

Heritage NEWS

JANUARY 2004

January

Guest speaker Sally Bund
assistant archivist
Bentley Historical Library

Wed. Jan. 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington Street

Sally Bund, a graduate of EMU's historic preservation program, is an assistant archivist specializing in architectural collections at the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library. Bund is archivist for the library's recent Albert Kahn acquisitions. On Wednesday evening, January 28, 7:30 p.m., Bund will present a talk and slide show on the late architect at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 North Washington, Ypsilanti.

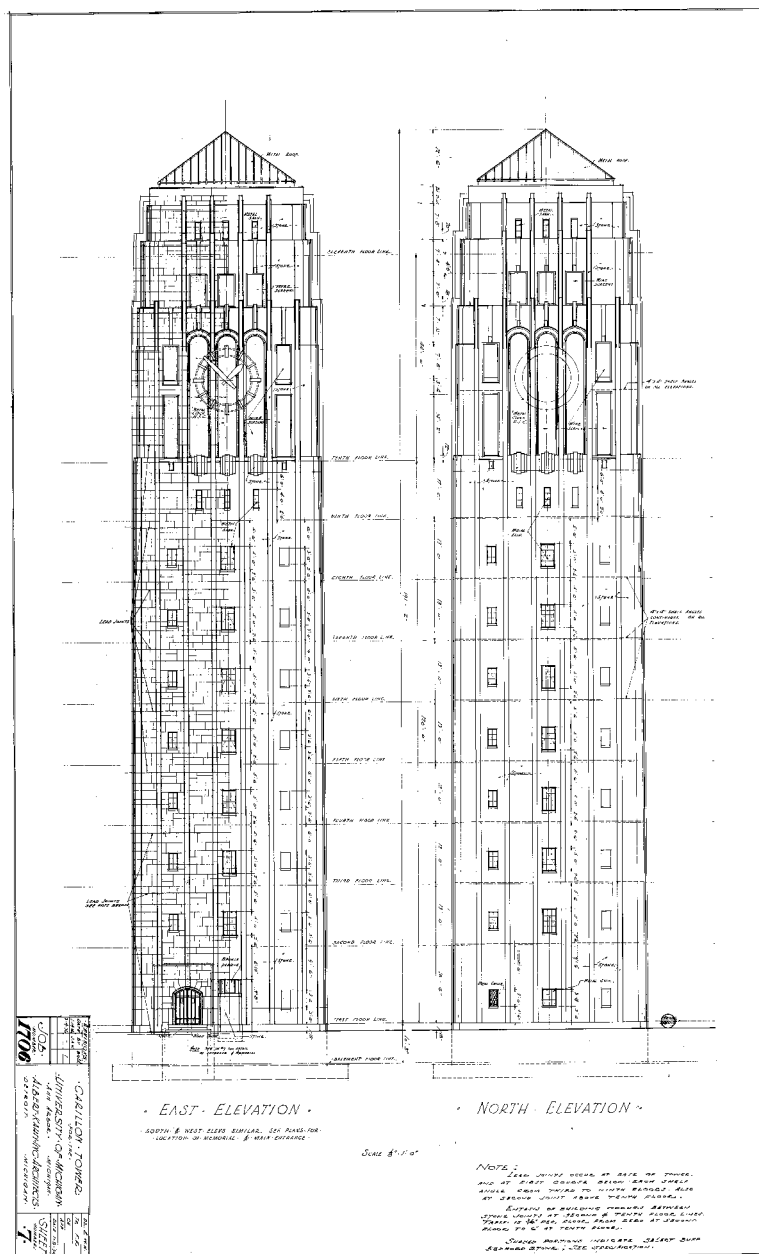
Albert Kahn left an enduring legacy throughout southeastern Michigan. Incredibly prolific, Kahn designed many buildings in Detroit, including the Fischer Building and the GM World Headquarters. He was also Henry Ford's favorite architect and the designer of Ford's world famous River Rouge Plant. In Ann Arbor he dominated the University of Michigan's twentieth-century campus. Of the seventeen U-M buildings that went up during Kahn's lifetime, fourteen remain, including Hill Auditorium, Angell Hall, and the Clements Library.



Albert Kahn

Kahn's Detroit firm, Albert Kahn Associates, recently donated the construction drawings for seventy of Kahn's most important buildings to the Bentley Library. Kahn Associates also donated a collection of construction photos, newspaper clippings about Kahn and his work from 1905 to the present, and the transcripts of many of Kahn's speeches. Sally Bund's Albert Kahn slide show had its debut in December at the U-M's Detroit Observatory, where it was a hit. Ann Arbor Observer writer and local historian Grace Shackman describes Bund's talk as "fascinating and excellent." The Kahn collection is a landmark acquisition for the Bentley, according to Shackman, and it will allow future scholars to break new ground in researching and writing about the architect. Future restorers of Kahn buildings are also going to be grateful.

Immersing herself in the Kahn collection at the Bentley "has been wonderful," says Bund, who has developed a bit of a crush on the architect along the way. Bund brings Kahn, who died in 1942, into focus as a person, says Shackman. "He was an amazing hero, a genius without flaws—lovely, honest, humble," says Bund. "His only fault is that he worked too much." Awareness of what Kahn accomplished and of how he influ-



Courtesy U-M Bentley Historical Library

enced twentieth-century architecture has been growing in the last ten years. "He was one of the greatest architects in American history," says Bund.

Please join us on January 28 for an absorbing evening with Sally Bund and Albert Kahn. The public is invited and coffee and cookies will be served.

