

# Heritage NEWS

MAY 2003

## 2003 Historic Markers presented at May Banquet

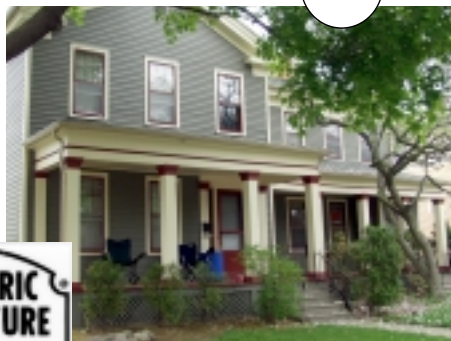
The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation would like to congratulate the 2003 Historic Marker recipients. The criteria used for awarding the marker includes the structure's architectural significance and the care and maintenance of the property.

This year the following property owners will be recognized at the Annual May Marker Banquet.

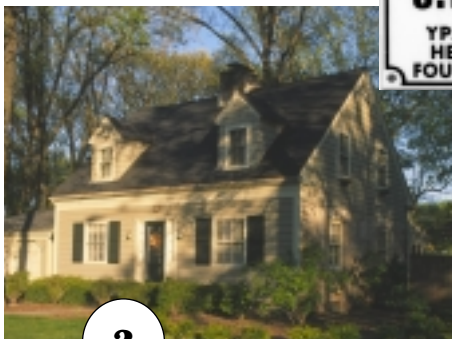
1



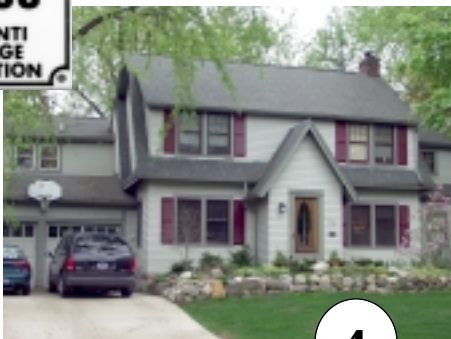
2



3



4



The Ypsilanti  
Heritage Foundation  
cordially invites you to  
The Annual  
**Marker  
Banquet**

on Wednesday,  
May 28, 2003  
at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

1

126 W. Michigan Avenue  
c. 1853 - Italianate  
Owner: Joseph D. Lawrence  
Business Proprietor: Jennifer Albaum

2

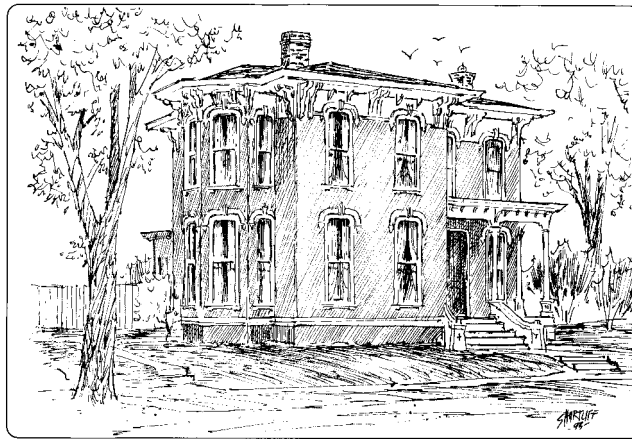
318 Washtenaw  
c. 1890 - Greek Revival  
Owners: Steve and Kathy Allen

3

1307 Westmoorland  
c. 1939 - Cape Cod  
Owners: Kevin and Andrea Webber

4

702 Collegewood  
c. 1926 - Dutch Colonial  
Owners: Vincent and Cheryl Zuellig



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

# A W A R D

presented to

Earl Greene

At the annual Awards Banquet on May 28, 2003, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation will present its 2003 Award for Contribution to Historic Preservation to Earl Greene. His museum-quality restoration of the Wilkinson-Lewis house at 415 North Huron, is one of Ypsilanti's most significant historic structures.

In late 1989, Earl Greene bought the house from the Ypsilanti Historical Society. Earl would prove to be the rescuing angel of this beautiful house. A structure once described by Ward Swarts, a restoration architect who contributed to the formation of the Ypsilanti Historic district, as "one of the finest extant examples of eclectic Victorian/Italianate architecture in the Midwest."

Earl spared nothing in his restoration efforts. He

employed a researcher from Henry Ford Museum/Greenfield Village and the finest artisans and woodworkers to be found. In the next two years, the team accomplished near miracles.

Extraordinary decorative painting was revealed and restored. Under many coats of paint, ceiling paintings were discovered and restored. Door and window frames were found to be of a type of walnut that is now extinct.

Earl Greene is honored for his determination to restore this very significant historic house to its original glory. The quality of the preservation work he has lavished on one of Ypsilanti's most magnificent historic structures is truly remarkable and this community owes him a huge debt of gratitude.



