the library by curtains, and from the bedroom before mentioned by rolling doors. In the library is a bay window and a mantel which for neatness is not often surpassed, the work of Mr. Fleming.

"At the further end of the hall is a winding staircase leading to a large hall upstairs where are found one double room, or suite of rooms and three single bedrooms, in all of which are arranged shelves and clothes-presses of ample dimensions. There is also a pump for raising water to the second story and a large tank which can be filled if desired.

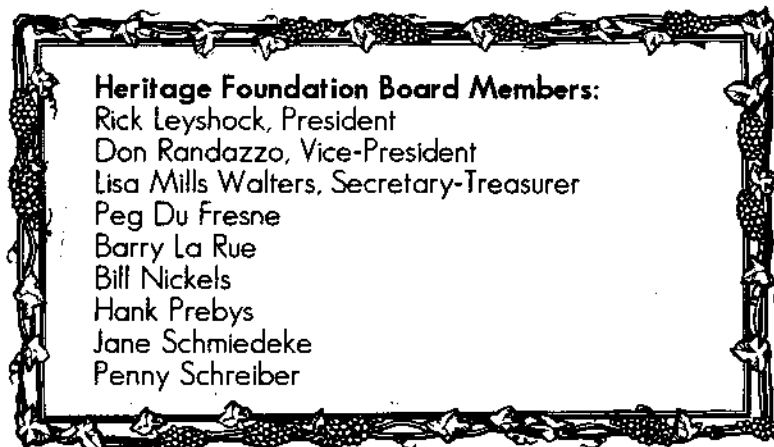
"The entrance to the cellar is through the kitchen. Here we find a Fuller & Warren hot air furnace which heats the entire house. Besides the division containing the furnace, and the coal room, there are three apartments, separated by brick partitions.

"The house is finished after the latest and most approved patterns; on the first floor entirely in butternut, and above in butternut and pine; above and below, a hard oil finish. The house is well-lighted, the panes of glass being of first class quality and good size gas pipe connections.

"Mr. J. W. Martin drafted the plan for the house. The work has been done entirely by home parties. The mason work by Mr. Rob't Curtis. Parsons Bros. furnished part of the material for the house, and did the outside painting; the finishing work was made up in the house from the planed boards. Mr. Chas. Hubbard of Amsdem & Hubbard did the inside painting and finishing. Mr. J. H. Sampson furnished the hardware and put in the hot air furnace, making the necessary pipe, and connections.

"For the present the ceilings and walls will be left in the white. Messrs. Warner and Fleming have reason to feel gratified at so successful a completion of their contract."





THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO MAKES YPSILANTI A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE: OUR POLICE FORCE, FIRE FIGHTERS, BUILDING INSPECTORS, CITY MANAGER, CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS, AND VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE PROUD TO BE FROM YPSILANTI.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOUNDATION

REMEMBER: dues are due in October. If you are a dues paying member now, you should be receiving your billing soon. If you would like to join the Foundation, send your check, payable to the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, to Lisa Mills Walters, Treasurer, 102 N. Wallace Blvd., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Individuals: \$10; Family: \$15; Contributing: \$25; Sustaining: \$100; Life: \$1000.

HELP MAKE HISTORY!

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

102 N. Wallace Blvd.

Editor: Lisa Mills Walters (485-3683)

Contributing Editors: Peg Du Fresne, Jane Schmiedeke, Barry La Rue

Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.

September 1995

Ypsilanti, MI

MEETING: Tuesday, September 26, 1995--7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: The Riverside Arts Center
76 N. Huron
Ypsilanti, Michigan

PROGRAM: "Vernacular Houses of the 1830's and 1840's in Ann Arbor, Michigan"

SPEAKER: Susan Wineberg, Historic Preservationist

The earliest settlers in Ann Arbor, and southern Michigan as well, who arrived in the 1820's and 30's were primarily from upstate New York and New England. As they prospered and left the log cabin stage, they tended to build their homes in the styles they'd left behind in the East: the Georgian, New England Large, and I-House floor plans. We kick off our 1995-96 series of programs with a fascinating look at some of these very early house forms in Ann Arbor, with our September meeting speaker, Susan Wineberg.

