Preserved, protected, and appreciated in Ypsilanti

The nonprofit Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation is dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti’s greatest resources is its wonderful historic architecture. Ypsilanti’s historic district, one of the largest in the state of Michigan, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The YHF supports preservation in the historic district and throughout the city. Since 1974 the YHF has sought to increase public understanding, awareness, and appreciation of the city’s architectural links to the past.

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation augments the preservation efforts of national, state, county, and city ordinances by recognizing historic properties meeting specific criteria (at right).

Through numerous yearly activities the YHF educates the community about the philosophy and purpose of historic preservation and encourages public and private preservation efforts in the city.

In addition to the annual presentation of preservation awards to local homeowners at its Marker Awards Banquet every May, the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation:
- publishes a bimonthly newsletter
- hosts an informative public program on preservation or historical topics in September, November, January, and March
- sponsors a popular annual historic home tour in August
- and makes financial contributions to local preservation projects

The 40th annual Heritage Foundation’s Marker Award Banquet is set for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, 22 May 2013 at the Ladies’ Literary Club. Owners of six houses and two out buildings (see pages 4-5) that meet certain criteria will be recognized for their efforts and Historic Building Markers will be awarded in order to publicly identify buildings of special merit.

Homes or buildings are nominated for this special award by the following criteria:
- The property is within the boundaries of the City of Ypsilanti
- The property predates 1950 and has an identifiable architectural style
- The property is well and appropriately maintained
- The grounds are maintained
- If it is a rental property, the property has had appropriate maintenance for at least two years
- The property has been developed sensitively
- The siding on the property is what was originally intended or could have been used originally. Vinyl siding on a 19th century building is never appropriate
- The windows are original or identical to the original in size and configuration
- Porches, railings and steps are appropriate to the period and style of the building
- Any additions are compatible

* The banquet is pot luck BUT marker recipients are our honored guests and need bring nothing but themselves!
What is historic preservation?

-From the Ypsilanti Historic District FACT SHEET

Historic preservation is the planned and guided protection, rehabilitation, maintenance and reuse of our architectural resources.

As recently as 1960, private efforts at preservation were limited to the rescue of an occasional mansion or monument, the federal government was busily engaged in urban renewal programs which leveled the older parts of many communities, few states had effective preservation an official part of their planning process were few and far between.

Enormous changes in attitude toward preservation have come in more recent years as a result of growing concern for our dwindling resources (including buildings themselves), the escalating costs of new construction, a revived interest in the nation's history, an anew appreciation of the aesthetic and economic value of historic architecture.

Preservation is no longer the sentimental saving of a beautiful old building—it is now a broad concept involving building codes, land use planning, tax law, open space planning, downtown revitalization—a vital tool for the conservation of neighborhoods and cities. Private involvement in preservation is extensive: thousands of people of ordinary means are engaged in the restoration of historic buildings, federal laws and tax benefits now encourage preservation, the states pursue active programs and offer assistance to local communities, and hundreds of cities have adopted preservation as official policy by establishing historic districts.
What is a historic district?
-From the Ypsilanti HDC

A historic district is an area of a community with a high concentration of historically and architecturally significant structures worthy of preservation. It is not an architectural museum in which no old building is ever torn down and no new building ever built. It must always be a growing, functioning part of the total community. Ideally, it is protected by a historic district ordinance and administered by a historic district commission.

Communities across the country have established historic districts in order to maintain the unique character of the district, encourage the recycling and continued productive use of fine old buildings, encourage new construction of a compatible nature, prevent the visual and financially harmful effects of neglected property, provide guidance for property owners, stabilize property values, protect investment and encourage new vitality.

These goals are realized through the implementation of an ordinance whose provisions serve to guide the decisions of the Historic District Commission.

Ypsilanti boasts one of the oldest and largest historic districts in Michigan, which encompasses both downtown and Depot Town, and the neighborhoods to the north and south of them.

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is an appointed citizen’s board that reviews exterior modifications to structures (“resources”) within the district; the purpose is not to revert things to The Way They Were, but to ensure that any changes are at least not detrimental to the character of the structure or the district.

The HDC meets twice monthly, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings, at City Hall. (The meetings happen roughly simultaneously with Ypsilanti City Council meetings.)

