

IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • SEPTEMBER 2002

Good Byes And Hellos At The Annual Meeting

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senior (60+) \$10; senior couple
\$19; business/association \$50;
patron \$100.

The **Annual Meeting**, attended by over 50 members, was held May 15, 2002 at the **Ladies Literary Club** in Ypsilanti. This beautiful Greek Revival house, built by Arden Ballard in 1842, was the perfect setting for our usual exuberant potluck dinner and after dinner speaker **Brett Lennart** (see related article). It has been the home of the Ypsilanti Ladies Literary Club since 1914.

Two long-serving board members retired and were given certificates for their long service on the board. **Karen O'Neal** served in many capacities in her 15+ years on the board, including President, Education Coordinator, Exhibits Coordinator and most recently, head of the Restoration Committee for the Museum on Main Street. A room has been dedicated to her at the museum to honor these efforts and she was presented with a framed picture of the 'before, during and after' of these events. Karen will be greatly missed.

Peter Rocco has also served on the board for almost 20 years, most notably as head of the Art



The usual wonderful potluck was served at the Ladies Literary Club in Ypsilanti for the Annual Meeting. Photo: Susan Wineberg

Fair Parking Committee that generated funds for us by using bank parking lots during Art Fair. At the Annual Meeting Pete confided that one reason he joined so long ago was that he wanted to see an Italian name on the masthead! He

(Continued on page 7.)



Karen O'Neal is happy in retirement! Photo: Susan Wineberg

Next Program

Sunday • October 20
Bently Library

Karl Grube and other **Masons** will present the histories of the various Masonic groups in Washtenaw County.

We will be starting at 1 PM and going until 5, as there is a lot of ground to cover!

The Ypsilanti Water Street Project



Brett Lennart spoke on the Water Street Project in Ypsilanti at the Annual Meeting. Photo: Susan Wineberg.

Brett Lennart, the Redevelopment Coordinator for the Ypsilanti Department of Community and Economic Development, was introduced by our program Chair Louisa Pieper at the WCHS Annual Meeting at the Ladies Literary Club in Ypsilanti. He is an EMU grad, native of Sylvania, Ohio and has worked for the City of Ypsilanti since 1999. Many thanks to Louisa for transcribing the tape for me!

Lennart began by noting that there is a lot of excitement about this project, which is the biggest development project to come to Ypsilanti since World War II. Using maps and drawings done by architects, Lennart discussed the new development planned for an area bounded by **Huron River** on south and west, **Michigan Ave** on north, and **Park Street** on the east. It is **right on US12** so it is prime property. When completed, this project will have 872 units spread over 38 acres. It will be very dense.

"The City of Ypsilanti is small—about 4 sq miles—and EMU takes up a lot of land. It is a great resource but its tax-free status has a tremendous effect on the tax base. So, Ypsilanti is in a

development mode. Because there aren't a lot of empty plots of land waiting for subdivisions and industrial parks, we really had to look at land in the city from a business perspective: what is performing, what is underperforming and what can we do to make those sections contribute more.

The first thing the city did was hire a marketing consultant to find an area ripe for redevelopment from underutilized and disinvested industrial and commercial properties. We wanted to provide new home ownership opportunities too, because Ypsilanti's very high rental rate of about 50% should be lower. This would also be a great opportunity to get a population base adjacent to downtown and attract disposable income to those businesses and spur new business growth as well. The marketing study indicated we were not off base. [He answered a question and mentioned that Water Street is the first street east of the river and south of Michigan Ave., a very small dead end street. He doesn't know why the project is named for it.]

We took the marketing study and put it with the city's desire to create new home ownership, new commercial opportunities, and a chance to open up the waterfront to the public. Historic waterfronts have become a big trend nationally, and communities are starting to recognize they are great resources for parks and open space. The key component of our redevelopment plan was to take the marketing study and look at the amenities of the site. The concept plan was used as a marketing tool to start talking to the development community, seeking grants and funding partnerships. It was a great tool for us to demonstrate what the community's collective vision was for this area. Translating it was a messy process! It culminated in a document we called Request for Development Partner Process.

We sent this brief document to over 200 developers in SE Michigan and throughout the country, asking them to partner with us. My department does land acquisitions, not development. The

quality of the proposals we received was tremendous and ultimately we selected a company called **Biltmore Properties**, a company currently doing a project in Canton called Cherry Hill Village. The Cherry Hill Village project is at the corner of Cherry Hill and Ridge Roads if you want to get an idea of what the proposal is like. It's a fabulous project.

So Biltmore came in and the fun began. Traditionally cities—really too often in my opinion—respond when a development project comes to them by saying it meets our ordinance or it doesn't, it's too short, it's too tall, too far back or too close to the street, has too many parking places or not enough. Using the model of what they did at Cherry Hill Village, Biltmore Properties pushed us into a **Community Design Charrette**. This is a community-based design process. Working with whoever was interested—residents, elected officials, commissioners, appointed officials, city staff and a whole slew of architects and land planners—we started on a Saturday morning with a walk of the project area to establish an overall project boundary. Through the course of the next week, pretty much all day and all night, we came up with the final site design. It was a fabulous process—very interactive—and it gave a wide section of the community a sense of ownership and the opportunity to affect what could be built: what it would look like, how it would feel, and how it would relate to the rest of the city.

The first thing we did was look at the site's strengths and opportunities. The Huron River is to the south and the downtown business district is to the northwest. Bringing in the public park makes an important link to their riverfront park system to both these parts of town.

One of the earliest themes of the community design process, was to develop a new neighborhood within the city—not a walled community. So you see a lot of emphasis on connectivity, (both pedestrian and vehicular) using the existing street network and sidewalks. Ypsilanti doesn't have neighborhoods with gated entries in stone walls. It has urban neighborhoods

that have developed over time and we want this project to reflect that.

(Answering a question about whether the site has been cleared, he said it is full of houses, industrial properties, commercial properties, abandoned buildings, and railroad lines. The city owns a little over a third of it. This summer they are continuing negotiations with the remaining property owners and soon they will be deciding on condemnation of some properties.)

