

1994

Preservation Eastern Newsletter, November-December 1994

Preservation Eastern
Eastern Michigan University

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Preservation Eastern Newsletter

November / December 1994

Meeting Updates:

Notes from regular meetings on October 31 and November 14

The third regular meeting of the semester was held on October 31 with about 10 people in attendance.

- **New Officers and Elections:** New officers to serve one-year terms for 1995 were discussed, and it was decided that Lisa Lussier and Kimber VanRy would sit down and put together a list of nominees for the next meeting.
- **Possible Funding Projects:** A discussion continued from the last meeting on what to do with some of Preservation Eastern's money. Kimber reported that the group's account currently held just under \$500, so a large donation to Pease Auditorium would be impossible right now. Several people brought up fund-raising ideas, and it was decided that Heather Richards would look into what kind of start-up support EMU would provide for fundraising.

The fourth regular meeting of the semester was held on November 14 with around 8 people in attendance.

- **New Officers and Elections:** Kimber presented a list of nominees for 1995 officers as follows - Heather Richards (President), Julie Lentendre (Treasurer), Kirk Bunke and Laura Manker (Activities), and Amy Arnold and Heather Aldridge (Public Relations). Since the meeting's attendance was low, it was decided that additional nominations and elections would take place on December 9 at the Preservation Eastern Holiday Party.
- **Habitat for Humanity:** Kirk Bunke brought up an idea for Preservation Eastern to work with the Ypsilanti chapter of Habitat for Humanity on the renovation of a local home. A project would involve a two-semester commitment from the group. There was some discussion on how valuable an experience this would be for preservationists. Some people wondered if the possibility of an internship with the organization as a project planner would be possible. Kirke said he would get more information and report back.

The final Preservation Eastern Meeting of the Fall semester will be held at the Preservation Eastern Holiday Party on December 9 from 6-9 pm at the old Masonic Temple / new Riverfront Arts Center (76 North Huron, Ypsilanti). Nominations and elections of 1995 officers will be held, so don't miss this special gathering. See inside for details.

Milan Downtown Historic District National Register Nomination Well-Received by DDA

On the evening of November 17, Ted Ligibel and graduate assistant Darrin VonStein presented the results of research the EMU Historic Preservation Program has been compiling for a National Register of Historic Places nomination of the proposed Milan Downtown Historic District to the board members of the Milan Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

The project in Milan's downtown originally began as part of Ted's Documenting Historic Structures class (GHP 630) from last Fall. Students found Milan to be rich in many varieties of commercial styles from the mid-19th-century through the 20th-century, including some fine Art Moderne buildings. Since last year's class, Darrin has worked with Ted at compiling and editing the research and completing the National Register nomination form.

Lisa Lussier, Coordinator of the Milan Development Office and a current EMU Historic Preservation Program student, said board members were obviously impressed by the amount of work the students had accomplished on the project. She also said the presentation to the DDA served as an important reminder to the community that Milan has many important downtown historic structures worth preserving.

This semester's Documenting Historic Structures class is currently working on a National Register nomination of the proposed Albion Historic District. Earlier in the semester, the class also completed HABS format documentation of four houses owned by the University of Michigan at 1007, 1015, 1021 and 1027 Huron in Ann Arbor.

• President's Note •

Putting this sixth issue of the newsletter together is one of the final things I have left to do as my tour of duty as President of Preservation Eastern and as a student in the Historic Preservation Program draws near an end. My charge has been to fill four pages of space each month with news and announcements, and so now I will devote some of this space to my own farewell musings.

When I entered this program two-and-a-half years ago, I was more than a little concerned about being in a geography department. What could this possibly have to do with historic preservation? By now, I've realized the importance of the geography component and that is one of perspective.

Maps are made to show relationships, to provide certain perspectives between the natural and unnatural things that exist in the landscape. But maps need not be two-dimensional pieces of paper, they can take on the form of many kinds of guides for our eyes and minds.