Follett mansion, finest in the city

By James Mann

Images from James Mann's book
Images of America Ypsilanti A History in Pictures

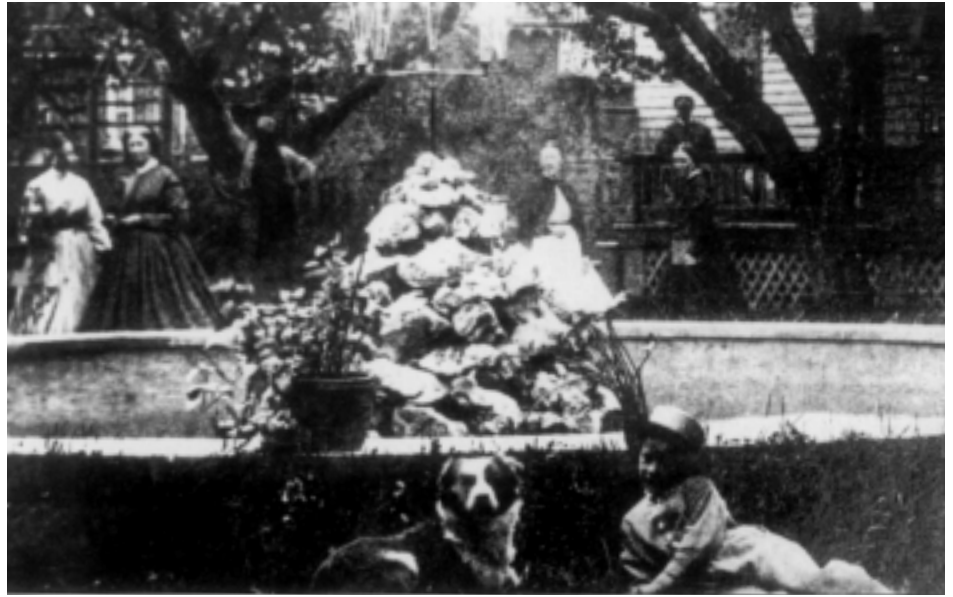
"The eyesore of the old house on the Follett property will soon disappear," reported *The Ypsilantian* of November 26, 1903. "The buildings, by order of Mrs. F. Uhl, were sold at auction Friday, and W. L. Beardsley got them for \$200. The land will be platted and sold for city lots. The place during the life of Mr. Follett was

the finest in the city, the lawn beautifully kept, with flowers and fountain. After Mrs. Follett's health failed the place began to run down, and since her death it has been allowed to rot and drop to pieces, a sorry monument to the memory of Benjamin Follett, who was one of the most enterprising men this city ever knew. It has

been hoped his daughter Mrs. Uhl, would present the beautiful grove to the city to make Follett Park a real memorial of her father's career in this city, but she evidently did not care to do so."

This was the sad end to a house once considered the finest in the city. At one time people in Ypsilanti would point out the Follett mansion to visitors with pride. The house was a gift in the 1840's from Mark Norris to his daughter Elvira and his son-in-law Benjamin Follett. Follett was active in banking, real estate, lumber, and many other activities. It was he who had the Follett House Hotel built in Depot Town, and it was considered the finest hotel on the Michigan Central Railroad line between Detroit and Chicago. Over the years, the couple metamorphosed the house turning it into a show-place and social center. Benjamin Follett died suddenly on December 26, 1864, at the age of 45. His wife Elvira died in September of 1883. The house then became the property of their daughter Alice, who lived in Grand Rapids.

"The beautiful Follett home," wrote Harvey Colburn in *The Story of Ypsilanti*, "was for years one of the show places of the city. It was situated on River Street in a grove of oak trees



The Follett mansion stood on River Street between Oak and Maple streets.

extending from Oak to Maple, a great rambling structure with big bay windows. The surrounding grounds were extensive, brilliant with flowers, and adorned by a large fountain fed by a windmill standing on the hill above."

"He (Benjamin Follett) built the first conservatory in the city," noted *The Ann Arbor Daily News* of Monday, January 25, 1904, and was one of the first to take care of his lawn and have fine flower beds. His was the first house in the city to be lighted by gas. This was in 1858 and the same day the second union school building was dedicated. All the children in the neighborhood were invited to see the house illuminated."

"In 1856," continued *The Ann Arbor Daily News*, "Mr. Follett had a fine barn built by Mortimer C. Smalley. When finished it was considered the finest barn in this part of the state and people came from all over the country to see it. A few years ago this barn burned, and to show how changed were the conditions from 40 years ago previous, the papers in referring to the fire came out with the headline, 'A Nuisance Gone'"

"A talk with Mr. Beardsley, who bought and has been tearing down the house, reminds one very forcibly of the changes that a few years make," noted *The Ann Arbor Daily News*. "How a carpenter of today would like to get hold of such timber as he took out of this house. In the frame work, several black walnut timbers, 8x10 were found and apparently as sound today as the day the house was built. And such boards

as were used in finishing—clear whitewood, two to two and a half feet wide, and not a sign of a knot in sight. The cellar shelves were made from clear walnut boards, 15 to 18 inches wide, and today a man couldn't find such lumber, even if he were prepared to pay the price that would probably be asked."



The Follett House was considered the finest hotel between Detroit and Chicago. It was opened on July 4, 1859.