One of the strengths of the final design is, not only is it just another neighborhood in the city, but there are neighborhoods within this neighborhood. There are sub-categories within the project area that really have very different characters. One of the things we wanted to provide was a lot of flexibility through unit type and unit size.

Somebody came up with the scenario of shifting the grid to respond to the river rather than the current street grid. All the architects were huddled around. 'Yeah, we like that. Get it out of here. We're all gonna fall in love with this. We're not going to be able to come up with any other ideas.' When that process played out the next day, the collective response was the same: this is the one that really made sense. It was magic. There was consensus.

Everything on the site will be demolished. Since these properties are in a Historic District, we must go through what is called a Section 106 review with the State Historic Preservation Office. Whenever federal funds are involved in a project, you have to go through an environmental review process incorporating everything from noise standards, to environmental standards, to historic preservation. They identified three buildings that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. So we are required to document the buildings before they are demolished. The buildings have some architectural value but would not individually be eligible for the National Register. One was formerly an auto parts store, one was a former auto dealer that is currently being used as a paint supplies sales and floor covering sales, and the other is a vacant structure also used for auto parts sales.....All of the significant buildings are on Michigan

Avenue and belong to the heyday of automobile showrooms, repair facilities etc. One was designed by a well known local architect R.S. Gerganoff, who designed the Washtenaw County Courthouse and also many schools in Ypsilanti. Some have been remodeled. [asked if any of the plans tried to incorporate some of these historic structures, he replied in the negative because of gradient concerns and flood plain issues.]

Another issue that developed during the week-long charrette was concern for the vulnerability of the downtown business district. We have a tremendous wealth of historic commercial buildings, and many of them are vacant. We are concerned about providing a lot of new commercial space that would have the possible effect of taking sales from downtown. So there was an effort to downplay the commercial in this project and emphasize the residential aspect to provide a population base to shop downtown. That said, the buildings along Michigan Avenue are all programmed initially as residential throughout. But the first floors will be constructed in such a manner that they could be turned into commercial. But the emphasis is definitely on home ownership. The prices for units right now will range from \$100,000 to \$200,000. There will be a wide range of different unit types, from about 700 square feet all the way up to 2,000 square feet. There is a lot of flexibility even within the initial program. Right now they are starting at \$99,000.

Since the project is within the historic district, the Historic District Commission will be involved in reviewing the final exteriors as will the State Historic Preservation Office. They have created a lot of new zoning districts in the city that require aesthetics, overlay districts and the like, but they hope that this project will spur private initiative on the north side of Michigan Avenue. Right now there is a car dealership there. Waterworks Park is on the other side of the river and it already has a pedestrian bridge. We see this as an extension of downtown and as the missing link in the riverfront park system, originally designed by the Olmsted Brothers.

A question was asked where everyone

will shop for groceries. He replied the same place he shops for groceries—at a shopping center. He would love to have a grocery store downtown but this is a pedestrian rather than automobile focused area and it is difficult to get a large retailer to come into the downtown without the parking.

The DDA provides commercial façade grant programs to encourage investment in the historic buildings in their downtown business district. They do everything they can, even getting involved in ownership of buildings sometimes. One of the things they think this project will do is provide a great base of people in close proximity. Though there are a lot of people now, they are not getting the traffic. The students have a stronger relationship with areas north of the campus area. They need more people down there both living in the upper floors and just enjoying those businesses. As part of the plan, the clubhouse of the condo association is at the downtown corner. What they hope is that somebody will walk out of their condo, go get their mail, maybe work out in the gym and then pick up dinner and take it back home. They see this having a very positive impact on the existing businesses without adding new ones.

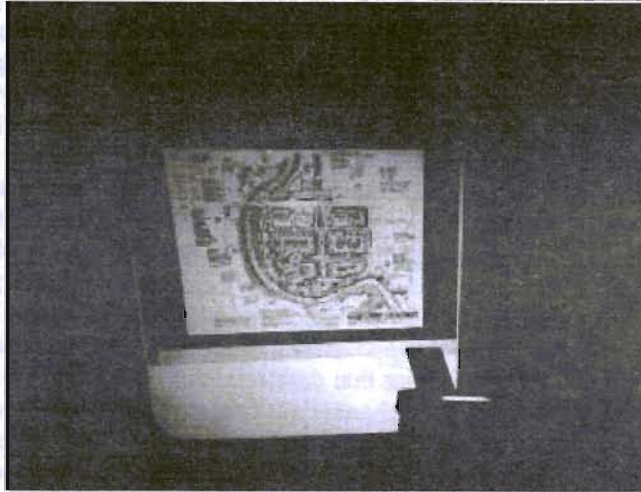
In discussing the unlikely prospect of a large grocery store coming into a typical downtown full of little shops, he pointed out that the entire length of the project along Michigan Avenue is as long as the entire existing downtown which is a scary thing. Their historic downtown has evolved over time. They can't replicate the architectural styles and diversity of their downtown in one project. One of the things we recognized early on in the project was that it would not be all high-style buildings. We have a tremendous wealth of historic resources in Ypsilanti. We wanted to focus on the more common buildings, pick out elements of them to help the new buildings really fit in to the city and let them evolve over time on their own as opposed to going in there and designing the highest style buildings along Michigan Avenue for the length of their downtown that has evolved over a hundred years. He didn't think that would be successful. He showed building designs that try to respond to

that: varying building heights, a lot of different architectural styles generally very referential, nothing trying to be the showpiece of the community. They want it to blend in and become a part of the city without drawing too much attention. Some respond to the industrial style of buildings in the area. These are very well suited to loft residential development, very light and airy. There are character districts to provide different experiences such as a mews area with condos that will front on a pedestrian throughway and the architecture that would respond to that. The mews becomes an outdoor living space, kind of a foyer for the condo. This would be a great situation for people with young children.

The park is one of the most important parts of the project. This park has a lot crammed in to it. They have the old mill site closer to Michigan Avenue that will feature some piece of industrial machinery that they will paint as a sculptural element to recognize the cultural heritage of this area. As you come down, they envision community gardens, a place where condominium owners - or other community residents since this is fully public - will have the opportunity to garden on a 10 by 10 plot of land. The area will be divided by sidewalks so everybody can enjoy this effort. As you come around the bend, there will be a more passive area, what they call a small sanctuary with benches, smaller paths, a much more quiet area.