Every different perspective you can use as you observe the landscape works to increase a true depth of understanding. The landscape must be seen from the standpoint of geographers, poets, preservationists, architects, planners, artists, photographers, journalists, builders, historians, authors and sociologists. The landscape must be examined through the experiences of women and men, children and adults, blacks and whites, natives and newcomers. I have learned the importance of looking beyond the architectural style books and the countless fancy coffee-table tomes. The most telling information on landscapes is found in novels and paintings, at construction sites and stone quarries, at the mall and on cable television. Historic preservation has taught me to become an intentional tourist who wanders along and scrutinizes everything for hints to some greater meaning in the landscape.

By constantly expanding our perspectives, the true preservationists will not paralyze themselves in time, but become a part of it. In doing so, historic preservation will become a natural part of society, rather than something odd that must constantly be explained to the uninitiated.

My opinions on historic preservation have shifted back and forth tumultuously in the past few years, yet I still feel I've made the right choice in devoting myself to its pursuits. New things are not all bad. Old things are not all good. Use some perspective. Find out for yourselves.

Kimber VanRy

Conferences Well-Attended by EMU Historic Preservation Students and Alumni

The National Trust's conference in Boston at the end of October saw over a dozen EMU students and alumni getting together to network with preservationists from around the country. Past students had the chance to meet with some of the newer students, friendships were struck up with students from other universities and job leads were anxiously pursued. In their spare time, the attendees toured a respectable number of Boston's better eating and drinking establishments.

The Pioneer America Society's meeting in Mitchell, Indiana had another good showing for EMU with eight past and present students and Marshall McLennan in attendance. Four of the students and Marshall presented papers, which was one of the best showings for any university being represented at the meeting. Despite the murky weather, everyone involved enjoyed the chance to meet with like-minded scholars and explore the countryside. And everyone there learned southern Indiana definitely isn't flat, especially when you're on a bus.

Cobblestone Farm Searches for New Board Members

Cobblestone Farm Association is currently looking for individuals with historic preservation or museum-related experience interested in becoming board members. Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month, and currently the board is working toward focusing more committee attention in the areas of membership activity, interiors, fundraising, archival work and newsletter production. Those who are seriously interested in this sort of important learning and working experience should call Marguerite Harms at (313) 662-5845 for more information. All kinds of volunteers are also constantly in need at Cobblestone Farm, so contact Kerry Adams at (313) 994-2928 if you're interested.

1994 Preservation Eastern Officers

Kimber VanRy, President	481-1957
Kerry Adams, Activities	994-2928
Mark St. John, Treasurer	482-1508
Ted Ligibel, Adviser	487-0232

Preservation Eastern is an officially recognized campus organization of EMU, sponsored by faculty of the Geography and Geology Department. Our goal is to promote preservation awareness among the campus community, and to assist in the efforts of local groups engaged in preservation activities. All interested parties are invited to attend the meetings, which are held bi-weekly.

PRESERVATION EASTERN MEETING

Monday, April 4

7 pm in 239 Strong Hall

This is our last meeting of the semester, and we're fortunate enough to have Steve Seebohm and Ron Koenig of Seebohm, Ltd. give a presentation on the Midland County Courthouse Mural Restoration Project. Their in-depth program will contain detailed information on the murals, the project, and how you can become involved as a summer intern or volunteer.

This is a truly unique project, both in its subject and in the practical hands-on opportunities being offered. Everyone is encouraged to attend, especially those students looking for an exciting internship experience this summer.

For more information, call Kimber at 485-2987 or Ted at 487-0232.

THE MIDLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE MURALS: A SHORT HISTORY

The murals on the exterior of the Midland County Courthouse, in Midland Michigan, have survived for seventy years, but will soon be lost forever if steps are not taken to preserve them. Seebohm, Ltd. has begun the process of restoring the decaying murals, but it is seeking the assistance of preservation interns to carry out the work. This summer the 1924 murals will be made beautiful once again through the combined efforts of community volunteers and a team of preservation specialists.

The Courthouse has always been a symbol of rich Midland County history. From the very beginning Henry Herbert Dow, head of the Dow Chemical empire, had a strong hand in the design and construction of the building, and it was his wish that it reflect the things which made his county singularly great. At his suggestion the rough-hewn boulders that make up the base of the building were carefully collected by local farmers to become the foundation of the courthouse. The magnesite stucco murals on the exterior were fashioned from materials extracted by Dow from Midland's own subterranean brine deposits. These murals depict the white pine forests that formed such an important part of Midland's early lumbering history, as well as Native Americans and settlers who lived there. Mr. Dow made generous financial contributions to the creation of the courthouse, yet, more importantly, it was his actual ideas that were the genesis for the building's design.

