

**"GENERAL YPSILANTI
TRIUMPHED.**

*The Name of
YPSILANTI
went up in a
shout of glory
all over Greece.*

*It crossed the ocean,
it found a place
in the songs of patriotism
in our Atlantic states,
and rolled along the shores
of these western seas.*

*Patriotic ears in this
wilderness heard it...
it was to them
so significant
of true greatness
that they wished
to retain it!"*

*—a letter to Mr. Rangabe,
Greek Charge d' Affaires,
Washington, D.C.
from
Mr. Davis, Mayor of Ypsilanti
September 27, 1869*



THE
RESTORATION
OF THE
SCULPTURE

OF

GENERAL
DEMETRIUS
YPSILANTI

An Invitation...



AHEPA CHAPTER 195
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Ann Arbor, Michigan
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THE BEGINNINGS

DEMETRIUS YPSILANTI (1793-1832) was a field general in the Greek army during the country's struggle for independence from the Ottoman empire. A highlight of his heroism was his successful defense of the fortress of Argos in Peloponnesos, Greece in 1824. With 220 Hellenes he resisted an invading army of 8,000 well-trained soldiers.

In 1823, Judge Woodward of Detroit was so fascinated by YPSILANTI'S military successes that he recommended the village on the banks of the Huron River be named in YPSILANTI'S honor. The general's great-great-great nephew, Demetri, who visited Ypsilanti in 1990, said his uncle is regarded as a founding father of Greece - as George Washington is seen as the father of the United States of America.

THE SCULPTURE OF GENERAL DEMETRIUS YPSILANTI

The sculpture was gifted to Ypsilanti by AHEPA. In 1928 dignitaries convened in the city to unveil a sculpture of GENERAL YPSILANTI. Present was Governor Green of Michigan, Supreme AHEPA President Dean Alfange, representatives of the Greek government and some 2000 men and women of AHEPA. The imposing marble sculpture quarried in Pendeli, Greece, was created by Cristos Nasos. Nasos also created the monument to the Unknown Soldier at Constitution Square in Athens, Greece. Today it reminds Greeks and Americans of the origins of democracy and the Hellenic contributions to the western world. It remains a focal point for AHEPA and the Hellenic community.

On Greek Independence Day and on OXI Day AHEPANS, parishioners from St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, and friends gather at the sculpture to participate in a Doxology, and reaffirm their Hellenic heritage.

DEMETRIUS YPSILANTI SCULPTURE COMMITTEE

Since the monument is a significant part of the heritage of the entire community, AHEPA - with the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, the City of Ypsilanti and the regional office of "Save Outdoor Sculpture!" Program has formed the Demetrius Ypsilanti Sculpture Committee.

COMMITTEE GOALS

The committee seeks to restore the sculpture of YPSILANTI. We have agreed to complete the project for the District 10 AHEPA Convention in June 1995 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

PROJECT RESTORATION AND COST

The marble work is in need of immediate repair. Recently, cracks appeared and the foundation has shifted. The structure must be dismantled and repaired, and the foundation requires reconstruction. The bust of YPSILANTI must be protected from further damage. CASO-IMPEX, a firm respected in art conservation and restoration will dismantle the statue, and restore it to its former appearance. Project cost is \$30,000. AHEPA (District 10/Lodge #195), businesses and the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation have already contributed funds to this historically significant project.

GENERAL DEMETRIUS YPSILANTI (1928)

Christopher Nastos

Marble, larger than lifesize bust on top of tall marble pillar

In front of Ypsilanti Water Tower (1889) intersection of Washtenaw Ave. and W. Cross St., Ypsilanti

Created by Greek sculptor Christopher Nastos, the artist responsible for the Monument to the Unknown Soldier in Greece, this statue was given to the City of Ypsilanti by the Order of Ahepa, a society of Greek-Americans as part of their national convention held in Detroit in August 29, 1928. Two thousand Greek Americans, including the Greek Minister to the United States and the Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church took the Inner Urban from Detroit to Ypsilanti to witness Governor Green of Michigan, President McKinney of Michigan State Normal College and Ypsilanti Mayor Matthew Max accept the gift.