110 North Park Street  
Colonial Revival c.1907

Special Award  
presented to  
Mr. & Mrs. David Marsh  
for the refurbishing  
of the  
"Tucker House"

# The Wilkinson-Lewis House

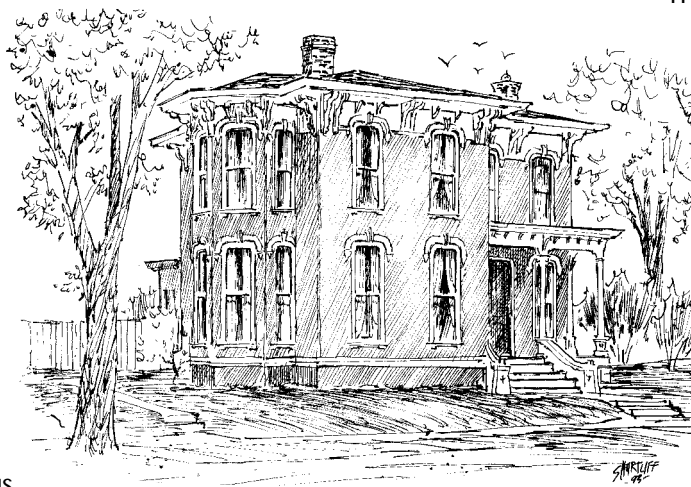
By James Mann

"One of the finest extant examples of Victorian/Italianate Architecture in the Midwest," said Ward G. Swartz, Retired Director of Architecture and Engineering Colonial Williamsburg, of the house at 415 North Huron Street; known as the Lewis House. This Italianate house was built in the 1880's by James Wilkinson, the son of a prosperous Ypsilanti businessman. The Italianate style was most popular from 1840 to 1880. The style is characterized by the gently sloping roof, deep overhanging eaves supported by prominent ornate brackets, and tall double-hung windows, each with single panes of glass.

"The house," wrote Denis C. Schmiedeke, "is atypical in the arrangement of its various forms, yet rich in Italianate details of windows, doors, hoods and cornice with elaborate, large paired eave brackets. Its wood frame construction is sided with smooth horizontal boards, unrelieved by bevel, groove or quirk, to simulate the stucco construction of a Mediterranean environment. The siding is aptly arrested at corners with a vertical, round rail to give added emphasis to wall edges. The heavy wood 'rope' trim surrounding the front porch doors and the delicate Corinthian capitals topping slender smooth porch posts are unique features. The single door on the porch, just south of the main paired front doors, is the typical 'casket' door which allowed for the carrying of a casket into the front parlor, and also permitted townsfolk to pay their last respects to the deceased without disturbing

the bereaved family. At such times, the front parlor was closed off from the rest of the house by large, double doors. Interior doors, casings, and baseboards are massive, ornate in detail and profile, and of walnut wood."

The house is called the Lewis House, because of the long occupancy by the family.



Horatio B. Lewis moved his family to Ypsilanti in 1903, from northern Michigan, into the home on the corner of Emmett and Washington Street, across from the Ladies Literary Club. He had just taken a position with a New York based company then developing land in San Diego, a province of Cuba. Mr. Lewis gave up this position in 1904, and had another position waiting for him in Ypsilanti. He returned home ill in February of 1905, and died of pneumonia within the week. He was 39 years of age. Mrs. Harriet Adelaide Lewis, who was 35 years of age, was left alone with six children to raise.

Mrs. Lewis decided to stay in Ypsilanti, to take advantage of the educational opportunities the

town offered. She was friends with Mrs. Newton and Mrs. King, who urged her to buy the house at 415 North Huron Street, then up for sale. The house had five upstairs bedrooms and was fairly cheap, so she purchased the house and the family moved in on July 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. Mrs. Lewis maintained and lived in the house until her death in 1958, at the age of 90.

The second child in the Lewis family was a daughter, Evangeline, who became the sole owner of the property on the death of her mother. She graduated from the Michigan State Normal College, now Eastern Michigan University, in 1914. She became disillusioned with teaching in the public schools, because the students just didn't seem interested in learning. A friend later told her: "You wouldn't have given up teaching, if you had taught in a private school."

During the 1920's she accepted a position with the Liggett School. "I'll never forget how I felt the first day I walked into the Liggett School. The girls were so polite, so interested and so responsive. "She retired in 1963.

Miss Lewis, she never married, later placed the house under the management of Eastern Michigan University, but neither party found satisfaction with the arrangement. Then on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1976, her mother's wedding anniversary, she gave the house to the Ypsilanti Historical Society.

The house was later sold to Earl W. Greene, who dedicated himself to restoring the property to its pristine glory.



## Ypsilanti Library Reopened in April

The city of Ypsilanti was fortunate in 1915, when the Federal Government agreed to build a new post office in the city. Designed by the post office department in Washington D.C., it was a one story building with basement covering a ground area of 5,100 feet. The building was covered with white stone, instead of brick. Although a one story building, it was as high as a two story building. The new post office was beautiful, as you can judge for yourself, because it still stands today.

This building remanded in use as the post office, until 1963 when it was renovated at a cost of \$38,813, and reopened in November of that year as the library. The library has just reopened, after undergoing a major renovation, and once again is a beautiful as it was when it opened in 1915. Stop in, and take a look!



## Heritage Foundation's Annual **HISTORIC HOME TOUR**

**Sunday, August 17  
Noon-5 pm**

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

**call Penny Schreiber 483-5688  
Jane Schmiedeke 483-0851**



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

## **Heritage News**

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

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

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

*See you at the Marker Banquet - Wednesday, May 28th at 6:30 p.m.*

**For up-to-date information about the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation  
& our Historic Community visit our website at [www.yhf.org](http://www.yhf.org)**