



**Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation's**  
**24th Annual**  
*Historic Home Tour*  
**Sunday, August 19, 2001**  
**Noon to 5:00 p.m.**

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**Tickets**  
**Advance- \$8.00 • Day of Tour -\$10.00**  
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**Advance tickets are available:**  
**In Ypsilanti**  
at Quinn's Essentials, Materials Unlimited, Haab's,  
Angel Food Cafe, and Norton-Durant Florists and Gifts  
**In Ann Arbor**  
at the John Leidy Shop and Downtown Home and Garden  
**In Plymouth**  
at Saxton's Garden Center

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The following letter was received by the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation from Stephen & Kristine Mucher, 2001 Home Marker Recipients

Dear Mr. Randazzo,

Thank you for your recent letter recognizing our house as an historic structure. I had planned to get involved with YHF well before receiving this letter. You may or may not know that we purchased this home a few days before receiving your letter.

As such we are not the most deserving recipients of this honor. Nonetheless, I'm not sure you could find a more appreciative family, I am an historian and educator (Ph.D student at U of M). Kristine is similarly interested in history, preservation and gardening. We were attracted to Ypsilanti in part because of its traditional neighborhoods, diversity and the community commitment to preserving its rich heritage. As first-time homeowner we are especially excited about ensuring that 619 Vought continues to be a lens into the past for visitors and passers-by.

I was happy to see that YHF would recognize such a small structure. We will happily display the marker. We are in the process of making some changes to the home that will better reflect its likely appearance in the late 1920s. I plan to do some more research to find out exactly when the home was built. While our deed lists 1930, I have determined that 1927 is probably the best estimation at this point.

Please feel free to contact me. I look forward to getting involved in the community preservation effort.

*Stephen S. Mucher*



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

## **Heritage News**

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

### **Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Board Members**

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Lisa Mills Walters, Secretary  
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Megan McCann  
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Don Randazzo  
Jane Schmiedeke  
Penny Schreiber

*See you at the Home Tour - Sunday, August 19, 2001 noon - 5 p.m.*

# Heritage NEWS

AUGUST 2001  
*Good News Edition*

## September Meeting

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG IN YPSILANTI

Wed., Sept. 26,  
7:30 p.m.

First Methodist Church  
of Ypsilanti  
209 Washtenaw Ave.  
for details see page 3

### Ypsilanti Heritage Foundations

24th Annual

# Historic

## Home Tour

On Saturday, August 18th, advance tickets for the home tour will be sold for \$8.00, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Home Tour ticket booth, located in front of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum at 220 North Huron Street.

On the day of the tour, Sunday August 19th, tickets are full price (\$10.00) and are available only at the Home Tour ticket booth from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### Homes On Tour



921 Woods Road  
Megan McCann and  
Len Lescosky

Ypsilanti architect R.S. Gerganoff designed this Period English Medieval-style home for Kenneth Ferguson, president of the United Stove Company in Ypsilanti.

The house was completed in 1941, although Ferguson died just two years later, his family continued to live in the house until the late 1950s. Since then there have been several owners, but except for a kitchen remodel sometime in the early 1970s, the house remains virtually unchanged.



220 South Huron Street  
Marla and Rick Richardson

Built in 1870 by H.T. Glover for Samuel Barnard, then vice president of Peninsular Paper Company, this wonderful house was originally built in the Italianate style. Charles Newton, one of the home's best-known owners, had the house extensively remodeled in the 1930s to resemble a federal-style plantation house.

7, 9, 11 West  
Michigan  
Avenue  
Phoenix  
Contractors  
Inc.



In 1888, Oliver A. Ainsworth contracted the Detroit architectural firm of Mason & Rice to build the O. A. Ainsworth and Co. Feed Mill & Grain Seed Storage at 514 and 515 Congress Street, (today 9 and 11 W. Michigan Ave.). The Ainsworth mill was highlighted by Romanesque arches and a prominent roofline—influences of the renowned architect H.H. Richardson.

The buildings exterior was brick with rusticated limestone sills. Mason & Rice also designed the neighboring Ypsilanti Savings Bank, today the Ypsilanti City Hall and Starkweather Chapel in Highland Cemetery.

105 West Michigan Avenue  
Ambrose Wilbanks  
and Jeffrey Kuhns



Until recently, this circa 1870 Italianate storefront building was hidden beneath a metal facade installed in the 1960s, when so many other commercial buildings were similarly disguised. Missing is the cornice which once topped the front facade, but the original brick is once again visible. New custom-made windows fit the typically Italianate segmental arched openings.

On tour is the two-story apartment on the second and third floors, newly created where no living space had previously existed. Other apartments can be found in other downtown buildings and it is hoped that more will be constructed, thus making downtown not only a viable commercial center, but a residential community as well.

**HOME TOUR** continued on page 2



*Home Tour*  
continued from page 1

109 North  
Huron Street  
Chris Norman

Built in 1859 by the Worden family of Ypsilanti, the house remained in the family for at least thirty years before it endured a long stretch of careless ownership, conversion to multiple units, occasional office use, ongoing neglect, and, in 1988, a serious fire.

The preservation community, and very likely the house itself, breathed a huge sigh of relief when Chris Norman, a graduate of the historic preservation program at Eastern Michigan University, bought this Italianate house in 1999. Well qualified for the job and devoted to his task, Chris has begun a careful process of research, repair and restoration to undo the years of neglect.