A look back at the miraculous changes

**An open letter from the
YHF President, Jack Harris
(March 1986):**

In a slide show with taped audio presented to the visitors at the 1979 Heritage Festival, I stated that Ypsilanti was at a crossroads. I was referring to the preservation movement, how far it had come and what the prospects for the future seemed to be. Today we have passed the crossroads and are on our way toward a revitalized community based on preservation and utilization of our best resource: our historic buildings.

No one who remembers Ypsilanti ten or fifteen years ago can deny that some pretty miraculous changes have taken place. Do you remember Depot Town in 1974, for example, when Bev and Don Shankwiler bought the Artrain building? The place inside looked like London after the blitz and tackling it had to take the courage of mighty brave adventurers and, given what the rest of that old business district looked like then, such an investment must have been taken as madness by many. Yet in 1977, when the Heritage Foundation held its September meeting in Shankwiler's imaginatively renovated building, things had begun to happen all along that part of Cross Street and a new spirit had emerged—the spirit of Depot Town. Today the spirit is very much in the flesh, and Depot Town is a vital, living area popular to thousands all over southeast Michigan.

Back in the mid-70s, North Huron Street was crumbling. The old city hall (now Old Town Hall) was rapidly decaying and all the buildings along that historic streetscape were neglected and abused—except for our museum, which stood amidst the ruins as a proud symbol of our heritage. Now that street, with nothing gone 'cutesy' as in so many revitalized towns, glows in pride in the late afternoon sun, a solid statement about a past worth remembering, preserving and using.

All over Ypsilanti, in the face of much negativism and ignorance, greed and apathy, houses have been maintained and restored. From Summit on the west to Prospect on the east, houses that were on the endangered list have been picked up, labored over, and brought back to life. From Buffalo to Forest, too, transformations have taken place. Each of us has his or her own list, but I remember admiring and lamenting the splendid gingerbread Queen Anne at 35 South Summit, which ten years ago looked like it

“All over Ypsilanti, in the face of much negativism and ignorance, greed and apathy, houses have been maintained and restored.”

might not survive. Houses all over the East Side needed attention, too. What is now High/Scope was not in the best of shape as an apartment structure and the wonderful Gothic Revival house at the corner of North Grove and High was in dire straits [in 2004 one of the city's crown jewels]. On the south side, I troubled over the Glover House (now Child and Family Service) at 118 South Washington, in a severe state of decay and worsening [in 2004 a superbly restored single-family home]. On the north side, there was the Stachlewitz house at 601 West Forest, almost in ruins.

When one remembers these images, it's a little easier to face the dregs of leftover winter 1986 in Ypsilanti. Everywhere one turns now one sees improvement year after year. Small projects as well as big ones contribute to the new sense of faith emerging that Ypsilanti can't lose, that the old idea that this was a town without an identity is dead, and that a new sense of community pride is spreading well beyond the city limits.

The origins of this pride go back many years to the days of Nat Edmunds' tireless battle to save five buildings along North Huron. Two were lost, but three were saved, superb examples of Richardsonian Romanesque, Italian Villa, and Greek Revival—now among our most cherished possessions. Again, Nat herself can better tell you about the six separate times she saved the Ladies Library (Starkweather mansion) from destruction.

Then came Jane Bird [today Jane Schmiedeke] and the organization of the Heritage Foundation, whose immediate purpose was to save the Towner House, the oldest building on its original foundation—now the Towner House Children's Museum on North Huron. Both Nat and Jane were influential in the beginnings of that organization and within only a few years, a new kind of pride in our architectural heritage had emerged, with the development of a historic-structure marker-award program, the heritage calendar (which annually presented a series of local historic buildings drawn by local artists), and a series of public presentations

designed to rouse interest in preservation and enlighten people about the advantages of saving old buildings. A walking tour was initiated along North Huron in 1977, and in 1978 the Foundation's first annual home tour was held, now a centerpiece for the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival.

Meanwhile, Nat and Jane were working within the political structure for preservation, aiming for a stronger base from which to protect the city's rich heritage. Through time and exacting surveys a historic district was established in 1973 and placed on the State Register of Historic places. Soon it would be on the National Register as well. A strong ordinance was written and gained City Council's approval in 1977. A historic district commission was appointed by the mayor, with Council approval, and the first historic district commission meeting was held in the small room behind the furnace in old city hall in February 1978.

Since that time, preservation has become an integral part of city policy. Meeting every two weeks, the Commission reviews all applications for building permits in the historic district for work that includes exterior change of any sort.

The district itself, soon after its establishment, was enlarged, at the petition of the neighborhood, to include a significant part of the east side beyond Depot Town. That made for an enormous district of over 700 buildings, and the work at times was grueling for the seven-member Commission, whose membership has remained remarkably stable over the years, with some seemingly permanent fixtures, alas, like myself, and some new blood (and minds), such as our most recent addition, Scott Diels, architect to Tom Monaghan. Members are appointed according to law; some with proven records in historic preservation, some who live in the district, one an attorney, one an architect or builder with preservation expertise, and so forth.

Only one who has served on the Commission since its inception can know how much work has gone into reviewing the hundreds of permits which have come before us. There have often been meetings which went on nonstop from 7 p.m. until after 11 p.m., with on-site field trips on weekends. But then, perhaps it takes that experience to know the impact the Commission has had on this entire preservation movement.

continue on page 4

A look back continued from page 3

Preservation is the key word—and it's difficult to appreciate the meaning of the term when one has no idea of what might have happened, but didn't—what might have been destroyed, but wasn't—because of the Historic District Ordinance. Yet some of us can look back and KNOW that certain buildings—important buildings—would not be here today without the protection of law and the work of the commission. It's also difficult to see "what might have been" unless one knows firsthand the work of the Commission—how structures would have been changed, sometimes altered out of recognition, and property values lessened by poor workmanship.