In the year it was completed, national magazines called the courthouse "The most completely American building in America." Further, it was stated that: "Many cities have made progress by forgetting their past - their early beginnings. Midland deliberately chooses to remember - to commemorate, to celebrate, its early history." The Midland County Courthouse murals are important not only because they are themselves a part of our history, but also because they are the essence of an even earlier historic memory.

Despite early notions that the murals on the Courthouse would last hundreds of years, time has not been terribly kind to them. Additions, neglect, and "repairs" have obscured many of the mural's surfaces. Large sections of the colorful artwork have crumbled from the walls, to be unsympathetically patched with gray Portland cement. Further, the very nature of the original stucco's chemical composition has changed dramatically; what was once a terribly hard material, has in many areas become soft and fragile.

For ten years *The Citizens Committee for the Restoration of the Exterior of the Midland County Courthouse* has worked to return the murals to their former glory. Due primarily to their efforts, the building is now on both the National and State Historic Registers. With financial support from three Midland foundations, the restoration of the exterior murals is now becoming a reality.

The Restoration is as unique as the building it is restoring. The Courthouse was built of Midland materials, by Midland hands, with Midland ideas. It is therefore appropriate the majority of the physical work on the Courthouse Murals be carried out by local volunteers. Empowering the community to preserve its own historic resources is proving the most effective form of preservation training and education.

MIDLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE MURAL RESTORATION PROJECT

The Internships

The three positions are open to all Historic Preservation students with a minimum of one year of training in a recognized Historic Preservation Program. These individuals will be required to live in Midland, Michigan while working on the project. Preference will be given to students who have resided or currently reside in the State of Michigan. The quality of a student's written response is of great importance. Personal transportation is required.

Positions are set up to allow interns the widest range of useful experience on a restoration project. Each internship will run for approximately six weeks, with some flexibility allowed for student schedules. Two of these positions will address the entire restoration and preservation process, allowing interns to explore and be involved in all aspects of the project. The remaining internship is geared to allow a student training in the conservation of architectural building materials, directed through hands-on training with an experienced conservation professional.

Preservation Internships (2)

One internship will run from June 2 to July 15, 1994, while the other will begin July 15 and run until the end of August. The focus of these positions will be learning the intricacies of planning, coordinating, and executing a large-scale restoration project. Interns will assist with project management duties, scheduling and coordination of work and materials, working with a community labor force, photo and written documentation of the building's history and of the project, and quality control. The student will also help carry out the hands-on reinstatement of lost areas of colored stucco on the murals.

Conservation Internship (1)

This position will open mid-May (May 16) and run until the end of June. The internship will allow the individual to receive hands-on conservation experience on a significant decorative historic exterior. The conservation student will work closely with Conservator Kenneth B. Katz of *Conservation and Museum Services* on the treatment of the primary magnesite murals located at the front of the building. The work will involve documentation, cleaning, evaluation and removal of prior repairs, consolidation, reattachment, in-filling, and visual re-integration using new materials.

We anticipate providing a stipend, as well as reimbursement for travel expenses. Accommodations are currently being arranged in the County of Midland.

Those interested in applying for these internships need to respond before April 18, 1994. Applicants should supply an up-to-date CV, with a letter indicating related preservation experience, career goals, as well as which internship they are applying for. If you have any question please call (517) 339-1900 or send FAX to, (517) 339-1920. Send all communications to:

Ron Koenig/Steve Seebohm
Seebohm, Ltd.
P.O. Box 4763
East Lansing, MI48826-4763

Preservation Eastern Holiday Happenings

Traditional Holiday End of the Semester Party at the New Riverfront Arts Center

Each year Preservation Eastern bids farewell to the year and the Fall semester with a holiday get-together which allows everyone to take a brief break before the last big push through finals. This year's party will be held on Friday, December 9 at the new Riverfront Arts Center, located in the historic Masonic Temple at 76 North Huron, Ypsilanti. The party will run from 6-9pm, and everyone is asked to bring a dish to pass. This year's holiday party will also serve as a forum for the nomination and election of new 1995 Preservation Eastern officers. Following the party, many people are going to walk to through the Festival of Lights at nearby Riverside Park and meet at Sidetracks in Depot Town.

