

# Holiday Events

## Nov. 24 Tree of Hope Celebration

3:30 - 7:30 p.m. Holiday performances, horse drawn carriage rides, activities for the kids, holiday caroling in historic downtown Ypsilanti.

## Dec 1 "A Kaleidoscope of Dance"

**33rd Annual Holiday Ballet:** Ypsilanti Area Dancers. December 1 & 2. 12:30 & 4 p.m., Ypsilanti High School, 2095 Packard. Tickets \$16 (children 12 & under, \$11) 482-6131.

## Dec. 1 "Hits and Mis-Demeanors":

Young Actor's Guild. November 29-December 1. 7:30 p.m., Riverside Arts Center, 76 N. Huron, Ypsilanti. Tickets \$6 (children, \$4) in advance and at the door. 913-9750.

## Dec. 1 "The Glass Menagerie" EMU

Theater Department. November 30 and December 1, 2 & 6-8. 8 p.m., Quirk Theater, Ford St., EMU campus, Ypsilanti. Tickets \$6 (Thurs.), \$11 (Fri. & Sat.), & \$9 (Sun.) in advance up to 30 minutes before the show; \$8 (Thurs.), \$13 (Fri. & Sat.), & \$11 (Sun.) at the door. 487-1221.

## Dec. 2 "Brass Blast II" EMU Music

Department. 2 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU cam-

pus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free.

## Dec. 3 EMU Jazz & Percussion

**Ensembles** EMU Music Department. 8 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU campus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

**Dec. 4 EMU Collegium Concert:** EMU Music Department. 8 p.m., Holy Trinity Chapel, 511 W. Forest, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

**Dec. 5 Flute Choir** EMU Music Department. 8 p.m., EMU Alexander Recital Hall, Lowell at E. Circle Dr., Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

## Dec. 6 Barnhill Band EMU Music

Department. 7:30 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU campus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

## Dec. 7 Children's Concert EMU Music

Department. 10 a.m. & 12:15 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU campus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

## Dec. 7 Symphony Orchestra EMU Music

Department. 8 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU campus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

## Dec. 8 "Second Saturday Bird Walk"

Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission. 9 a.m., Rolling Hills County Park, 7660 Stony Creek Rd., Ypsilanti Twp. 971-6337.

## Dec. 9 5th Annual Ypsilanti Holiday Homes Tour.

1-6 p.m., various locations. Tickets \$10 in advance in Ann Arbor at Downtown Home and Garden and John Leidy's; in Ypsilanti at Quinn's Essentials, Me 'n' My Sister's, & Haab's Restaurant; in Saline at the Calico Cat, \$13 day of tour. 487-9669, 544-4690.

## Dec. 9 42nd Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols EMU Music

Department/Campus Ministries. 3 p.m., Pease Auditorium, EMU campus, W. Cross at College Place, Ypsilanti. Free. 487-2255.

## Dec. 27 Women with Wings West

7-8:30 p.m., 1107 Pearl, Ypsilanti. \$3 donation. 483-6420, 482-0553.

## Dec. 31 New Year Jubilee 6p.m. - 1a.m.

Dance, sing and laugh out the old year with over 40 different performances in several different venues. This family event features story telling, music, dancing theatre, comedy, magic & more. For ticket information call 483-4444.



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

## Heritage News

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

## Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Board Members

Hank Prebys, President  
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Jane Schmiedeke  
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*See you at the Home Tour - Sunday, December 9, 2001 1p.m - 6 p.m.*

# Heritage NEWS

NOVEMBER 2001

## November Meeting

### GEER HOUSE, Preservation Project

Wed., Nov. 28,  
7:30 p.m.

First Methodist Church  
of Ypsilanti  
209 Washtenaw Ave.

