

1997

Preservation Eastern Newsletter, November 1997

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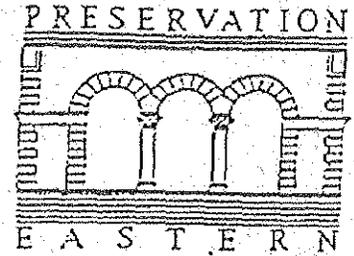
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Preservation Eastern Newsletter

November 1997



Volume 4 Number 2

The Newsletter of the Eastern Michigan Historic Preservation program

Art Contest, reception set

Preservation Eastern is sponsoring its Second Annual Art contest. "Focus on the Historic" is this year's theme and centers on the oldest historic structures on campus: Welch Hall, Starkweather Hall, Sherzer Hall, and McKenny Union. Submission deadline: Nov. 17.

Preservation Eastern is the Student Government Association's Student Organization of the year and is the student arm of EMU's Historic Preservation program.

A reception is scheduled on Tuesday, Nov. 18, from 3 to 8 p.m. in Goodison Hall. Serving as distinguished judges are Maria Davis, EMU Archivist; Cheryl Farmer, Mayor of Ypsilanti; Dr. Gayle Thomas, EMU Vice Regent; Dr. Roy Johnston, Art Department Chair; and Dr. Barry Fish, Arts & Sciences Dean.

"It is important that students, alumni and the University community are aware of the importance of our built environment on campus. Buildings are key to understanding and appreciating our surroundings," said Neva Baron, Director of Preservation Eastern. "With the University's 150th anniversary fast approaching, we want to emphasize these particular structures because they define the core of our campus."

Students, EMU alumni, faculty and staff are encouraged to enter the contest. Students compete against students in one category. There is a separate category reserved for alumni, faculty and staff. Entry information is available by contacting Neva Baron at (313) 480-3688, or nbaron@online.emich.edu.

Art contest sponsors listed with appreciation
on page 7.

Preservation program hosts Pioneer America Society meeting and tour

By Marshall McLennan
Director, Historic Preservation Program

On October 2-4, EMU's Historic Preservation Program and the Department of Geography organized and hosted the Pioneer America Society's 1997 annual meeting at the Dearborn Inn in Dearborn, Michigan. Mary Culver, a program alumnus and lecturer, provided the keynote address, "The Cultural landscape of Southeastern Michigan," at the Friday evening banquet.

Marshall McLennan organized the conference with assistance from Ted Ligibel. Along with Culver and fellow alumni Ina Hanel, Rob Burg, and Gladys Saborio, Ligibel and McLennan planned an all-day Saturday field trip, "Travel the Old Sauk Trail," which represented an extended journey through southeastern Michigan.

Ligibel played the role of "droll host" and chief guide as the group wended its way from Cherry Hill and Dixboro to Saline and Clinton through the Irish Hills to Brooklyn, Walker Tavern (once served travelers on the Old Chicago Road known today as U.S. 12) and the *trabajo rustica* concrete folk statuary of McCourtie Park in Somerset Township. The latter two sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Along the way, participants refreshed themselves at Cobblestone Farm, lunched in a historic hotel in Brooklyn where they also prowled the town's old market square, and inspected several old barns, a log cabin, and one of Stephen Mills' adobe houses, all the time admiring the fall colors, which seemed to intensify throughout the day.

Of the 34 papers on Oct. 3, two were presented by department faculty (Ligibel and Gabe Cherem), 10 by alumni of the

Historic Preservation Program, and four by students currently enrolled in the program. Program students also provided a variety of technical and logistical support services. Graduate assistant Phil Smith not only ably undertook the role of protocol officer on Friday, the day of paper presentations, but also edited the field guide. Graduate assistant Lisa Porstman assembled the paper abstracts, and assistance with registration and monitoring of the presentation rooms was provided by Tricia Todt, Nancy Reynolds, Mark St. John, Ioana Campean (our current Fulbright scholar from Rumania), Monica Kuhn and Danielle Hall.