Trying to create different experiences, some units will have a much closer relationship with the river, while others will front on much larger public spaces further from the river but those spaces have public pathways leading to another park amenity that will provide a lot of benefit for this project and the whole neighborhood. It is called an outlook with some of the best long views of the Huron River where it bends. They don't want it to feel unconnected so this is an amenity for this neighborhood and the whole town.

Asked how soon it will happen, he



The Water Street Project covers 38 acres between the Huron River and Michigan Ave in Ypsilanti. Photo: Susan Wineberg

said they are programming to build 100 to 150 units a year - 200 at the most. That will evolve as units are built, they will see what is most popular which will affect the absorption rate. Overall he anticipates a 7 to 9 year build out period. It is a very large project. The city council approved it as a planned unit development, which means the plan is approved subject to phases coming back to them on a more refined basis. Because it is so large, it will definitely be done in phases and they will be able to respond to changes in the project. If there is something they don't like, if they decide they want to incorporate a grocery store in year four or five, they may be able to respond to that as they phase through the project.

How long will it take to clear the land? They anticipate four to six months of demolition and environmental remediation followed by a full calendar year of site preparation, underground infrastructure, soil compaction. Being an older urban area, there is a ton of fill across the entire site, making it an engineering nightmare. So it will probably be a year and a half to two years before you can even think about vertical. They are working on acquisition now. They originally planned to do all the demolition, remediation, at once but now they are debating phasing that so they can get going sooner. Some of their elected officials are very anxious to see those buildings start coming down. They will start from the northwest and work toward the south. The developer brings

expertise in builders, architects, landscape architects. That was what they were looking for in the selection process, the whole package. They interviewed all the team components including the land planners, the environmental consultants, and engineers all together. They wanted a team that has urban redevelopment project experience. Not all developers do. Biltmore has been a pleasure to work with.

He displayed drawings of some of the proposed buildings that reference local architectural styles. They don't know how this place will evolve. They

don't know who is going to live there yet. They need to build in flexibility to respond to demands for differing size units, so the building blocks are modular and have four units per two garages in a vertical space. Question on the designs being so derivative rather than reflecting today's architecture. Has that been an issue? Not so far. Both the Historic District Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office have found them referential enough and modern enough and are comfortable with them. In a couple of places there will be an "estate" style home that includes four units.

Collections

Collections Chair **Judy Chrisman** reports the receipt of many items of local interest, including books, photographs, articles and Kate Schuler's small German bible from **Matilda Bauer**. Some of the photos are of the "Rock" at Washtenaw and Hill being moved into place. Judy will be developing a new form for people dropping things off at the Museum that will serve as a temporary receipt until the donations can be processed. Potential donors should call Judy at 734-769-7859 to see if we can use the items.

Your Museum

President **Pauline Walters** has been busy this summer with repairs to the house that are still on going. The two doors on the back of the house need to be replaced and Pauline appeared before the **Historic District Commission** in August asking to put in metal doors to prevent future rot. The Commission denied this request, citing the historicity of the house and the need to discover the source of the water problem. We will keep you posted.

Pretty pink **insulation** was installed behind the **accordion lath** in the upper rear rooms so that heating costs will be lowered and the upstairs can remain warm in the winter. **Joe Majorana** and **Jerry Protiva** of **Electri-Serv** are doing these tasks. We are getting great reports on the careful way the insulation was installed by Jerry so that the original 1830s nails could be re-used! This is true preservation. We may also be getting more old lath from **Ed Shaffran** as he demolishes the **1845 Oliver Martin House** at **320 E. Liberty**. Mr. Shaffran has agreed to give us any historic building materials we might need. [The Historic District Commission ok'd his request for demolition of this building in June 2002]. Now that the insulation is in, Plexiglas is being installed over the lath to prevent dust from falling on our materials.

Flooding problems continue to plague us as the drain at the bottom of the basement stairs seems to be clogged more than it is open! Our fence needs repair, as does the front porch, and the cement area around the basement steps will be changed to divert rainwater away from them. The sump pump continues to be a problem as well and discussions are underway to attach it to the storm sewer. We hope to solve these old headaches once and for all this fall and be done with them. We want to concentrate on the more exciting aspects of running a museum! And Pat Thompson wants to finish all her gardening projects!

Our exhibits continue to be popular and we have received very good coverage in the **Ann Arbor News**. Our **Weddings of Yore** Exhibit, held over until late August by popular demand, was filmed by **CTN** and broadcast on Channel 17. The **Masons of Washtenaw** will begin their exhibit on **Wednesday, September 18**. It will be up

until **Saturday, November 30**. An **Open House** with refreshments will be held **Sunday September 29** from noon-5 PM. Watch your mail for a post card invitation.

Future exhibits will be "**Toys and Doll Houses of Yore**" during the Holiday season, and another on the families that have lived in our house. It promises to be an exciting year, so come down and see for yourself!

Our new museum shop coordinator **Sue Kosky** has been doing a great job. Everything is well organized, she's sold over \$500 worth of books, and she re-discovered our bumper stickers that will be our fund raising tool this year.

Bach Bequest Committee Chair Tom Freeman reported that we have almost received the entire amount due us from the bank managing the trust at present.

Once we have our endowment up and running we hope to hire someone to manage the running of the Museum. We are required as a non-profit to spend most of the interest from this endowment. A committee was established at the last board meeting to write a **job description for a part-time director/curator**. Serving on the committee are **Randy LaHote, Tom Freeman, Judy Chrisman** and **Cynthia Yao**. It is great to have new blood on the Board!

Business Support

This month's issue of *Impressions* is co-sponsored by

CHELSEA MILLING

Sad News

We have some sad news to report. **Elizabeth Dusseau**, a former board member of longstanding who served as Collections Chair for years and who financed a portion of the house restoration, has moved to Montana to live with relatives. We know her sight was failing and we hope she is happy now. She can be reached at **588 Swan River Drive, Big Fork, MT 59911**. We also learned that our former board member and prize-winning gardener **Ella Grenier** had a stroke and has moved to **Cape Coral, Florida**. She can be reached at **239-775-1000**. We wish them both well.