## Holiday Homes Tour Set for December 9th

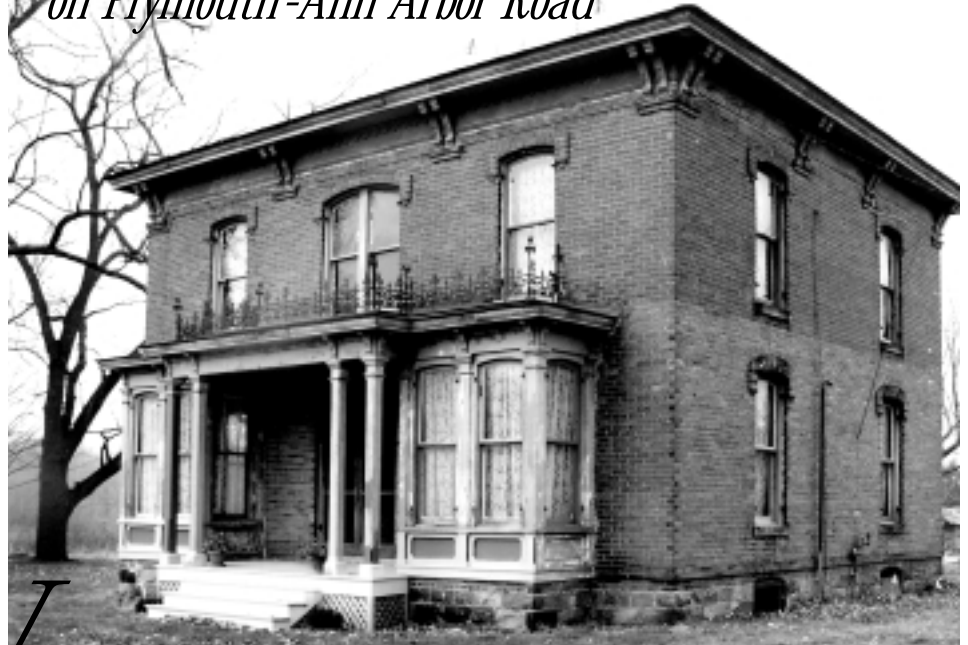
If you enjoyed the Christmas Home Tour last year, you're looking forward to going again!. If you missed it last year, you have a delightful treat in store on Sunday, December 9, 1:00 to 6:00. Seven properties, all wonderfully decorated for the holidays, as well as a refreshment stop at the Ladies' Literary Club – its all yours to enjoy on this years tour. Take a friend, take a neighbor, take your family! Advance tickets, \$10, will be available at Quinns Essentials and Me n' My Sisters Country Store in Depot Town, Haabs Restaurant in downtown Ypsilanti. Tickets will be available the day of the tour, \$13.00, at the Ladies' Literary Club and the Hutchinson Mansion.

All of the proceeds from the Holiday Home Tour go to Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. YMOW, a non-profit organization, has served the City of Ypsilanti and surrounding areas for more than 25 years. It delivers more than 280 meals each day, six days a week, to the elderly, home-bound and those recently discharged from the hospital.



Hutchinson Mansion - High/Scope Foundation featured on this year's Holiday Homes Tour.

## A BATHROOM IN THE PARLOR *on Plymouth-Ann Arbor Road*



Jeanine Head Miller and Glenn Miller will speak to the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation about their new project, the 1884 Geer House on Ann Arbor-Plymouth Road, just north of Ypsilanti. They will give their informal talk at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 28, at Ypsilanti's First United Methodist Church, 209 Washtenaw Avenue. The public is invited.

Please join us to hear about how a couple from Dearborn researched the history of their new old house, undertook the challenging task of preserving it, and even had it designated its own "historic district."

The brick Italianate former home of Milton and Kittie Geer is located between Plymouth and Ann Arbor. For many years it was part of a farmstead in Superior Township. In the 1920s the Barnes family bought the farm; the last of their children to live in the house died there in October of 1999. Many

of us remember the buildings as they fell on hard times, the barn collapsing and the house becoming derelict.

Glenn Miller had often driven down Plymouth-Ann Arbor Road past the house and imagined owning it. His wife, Jeanine, has always been fascinated by the romance of old buildings. Imagine their surprise when a friend told them that the property was for sale.

The Millers bought the house in May 2000. Come and hear all about the parlor, the 15-amp electrical service, and much more. They will also tell us about how they researched the history of the property, what they found once they took possession, the work they have already done, what their plans are for the future, and how and why they became a historic district.

Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

# "Ypsilanti is a town in Michigan". . .

*Saul Bellow published his novel **Humbolt's Gift** in 1975. Bellow was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1976. Bellow makes reference to Ypsilanti in the story.*

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"When he was done, he declared that he was going to sing "Goin' Home," an old American spiritual-used by Dvorak in the New World Symphony, he added as a program note. Then, oh Lord! I remembered that he had been homesick for Ypsilanti, and that he had pined for his sweetheart, back in the Twenties, longing for his girl, singing "Going home, going home, I'm a'goin' home," until my mother said, "For heavens sake, go then." And when he came back with his obese, gentle, weeping bride, this girl who sat in the tub, her arms too fat and defeating her efforts to bring the water as high as her head, Mama came into the bathroom and washed her hair for her, and tow-eled it.

They were all gone but ourselves."

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*In the movie  
"North by Northwest" 1959,  
starring Cary Grant and  
Eva Marie Saint*

• • •

There is a scene in the train station. While they talked, in the background you can hear the station announcer barking out the various trains that were about to leave. The conductor announces "train now leaving for Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Detroit."

Our 15 minutes of fame in Hollywood!

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## FICTION

### BEFORE THE CHANGE

How could she not have known?

BY ALICE MUNRO

DEAR R.,

My father and I watched Kennedy debate Nixon. He's got a television since you were here. A small screen and rabbit ears. It sits out in front of the sideboard in the dining room, so that there's no easy way now to get at the good silver or the table linen, even if anybody wanted to. Why in the dining room, where there's not one really comfortable chair? Because it's a while since they've remembered they have a living room.

Do you remember this room? Heavy side curtains with wine-colored leaves on a beige ground and the net curtains in between. Picture of Sir Galahad leading his horse and picture of Glencoe with a herd of red deer instead of the massacre. The old filing cabinet moved in years ago from my father's office but still no place found for it, so it just sits there, not even pushed back against the wall. And my mother's closed sewing machine (the only time he ever mentions her, when he says "your mother's sewing machine") with the same or what looks like the same array of plants, in day pots or tin cans, not flourishing and not dying.

So I'm home now. Nobody has broached the question as to how long for. I just stuffed the Mini with all my books and papers and clothes and drove here from Ottawa in one day. I had told my father on the phone that I was finished with my thesis (I've actually given it up, but I didn't bother telling him that) and that I thought I needed a break.

"Break?" he said, as if he'd never heard of such a thing. "Well. As long as it isn't a nervous break."

That's the way he still refers to panic

attacks and depression and personal collapse. Nervous breakdown.

There wasn't any big welcome when I got here, but no consternation, either.

I'd thought of kissing him-more brava-do than an upsurge of affection, more this-is-the-way-I-do-things-now. But by the time my shoes hit the gravel I knew I couldn't. There was Mrs. B. standing halfway between the drive and the kitchen door. So I went and threw my arms around her instead and nuzzled the bizarre black hair cut in a Chinese sort of bob around her small withered face. I could smell her stuffy cardigan and bleach on her apron and feel her old toothpick bones. She hardly came up to my collarbone.

Flustered, I said, "It's a beautiful day, it's been the most beautiful drive." So it was. So it had been. The trees not turned yet, just rusting at the edges, and the stubble fields like gold. So why does this benevolence of landscape fade in my father's presence and in his territory?

When the debate was over, my father got up and turned off the television. He won't watch a commercial unless Mrs. B. is there and speaks up in favor. Whatever she enjoys is permitted, even dancing cornflakes, and he may even say, "Well, in its own way it's clever." This I think is a kind of warning to me.

What did he think about Kennedy and Nixon?

'Aw, they're just a couple of Americans. I tried to open the conversation up "How do you mean.

"Just a couple of Americans," he said, as if the words might have got by me the first time.

So we sit there not talking but not in silence, because, as you may recall, he is a noisy breather.

**R.** THE waiting-room walls are scuffed all round where generations of patients have leaned their chairs back against them. The Reader's

# Recognized in Books & Movies

Digests are in rags on the table. The patients' files are in cardboard boxes under the examining table. And in the house it's no better.

I asked what color paint he'd like for the office walls. Light green, I said, or light yellow?

He said, "Who's going to paint them?" "I am."