Other speakers and attendees comprised a spectrum from across the country, coming from as far as California and Washington. Program students enjoyed the opportunity to meet numerous individuals whose published work they've encountered in the course of their studies: Allen Noble, Terry Jordan, Robert Ensminger, John Jakle, Richard Cleek, Warren Roberts, Jon Kilpinen, Hubert Wilhelm, Alex Bobersky, David Stephens, and Michael Davis.

Jordan, the foremost authority on American log building construction, pointed out on the field trip that the 1837 log cabin at Cobblestone Farm is an example of the Anglo-Ontario Canadian tradition of log construction rather than the more prevalent Midland tradition originating in the Delaware River Valley. It is made of rounded logs shaped only at the ends. Warren Roberts, another national authority on American log architecture, pointed out that the Portland cement that has replaced the original chinking is drawing the moisture out of the logs, leading to rapid deterioration.

Gassing up

A 20th-century form, the gas station evolved

By Janna Baron

The gas station, like many forms of popular architecture, is often so taken for granted as a part of everyday life that its history is rarely considered.

Station types were sometimes introduced well before they became popular. For example, the oblong box accounted for three percent of gas stations in 1930. Ten years later, it had increased to 54 percent. Other types, such as the curbside station, survived well beyond their age of popularity.

Gasoline wasn't always as simple to pump into a gas tank as it is today. In the automobile's early days, there wasn't a gas pump, let alone a gas station. There was, however, a forerunner to the gas station called the bulk depot. Here, early motorists could buy gasoline by the can or drum. A can might be just enough to fill the tank, but a drum could be taken home and used as needed. Gas was also sometimes sold door-to-door from horse-drawn tanks.

Filling the tank proved as challenging as finding a place that sold gas. Before the advent of the gas pump, filling up was a challenging and dangerous ritual. This "ritual" often involved at least two people. The gasoline was poured through a large metal funnel held by one person. A second person poured the gasoline into the funnel that was often covered with a chamois cloth to filter out anything that might harm the automobile engine. Once it made it through the filter, the gasoline gurgled through the funnel into the gas tank. Judging the fullness of the tank was left up to the eyes and ears. A person would peer down the filling tube to see if it was full or listen for a full tank if the tube was curved. Luckily, this method of fueling would have a short life.

In 1905, the pump Sylvan F. Bowser had developed twenty years earlier was ready to go. His original idea consisted of a pump in which a wooden plunger would raise a column of liquid toward the surface. From there, he developed a self-measuring tank that pumped coal oil out of a barrel. Eventually, it pumped gasoline instead.

The following year, John J.

Tokheim's Dome Oil Pump debuted. This hand-operated pump had "a mechanical counter that was geared to the fluid-holding capacity of the cylinder and could be read for total volume pumped."

Now that it was easier and safer to sell gasoline in town, gas pumps popped up in front of a variety of businesses, including grocery and hardware stores, and blacksmith shops. This was the curbside station.

By 1917, curbside pumps could be found in busy downtown areas with gasoline sales being the only product, as well as at the businesses mentioned above. There were, however, disadvantages to the city curbside station. Lines of cars waiting for a fill-up congested traffic and blocked trolley tracks. The pumps could be crashed into by oncoming vehicles, potentially causing fire or explosion. Such hazards led to the end of urban curbside stations. Local fire ordinances outlawed them in most cities by the early 1920s. Curbside stations continue to exist in less populated rural areas.

The first off-street gas stations, the shed form, existed simultaneously with the curbside station. They came in a number of sizes and shapes. Used mainly as storage facilities, shed gas stations were the same type of sheds used by lumber yards and other businesses that dealt in bulk commodities. Grounds weren't landscaped, but sometimes a fence was built around the unattractive, utilitarian shed. They first appeared around 1910 and had all but disappeared by 1940.

Here begins the history of the modern off-street gas station. Off-street gasoline sales began about 1905. Harry Grenner and Clem Laessig opened the first chain of gas stations in St. Louis, MO. The pair began as bulk fuel distributors but thought profits might be higher if motorists could buy gasoline in a quick, efficient way. They created the first American gas station by "installing a gravity fed tank resembling an oversized water heater and attaching an ordinary garden hose to its base." The chain, called the Automobile Gasoline Company, sold Shell gasoline.