The Dexter Gate, on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, MA was erected in memory of the brother of Katharine Dexter McCormick, our April program subject. Photo: Shirley Kauper submitted by Karen O'Neal.



The Dexter Gate at Harvard University. Photo: Shirley Kauper submitted by Karen O'Neal.

Around Campus

If you have been away for the summer, Ann Arbor looks very different than it did in April. Several buildings on the campus along Washtenaw were demolished and construction pits have replaced them. NUBS, which housed the **Herbarium**, the **English Language Institute**, and other assorted units of the university (and where I once had an office when I was an Anthropology student) was demolished in May. It was built in 1914 for the Department of Buildings and Grounds and even had railroad tracks which fed into the building at one time.

At the corner of Washtenaw and Glen, the former **Neuroscience Building**, originally constructed as the Food Service Building in 1948, was also demolished in May. It was one of the few buildings in the Art Moderne Style on campus with its rounded projecting walls. The Biomedical Science Research Laboratory, connected with the Life Sciences Institute, is being built on this site. One downside of all this activity is the announcement in August that the university had purchased the 1929 **Planada Apartment** building on E. Ann St. This is a **individually designated city property** and we hope we can persuade them not to demolish this unique building. The **Historic District Commission** has written UM officials and the Regents expressing its hope that the building can be used in some way, perhaps for badly needed student housing.

Also on the central campus of the

University, some of the construction fencing has been removed as the renovation of **Haven Hall and the Fishbowl** approaches completion. Soon the central campus may be more or less back to normal. But construction continues apace at **Hill Auditorium (1913)** that will be closed for 18 months during which both restoration and new construction will take place. And the **Rackham Building (1936)** is also still under restoration/renovation and will probably re-open in January 2003. We can report that the **murals of lions and dolphins and birds** in the north lobby of the **Graduate Library** have been restored. New York artist **Thomas DiLorenzo** originally painted them in a Pompeian style in 1919. Generous donors made this possible with the help of professional conservators from the Chicago Conservation Center. DiLorenzo also worked on the ceiling of the Clements Library.

We have forgotten what it feels like to have a quiet and peaceful central campus! But the restoration of these gems will make our campus glitter once again.



NUBS (1914) is demolished over the summer. Photo: Lars Bjorn

Art Fair Parking Helps WCHS

This year **Julie Creal Goodridge** coordinated the Art Fair Parking (with help from retiring board member Pete Rocco). Over those four days we made \$731.00! Many thanks to all who helped park cars including **Sue Kosky, Patricia Thompson, Patty Creal, Susan Wineberg, Ralph Beebe, Peggy Haines, Greg and Ann DeFreytas**, and especially to **Julie Goodridge!** It wouldn't work without all of you.



Neuroscience, formerly Food Services (1948) was also demolished this summer. Photo: Susan Wineberg.



Site of Biomedical Science Research Bldg, to open in 2005, at Huron and Glen. Photo: Susan Wineberg.

Program Schedule 2002-2003

Our Sunday program has already been arranged due to the hard work of President **Pauline Walters** and Vice President **Ralph Beebe**. As usual, we have a fascinating array of topics in unusual locations. We hope you will join us the third Sunday of every month, from 2-4 PM. All programs are free and open to the public. Light refreshments are usually served. Members receive a post card every month with more details and maps of how to reach the meeting.

SUNDAY • SEPTEMBER 15 • 3-5 PM UM CLEMENTS LIBRARY (please note time change)

Janice Longone, Curator of Culinary Arts at the Clements Library, will speak on *Dr. Chase and his 19th Century Recipe Book* published in Ann Arbor in the 1860s. This meeting is co-sponsored by the Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor. Cider and cookies will be served.

SUNDAY • OCTOBER 20 • 1-5 PM UM BENTLEY LIBRARY (please note time change)

Dr. Karl Grube and others will speak on the history of the **Masons of Washtenaw County**, including groups from the Ann Arbor Lodge, Golden Rule, Zal Gaz Grotto, Phoenix Lodge, Prince Hall, and York Rite Masons. The keynote address is entitled "*Judge Augustus Woodward and What it Means to be a Mason*" by **Dr. Richard H. Sands**. This talk is in conjunction with a concurrent exhibit at the Museum on Main Street organized by Dr. Grube.

SUNDAY • NOVEMBER 17 • 2 PM CHELSEA COURT HOUSE • CHELSEA

The **Hon. Julie Creal Goodridge** will speak on "*The Mysteries of the Court System Unraveled*." The meeting will be in the Chelsea Court Building, the 101-year old former Glazier Bank Building, which was recently totally restored and given a historical marker by the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission. A beautiful dome and oculus grace the interior.

SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 16 • 2 PM LOCATION • TBA

Pam Newhouse, a former Board Member and activist with the Civil War Roundtable in Washtenaw County will lecture on "*The Ryder Brothers' Civil War Letters*."

SUNDAY • MARCH 16 • 2 PM YPSILANTI FIRE EQUIPMENT MUSEUM

Marcia McCrary, President of the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County and curator of the Fire Museum, will speak on the history of the Ypsilanti Fire Museum and its brand new addition.

SUNDAY • APRIL 27 • 2 PM (please note this is the fourth Sunday)

ST. ANDREWS CHURCH ANN ARBOR

As part of the continuation of the celebration of the 175th anniversary of St. Andrew's Church, **Louisa Pieper** and **Grace Shackman** will give walking tours of the Old Fourth Ward Neighborhood surrounding the church, while docents will be giving guided tours of the church. *The Windows of St. Andrew's*, a book on the history of the church's windows, will be available for sale. Light refreshments will be served at 4 PM.

WEDNESDAY • MAY 21 • 6 PM ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting will be held at **Cobblestone Farm Barn** and will consist of our usual yummy potluck plus a guided tour of the 1844 Cobblestone House and outbuildings.

Good Byes And Hellos At The Annual Meeting

Continued from page 1.



Pete Rocco also retired from the Board after 20 years of service. Photo: Susan Wineberg.

received a *History of the Ann Arbor Police Department* by Michael Logghe as a thank you for his many years of service. He too will be greatly missed (and we've no Italian stepping into his shoes!).