Anyone who owns or buys an old building knows the work involved in maintaining or restoring that property. The work seems endless, but harder to deal with is the depression of seeing negative changes in buildings in the neighborhood—changes which affect not only that property itself, but reflect upon the character of the entire area and cut the value of one's own investment in sweat and cash.

The ordinance has gone far to lessen the number of such negative changes, because the historic district encompasses the entire central part of the City; and this protection has meant an enormous difference in our total image and has provided a more stable base for investors all over town.

Movement now is into Ypsilanti, not out of it. Enthusiasm is high, property is selling, people are moving in, most encouragingly into downtown. Lowered interest rates are a big help. Still, people want assurance that their investment is safe. A tight Historic District Ordinance is a major way of protecting those investments which are so vital to the continued revitalization of our city.



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

c/o Don Randazzo
6101 Hitchingham Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Board Members

Hank Prebys, President
Joe Mattimoe, Treasurer
Jan Arps
Jennifer Albaum
Jennifer Goulet
Pattie Harrington
James Mann
Bill Nickels
Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke
Paul Schreiber
Penny Schreiber

2004 HERITAGE FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

Location: Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington
Time: 7:30 p.m.

WED., JAN. 28, 2004:

"Albert Kahn, Master of American Industrial Architecture," Sally Bund, assistant archivist architectural collections, U-M Bentley Historical Library.

WED., MARCH 24, 2004:

"So Faux So Good," local decorative painters Randy and Kathy Fettes. Get an overview of the past, present and future of faux finishing. Plus a demonstration of their most popular faux finish techniques, including architectural stenciling. Learn to transform your own walls from plain to a richly glazed patina with the help of these classic decorative painting effects.

WED., MAY 26, 2004:

Annual Marker Awards Banquet

SUN. AUGUST 15, 2004:

27th Annual Historic Home Tour

See you at the January Meeting - Wednesday, January 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Heritage NEWS

MARCH 2004

March

"So Faux So Good"

Guest speakers
Randy & Kathy Fettes

Discussion & Demonstration
of Faux Painting Techniques

Wed. March 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington Street



Ypsilantians Randy and Kathy Fettes own a decorative painting business called Rand and Company Interiors. On Wednesday evening, March 24, 7:30, the Fettes will give a talk and demonstration on decorative painting for the Heritage Foundation at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 North Washington, Ypsilanti.

Randy Fettes has been in the custom painting business since his graduation from art school. About ten years ago, he and Kathy added decorative painting to the business.

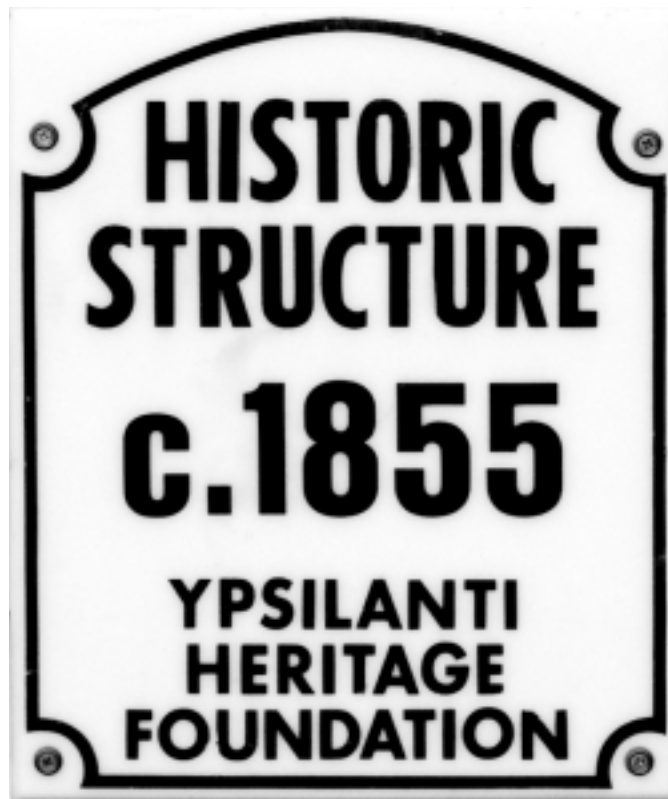
The painting duo went into business together at the right time. Decorative painting is very popular, partly due to HGTV. Today the Fetteses do quite a bit of stenciling for their clients. "Stenciling used to be cows and chickens," laughs Kathy. "Now it can be 'all over' stenciling, with great big stencils that look like fabric damask." Or they mimic the look of old-fashioned silk wall coverings. "Dimensional, raised

stencils are now cutting edge," she adds. The Fetteses go to conventions and classes to stay current.

On March 24 Kathy and Randy are going to talk a little bit about the history of decorative painting. Then they will demonstrate simple techniques and explain the proper proportions for mixing glazes. The audience will have the opportunity to "practice." Kathy and Randy are also bringing photos of some of their recent projects.

Kathy and Randy's house is going to be on the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Historic Home Tour on August 22. Everyone can look forward to seeing what they have done to their own house on East Cross Street.

Please join us on March 24 for practical tips on decorative painting from experts. As always, coffee and cookies will be served and the general public is welcome.