Standard Oil of California opened its first gas station two years later in Seattle,

Author's note:

"There's an example of the ice box type station on Huron & Cross in Ypsilanti; but it has been painted green (and is no longer used as a gas station.) In Ann Arbor, there's another ice box example at Main & Stadium; it's a drycleaner now, but the exterior is well-preserved."

WA. It consisted of a small building just off the street with a tank set on a platform with a glass measuring device and a hose.

In 1910, the Central Oil Company of Flint, MI erected the first building specifically designed as a gas station. It was simply a large canopy supported by posts, covering two drive-ways with one hand operated gas pump in the middle. It wasn't a masterpiece in design, but it served its purpose.

Many early gas stations were prefabricated buildings that could be erected in only a few days' time. In 1915, Shell of California used a standard prefabricated building. According to The American Gas Station, it had a flat roof with a canopy supported by a single post with electric lighting and "modern gasoline pumps." Shell called this model the Type A or cracker box station. Writing for the Shell Company, Beaton said the Type A station was capped by a 32-by-16-foot-square roof, beneath which was a 16-by-16-foot-square enclosure made of factory-sash glass panes. The other half of the space beneath the roof was left open. It was supported at the ends by two posts to form a canopy. Next to the posts, stood the gasoline pumps (usually two). The finished station was painted bright yellow with bright yellow trim. Stations built before 1920 were wooden. After 1920, they were of steel construction, for fire safety.

In response to competition from Shell, Standard of California opened its chain of west coast stations. It too,

GAS STATION continues from page 2 ...

standardized its 34 locations. Each was a small house with an attached canopy. They were all painted the same way and had the same signage. Sites were fenced and landscaped, as were some Shell stations.

Around 1917, Allan Jackson developed a standardized station for Standard Oil Company (Indiana) that was not prefabricated. Jackson's station was a small, flat-roofed brick building with a canopy that covered one of two driveways in front of the building. Brick posts supported the canopy at each end. A few of these midwestern station buildings were still extant in the early 1980s.

Standardization for early gas stations was key for the same reason it is today in various retail industries -- it is familiar to the customer and will draw him or her in if the building and signage look the same wherever an outlet is located.

Not all oil companies required that their gas stations look the same. Sinclair spent money on company owned stations only where "prestige" was important. However, most Sinclair stations were run by individual operators who were not bound to any particular style in station design.

In the late teens, the visible pump, also known as the gravity pump, was introduced. In the earliest models, gas was pumped by hand into the cylinder and gravity-fed into the tank. By 1923, the visible pump with electric motor was introduced.

To establish product identity, gas companies dyed the now-visible product. For example, Texaco dyed its gas green while Sunoco sold blue gas. However, gasoline (dyed or not) exposed to sunlight has the tendency to form an unsightly brown film. Corning Glass Works came to the rescue when it developed Nultra, a blue-tinted glass that blocked out ultraviolet rays that caused the film.

By the dawn of the Roaring Twenties, the gas station had become a familiar feature on the American landscape. Several station building forms were popular during the 1920s, including the house, and the house with canopy. Prefabricated buildings continued to be popular.

The house type gas station was made

to blend with the residential and urban neighborhoods in which it was often located. Many of these stations were prefabricated steel buildings, ordered from a catalogue or specially designed for a company. Pilasters and low hipped roofs were common decorative features.

A typical floor plan included a small office area, one or two storage areas, a hand-cranked oil dispenser strategically located at front center of the office where the customer would definitely see it, and a pair of public rest rooms. For convenience, the mens' room was usually located inside the station office. The ladies' room was often placed in a "discreet" place, typically along one side or the rear of the building.

Many companies used a specific, traditional architectural style to establish brand loyalty as well as to minimize the physical intrusion on neighborhoods and scenery. The Pure Oil Company and Phillips Petroleum are two such examples.