Newly elected members of the board include **Cynthia Yao**, **Sherry Peller**, and **Randy LaHote**. **David Fitzpatrick** and **David LaMoreaux** were elected to the Endowment Committee. Re-elected were **Pauline Walters**, President; **Judy Chrisman**, Recording Secretary; **Patricia Creal**, Treasurer; and **Susan Wineberg**, *Impressions* Editor. Newly elected were former board members **Ralph Beebe**, Vice President and **Richard Galant**, Corresponding Secretary. Thank you one and all for your tireless service!

Around The Town



Mayer-Schairer, a fixture for 92 years, has closed. The building is for sale. Photo by Susan Wineberg.

The folks at **Kempf House** have been busy this summer. Three windows on the south side of the house were reglazed using old glass. Helping with this project were students from **Ted Ligibel's** class at EMU, and **Steve Stier**. A new cedar shingle roof is weathering nicely, volunteers have been restoring Pauline Kempf's flower garden and the house is being cleaned from top to bottom. An exhibit on graduations was well received and board members are working on a new brochure.

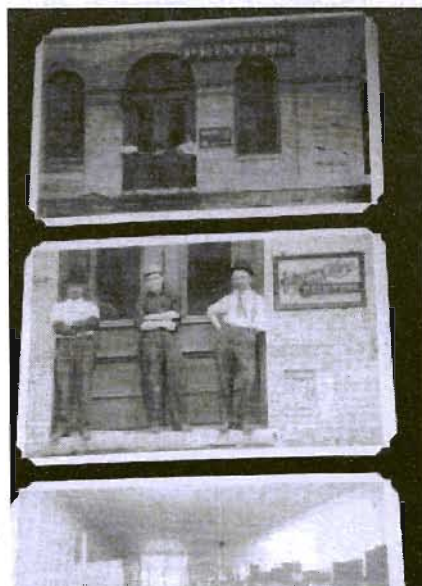
Duffy Liddicoat, their education chair, has again produced a very interesting group of lectures. All are on **Wednesdays** at noon at the **Kempf House**, 312 S. Division and you are encouraged to bring your lunch which must be eaten in the dining room. Members pay \$1.00 and non-members \$2.00. Call 734-994-4898 for more information. Parking is available in the next door (library) parking lot.

The first lecture is **September 11** and **Jennifer Radcliff** will be speaking on *Success in Historic Preservation*. On **September 18**, **Dick Alexander** will lecture about his *toy collection* and on **September 25**, **Todd Gerring** will lecture on the history of the *Kelsey Museum*. On **October 2**, **Susan and Bill Basinger** of Clarkston will lecture on the *Future of History*; on **October 9**, **Cathy Andrews** will give you a check list for your antique safari; on **October 16**, **Ed Surovell** will speak on *Good Maps and Bad Poetry* and on

October 23 **Tom Collier** will discuss *Ann Arbor's participation in the Civil War*. The last lecture will be **October 30** and **Anne Bauman** will talk on the past present and future of *Ann Arbor's Civic Theater*.

The **UM Observatory** also has many interesting lectures planned for this fall. They begin on **Tuesday, September 24**, at 3 PM, when **Steven Turner** will lecture on *Rochon's Famous Micrometer Telescope*. On **Tuesday October 8** at 3 PM, **Jeffrey Werner** will speak on *Cartography of the Great Lakes*, and on **Tuesday, November 19**, **Julie Truettner** will talk about *Alexander Jackson Davis and his 1838 plans for the UM Campus*. The last lecture of 2002 will be given on **Tuesday, December 10** at 3 PM by **Thomas E. Moore** on *Ornithologist J.B. Steere's 1870 Worldwide Expedition*. The Observatory is at the corner of East Ann St. and Observatory. The lectures are free and open to the public.

The award-winning 1854 Observatory is also hosting **Open Houses and Tours** on selected **Wednesdays September 18 and 25; October 2 and 30; November 6 and 13; and December 4 and 11** from 2-5 PM. The Observatory is the oldest American observatory retaining its original telescopes in their mounts and is on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information visit their website at www.DetroitObservatory.umich.edu or call 734-763-2230.



Historic photos of Mayer-Schairer when it was a print shop. Courtesy Mayer-Schairer.

The **Old West Side Association** hosts its 30th **Annual Homes Tour** on **Sunday September 22** from noon-5. The Old West Side neighborhood exemplifies a typical German working class neighborhood of the 19th and early 20th century and was placed on the National Register in 1972 and declared a local historic district in 1978. The tour is always a fun and educational event and you can help the Association at the same time. Ticket prices range from \$6-8.00 depending on your age and when you buy your ticket. Check out their website at www.oldwestside.org or call 734-747-6795.

The **Cobblestone Farm Museum**, owned and operated by the City of Ann Arbor, also has great plans for the fall. Also on **Sunday, September 22** from 1-5 PM, they will present a living history event called *"Preparing for the Winter at the Farm."* The farm is an 1844 cobblestone building that has portions dating (in the rear) to the 1820s and the earliest settlement of Washtenaw County. This event will feature **costumed volunteers** demonstrating candle making, cleaning tack, fixing and sharpening tools, mending clothing and building split rail fencing. Soap making procedures will also be on display. The farm is located at **2781 Packard Road**, next to Buhr Park and the event is free to members. Admission for others is \$2 for adults and children and \$8 for families. Call 734-994-2928 for more information.

The Farm is also seeking \$1500 to **replicate the original chicken coop**. Let them know if you want to crow. Their last newsletter was clucking about the \$1500 they've already gotten for the project, and also that the **Dean Fund** will supply \$\$\$ to replicate the **Farm's original plantings**. This will consist of 12 white cedars, an osage orange "hedgerow," a horse chestnut and eight sugar maples. Two of the white cedars will be planted at the cabin continuing the 19th century tradition of "marriage trees." Wealthy settlers often planted Austrian or Norway Pines and remnants of these trees can be found all over the county.

Also mark your calendars for **Cobblestone's Country Christmas Celebration**, which will be on **Sunday, December 8** from 1-5 PM. Costumed volunteers demonstrate how the holidays were celebrated in 19th century Ann Arbor. On **Saturday, November 16** a **Historic Construction Workshop** will deal with a



Ca. 1910 wallpaper revealed inside Mayer-Schairer. Photo: Susan Wineberg

history and explanation of **barns** in Michigan including an in-depth look at construction techniques. **Pre-Registration is required** and the minimum at is 14. This workshop is limited to 20 participants who will learn how to build a 'bent' for a timber-frame building.