Historic House Markers

You can nominate a home or building for this special award

The time is coming again for The Heritage Foundation's Marker Award Banquet. It will take place Wednesday, May 26, 2004 at the Ladies' Literary Club. At the banquet, owners of houses that meet certain criteria are recognized for their efforts and Historic Building Markers are awarded in order to publicly identify buildings of special merit.

You can nominate a home or building for this special award.

How about bringing places that you think deserve an award to the attention of the selection committee?

Here are the criteria used by the committee:

- The building is within the boundaries of the City of Ypsilanti.
- The building predates 1950 and has an identifiable architectural style.

- The building is well and appropriately maintained (maybe it has just been rehabilitated).
- The grounds are maintained.
- If it is a rental property, the property has had appropriate maintenance for at least two years.
- The building has been developed sensitively.

The following example gives an idea of what is meant by "appropriate maintenance."

- The siding on the building is what was originally intended or could have been used originally. Vinyl siding on a 19th century building is never appropriate.
- The windows are original or identical to the original in size and configuration.
- Porches, railings and steps are

- appropriate to the period and style of the building.
- Any additions are compatible.

One-of-a-kind markers are possible in order to recognize the preservation and stabilization of a significant or high-profile building that has had a history of mistreatment. These will be selected after a case-by-case review.

If you would like to nominate a building for a Historic Marker designation send (before April 1, 2004) a very brief description of the building and its address to:

Don Randazzo
Chair, YHF Marker Committee
6101 Hitchingham Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
e-mail: drandazzo@provide.net

Riverside Arts Center to Hold Benefit

Mark your calendar for The Riverside Arts Center's "Party for the Potty"! The event will take place on Friday, April 16, at 8:00p.m. Featuring music by the RFD Boys as well as drinks and hors d'oeuvres from local eateries.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will support restroom and catering kitchen improvements in the newly renovated Club Level. Tickets are \$50 each. Corporate Sponsorships are \$500. For more information call (734) 480-ARTS (2787)

At the Riverside Art's Center Club Level Reflections on Life: The Works of Emil Weddige March 4-31, 2004

The exhibition features the work of longtime printmaker, educator and alumnus of Eastern Michigan University, Emil Weddige, who left his many color lithographs to the University upon his death in 2001.

The exhibition is open from 3-9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and 1-3 p.m. on Sundays.



Historic District Commission Role Significant

August 1993

*Heritage Foundation Newsletter article
written by Jack Harris, editor*

"With such news as the above, (historic preservation) we should perhaps add the note that such a miracle would not likely have happened were it not for the establishment of the Historic District in the late 1970's and the important role the Historic District in the late 1970's and the important role the Historic District Commission has played in the preservation of the historic character of this town. Often misnamed "the historical" group (confusing it with either the Ypsilanti Historical Society or the Foundation), the HDC is the public body that has been delegated the task of interpreting the city ordinance that that is the guiding source for decisions made in terms of exterior effect for all properties within the historic district. Following national and state regulations, this ordinance has been a powerful tool in protecting the historic character of this town.

Serving on the Commission is a thankless task, a time-consuming and wearing job, that only the most dedicated citizen should be assigned by the city. In the course of its history, since its establishment in 1978, disputes have arisen, tempers have flared, misunderstandings have occurred, but no one can ultimately deny that the work of the commission

has contributed enormously to Ypsilanti's ever-growing positive image, both as it is seen by the public in the area and in reality.

History happened as it did in the late seventies, with the establishment of our great historic district, because this town was on its way to becoming a shambles and because two women in particular, Nathalie Edmunds and Jane Schmiedeke, rolled up their sleeves and went to work to turn the tide against destruction. They have been honored in the past; they should never be forgotten for what they have done. Jane's dedication has been phenomenal. If we honor a Greek patriot named Demetrius for fighting to protect his homeland, we might well consider honoring an American woman named Jane for devoting so much of her life to protecting our town. America has had some extraordinary women who have committed their lives to preservation. Jane Schmiedeke is one of these.

This edition of the News is dedicated to her and to Nathalie and to all those who have committed themselves to preservation. It has largely been through their selfless dedication and hard work that Ypsilanti has turned itself around—and we all deserve to celebrate the Great Cause to which so many have contributed and some have Given So Much in the Preservation of Our Heritage." (Jack Harris, editor)

Home Tour Committee Seeks Volunteers

The Heritage Foundation's Home Tour Committee is busy putting together this year's Historic Homes Tour, which takes place on Sunday, August 22, during the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. If you would like to volunteer to help with the home tour please call Penny Schreiber (483—5688).

**Historic
Homes Tour
Sunday,
August 22**



2004 HERITAGE FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

Location: Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington
Time: 7:30 p.m.

WED., MARCH 24, 2004:

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WED., MAY 26, 2004:

Annual Marker Awards Banquet

SUN. AUGUST 22, 2004:

27th Annual Historic Home Tour

Have you visited the YHF website lately? There are new features you may find interesting • www.yhf.org

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.

See you at the March Meeting - Wednesday, March 24 at 7:30 p.m.

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2004/2005 SCHEDULE

22
SEPTEMBER
**Historic Preservation
Before & After**
Jane Schmiedeke & Paul Schreiber

17
NOVEMBER
Buying This Old House
Don Randazzo & Paul Schreiber

26
JANUARY
How To Research Your Home
James Mann

23
MARCH
Painting Your Home
Ron Rupert & Sherwin Williams

25
MAY
Annual Awards Banquet



Heritage Foundation's Annual HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

Sunday, August 22nd

We are looking for volunteers
to serve as guides for the home tour.