Carl Petersen, designer for Pure Oil, dubbed his 1927 creation the English Cottage. Designed to blend in with residential surroundings yet stand out, the English Cottage looked like a little house with end chimneys. Its white building with bright blue shutters and steeply pitched roof made it distinctive from other gas stations. The first English Cottage stations opened in Indianapolis later the same year.

Phillips Petroleum designed its house station in 1927, too. Instead of false end chimneys, Phillips' version had a more centrally located cosmetic chimney. A gable was placed over the entry, versus Pure Oil's hooded entry. Each "house" was painted dark green with orange and blue trim to distinguish it from the competition. The first station of this design was opened in Wichita, KS in 1927.

The house with bays station bore resemblance to both the house and prefabricated cracker box designs. It was really just a house type with an adjoining canopy to shelter attendants and customers from the elements. It could be of standard construction or prefabricated.

The 1930s were a transition period for gas stations. Services introduced in the 1920s, such as lubrication, minor repairs, and washing were continued or increased. New and additional bays were built for these. Bay additions before 1935

tended to follow the architectural style of the rest of the station. After 1935, they were usually somewhat dissociated from the rest of the station with a simple box form and flat roof. A lubrication bay was large enough to hold necessary equipment and the car being worked on.

Canopies were temporarily eliminated in many parts of the country for at least two reasons. From the aesthetic standpoint, they were a distraction from the lines of gas station building designs. They were also removed to help improved traffic circulation. In the western states, canopies remained to help protect station attendants from the sun.

A new gas pump was introduced during the 1930s. Manufactured by a variety of companies the calculating pumps had the same elements (though are not identical to) as modern pumps. Gauges were clockface, with the "hour hand" indicating the number of gallons pumped and the "minute hand" showing fractions of a gallon pumped. Early calculating pumps were still quite tall; they would not shrink until after World War II when the pumping cabinet was moved below ground.

Before the end of the 1930s, the oblong box that would dominate the next fifty years of gas station design was introduced. Hipped and gabled roofs of the earlier house type stations were replaced with flat roofs. The visual

— **GAS STATION** continues on page 4

New classes in preservation

Beginning in the winter semester 1998, Lisa DiChiera will join our roster of part-time lecturers. This will expand our offerings in preservation planning and architectural history. In the Winter 1998 term, DiChiera will teach a class on Politics and Policies (GHPR 680). This will be followed in the fall semester by a course, as yet untitled, involving an overview of the architectural history of the American metropolis.

Ms. DiChiera's working experience has been centered in Chicago. She has worked with both the regional office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office.

Director's Column

Preservation Eastern is breaking new ground. On Friday, Nov. 14, members will be teaching at Jeanette Junior High School in Sterling Heights. Members will present on various topics, including Civil War Battlefield Preservation, Cemeteries, Living History, and Preservation issues in West Africa and Rumania. We are educating the next generation of young people!!!

Our Fall Art Contest deadline for submissions is Nov. 17, with a reception scheduled for Nov. 18, from 3 to 5 p.m., in Goodison Hall. Our distinguished judges include: Maria Davis, EMU Archivist; Cheryl Farmer, Mayor of Ypsilanti; Dr. Gayle Thomas, EMU Vice Regent; Dr. Roy Johnston, Art Department Chair; and Dr. Barry Fish, Arts & Sciences Dean.

To date, the art contest committee has raised more than \$600 in donations from area businesses and from the EMU Student Government Association. I want to thank each of you who are involved in this endeavor. (See page 7 for a list of sponsoring businesses and organizations and additional information.)

The Museum Committee is in the process of developing and implementing an exhibit to celebrate the Historic Preservation Program, the Geography & Geology Department, and eventually, the 150th anniversary of EMU.

Preservation Eastern meetings for the Fall Semester are on the first and third Mondays of the month at 5:45 p.m. in Strong Hall. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate. If you want to be active but are unable to attend the meetings, please contact Susan McBride, Phil Smith or me.

Yours truly,

Neva K Baron

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distinction between the office and service bays became blurred. Gas pumps were pushed further away from the station house to keep office and service bay entrances clear. A typical oblong box (rectangular) floor plan would include an office, mens' and ladies' bathrooms, a storage area, one or two service bays, and a utility room. Exteriors were often covered with affordable yet durable white porcelain enamel. Such exteriors were easy to clean; they had only to be hosed down or washed just like a car to be gleaming white again.