Local retailer **Mayer-Schairer**, a fixture on Main Street for 92 years, **closed in May**. They've been selling off the contents of the store throughout the summer and we even managed to get a photo of some historic wallpaper. Owner Robert Ely declined to be interviewed by the *AA News*, but it is probably safe to say they could not compete with big box retailers such as Office Depot, Office Max, and Staples. Mayer-Schairer began as a bindery run by **Oswald R. Mayer** and **Alfred C. Schairer** and then added printing and office supplies and expanded to three storefronts in 1962. The building at **110-112 S. Main** is now for sale. The transformation of downtown from hard goods sold in German-owned firms to soft goods is now almost complete.

A new website is up for the **African-American community** in Ann Arbor. Called "**Another Ann Arbor**" their aim is to connect to the 38,750 blacks in Washtenaw County and be an interactive way to communicate. You can learn more at www.anotherannarbor.org.

Around The County

It's been a hot summer and a bit quiet in the county but things are heating up and we have lots of things to report.

Last fall we visited the Hack House in Milan and this fall, on **Saturday, September 28**, at 10 AM, the **Milan Area Historical Society** will be dedicating the newly-restored **Old Fire Barn**. It is located at 153 E. Main St., one block east of the red light in the center of town, on the point between E. Main and County St. From Ann Arbor, take US 23 south to Carpenter Rd. exit (first Milan exit) and turn right and continue to the 4-way stop at Dexter and County. Turn right again and go two blocks. Call **Bonnie Jurgensen** at 734-439-7522 for more information.

Another study committee has been formed by the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to study the nomination of **2426 Whitmore Lake Road** in **Ann Arbor Township** as a historic district. The members of the committee are **Janis Bobrin, Tom Nicely, Gene Ragland, Grace Shackman** and **Susan Wineberg**. The owners **Brian and Linda Etter** and **Nancy Snyder** will serve as advisors and **Marnie Paulus** as staff. The Committee was established in March 2002 and first met in April.

A May 14th article in the *Ann Arbor News* reported that Washtenaw County residents will soon be able to access

information about historic structures at the "click of a mouse." The county's **Historic District Commission** received a \$13,500 state preservation grant to put survey information from the last 20 years on the Internet. **Marnie Paulus**, Staff of the HDC, wrote the grant that will publish surveys of residences over 50 years old. Check out their new and spiffy website at www.ewashtenaw.org. You can also learn about the other grants given by the state at their website www.michigan.gov/hal/. By the way, the same Washtenaw County website, through the County Clerk/Register's Office, provides birth certificates, death records and marriage records through the mail. Here's a great way to do your genealogical research at home! For a small fee, these records can be mailed to you. What a deal!

The **Parker Mill**, an 1873 mill with its original machinery (still operable!), will be open for visitors this fall on the weekends of **September 14-15, 21-22, 28-29, October 5-6, 12-13 and 19-20**. It is open from noon-3 PM. The mill is a Washtenaw County Park at **4650 Geddes Road** in Ann Arbor Township, and operated until 1958. Call 734-971-6337 for more information. Group tours are available.

The **Saline Area Historical Society** begins its Fall Education Series on **Wednesday September 18** at 7:30 at the Saline Railroad Depot. **Mark Nice**, of South Lyon, will discuss "**Old Windmill Uses and Designs**." He is an expert on the subject, and will discuss Saline's Windmill as well as others. On **Saturday, October 5** from 11-4, **Harvest Time** will be celebrated at the **Rentschler Farm**. There will be demonstrations, food, petting animals, music and activities for children. Call 734-944-0442 or 769-2219 for more information. See the Kudos column for information on the Orange Risdon bust and Time Capsule.

The **Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County** begins its fall series on **Sunday, September 22** at 1:30 PM at the St. Joseph McAuley Education Center (use Parking Lot P). The speaker will be **Mrs. Marge Waterfield** who will lecture on "**Depression Era Records in Genealogy**" and "**Beyond the Civil War**." Visit their website at www.hvcn.org/info/gswc.

The **Waterloo Area Historical Society** celebrates **Pioneer Day** on **Sunday, October 13**, from 12-5 PM. This fall festival has lots of activities like spinning and quilting, baked goods and seasonal foods. The **Dewey School** has special activities

(Continued on page 10.)

for children and the Farm Museum, the **1844 Realy Log Cabin** with its several 19th century additions. A **Victorian Christmas** is planned for **Saturday and Sunday December 7 and 8** from noon-5 PM. The farm is at 9998 Waterloo-Munith Road in Waterloo Township. Call 517-596-2254 for directions.

The **Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation** announced its 2002-2003 Lecture Series. First will be Preservation architect **Elisabeth Knibbe** on **Wednesday, September 25**, speaking on the *Inn on Ferry Street*, Detroit's newest Bed and Breakfast housed in four restored houses from the go-go 1880s. On **Wednesday, November 20**, Henry Ford Museum curator **Nancy Bryk** will talk on the history of wallpaper. On **Wednesday, January 22**, **Scott Kunst** of Old House Gardens will discuss "*Antique Bulbs: Four Seasons, Forty Centuries*." On **Wednesday, March 26**, Ann Arbor preservation architects **Mitchell and Mouat** will discuss the restoration of Ypsilanti's historic **First Presbyterian Church**. And finally, on **Wednesday May 28**, they will hold their **Annual Marker Awards Banquet**. All meetings are at the **Ladies Literary Club**, 218 E. Washington, at 7:30 and are free and open to the public. You can learn more at www.yhf.org.

Northfield Township is looking into creating a historic district without boundaries, allowing individual buildings to be designated and thus avoiding the contentiousness sometimes accompanying historic district designation (*Ann Arbor News* 7/15/2002). Property owners who qualify would receive at 25% tax credit for the rehabilitation of their homes thanks to a state program enacted in 1999. One of those thinking of applying is **L. Vivian Devereaux**, the fourth generation owner of an **octagon home** built in 1852 on **Eight Mile** between Rushton and Spencer Roads.