The shifts: 2 1/2 hours
The benefits: free admission to the home tour and
an invitation to the Post-Tour Party

call Jan Arps 734 426-5057
or Penny Schreiber 483-5688

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Heritage NEWS

MAY 2004

2004 Historic Markers



presented at the

May Banquet

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation would like to congratulate the 2004 Historic Marker recipients. The criteria used for awarding the marker includes the structure's architectural significance and the care and maintenance of the property.

This year the following property owners will be recognized at the Annual Awards Banquet:

Bryant Murray & Rachel Cushchiere-Murray
114 North Normal

∞
Diana Green
306 South Huron

∞
Kay Wenger
8 South Summit

∞
Barry LaRue & Kimberly Clarke
302 Oak

∞
Eric & Karen Maurer
35 South Summit

∞
Sexton's House & Gatehouse
Highland Cemetery
River Street

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation cordially invites you to The Annual Awards Banquet

on Wednesday,
May 26, 2004
6:30 p.m.

at the
Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington Street
Ypsilanti

Please call
Karen Nickels at 483-8896
or Penny Schreiber at 483-5688
if you plan to attend
and let them know
what dish
you will bring to pass

Preview of the 2004 Marker Homes



114 North Normal
c. 1890 – Queen Anne



302 Oak
c. 1860 – Italianate



306 South Huron
c. 1888 – Italianate



35 South Summit
c. 1850 – Gothic Revival, Italianate,
Queen Anne, & Eastlake



8 South Summit
c. 1883 – Queen Anne



Postcards of the
interurban railway.



The Interurban Railway

The Interurban: The "Ypsi-Ann"

The interurban railway was born during the summer of 1890. Citizens of Ypsilanti supported the interurban as a quick and easy way to travel to Ann Arbor, the county seat. The steam-driven "Ypsi-Ann" soon acquired over 600 riders a day. Its ridership was directly connected to Ann Arbor having three thousand male students and not enough girls and Ypsilanti having one thousand female students and not enough boys.

The Ypsilanti station and car barns were originally on North Washington near Michigan Avenue, where Club Devine is now located. The interurban traveled up North Washington and turned west on Cross Street, following Packard Road into Ann Arbor. In 1898, steam power was replaced with

electricity and a route to Detroit was inaugurated. Pretty soon the car barns were moved to East Michigan Avenue on the site of today's Honda dealership. An extension west on Michigan Avenue to Saline was completed in 1899 and a route to Jackson and Coldwater added in 1901. Ypsilanti historian Milt Barnes told how he could ride linking interurbans to Romeo, Cass Lake, Pontiac, Port Huron, Toledo, and Cleveland.

The rapid growth in automobile ownership spelled the end of the interurban, which finally shut down in 1929. Barnes claimed that the tracks were removed when the interurban stopped running. Today we know that they failed to remove on North Washington.

The Interurban Rails Unearthed in 2004



Interurban rails discovered during road construction on North Washington Street in April of 2004.

photos courtesy of M. Maynard

Heritage NEWS

AUG./SEPT. 2004

GOOD NEWS EDITION

Historic Home Tour 2004

Sunday, August 22 ■ noon - 5pm

The 27th Annual Historic Home Tour will take place on Sunday, August 22nd from noon - 5pm. Advance tickets are on sale in Ypsilanti at Haab's Restaurant, Norton-Durant Florists & Gifts and Quinn's Essentials, they are also available in Ann Arbor at Downtown Home & Garden. Tickets are \$8.00 in advance and \$10.00 the day of the tour. On the day of the tour, tickets are available at the Home Tour ticket booth in front of the Historical Museum at 208 North Huron Street from 10 a.m. until 3 pm and Haab's on Michigan Avenue.



203 North Washington Street

The home at 203 North Washington is more than 100 years old. Today Daniel and O'Bryan Worley are working diligently to bring it back to its original nineteenth-century glory. The house's eclectic and expressive characteristics are highly indicative of the Queen Anne style, popular in the 1880s and 1890s when the Industrial Revolution swept the country. As in this regal 1890 beauty, the exteriors of Queen Anne houses were often innovative and ornamental. Note the spindle work and other decorative details. Unfortunately these glorious details often proved difficult to maintain. For this reason, the Queen Anne style fell out of favor around the turn of the last century while smaller, more serious styles took center stage.

1124 Grant Street

Built in 1926, this Colonial Revival house was constructed as a model home. Its contractor, Allen Dieter, lived in the house until 1942. William Yeatman, a farmer and a gas station owner, became the house's second owner. Yeatman's partner, Matthew Stein, bought it in 1945 and his family lived there until 1975, when Bob and Shari Strauss purchased the house.

114 North Normal Street

Charles Neal Ellis, the owner of a local lumber business, built the Queen Anne house at 114 North Normal Street between the years 1885 and 1896. Ellis and his wife, Julia Chapman Ellis, raised their three daughters, Bessie, Bethlea, and Bertha, in the house.

209 Washtenaw Avenue

In a small city with a wealth of beautiful old churches, the 1892 First United Methodist Church of Ypsilanti stands out. The light-filled sanctuary is lovely, with graceful wood pews, a prominent balcony encircling the space, and a backdrop of stunning stained glass windows.

321 High Street

This 1930s American vernacular cottage was built in 1939 by the current owner's grandparents Jake and Alice Dieterle. Because Jake Dieterle was a finish carpenter, he did all the woodwork in the house, including the corner cupboard.