Preservation Eastern 1995 Nominees for Officers

President:	Heather Richards
Treasurer:	Julie Letendre
Activities:	Kirk Bunke Laura Manker
Public Relations:	Amy Arnold Heather Aldridge

Land for the Masonic Temple was purchased in 1907 on a lot which at the time was occupied by a boarding house and an old laundry. The Neo-Classical building was dedicated on May 5, 1909 with an elaborate celebration, but it eventually fell out of use as a ceremonial hall for the Mason's. The Masonic Temple has been used on and off as a place for other meetings in recent years, but lately a group of local individuals have come together to turn it into a permanent public arts and activities space. So far, as the Riverfront Arts Center, the building has hosted gatherings ranging from fraternity dances to a party for radio station WEMU. There is much work left to do on the building, and volunteers are needed to participate in renovation work.

Preservation Eastern's Special Cobblestone Farm "Country Christmas" Tour

By special arrangement with the folks at Cobblestone Farm (2781 Packard Road, Ann Arbor), Preservation Eastern is being given a special free holiday tour of the house on Monday, December 5, from 5-7 pm. The halls will be decked for the season, including three period Christmas trees decorated in the styles of the 1840s, the 1890s and the 1940s. Guided tours will be given at 5:30 and 6:15 pm, and refreshments will be served. All EMU Historic Preservation Program students and faculty, Preservation Eastern members, and family are invited to attend. For more information call Kerry Adams at (313) 994-2928.



The Newsletter Needs You

The Preservation Eastern Newsletter is always looking for submissions and wants to continue its expansion. The Newsletter is now being read not only by students, but by local and statewide organizations and program alumni. If you have a condensed paper, some interesting research, a book review, a preservation related article or upcoming event you would like to see included in these pages, contact any of next semester's new Preservation Eastern officers or Ted Ligibel at (313) 487-0232.

• Upcoming Events •

Victorian Christmas Celebration at Milan's Hack House

The Milan Historical Society will be hosting a "Victorian Christmas" at the Hack House (775 County Street, Milan) on December 4 from 12-4 pm. Victorian holiday decorations will adorn the home, homemade baked goods will be for sale, and Victorian gifts and cards will be available in the gift shop. Admission is a small \$1 donation. For more information, call (313) 439-7522.

A Traditional Winter Holiday at Cobblestone Farm

As a grand finale to its 150th year anniversary, Cobblestone Farm (2781 Packard Road, Ann Arbor) will be celebrating the winter holiday season with a "Country Christmas" event on Sundays, December 4 and 11, 1994 from 12-5 pm. These events include traditional floral decorations, period music, caroling and holiday food preparations. Special children's story telling and crafts make this an event for the entire family. Admission is \$2 per person or \$8 per family. For more information on this and other Cobblestone Farm events, call (313) 994-2928.

Victorian Christmas Open House in Wyandotte

The Wyandotte Museum (2610 Biddle Avenue, Wyandotte), an 1896 Queen Anne home, will be hosting a "Victorian Christmas Open House" on Sundays, December 4 and 11 from 1-5 pm. Period rooms throughout the house will be decorated in Victorian holiday style by local florists and crafters, antique toys will be displayed, harp and piano music will provide entertainment, and Santa Claus will make an appearance. The 1862 Marx Home and Bishop Park Log Cabin will also be open for viewing. Admission is free for this holiday event and refreshments will be made available. For more information, call (313) 246-4520.

Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor Special Holiday Events

The sites and communities along the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, stretching 150 miles from Toledo, Ohio to Fort Wayne, Indiana, are hosting a number of special events in the coming months. Through December 31, the Wolcott House Museum Complex in Maumee, Ohio will present a "Victorian Christmas by the River" through old-fashioned holiday decorations. Call (419) 893-9602 for more information. Seventy-five handcrafted wreaths will be featured at the "Festival of Wreaths" at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in Fort Wayne through December 4. Call (219) 427-1267 for more information. Finally, the Embassy Theater in Fort Wayne will host 65 professionally decorated Christmas trees in its "Festival of Trees" through December 4. The event also includes live entertainment and music from the Grand Page Pipe Organ. For more information, call (219) 424-4071. For information on year-round activities in the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, write to: Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, Inc., 5100 W. Central Avenue, Toledo, OH 43615.

Congratulations!

**To Geography and Geology Department Head
Andrew Nazarro and his wife Norieda on the birth
of their son Andrew Benjamin on Friday, November 18**

Membership Counts! Join Preservation Eastern

Why join Preservation Eastern? Well, it's the best way to keep up on historic preservation activities both within the department and throughout the area. We're planning speakers, activities, events and trips for the upcoming year, so join now and keep informed with the *Preservation Eastern Newsletter* which will be mailed to all current members. Dues are only \$5 per year, and your membership and involvement will insure future growth and success in the organization. For more information, contact treasurer Mark St. John or any other officer.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Program of Study: _____

Enclose a check or money order for \$5, and mail to:

Preservation Eastern

Preservation Eastern
EMU Department of Geography and Geology
Historic Preservation Program
Strong Hall
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

THE SERIOUS SIDE

Historic Preservation, for many of us, is a life-style choice and represents a sometimes radical departure in outlook and demeanor...just ask your friends and family! Its a joyful embrangle. No longer do we observe the built environment in a "normal" way . . . no detail being too minute, no minutia being too detailed. Yet this aspect of preservation is both one of its strengths and vulnerabilities; strength in the ability to recognize what constitutes the components of good/authentic design, vulnerable in the tendency to get lost in its physicality.

Too often we separate people from place, imagining, usually subconsciously, that these places somehow just appeared, perhaps spontaneously. We get overwhelmed by the uniqueness of the place and its interplay between light/dark, solid/void, detail/austerity, scale/insignificance. We forget that every inch of the earth is the result of **human** arbitration, even those vast expanses of the Yukon Territories and the ocean floor and Yellowstone National Park. We forget that our neighbors on this planet, who do not see the world as we do, have a hard time visualizing, let alone conceptualizing what it is we espouse.

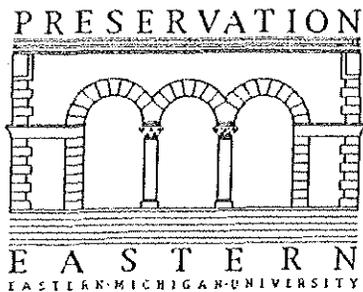
We need to help them understand. Many of you have heard me wax eloquent (or so I think) about that fifth dimension of HP that so often gets overlooked . . . INTERPRETATION! I shudder when I think for example of the times I have watched an historic commission twist uncomfortably in the wind of an obnoxious NIMBY only to realize that a strong argument was being made about the imposition of a regulation that they never had heard of before, or the existence of an historic neighborhood they never even knew existed. Why, because we didn't do our job, we didn't take the next step, we didn't help our neighbors understand . . . and we lost a potential ally.

As a profession we need to become more user friendly. We must recognize that the larger public, who will inherit these fabulous places we aspire so ardently to preserve, needs and wants to understand what it is that makes them so distinctive. Remember as Charleston (SC) Mayor O'Reilly has noted on so many occasions that good(authentic) design knows no bounds, it is not impinged upon by race or creed or economic status . . . it is a universal. But it needs to be discussed, explained, brought from the subconscious into the everyday.

The best place to start? In the cradle! (Remember those Froebel blocks and good ole FLW)! Next time lets talk education and how to really use it to our advantage, for here is where we need to get aggressive. Bye for now!

Yours in JMF!
Ted J Ligibel

4-3-95



PRESERVATION EASTERN
Eastern Michigan University, Historic Preservation Program
Strong Hall, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

February 24, 1995

Ted Ligibel
Historic Preservation Program
EMU

Dear Dr. Ligibel,

Thank you so much for writing a response to Preservation Eastern's call for papers for our newsletter. I really appreciate your efforts considering the short notice I gave you.