Bob Dargel

The Dargel house, built about 1865, is a lovely example of Carpenter Gothic style, with its intricate gingerbread, steeply pitched roof, and many high gables. The gingerbread-trimmed porch across the front and the tall, hooded windows are also characteristic of the style. This house also offers a charming balcony door and windows framed with pointed gothic arches. The city records of 1876 list the owner as Eliza Dunham, widow of Dr. George Dunham, a dentist. City directories from the early 1900s indicate that Mrs. Dunham had beds available, which likely meant that she ran a rooming house for students of the Normal College.

*Good News in Ypsilanti . . .*

*It Happened in Ypsilanti*

The Heritage Foundation presents its ANNUAL GOOD NEWS ISSUE, reporting on some of the improvements that have occurred in Ypsilanti over the past year, for our own delight and that of our Festival visitors. It's also a chance to say Thank You to everyone who cares for and about Ypsilanti.

By Jane Schmiedeke

*Good News!*

STREETS are the big news this year! The Michigan Ave median, complete with brick paving, planter tubs and traditional streetlights, is scheduled to be complete by the time we welcome Festival visitors.

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And, on July 20, the City began work on a four-year program of repair and repaving that will improve every local street in Ypsilanti.

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The addition to the FIRE EQUIPMENT MUSEUM, on Cross between Huron and Washington, is going up rapidly. This year's visitors can do a little sidewalk supervising – next year's visitors can view a much expanded museum collection.



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Look up! At intersections all around the Historic District street signs are now topped with signs identifying the



"CITY OF YPSILANTI HISTORIC DISTRICT." Costs were shared by the Heritage Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce. The signs were installed by the City of Ypsilanti DPW.

**Nice Work!**

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Repeat visitors to Ypsilanti may not even recognize the long-endangered TOWNER HOUSE! Now fully restored, painted and planted, it once again proudly takes its place in the Huron Street parade of architectural styles.

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Even if you're not going on the Home Tour, don't miss seeing the OLD FLOUR MILL on Michigan just east of City Hall. The rehab is nothing short of spectacular!

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FALSE FACADES are still disappearing from commercial buildings. Gone is the metal screen from 105 W. Michigan (an apartment here is on this year's Home Tour), a similar screen will soon be removed from the former Marsh Office Supply on Washington, and the much-hated wood awning is gone from the adult bookstore on Michigan Avenue. (And, the adult bookstore is gone, too!)



The big news at Eastern Michigan University is that relics from the TITANIC will be housed at EMU, the only repository in the United States for artifacts salvaged from the ill-fated ship.

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The long dismal, ugly CITY HALL parking lot is newly curbed and paved and beautifully landscaped! What a spectacular improvement!

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Out-of-town visitors who enter Ypsilanti from I-94 will notice some UNUSUAL LANDSCAPING at the interchange. Landscaping there is being done with native plants and trees in a pilot program which may have a major influence on the treatment of similar interchanges around the state.

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A new state historic marker was installed this summer in front of the METHODIST CHURCH on Washington at Wash t e n a w .

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The good folks who once owned Riverside Lawn & Garden on Forest Avenue are now operating MANTIS GARDEN SUPPLY on West Michigan – stop in!

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## Many Thanks

To the developers, American Community Developers, and the architect, Ypsilanti's Elisabeth Knibbe, to whom the community is forever indebted for the stunning rehabilitation of the old high school, on Cross Street between Washington and Adams. The long-vacant and endangered building is now the fully occupied CROSS STREET VILLAGE senior apartments. This springs ribbon cutting was a spectacular, festive and heartwarming occasion.

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To YCUA (Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority) for the wonderful care lavished on the historic stone Water Tower and for the lights which circle the Water Tower during the winter holidays.



## September Meeting

### Chris Norman to speak on archaeological dig

On Wednesday, September 26, at 7:30 p.m., at the First United Methodist Church of Ypsilanti. EMU historic preservation program graduate Chris Norman will speak to the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation about an archaeological dig that took place behind his 1859 house on North Huron Street. When Norman removed an 1860 addition to the house, he offered to let his friend and fellow EMU student Stacy Tchorzynski head up a dig on the site before he replaced the addition. Back then, says Norman, the people who lived in the house "just opened the back door and threw their trash out." He says that he and Tchorzynski learned a lot about the historical context of the site and of the Ypsilanti area as a result of the dig. Norman will begin his talk, which will include artifacts and slides, with an explanation of what a "real" archaeological dig is all about. Tchorzynski, who studied anthropology at EMU and took courses in historic preservation, may join Norman that evening. She has written a soon-to-be-published paper about her research on Normans backyard, which has been assigned an official state archaeological site number.

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To the SIDETRACK for the enormous lighted tree in the courtyard at Christmas.

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To the YPSILANTI GARDEN CLUB for the plantings at the Towner House. The little Greek Revival has another new friend!

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To EZELL AGNEW who keeps downtown streets and plantings looking great!

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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!

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Thanks to everyone who works to make Ypsilanti a better place to live: Police, Fire Fighters, City Manager, City Department Heads, City Employees, Mayor & City Council, Boards & Commissions and volunteers!