Susan grew up in Chicago and says she developed her life-long love of architecture as a result. A graduate of the Masters of Science in Historic Preservation program from Eastern Michigan University, Susan also has advanced degrees in Anthropology and Near Eastern Studies and pursued a career in archaeology, with many seasons of fieldwork in Turkey, before entering the field of historic preservation. Among her many accomplishments, Susan is co-author, with Marjorie Reade, of Historic Buildings: Ann Arbor, Michigan; Chair of the Individual Historic Properties Study Committee and the Awards Committee of the Historic District Commission of Ann Arbor; President of the Washtenaw County Historical Society; and Chair of the Museum Operating Committee for the proposed museum on Main Street. In the past, she has served on the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, the Old Fourth Ward Study Committee, the Downtown Study Committee, and Landmarks Study Committee. In her free moments (which, judging from all her commitments, can't be many), Susan relaxes in her 1850 Greek Revival house in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, in Ann Arbor.

With slides of those buildings still standing, and with measured drawings from the 1930's of some early houses which have since been demolished, Susan will show us how to recognize these earliest architectural forms.

We hope to see you there. As always, membership is not required. Bring a friend.
Refreshments WILL Be Served.

1995 HISTORIC HOME TOUR ANOTHER SUCCESS

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation's 1995 Historic Home Tour, held on Sunday, August 20th, proved to be another successful event, despite some of the hottest weather on record! More than 700 people went on tour. Advance ticket sales were particularly successful this year, nearly doubling sales from last year. Our sponsorship/patronage campaign was also very successful, as we more than doubled the number of sponsors and patrons from last year.

This growth in sponsorships and patronages is important because it enables us to cover all of the costs associated with holding the tour with these contributions, and that means that all of the tour proceeds go directly to the support of the Foundation programs. (In addition, a portion of the proceeds from this year's tour will be donated to the Ypsilanti Public School District, to help in the further development of its historic preservation program for grades K-12. See related story elsewhere in this newsletter.) A very special thanks goes to Home Tour Committee members Julie Fisher, Jennifer Goulet, and Mary Ann McDonald for their efforts in increasing this underwriting support for the tour.

On behalf of the Home Tour Committee, I would like to thank the owners and residents of this year's locations for graciously making their properties available: Roger Maki, Lorelei Crawford, and Edward Schramm, 122 Linden Court; Terry and Mary Ann McDonald, 315 N. Grove; Jonnie Bryant and Mark Namatevs and Gary Clark and Glenn Sard, 309 E. Cross; Jim and Marjean Soraruf, 322 Maple; Warren Lewis, 410 Oak; and Brad Perkins, 3401 Berry Road/Springhill Farm.

Thanks, also, to all of our volunteer guides and ticket sellers. It takes a great many people to make a tour work, and we couldn't do it without you.

Special thanks go out once again to Eric and Lisa Walters, our very hard-working Ticket Chairs. Thanks, also, to Rick and Carol Leyschock, and especially to **Barbara and Alan Saxton**, for a wonderful, **WONDERFUL**, post-tour party.

Finally, I'd like to issue my personal thanks to the members of the Home Tour Committee: Sharon Beckett, Jonnie Bryant, Lorelei Crawford, Julie Fisher, Jennifer Goulet, Kim Koch, Nancie Loppnow, Mary Ann McDonald, Penny Schreiber, Grace Sweeney, and Jane Van Bolt. These individuals are responsible for locating and selecting the homes on tour. In addition, they serve as the chief guides at each location, researching the properties, writing the brochure copy for the sites, and organizing and training the volunteer guides. **CONGRATULATIONS, GROUP, AND THANKS TO YOU ALL!**

Peg Du Fresne
Chair, 1995 Historic Home Tour Committee

P.S. The Committee will begin its work on the 1996 Home Tour in late January, 1996. Anyone interested in joining the Committee in any capacity should contact Peg Du Fresne between now and January 1, 1996, at 482-8666.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND THE NEXT GENERATION: THE YPSILANTI PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMUNITY HISTORY PROGRAM

As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, the Foundation is donating a portion of the proceeds from this year's Home Tour to the Ypsilanti Public School District to help in the further development of its program to promote interest in Ypsilanti history and historic architecture in grades K-12. Until members of the Historic Home Tour Committee and the Foundation Board brought these programs to this writer's attention, I was not even aware that such a program existed in our schools, and I suspect that other Foundation members are unfamiliar with it as well. So I was excited to learn more about the District's Community History programs from Rochelle (Ricky) Balkam, Program Coordinator and Social Studies Resource Teacher for the Ypsilanti Public Schools.