Demetrius Ypsilanti was a Greek from Constantinople, born into a military family that had served the Turkish Empire, and was, in 1823, helping lead the revolt against the Turks.

Although the war featured atrocities and massacres by both sides, the United States, with its Christian heritage and its tendency towards seeing Greece as the ancestor to its own democratic traditions quickly sided with the rebels against the "barbarous" Islamic Turks. Exploits like Ypsilanti's escape with his entire army from the besieged citadel of Argos brought him to the attention of Judge Woodward who suggested the name for the new village on the banks of the Huron River.

At various times members of the Ypsilanti family have visited the town named after their ancestor. Harvey Colburn relates how Prince Hohenlohe, husband to Princess Ypsilanti had the Michigan Central train on which he was a passenger wait five minutes so he could purchase and mail picture postcards from there. In 1940 Charles Ypsilanti (from New York) arrived and was quoted as saying Ypsilanti means "tall" and that, plus the unusual "i" ending on the name could indicate the family was of Austrian or Romanian origin.

Sources:

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Demetrius Ypsilanti

1793-1832

Hero of the Greek War of Independence whose valor and whose ideals of freedom provided inspiration and a name for a pioneer Michigan settlement.

YPSILANTI -PEACE AND PLENTY

Ypsilanti had its beginning as a trading post where Gabriel Godroy, an astute Frenchman and two comrades met Indians of the Huron, Ottawa, Pottawatomie and Chippewa tribes to exchange wares of civilization for fruits of the hunt. From 1809 to 1820 Godfroy's Trading Post flourished and trails beaten by the aborigines were the welcome beginnings of roads which facilitated pioneer travel.

In 1823 Benjamin Woodruff with a hardy group from Ohio, camped on this slightly spot and they were so deeply impressed by its beauty and advantages that they returned for their families and goods. As Woodruff's Grove and later as Waterville, the community grew and prospered with Major Woodruff the able counsellor and guide. Later came neighbors and relatives from the home country who notably brought with their stores of provisions roses, lilacs and other shrubs to embellish the site.

Soon along the navigable river, grist mills and sawmills appeared, then barrel and wagon industries. Later paper mills flourished and a great knitting plant was established, which through a huge advertising program, considerably in advance of the times, became nationally known.

The naming of the city strikes an interesting keynote. Early inhabitants, deeply impressed by the bravery of the Greek General, Demetrius Ypsilanti, 1793-1832, agreed that this would be a suitable name for the settlement which they sponsored and thus "Waterville" gave way to "Ypsilanti".

The first Independence Day Celebration was in 1824. Elaborate preparations were made for the occasion, all delicacies being brought from Detroit. It is reported too, that Clark Sills walked to Detroit and carried two gallons of liquor back on his shoulders. There was a full attendance of white residents of the county, 31 in all. Judge Robert Fleming presided at the table and opposite him sat the Indian Chief, Blue Jacket. The table was loaded with fish and venison.

Hardship was visited upon the Ypsilanti pioneers in the winter of 1824 following a poor growing season. Chills and fever forced many to their beds. Mrs. Woodruff acted as community nurse preparing a huge kettle of porridge each day from which portions were distributed to the sick. Principal food during that winter was turnips. Rations were drawn from time to time from a limited supply of beans, potatoes and corn.

The most stirring reminiscences of the city's history have to do with the sympathy of the populace for negro slaves fleeing to the Canadian border. Here harried fugitives found refuge and were aided in their flight as they had been in other stations in the famous Michigan "Underground Railway".

Michigan State Normal College, established in 1849, was the first institution of its kind to be founded west of the Alleghenies. Many pioneers in Michigan education received their training in Ypsilanti. Today the University with Cleary Business College draws students from many cities of Michigan and neighboring states.

Ypsilanti is a well located, typical American small city. Her industries are diversified and reach out to all parts of the county. She treasures her aloofness from the noises of the metropolis while she values the nearness of its advantages. Among her choicest assets are her educational institutions, splendid churches, public library, literary and garden clubs and musical groups, contributing their spiritual and cultural influence.

Copied from Michigan Pioneers, 1937 published by J.L. Hudson Company.