"I never knew you were a painter." "I've painted places I've lived in."

"Maybe so. But I haven't seen them. What are you going to do about my patients while you're painting?" "I'll do it on a Sunday."

"Some of them wouldn't care for that when they heard about it." "Are you kidding? In this day and age?"

"It may not be quite the same day and age you think it is. Not around here."

All I got to do in the end was throw out the Reader's Digests and put out some copies of Maclean's and Time and Saturday Night. And then he mentioned there'd been complaints. They missed looking up the jokes they remembered in the Reader's Digests.

"Too bad," I said, and I couldn't believe that my voice was shaking.

Then I tried to tackle the filing cabinet in the dining room. I thought it was probably full of the files of patients who were long dead. Mrs. B. saw what I was doing and went and got my father. Not a word to me. He said, "Who told you you could go poking around in there? I didn't."

**R.** THE two days you were here last year Mrs. B. was off for Christmas with her family. (She has a husband who has been sick with emphysema it seems for half his life) and no children, but a horde of nieces and nephews and connections.) I don't

Of course there could just as easily have been a car that dropped them off at the end of the lane.

And I was told-by Mrs. B., I think, not by him-that they came to my father for vitamin shots. I know that, because I would think, Now she's getting her shot, whenever we heard a woman make a noise, and I would be a little surprised that women so sophisticated and self-controlled were not more stoical about needles.

Even now, it has taken me weeks. Through all this time spent getting used to the ways of the house, to the point where I would never dream of picking up a paintbrush and would hesitate to straighten a drawer or throw out an old grocery receipt without consulting Mrs. B., who can never make up her mind about it anyway.

At lunch today, Sunday, my father laid a check beside my plate. Mrs. Barrie is never here on Sundays. We have a cold lunch of sliced meat and bread and tomatoes and pickles and cheese, which I fix when my father gets back from church. He never asks me to go to church with him-probably thinking that would just give me a chance to air some views he doesn't care to hear.

The check was for five thousand dollars. "That's for you," he said. "So you'll have something. You can put it in the bank or invest it how you like. See how the rates are. I don't keep up. Of course you'll get the house, too. All in the fullness of time, as they say."

A bribe? I thought. Money to start a little business with, go on a trip with? Money for the down payment on a little house of my own, or to go back to university to get some more of what he has called my unnegotiable degrees? Five thousand dollars to get rid of me.

I thanked him, and more or less for conversation's sake I asked him what he did with his money. He said that was neither here nor there.

"Ask Billy Snyder if you're looking for advice." Then he remembered that Billy Snyder was no longer in the accounting business; he had retired.

"There's some new fellow there with a queer name," he said. "It's like Ypsilanti, but it's not Ypsilanti." "Ypsilanti is a town in Michigan," I said.

"It's a town in Michigan, but it was a man's name before it was a town in Michigan," my father said. It seems it was the name of a Greek leader who fought against the Turks early in the eighteen-hundreds.

I said, "Oh. In Byron's war."

"Byron's war?" said my father. "What makes you call it that? Byron didn't fight in any war. He died of typhus. Then once he's dead he's the big hero, he died for the Greeks, and so on." He said this contentiously, as if I had been one of those responsible for this mistake, this big fuss over Byron. But then he calmed down and recounted for me, or recalled for himself, the progress of the war against the Ottoman Empire. It's always best not to interrupt. When he starts to talk like this there's the sense of a truce, or a breathing spell, in an undeclared underground war. I was sitting facing the window, and I could see through the net curtains the heaps of yellow-brown leaves on the ground, in the rich generous sunlight (maybe the last of those days we'll get for a long while by the sound of the wind tonight), and it brought to mind my relief as a child, my secret pleasure, whenever I could get him going, by asking a question or by accident, on a spiel like this.

Last night I came in at about ten o'clock. I'd been out at a meeting of the Historical Society, or, rather, at a meeting to try and organize one. Five people showed up, and two of them walked with canes. When I opened the kitchen door I saw Mrs. B. framed in the doorway to the back hall-the hall that leads from the office to the washroom and the front part of the house. She had a covered basin in her hands. She was on her way to the washroom and she could have gone on, passing the kitchen as I came in. ...