Oblong boxes before 1950 were usually prefabricated. After 1950, they were often constructed of cinderblock or concrete block. In the 1960s, plastic simulated more traditional materials such as wood and brick.

In 1931, the Mid-Continent Petroleum Corporation was the first to take the oblong box as its standard station design. The first station went up in Sapulpa, OK. It incorporated a great deal of plate glass with white unpainted aluminum framing set into walls covered with glassy, black vitrolite.

Texaco was among the first of the major companies to embrace this new, stripped down type. In 1937, Walter Dorwin Teague presented his International Style and Streamline Moderne - influenced designs to Texaco's board of directors. By 1940, 500 of these stations had been constructed. Overall, about 10,000 Texaco stations were built or remodeled to Teague's specifications.

In 1940, Socony Vacuum (better known as Mobil) adopted a box style designed by Frederick G. Frost and David Dodge. It had a half - cylinder shaped show room and display area that was reminiscent of an oil can. Several years earlier, in 1934, Socony had rejected a similar box design by Norman Bel Geddes with streamlined corners and large display windows. The company and its distributors feared a design so different from the older house type stations would result in a loss of brand identity, and thus, a loss of customers.

Throughout its reign as a standard station type, the oblong box would be modified according to company decisions and tastes of whatever period. The flashy boxes of the 1930s and 1940s were

purposely designed to stand out from their surroundings, to attract customers. By 1960, these buildings were considered garish by the public, as well as by planning and zoning commissions. Oil companies responded by redesigning boxes to blend in with their increasingly suburban surroundings. Older metal prefabricated buildings were covered darker colors, brick, shingles, or a combination of these. Shell updated its stations by adding low gabled roofs, sometimes with a cantilever that sheltered bath room entrances or vending machines.

Instead of following Shell's method of revamping stations to look something like the popular ranch house, Mobil (formerly Socony) commissioned architect Eliot Noyes to design something new and modern. The station building retained a flat roof but added a soffit for lighting. A lighted disk with the well-known Pegasus trademark was mounted on the front wall. Canopies and gas tanks were circular. The result was a station that still looks quite modern today.

Several other station types debuted during the oblong box's long roadside engagement. Included was the small box and its subtype, the small box with canopy. Both are products of the rise of the small regional distributing companies. Because their outlets did not sell tires, batteries, and accessories like the larger corporations, they needed only a small station building. A typical floorplan included only a small office, a set of bathrooms, and a storage area. Canopies (free-standing or attached to the building) were often used to carry signage. The small box experienced its greatest popularity around 1950. The small box with canopy reached its zenith around 1970.

The Total and Clark companies still regularly use the small box with canopy in Michigan. Total stations often have two canopies, however. Examples have been spotted in the Lansing and Ypsilanti areas.

The canopy with booth is a fairly modern prefabricated type, achieving its highest popularity in the 1980s. The type is made up of little more than a small cashier's booth beneath a canopy that covers two or more pump islands.

Bathrooms may be located in small sheds on the station lot away from the canopy or adjoining the cashier's booth. This type of station is a result of higher gasoline prices and the shortages of the 1970s. By getting rid of other services, the retailer could offer the consumer a lower priced gasoline.

Personal observation shows that by 1996, the booth had become a convenience store depending on station location. Stations located along limited access routes such as the Ohio Turnpike are likely to have retained the booth. Those in residential areas and interstate villages are likely to have a convenience store. Perhaps the canopy with convenience store should be considered a new type of gas station.

By 1996, some Mobil stations had been remodeled to be a canopy with convenience store stations. However, Noyes' mark is still somewhat evident. The Pegasus disk was moved from the front to the side(s) of the building, perhaps to be more in the customer's line of vision. The circular canopies were eliminated and replaced with one canopy that covers the building and pump islands. However, lighting over each pump island is arranged in a circular pattern.