Official website: http://www.cityofypsilanti.com/boards/bd_historic

HDC Commissioners:
Anne Stevenson, Chair
Hank Prebys, Vice Chair
Ron Rupert
Jennifer Henriksen
Mike Condon
Alex Pettit
Jane Schmiedke

“Save the past; enrich the future”
-National Trust for Historic Preservation
Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation 2013 Marker Awards

1029 Washtenaw
Shannon & Andrea Linn

Families watched from the front porch of this Queen Anne as traffic streamed in and out of town along a tree-lined Washtenaw Avenue. Behind classical columns and dainty dentils in the porch fascia, wicker chairs provided the best view of every parade in Old Ypsi. Our streets followed the river and Native American trails and this tributary led westerly to Ann Arbor.

Built in 1900, the house was occupied in 1922 by Michigan State Normal College professor Nathan A. Harvey and wife Carrie. They lived there until his retirement in 1935.

Frederick and Ruth Katon lived here in 1957. Frederick was a mechanic at E.G. Weidman Auto Co. Katons owned the house until his death in 1989, but the next two generations of Katons still live in the neighborhood.

Gary and Tammy Dust lived here next. Gary was a firefighter at Willow Run Airport and Tammy grew up on the EMU campus and is now a school administrator in a downriver district.

Robert Kilpatrick and Andrea Linn purchased the house next.

The Queen Anne structural design, fish-scale shingle texture, and green & cream color scheme is echoed in the garage at the rear of the property and is surrounded by massive shade trees, continuing to make an impressive entrance into the city from the west. And, true to tradition, there’s a path alongside the property connecting walkers with the schools and churches to the south on W. Cross Street.

32 S. Normal
Adam Delaney

This red, pink, and delicious two-colors-of-cream “painted lady” was built on the corner of S. Normal and W. Michigan (then the Chicago Road) in 1893 at the City’s southern entrance to the Normal School (hence the street name).

In 1922, Arba M. and Rhoda J. Wilson lived here. Arba had an auto repair business at 103 N. Huron. Stephen Plome, a cook, and his wife Mary occupied the residence in 1926. In 1935, auto worker Hamilton Moore and wife Mildred. George Plom is listed as a resident that same year, but no occupation is shown.

In 1951, the owners of record were William and Meridith Polmartis, and one might conclude that "Plom" was an Americanized name derived from their Greek heritage. Ploms continued living here: Cleo M. Plom, supervisor of the Auto Club of Michigan, in 1957, followed by George B. Plom and Paul Kuestner, who was a teacher in the public schools.

Today’s outstandingly colorful paint job was the work of Adam Delaney who has owned the property since 2004. The analogous color scheme was featured on the cover of the 2012 Home Tour brochure. These most recent color choices have made this house a beacon for the Normal Park neighborhood and still maintains its role as a welcoming sign to the campus.

12 W. Ainsworth
Robert Howard

Named for a family of early settlers who had a mill on the Huron River at Michigan Avenue, Ainsworth Subdivision was one of the first additions to the original plat of the City.

This charming cottage was built in 1920, but there is very little information on the property in the Polk Directories, indicating that the Ainsworth subdivision may have still been part of the township originally.

Robert, now a retired teacher, has lived in the house since 1944. He is a volunteer at the Historical Society Museum and maintains both the Ainsworth house and the house his grandfather built on Whittaker Road next to what was the family’s market. His father, Art Howard, was a landscape architect by trade and served for many years on the board of directors of the Historical Society. Art worked in his father’s Howard Meat Market and later had his own store at the Whittaker Road location.

Sitting picturesquely near the neighborhood’s entrance from Michigan Avenue, the Howard family has a great perspective on the history of their community.

106 N. Adams

YHF continues to recognize barns, garages, and garages that meet the marker criteria. Look for these at the May 22 pot-luck dinner!
Six houses and two out-buildings to be recognized

408 E. Cross
Brian Robb & Kate de Fuccio
Listed as “storekeepers” and “laborers” when information was available, the owners seemed to fit perfectly with the Historic East Side’s working man’s neighborhood. That ethic holds true today as our city’s traditions continue.