Webster Township lost its landmark grocery store in July. CJ's little corner store, built 75 years ago, was demolished for a new store. Owner **Chester Troczynski** was so touched by people who wanted a 'piece' of this landmark that he allowed all comers to take bricks and signs from the old store as mementos.

Pittsfield Township has a wonderful website at www.pittsfieldhistory.org. We contacted them to get information and wound up getting an offer from their webmaster, **C. Edward Wall**, to do a website for us! We are hoping to be able to take him up on this generous offer. Thank you! Meanwhile, the **Pittsfield**

Grange Hall on Ann Arbor-Saline Road, is once again the site for the **Vintage Dance Academy**. It offers two series of three sessions each on vintage dancing, a Sunday Waltz Series, a Northern Lights Victorian Ball in December, a Valentine Ragtime Trot in February, and a special spring event. For more information contact the **Grand Traditions Vintage Dance Academy**, 211 E. Henry St. Saline, MI 48176, or call 734-429-0014. Or you can e-mail Arlynn Hacker at info@vintagedance.com.

The *Ann Arbor News* (7/8/02) reported that **Manchester's Old Village Hall**, built in 1887, will be restored and used for office space. Unfortunately, the **Manchester Area Historical Society** was not able to raise enough money to purchase the building. **Russell and Diana Rhoton** of Sharon Township are the new owners. The historical society is now looking at the old township library, which was vacated last fall.

The village of **Manchester** has been working with the neighboring townships of **Bridgewater, Freedom, Manchester** and **Sharon** for the past three years to develop a **collective land-use plan** in the face of inevitable growth. They have a long history of working together on regional issues and a public hearing was held in May. Some recommendations are that commerce continue to be based in Manchester, lots be protected with one home on 10-40 acres, and no water and sewer should be extended to agricultural zones to preempt housing developments.

Beyond Washtenaw

The **Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)** and the **Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN)** invite you to attend **The Eastern Upper Peninsula Historic Preservation Information Forum** on **Saturday September 21** from 8:30-4 PM. Hosted by the City of **Sault Ste. Marie**, this day-long forum will offer an overview of a wide range of preservation tools, such as National Register nominations, historic district formation, preservation ordinances, Section 106 Review and more. A walking tour of the historic downtown and the famous "Soo Locks" will be given. Registration is due by September 14 and the cost is \$15.00. Call 248-625-8181.

Other important statewide events are the SHPO's **Commissioner Training**

Workshop on Saturday, September 28 in Lansing; the Network's 8th Annual Fall Benefit on **Friday, November 15**, at the **Henry Ford Fairlane Estate** in Dearborn; and the **23rd Annual Michigan Preservation Conference, April 24-26, 2003**, in Kalamazoo. The Network has a newly designed website at www.mphn.org. I encourage everyone to check it out.

"*Choices and Challenges*," a symposium on collecting by Museums and Archives, will be held at the Henry Ford Museum/Greenfield Village, **November 1-3, 2002**. Featured speakers will be **Lonnie Bunch** of the Chicago Historical Society, **Richard Cox** from the University of Pittsburgh, **Barbara Franco**, Historical Society in Washington DC and **Elaine Huemann Gurian**, museum consultant. The registration fee is \$100. Call 313-982-6100, ext. 2559 or email MarilynY@hggv.org.

Green Oak Township's Historic District Commission went before the township board in April to request funding to establish two additional historic districts. The Board approved funds for a consultant, **Ruth Mills**, to do the Intensive Level Study. Recommended were the **Richard Peer House** and **Hollow Oak Farm**.

There is much going on in Detroit and you can learn more about it at www.detroitpreservation.com or www.detroitlofts.com. **Preservation Wayne** continues its walking tours of downtown throughout September and they have their program online at www.preservationwayne.org. Their annual Awards Dinner in May was held at the newly rehabilitated **Dime Building** at Fort and Griswold. Another fabulous website dealing with Detroit is **Lowell Boileu's DetroitYes.com** which is "arguably the most effective educational tool about the city's heritage."

The 4th Annual **Detroit Area Art Deco** sale will be held **Saturday, September 28** at the Southfield Center for the Arts. The DAAD's Modernism Show is slated for **October 18-20** at the Southfield Civic Center. Call 248-761-6166 for more information.

And an update: a June 6 *Detroit Free Press* article featured the progress being made by the **Model T Automotive Heritage Complex, Inc.** group in restoring the **Ford Piquette Plant**, which from 1904-1910 was the home of Ford Motor Company. These dogged men are restoring the birthplace of the Model T, which they hope to turn into an interpretive center on the history of the automobile. But as one complex is

saved, another is threatened. The **Book Cadillac Hotel** in downtown Detroit, empty almost 15 years, is in danger of being demolished. A new preservation group, The Friends of the Book-Cadillac Hotel was recently formed. They are hoping to convince the city to restore and re-use this fabulous building from the 1920s. Visit their website at www.book-cadillac.org.

Other preservation and history organizations in Detroit are **Cityscape Detroit** (www.cityscapedetroit.org), the **Historic Designation Advisory Board** (313-224-3487), the **Historic District Commission** (313-224-6536) and the **Detroit Historical Museum** (www.detroithistorical.org). The latter is a treasure trove of information on their famous tours of historic buildings, including houses of worship. Also featured are dates for lectures, special exhibits and book signings and the **Flea Market at Historic Fort Wayne** (October 12-13). I encourage everyone to look.

The Historical Society of Michigan also has a new and wonderful website at www.hsmichigan.org. First on their agenda is the 128th Annual Meeting and State History conference **September 27-29 in Muskegon**. You can download the program and register online, which will save lots of time. The theme is "*Coming to the Lake: The Evolution of Muskegon and Western Michigan*." Also presented by HSM is **Mulling Over Michigan**. This statewide conference is for K-12 teachers, administrators and college educators for the teaching of Michigan History. This year it is being held **Wednesday, October 16** at Macomb Community College-South Campus. Registration is \$60. The **27th Annual Great Lakes History Conference** will be held **October 26** in **Grand Rapids**. It is being held concurrently with the **Michigan Railroad History Conference**. Call 616-8995-3429. HSM's events are organized by region within Michigan, and I encourage you to look at what is planned for the rest of the state.