Jakle and Sculle practically ignore the modern gas station/convenience store (in all its guises) where many Americans "fill up" in The Gas Station in America because it does not fall under their definition of a gas station, even though less than 100,000 so-defined traditional stations were extant by 1994, down from 236,000 in 1969.

Liebs and Margolies (writing separately) pay scant attention to it as well, but they do consider it a gas station. Comparing it to the early curbside stations, each notes that the once and future gas station was and is a place where the customer can fill up the gas tank and buy groceries at the same time. Liebs notes that old gas stations can be easily remodeled into the new gas station/convenience stores. Humorously, he comments, "In a matter of weeks, a teenage clerk can begin selling gas, milk, and cat food and watch television all at the same time."

The gas station/convenience store has

been extant for little more than twenty years. In terms of popular architecture, it may be a little too soon to start researching it as a building type (or types). It could be considered a separate type, a subtype of gas stations or a subtype of convenience store. Typology could be based, in part, on whether gasoline or grocery sales make up the bulk of profits. When and if this commercial form -- whatever it is -- will be further researched remains to be seen.

The gas station has undergone a variety of changes since its introduction nearly one hundred years ago. Technology and economic conditions have played a part in these changes. The invention of the gas pump and its subsequent modifications have made the gas station more and more user-friendly. A fairly recent modification, the credit card-accepting pump, makes it possible to fill up without entering the station office. In the 1920s, the introduction of electrically lighted canopies made sales after dark possible. In fact, many stations today are open around the clock. Use of prefabricated buildings has continued from the early 1900s to the present, providing a quick and economical way to construct a station.

In the 1930s, economic conditions forced some companies to adopt the flashier, more modern oblong box type to attract customers. Economic conditions caused by fuel shortages in the 1970s and 80s forced some companies to adopt the minimalist canopy with booth type that sold only gasoline and a few sundry items such as cigarettes and chewing gum. In the 1980s and into the '90s, many stations incorporated a convenience store, creating yet another set of gas station types. The gas station will continue to be a familiar place to most Americans. As technology and economy allow, it will continue to evolve in its second century.

IT'S PARTY TIME!

PE Members: Mark your calendars for the evening of Dec. 19 for the night of the Annual Holiday party. More information, including location, to come at Preservation Eastern meetings, 1st and 3rd Mondays.

Editor's notes

Whew! So ends a combination of firsts: the compilation of my first Preservation Eastern Newsletter while using new computer hardware and software. Fortunately for me, I still have hair; fortunately, for the computer, it's still in one piece.

I share this with you because this is your newsletter, and I would like my year as editor to reflect your suggestions as well as contributions to the newsletter. Please feel free to drop me a note at 215 E. Biddle St., Jackson, MI 49203, or leave it in the Preservation Eastern box in the offices of the Dept. of Geography and Geology. (Sorry, no e-mail address because our telephone cable is a 1924 antique -- the phone company begs us not to add lines or services until new cables are hung.)

One thing would help make the production of the newsletter more efficient and easier for me -- if possible, please submit your articles on disk as well as in hard copy. I can convert MAC wordprocessed files and Wordperfect files, as well as several others. If you have a question, call me at (517) 784-2353 and I'll check the software for compatibility. With a disk copy available to read, I don't have to spend extra time retyping.

Secondly, in regards to photographs, I can scan them in and save money on production costs; however, we need clear photographs without dark or interfering backgrounds that make it difficult to see the subject building, etc. This challenges most of us because the human eye/brain duo "edits" while the camera lens sees all.

And a special thank you to everyone who helped with this issue, especially to Janna Baron and Neva Baron of Preservation Eastern; to Cheryl Leon and Gail Slaughter of Jackson -- Pagemaker veterans who taught me quickly; and to Mark and Andy of Huron Valley Printing for their suggestions.

Jan Bellamy, newsletter editor

Exploring the Old Sauk Trail

U.S. 12 reveals centuries of history to Pioneer America Society members

By Philip Smith

On Oct. 4th, my wife, Jeanne, and I joined 38 other members, students and general pioneer-loving types to take the tour of the Old Sauk Trail, which was sponsored by the Pioneer America Society. The day trip took us from Dearborn as far west as Somerset Township. This was a fitting climax to a wonderful convention sponsored by Marshall McLennan and the EMU Historic Preservation Program.