Today the handsome East Side residence is the home of City Councilmember Brian Robb and Kate de Fuccio. The present color scheme of green, creams, and red are really “Rock Garden,” “Macadamia,” “Rye Grass,” and “Fireweed” according to the names on the paint chips and accent the structure’s delicate details in a most tasteful manner.

505 N. Hamilton
Barry LaRue & Kim Clarke
This Queen Anne house was built circa 1888. The Lewis family owned this house from about 1905 until 1968. Alton Lewis was a co-owner, treasurer, and manager of Michigan Ladder Company. They “updated” the Queen Anne style to a more Neo-classical look when they bought the home by enlarging a small front porch to a wrap-around complete with Doric columns. The parlors and formal dining room had oak trim added and features such as huge fluted columns in the archways, etc.
After 1968 the house was converted to a student rental and eventually was lost due to unpaid taxes.
After demolishing the collapsed garage and front porch roof, the County considered a total demolition when LaRue and Clarke purchased the house in October, 2009 and spent a year and a half restoring much of the missing or damaged details. Holes in the roof drilled through to the first floor, required structural and aesthetic repairs. Every system from roof to plumbing and electrical were removed and brought to current standards, being sensitive to period detail.
Yellow-orange, yellow-green, and terra cotta divide the façades of this house into a pleasing visage.
The home is now a duplex and has gone from the most blighted structure on the block to one that clearly sends the message that even a “basket case” can be saved!

324 W. Forest
JTK Holding LLC
In his 1976 account of local history, City Historian Foster Fletcher wrote “the finest brick home, was that of John S. Jenness…” Records show the grand Italianate style house was built by Vermonter John Jenness in 1858.
A broad overhang shelters the cornice and brackets, subtly encompassing the third floor windows. Paired four-over-four windows complete the front façade with half-round hoods on the second floor, elliptical hoods on the main floor. Assembled in perfect symmetry, the front portico is topped by a delicate banner of Victorian trim on the second level. This attention to Italianate details provided an elegant home for the Jenness family.
Being at the edge of the Normal College, many professors and students lived here over time. From private residence, to rooming house, to apartments, the property stands nobly at the eastern border of Eastern Michigan University. Other Italianate cubes line the north side of Forest Avenue, but 324 is by far the most massive.

Polk’s Directory indicates three women living here in 1922, three more in 1926, and the pattern continues through 1935. In 1957, the house had been divided into six apartments. Records indicate the house was owned by “Marsh” in 1973. Richard Reid owned it in 1999 and, in 2006, the property was part of Ave Maria College.

SPECIAL THANKS to Karl Williams, Jan Arps-Prundeanu, and Barry LaRue for helping collect data on the properties.

409 Oak
Preservation saves historic places in the nation, state, & county

The National Register of Historic Places
A service of the National Park Service, The National Register is the official list of the Nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and administered by the National Park Service, the National Register of Historic Places coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archeological resources

Listing on the National Register is honorary only. It does not protect the listed structures from inappropriate alteration or demolition. Only a local historic preservation ordinance can do that.

MI SHPO
Michigan’s State Historic Preservation Office evaluates properties for significance and nominates eligible resources to the National Register or protects with a local historic district ordinance. SHPO educates the public via workshops, newsletters and the HistWeb site. State Register resources are not protected from demolition or inappropriate alterations.

20 State historical markers have been awarded properties in Ypsilanti

Because of its historical significance, the city of Ypsilanti was featured in the book, "Tours of America: Michigan's Historic Architecture."

Washtenaw County helps Local Historic Districts
To help protect and preserve our most significant resources, the Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Commission periodically reviews local ordinances to ensure consistency and compliance with PA 169, invites local units of government (lugs) to take advantage of the local historic district program to protect sense of place and assists local governments in creating their own historic district commissions. SHPO does not create local ordinances; only local governments can do that.

Historic Preservation in Washtenaw County
Washtenaw County is Michigan’s only county-wide certified local government. Its historic preservation program is dedicated to supporting local historic districts, spur-ring heritage tourism, and attracting investment in our historic resources.

The Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Program is housed within the County’s Office of Community & Economic Development. The program includes the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission and its staff.