845 East Cross Street

Randy and Kathy Fettes are decorative painters and the owners of Rand and Company Interiors. Naturally they like to practice their painting skills on their own house, so tourgoers interested in decorative painting won't want to miss this stop on today's tour.



1124 Grant Street



114 North Normal Street



209 Washtenaw Avenue



321 High Street



845 East Cross Street

Good News in Ypsilanti

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation presents its

2004 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's also a chance to say Thank You to everyone who cares for and about Ypsilanti!

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"It Happened in Ypsilanti"

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation awarded
Historic Structure Markers

this year to:



houses pictured left to right

1. 114 North Normal,
c. 1890 Queen Anne
2. 302 Oak,
c. 1860 Italianate
3. 306 South Huron,
c. 1888 Italianate
4. 35 South Summit,
c 1850 Gothic Revival, Italianate,
Queen Anne & Eastlake
5. 8 South Summit,
c. 1883 Queen Anne
6. Sexton's House & Gatehouse
Highland Cemetery - River Street
(not pictured)

• *Nice Work* •

Need inspiration to choose paint colors for your own house? Drive by to see the gorgeous jobs at 323 MAPLE, 114 NORTH NORMAL, 321 HIGH, 109 NORTH and 52 EAST CROSS.

And, while you're admiring the paint scheme at 52 EAST CROSS, the home of BirdBrain, who deal in upscale furnishings for home and garden, take a minute to appreciate the contemporary curved cornice above the storefront windows. It replaces a cornice that was removed years ago

The muddy parking lot behind CADY'S GRILL is unrecognizable! Paving and landscaping have made it a great entry to Cadys rear entrance. And more enhancements are coming – stay tuned!

The beloved, 125 year old FREIGHTHOUSE is getting some welcome attention by way of grant-funded electrical work, repairs to wooden portions of the building, and new exterior lighting.



The "gingerbread", such a highlight of the house at 101 EAST FOREST (corner of North River), for many years had pieces missing. A few scraps, found in the basement, and an historic photo of the house guided the creation of new pieces so that what you see now matches exactly what was there originally.

And, next door at 111 EAST FOREST, the asphalt siding has been removed and, when the 12,000 nail holes have been filled, the house will be painted in its original colors, traces of which still remained. And this is a do-it-yourself job !!

Thanks to the owner of the Queen Anne house at 106 SOUTH HURON for the appropriate front porch railing. It really stands out from the inappropriate railings we see so often.

• *Major Rehab Jobs* • undertaken this year

Something to keep an eye on – the KRESGE BUILDING, the huge commercial Italianate building at the NW corner of Michigan and North Washington, and the adjoining RENAISSANCE BUILDING are just in the beginning stages of being rehabbed. It will eventually house businesses on the first floor and loft apartments on the upper floors. What an attractive place to live that will be.

• *Great News* •

Ypsilanti was one of four Michigan cities to receive a \$100,000 COOL CITIES grant. It will enable the Riverside Arts Center to expand into the vacant Detroit Edison building next door, providing funds for interior and exterior improvements and much needed space for ever-expanding activities.



• *On-Going* •

And, speaking of attractive places to live, the much anticipated WATER STREET project is making steady, if not particularly visible, progress. All of the property has now been purchased, many buildings have been demolished and contaminated soil has been removed and replaced. Construction of the housing units will begin when all demolition is complete.

• *New* •

Four new apartments are ready in a building just completed at the corner of NORTH ADAMS and ARCADE. Where there was one of the very few vacant lots in the city, there is now an attractive building offering two-story apartments with private entrances and on-site parking.

You can't get from here to there, or from there to here, the dust billows, the ruts are muddy and deep and we've given up washing our cars. But, the NEW STREETS are smooth and clean and beautiful!!! And, yes, this is the last year of the road repair project – every local street will have been replaced, as well as the water mains under them!!! Again, many thanks to the road workers who are competent, efficient, helpful and friendly.

• *Thanks* •

The historic village barn at the rear of 206 NORTH HURON, about which we worried for so long, was reroofed last fall and painted this spring.

And thanks to the very nice, but anonymous, person who planted and tends the lovely little URBAN GARDEN behind 234 West Michigan at the corner of North Adams! It has been noticed!

And thanks to Mr. Hunter at 9 NORTH RIVER, whose front yard garden is as lovely as ever!

Don't miss visiting Ypsilanti's museums



FIRE EQUIPMENT MUSEUM
on Cross Street between Huron and Washington



AUTO HERITAGE MUSEUM
on Cross at North River



HISTORICAL MUSEUM
on North Huron just south of Cross



YANKEE AIR FORCE MUSEUM
at Willow Run Airport

*Thanks to everyone who works to
make Ypsilanti a better place to live*

Police ▪ Firefighters ▪ City Manager
City Department Heads ▪ City Employees
Mayor & City Council
Boards & Commissions

They've never been better!
What a great bunch!

Thanks also to the Department of Public Works
for great service year-round, for SUPER snow
removal and for never missing their scheduled
rounds even during the chaos of street repair.

And SPECIAL THANKS to all those folks who
quietly and faithfully maintain their properties,
who sweep and water, pick up and plant,
repair and paint. If we missed mentioning
you, know that without your effort Ypsilanti
wouldn't be the great place it is!

2004/2005 SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 N.
Washington Street, Ypsilanti at 7:30p.m. The public is welcome.