Last, but not least, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** holds its Annual Conference this year in **Cleveland** from **October 8-13**. The theme is "Cities, Suburbs and Countryside." You can look at the preliminary program and register online by logging on to www.nthpconference.org. One of the best things about their conferences are the wonderful local tours they organize and this year is no exception. You can also contact them at 202-588-6100.

Kudos And More

Congratulations are in order to **Marshall McLennan**, retired director of the Historic Preservation Program at EMU. At the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** meetings in October, he will be receiving the prestigious **James Marston Fitch Award** from the National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE). The meetings this year are being held in Cleveland, **October 8-13**. To go, or learn more about the conference, visit their website at www.nthpconference.org. Marshall has spoken to our group on numerous occasions in the past and we are very proud of him and the honor he brings to Eastern and Ypsilanti.

Saline will be honoring its founder (again!) on **Monday, September 23**, at 5:30 PM, when they will be unveiling a bust of **Orange Risdon** and burying a **Time Capsule** (in two pet caskets donated by the Robinson-Bahnmler Funeral Home!) to be opened in 2052. Former Mayor **Rick Kuss** urged the city to do this and money has been raised from private individuals and the Saline Area Historical Society to cover the costs. The event is at Saline City Hall. For more info call **Wayne Clements** at 734-429-9621.

Another historic house on Wall Street has been saved! Thanks to **Tom Foley** who purchased the **1846 Sumner Hicks House** at **936 Wall** and moved it to a new location just north of the historic **Lund House** (1847) at 1324 Pontiac Trail. **Bob and Nancy Harrington** of the Lund House threw a party for the neighborhood and patriotic-themed foods were offered to all. The *Ann Arbor News* didn't think it worthy of a photograph, so we provide one for you here (next page)! Owner Foley has allowed **Prof. Henry Wright**, archaeologist from the UM, to excavate the site on Wall Street before he begins construction on 6 condos for the site. We'll keep you posted.

The **Popkins School**, a red brick one-room schoolhouse built in 1870 to serve children of Ann Arbor Township, has been restored by the **Kojaian Group**. The **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission** worked very hard to get this building restored and we applaud them and the developers for their hard work. Also applauding are members of the **Zeeb**

Family, who have been preserving the **school bell** for decades. They are now donating the bell back to the school. Ring-a-ding-ding!

Quinn/Evans/Architects, our local historic preservation architecture firm, received the 2001 **Award of Excellence for Extraordinary Achievement in Historic Resources** from the AIA in Washington for their work on the **Sir Christopher Wren Building** at the College of William and Mary. Their restoration of the UM's **Observatory** received a **2002 AIA Michigan Award of Honor**. They also received a **Special Recognition Award from the AIA Wisconsin** for their restoration of the **Fairlawn Mansion and Museum** in Superior Wisconsin. QE/A has restored many buildings in Michigan and particularly in Ann Arbor and their latest project in town involves the restoration of **Hill Auditorium**. Given their past record, we know this will be an award-winning project as well. Congratulations!

And speaking of Quinn/Evans, I'm happy to report that **Ilene Tyler**, a principal at the firm and her husband **Norm Tyler**, a preservation planner and professor in the Preservation Program at EMU, have purchased the historic Greek Revival **Wilson-Wahr House** (1843) at the corner of Division and Ann Streets. They were also able to sell the Queen Anne (1894) house next door to **Ray Detter**, a founder of the Old Fourth Ward Association and active historian and preservationist. The city should be celebrating this happy event, since we are overjoyed these homes will still be owner occupied.

The **Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation** honored Ypsilantian **Arthur "Jack" Harris** for his life-long commitment to historic preservation in the community. He was honored at the May banquet for his pioneering work in founding the Historic District Commission in 1978, and for serving as Heritage President from 1982-1990. The City of Ypsilanti also lauded preservationist **Jane Schmiedeke** for her lifelong commitment to preservation in Ypsilanti as well (and the *Ann Arbor News* printed a very pro-preservation editorial during Heritage Week). Congratulations to both of you for a job well done!

(Continued on page 12.)

Kudos And More

Continued from page 11.

The historic **Stearns Lofts** in downtown Detroit are going condo. Apartments were created about 15 years ago in this 100-year old former factory built in a Jacobean style by **Albert Kahn**. With great views of the Detroit River, they have should be snapped up!

Our speaker in Chelsea last winter, **Cynthia Furlong Reynolds**, was honored by having her book *Our Hometown: America's History as Seen Through the Eyes of a Midwestern Village*, placed on the **Read Michigan 2002** list, a group of books about Michigan compiled annually by the Library of



936 Wall St, an 1846 house, was moved to 1335 Traver in July.

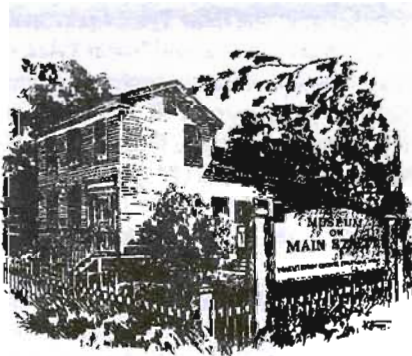
Photo: Susan Wineberg.

Michigan since 1994. Congratulations Cynthia!

What Is It???

Our Education Chair **Sally Silvennoinen** would like teachers and groups to know about her work with the "**What's It**" Game. It consists of 12 artifacts from our collections and travels with Sally to schools or groups who request it. One artifact is a candle mold. Another is a foot warmer used in sleighs that brings back memories of her grandpa's sleigh blanket and warming stone. Sally has question sheets with three choices and you guess what the artifact is. She also demonstrates how it was used:

Sally also manages our two **Loan Boxes**, entitled **Life Before Electricity** and **Hats to Spats**. Both loan boxes are available for \$15, with a deposit of \$50. They are self-guided and designed particularly for elementary and middle schoolchildren. They consist of artifacts that can be touched, books, and ideas for projects. Anyone interested in obtaining the Loan Boxes, or in having Sally demonstrate the What's It Game should call her at 734-971-5086.



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