To date the staff has conducted several historic preservation projects, spanning nearly three decades of identification, documentation, and analysis. Since the 1990s, several of these projects have been partially funded by grants provided by the State Historic Preservation Office’s CLG grant program. These include the Washtenaw County Thematic Survey, 1996-1997; and the HistWeb project, 2002 to present, public workshops, and site-based projects in Chelsea, Dexter, and Ann Arbor.

### Historic Preservation Programs

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<th>Program</th>
<th>Honorary</th>
<th>Protection</th>
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Federal Tax Credits for Historic Properties

Source: Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Federal tax incentives are available to stimulate private investment in the rehabilitation of historic structures. The State Historic Preservation Office in the Michigan State Housing Development Authority administers provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 in partnership with the National Park Service and Internal Revenue Service.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 establishes...

...a 20% tax credit for the substantial, certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures for commercial, industrial and rental residential purposes, and a 10% tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation for nonresidential purposes of buildings built before 1936; and a straight-line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 39 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of the tax credit.

A certified historic structure is any building that is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, or located in a registered historic district and certified as being of historic significance to the district.

A registered historic district is any district that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or designated under a local ordinance under Michigan Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended, which has been certified by the National Park Service as substantially meeting all the requirements for listing of districts in the National Register. Simply being listed in a locally designated historic district is not sufficient to gain access to the Federal tax credits.

A certified rehabilitation is any rehabilitation of a certified historic structure that is certified as being consistent with the historic character of the property and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are used to determine whether the historical character of the building is preserved through the process of rehabilitation.

LUGS (local units of government) have established Historic Districts throughout the County

Local Historic Districts have been established in the Cities of Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Saline, and Chelsea, and in Pittsfield Charter Township:

National News Clip:
From PRESERVATION, Spring 2013, the magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Midwest-West, Michigan, Ypsilanti
[Photo: Sighting in the hanger of the Yankee Air Museum, Ypsilanti, Mich. Courtesy Leisa Thompson]
"Ypsilanti offers one of the oldest and largest historic districts in the state. This area’s love for history and historic preservation is the bedrock of our visitor’s experience. Discover the Yankee Air Museum, Michigan Firehouse Museum, Automotive Heritage Museum, a century’s worth of historic architecture, and more. Call (800) 265-9045. WWW.VISITYPSINOW.COM/DISCOVER"

Post card of Hutchinson Mansion featured on CVB’s FB page

“Still home to much of the beautiful architecture built in the 1800s, Ypsilanti is rich in historic architecture. The historic district has designated 776 buildings, including the beautiful Hutchinson Mansion located in the Historic East Side Ypsilanti neighborhood. Ypsilanti also boasts numerous historic homes that overlook the Huron River.”

Check out Visit Ypsilanti’s Facebook page every Wednesday for more vintage postcards.
Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti’s greatest resources is its historic architecture

See you at the General Meeting - Wednesday, 22 May at 6:30 p.m.

2013 / 2014 SCHEDULE

Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti’s greatest resources is its historic architecture.

Become a Member

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation encourages both private and public preservation efforts.

Join today and see what we have to offer!

Visit the website at www.yhf.org to enter your name and address. Please mail it along with a check for the appropriate amount to our treasurer. YHF’s membership year runs from January-December.

Annual Membership Categories

Students & Seniors $10
Individual $15
Family $20
(2 or more @ same address)
Contributing $50
Sustaining $100
Lifetime $1000

Make checks payable to: Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

c/o Claudia Pettit
945 Sheridan
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Board Members

Hank Prebys, President
Joe Mattimoe, Treasurer
Jan Arps-Prundeanu
Tom Dodd
Pattie Harrington
Barry LaRue
Michael Newberry
Bill Nickels
Alex Pettit
Claudia Pettit
Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

Claudia Pettit
945 Sheridan
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

2013

22 MAY 6:30 starting time: 40th Annual Marker Awards Banquet

18 AUGUST 36th Annual Home Tour

18 SEPTEMBER “The Working Women of 19 Century Ypsilanti”
Susan Nenadic, author of “Working Women in Washtenaw”

20 NOVEMBER TBA

2014

15 JANUARY TBA

19 MARCH TBA

21 MAY 41st Annual Marker Awards Banquet

2013 / 2014 SCHEDULE

Programs are held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the Ladies’ Literary Club
218 N. Washington Street, Ypsilanti, MI

Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti’s greatest resources is its historic architecture

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