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SEPTEMBER

Historic Preservation Before & After

Jane Schmiedeke & Paul Schreiber

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NOVEMBER

Buying This Old House

Don Randazzo & Paul Schreiber

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JANUARY

How To Research Your Home

James Mann

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MARCH

Painting Your Home

Ron Rupert & Sherwin Williams

25
MAY

Annual Awards Banquet

Have you visited the YHF website lately? There are new features you may find interesting • www.yhf.org

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.

See you at the General Meeting - Wednesday, September 22, 2004, at 7:30 pm

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Board Members

Hank Prebys, President
Joe Mattimoe, Treasurer
Jan Arps
Jennifer Albaum
Jennifer Goulet
Pattie Harrington
James Mann
Bill Nickels
Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke
Paul Schreiber
Penny Schreiber

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
Heritage News
c/o Don Randazzo
6101 Hitchingham Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197



Heritage NEWS

NOVEMBER 2004



Christmas Home Tour

Sunday Dec. 5th
12:00 - 5:30 pm

benefiting Meals on Wheels

Advance Tickets - \$15

Ypsilanti - Mantis Garden Supply, Haab's
Ypsilanti Visitors & Convention Bureau,
Quinn's Essentials
Ann Arbor - John Leidy Shop

Day of Tour Tickets - \$20

Available at Haab's & Mantis Garden Supply



DON WILL DISCUSS HOW TO EVALUATE
THE STRUCTURAL CONDITION
OF A HISTORIC HOUSE.

Buying This OLD HOUSE

On Wednesday evening, November 17, 7:30, Don Randazzo will give a talk to the Heritage Foundation on "Buying This Old House." Don will discuss how to evaluate the structural condition of a historic house. He will show photos of new houses and historic houses to illustrate structural and mechanical warning signs and he will explain the positive signs to look for from the curb to the basement to the attic.

An Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation founding board member, Randazzo worked for ten years as a restoration carpenter at Greenfield Village. He has been inspecting houses for prospective home buyers for more than twenty years and is a past member of the Ypsilanti Historic District Commission.

Please join us on November 17 at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 North Washington Street, in Ypsilanti. The presentation is open to the public. As always, refreshments will be served.



Historic Home Experience:

Mark and Julie Fisher
402 East Cross

*(First in a series of testimonials
from historic home owners in Ypsilanti.)*

In 1994, we moved from Virginia to Ypsilanti. We purchased an Italianate in Ypsilanti's historic district with the grand plan of changing it from a duplex back to a single-family home. The house had two of each appliance, and less than half of them worked. Our first project was to remove the appliances and the empty liquor bottles from the backyard.

1996:

The house is finally to the point where we don't sneak in and out. We had the exterior painted (the neighbors didn't find the peeling paint as charming as it seemed two years ago), a screened-in porch and gutters installed, and some landscaping done. Julie insists that all she did this year was write checks to grubbily dressed men who came to the door—she hopes that they all worked on the house.

1997:

The outside of the house is finally finished, and we received a historic marker. We were surprised they didn't ask us to keep our shades down, as we were in the throes of a major kitchen renovation. Mark had to raise the floor, raise the ceiling, and move the plumbing—and then still had to put in the cabinets and countertops. We hope the cooking materials are back in place before Christmas or our holiday feast will be delivered pizza! The visiting nurse who came to check on daughter Hannah brought a list of things to make the house safer; you could see her eyes shifting to the exposed 2 x 4s and wires as she read the list.

1998:

Mark is still waging the Battle of the House, and the house is still winning! This year, he spent a lot of time on landscaping, installing raised flower beds and brick walkways. He rented a jackhammer and soon had a testosterone club helping him. Every time Julie looked out the window, a different male neighbor was offering advice and testing the new tool.

1999:

Mark recently renovated an old playhouse that was given to us by a neighbor. It looks nicer than our house, and we're ready to move in, dogs and all. Mark has also finished our fence (it only took five years) and some walkways and landscaping. We are now ready to complete the inside of the house!

2000:

The house is really coming along, and next year we may be able to report that it is done! We finished the living room, master bedroom, and guest bedroom. If our energy levels cooperate, we may have the dining room and foyer done by the end of the year. Julie has had a yearlong "urge to purge," so she is getting rid of stuff by the trunk load. Mark is afraid to stay in one spot too long.

2001:

We are almost done with the house, with only the study to finish. Mark suddenly launched grand plans to raise the ceiling in the study and build a loft. Julie is considering hitting him with a 2 x 4. When the study is done, the final punch-out list will be almost two miles long.

2002:

We hope you are sitting down when you read this. The house is done!

Eight years and half the national debt later, we are finished. It was all worth it; at least that's our mantra. We were even invited to be on the home tour this summer, which made us feel a little like Sally Fields ("You like our house. You really like our house.") Now, since Mark doesn't know what to do with all of his spare time, we have decided to put on an addition . . .

National Trust Nomination for Ypsilanti

The YHF has nominated Ypsilanti for the National Trust for Historic Preservation 2005 Dozen Distinctive Destinations. Each year the Trust selects twelve communities from across the country that offer enjoyable natural, historic, aesthetic, and cultural experiences. According to the Trust, winning communities must have a dynamic downtown, a commitment to historic preservation, interesting architecture, cultural diversity, locally owned businesses, and walking access for residents and visitors.

Recognizing that Ypsilanti is a perfect fit for this award, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation has submitted a nomination for the city. A dozen winners will be selected this spring. The Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations will be publicized as destinations for travelers interested in heritage tourism. Ypsilanti is a particularly good candidate to become a Distinctive Destination with its museums and its large historic district. We'll let you know if Ypsilanti is selected.

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