Already people are commenting on the provocative observations in the *Redefining Historic Preservation* insert of the January/February issue of the newsletter. My main goal in exploring this issue with our newsletter was to generate passionate thought and dialogue about this very pervasive concern in the American historic preservation community, and happily I am beginning to hear that conversation here in Michigan.

Once again, thank you very much. And if I may, I encourage you to remain actively involved in future issues of the newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Richards

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a header or title, including the word "MAY" and some illegible characters.

Main body of handwritten text, consisting of several lines of cursive script. The text is mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through.

Second main section of handwritten text, continuing the cursive script. It appears to be a continuation of the text from the previous section.

Final section of handwritten text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or a closing statement.



TED - FYI

PRESERVATION EASTERN
Eastern Michigan University, Historic Preservation Program
Strong Hall, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

November 20, 1995

Dear EMU Historic Preservation Alumni:

Please find enclosed the latest issue of Preservation Eastern's Newsletter. We are sending this issue complimentary to all of our alumni. We want to (re)introduce you to Preservation Eastern and the EMU Historic Preservation Program. The newsletter is akin to a sleepy giant just waking from a deep slumber. Preservation Eastern has been working all year to bring the newsletter up to a level comparable with other nationally reknown graduate programs' newsletters. We believe that we are almost there, but we would like to include some input from alumni in the publication. If you are currently involved in an interesting project or research topic, please write a short synopsis for the newsletter. We publish the newsletter twice a semester, and it is read avidly by all the students currently in the program.

Preservation Eastern would also like to encourage all our alumni to become members of Preservation Eastern. Membership will not only provide a means for you to keep in touch with the activities of the program, but it will also allow us to keep in touch with the activities of alumni.

Finally, please take notice of our new t-shirts and sweatshirts that are for sale. Our logo is screened onto a high-quality, emerald-green material, and we are selling them just above the price of cost. They are made locally here in Ypsilanti by EMU graduates and we will be able to ship them to you within a week of receiving your order.

Have a marvelous holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Richards, Director
Preservation Eastern

*Preservation Eastern Newsletter
challenge: NO MORE EXCUSES!*

*What Role Can and
Should HISTORIC
PRESERVATION Play
in "Rebuilding"
DETROIT?*

Preservation Eastern, the student organization of Eastern Michigan University's Historic Preservation Program, is challenging you to take a stand on the realities of historic preservation as a partner in "rebuilding" Detroit. While the national historic preservation community seems to be viewing Detroit as an exciting challenge - a means of utilizing historic preservation towards community preservation, we in Michigan only seem to be turning our backs on Detroit - "the problem is too large", "the politics are too murky".

No more excuses, we want solutions.

Tell us what you think in 1000 words or less. We are putting together a special December issue of our newsletter to specifically address the challenges of historic preservation in Detroit. We hope that all the representative historic preservation agencies in Michigan will respond to our challenge. It is time to start a dialogue and stop ignoring Detroit. **Deadline: November 30, 1995.**

Mail to: Preservation Eastern, Eastern Michigan University, 201 Strong Hall,
Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Fax: 313-487-6979 Geo_Richards@emuvax.emich.edu

MEMO

To: Paul Heaton, University Publications
From: Philip Smith, Preservation Eastern, Geog. & Geol. Dept.
Date: March 9, 1999
Subject: Payment of Requisition # 436303, First Impression Printing

Per our phone conversation today, I understand that I incorrectly processed a printing project, by not going through University Publications. At the time I had the printing done, I felt I was getting a good price, for I contacted 3 printers for quotes. The printer I used is in Howell, and I use this printer for jobs with other organizations. I realize now that I should have sent the job through your department.

Please approve this job, with the understanding that I will inform the students in Preservation Eastern that all future printing jobs need to be processed through University Publications.

Thank you for your help in getting this paid even though the proper channels weren't followed.

A copy of this memo will be filed in the Preservation Eastern folder for the next Director, so that he/she will know how to handle printing jobs.

Attachments:

newsletter
requisition #436303
invoice #7320

cc: Rosa Bird, Purchasing Dept.
✓ Ted Ligibel, Geog. & Geol. Dept.