From Ricky, I learned that the Public Schools' Scope and Sequence specifically includes Community History at the third grade level, and that teachers in other grades include Community History in their programs as well. For the past six years, Ricky has been visiting elementary classrooms, showing slides of Ypsilanti's historic architecture, sharing artifacts, and accompanying students on walking tours of Ypsilanti's Historic District and on tours of the Historical Museum. In addition, I learned that Ypsilanti High School offers a one-semester course in Ypsilanti History, and approximately 65-75 students take this course each year.

Ricky also shared with me the plans for three elementary projects being developed. The first is an Erickson Early Childhood (grades 1-3) community volunteer project, now in the early stages. The second is an Ardis third grade project with a combined focus on the 25th anniversary of the school and a look at Ypsilanti over the last 100 years, at 25-year intervals. These two projects have been funded, in part, by the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. The third project, just underway at Estabrook, will develop a model for community history using the latest CD-ROM technology.

Looking to the future, the District has three other projects in mind, which are only in the talking stage at this time. One involves the creation of a model program linking the Eastern Michigan University School of Education with the Ypsilanti Public Schools. This program would be based in the Town Hall School, now on EMU's campus. Teachers and students would visit the school and participate in the curriculum found in a typical one-room school of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Geer School (Plymouth Public Schools) or Scotch Settlement School (in Greenfield Village) model would be used. The second project is participation in the National Trust for Historic Preservation/National Park Service program called "Teaching with Historic Places." In this program, each community determines its own scope, and lessons are designed across subject areas and across grade levels. The third future program is based on the theme of this year's Heritage Festival poster: "Postcards from the Past." It's a writing project, combining historical photos with writing skills.

As you can tell from the above program descriptions, there's a lot going on in our schools related to local history and historic architecture, and our donation will certainly be put to good use! We are pleased to be able to give the Community History Program our support. After all, we both have the same goals: the help preserve, to help protect, and to educate the community about our rich heritage.

Peg Du Fresne

(A special thank you to Ricky Balkam for information used to prepare this story.)



HOLIDAY HOUSE PLANS IN FULL SWING

Saturday, October 21st, and Sunday, October 22nd, will see the James Breakey Manor transformed into a holiday wonderland as some of Ypsilanti's most creative designers, decorators, and florists present their best ideas for the season at the HOLIDAY HOUSE.

Among those participating will be Remington-Walker Design Associates, The Parish House Inn, Me 'N' My Sister's Country Store, Esquire Custom Draperies, design consultant Warren Kent Lewis, and others, including members of the Foundation.

A brand new fundraising event for the Foundation, the Holiday House will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Visitors to the Holiday House will enjoy light refreshments served by the Breakey Manor and can also include a walking tour of the surrounding Historic District as part of their visit.

Tickets are available at the door. Admission is \$8.00 per person and includes the tour of the displays, the tour of the Breakey Manor, refreshments, and optional walking tour. For more information, call the James Breakey Manor at (313) 483-2300.

VOLUNTEERS: Take part in this first-time fundraiser for the Foundation and enjoy some of the holiday magic yourself! Peg Du Fresne (Co-Chair of the Holiday House, along with Mary Todorov of the Breakey Manor) is recruiting volunteers to either sell tickets or provide additional on-site security presence for the displays. Contact **Peg at 482-8666** for more information. Barry La Rue, who is coordinating the walking tours, is recruiting volunteers to act as tour guides. Contact **Barry at 482-2327** for more information.

All volunteers will receive complimentary admission to the Holiday House.

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