Hitting the bus trail at 8 a.m. and returning at 7 p.m., we were able to pack in an impressive number of sites in one day.

For those not familiar with this area of Michigan, the Old Sauk Trail was once an Indian route from Detroit to Chicago and beyond to Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Potawatomi Indians made this the route most traveled in the territory. Later the road was known as the Chicago pike, and it became an important link for the pioneers who settled the area. Now it is known around Detroit and Ypsilanti as Michigan Avenue and as U.S. 12 nationally. It can still be driven from Detroit to the port of Aberdeen, Washington, on the Pacific coast.

This road was officially known as the Chicago Road after 1824, when Father Gabriel Richard, a delegate in Congress, convinced his peers that a military road was needed from Detroit to Chicago. The National Road (U.S. 40) is the only U.S. Highway to be built before U.S. 12.

The original stagecoach trip took 4½ days from Detroit to Chicago. Along the way taverns were built for travelers, though many were just the cabins of early settlers. When the highway was paved in the 1920s, traffic increased dramatically, and tourist attractions opened up along the route. The "Irish Hills," mostly south and east of Brooklyn, became a popular day trip for people from the Detroit area.

A federal study in the 1940s revealed this highway had the second highest volume of any road in the country. With the passage of the Federal Highway Act in 1956 there began a process that would forever change our landscape. As the new highways were built around the country,

traffic was diverted from the towns and the old routes. Less traffic through those areas meant fewer tourists, and in many areas this change spelled the decline of the tourist trade.

As we experienced on the tour, the area has gone through a transformation, but evidence of past cultural landscape forms is still available to those who are willing to take some time and ride the "blue highways" of the southeast Michigan countryside.

Our tour included a number of highlights.

Our first stop was at the hamlet of Cherry Hill, at the intersection of Cherry Hill and Ridge Roads. Cherry Hill has survived as an outstanding example of a rural crossroads hamlet, representing an era when Americans lived in close-knit communities and life centered on the school and church. Tour members took 30 minutes to walk around the hamlet, using the time as a photo-op to capture the images of the church, cemetery, and school in the early morning sunshine of a Fall day.

Mary Culver, a graduate of our program here and currently teaching the course in Architectural Nomenclature, met our bus at the next stop. She was able to bring us her knowledge of the area's buildings. The Nanry House, an excellent example of a Greek Revival "hen-and-chicks" house is located at 6595 Plymouth Road. With its basilica plan, the hen-and-chicks house type resembles a mother hen with her wings spread to protect a brood of chicks clustered at her feet. Also of interest is the six-hole outhouse in the rear of the house. Unfortunately, the owner is concerned about people hurting themselves, and even with it vacant, requests that no one trespass. So pictures had to be taken from the road. Even so, this stop proved to be well worth the time we spent there.

Cobblestone Farm was in all its fall splendor this day, and Kerry Adams and Tracy Miller gave us a fine tour of the site. We were also treated to refreshments, which pleased some of us who had growling stomachs by this time.

And we were running late, but

Marshall was good enough to give those "barn again people" a chance to see a wonderful old barn at the Braun Brothers dairy farm. Located just east of Saline off Bemis road, these brothers still farm 500 acres, even while the houes creep closer and closer. The old barn, which caused quite a stir among the busload, is believed to have been built in the 1820s. I was able to get a picture of Allen Noble and Ted Ligibel outside the barn. For all those students who wonder what the people really look like who write the articles that Marshall has us study, you will now be able to place Allen Noble.

Adobe houses were said to have been built by Stephen Mills in this area around the 1840s and '50s. At the Brinkerhoff-Burg farm, we were graciously admitted by the new renters, who were still unpacking. I thought it would be a good idea if we all unpacked one box each for them as a thank-you. Probably having 40 preservationists was enough stress for one day. I think, as we pulled out of the drive, I heard the gentleman ask his wife something about which box contained the booze. But the house is a wonderful example of how the adobe brick was used. We were given a tour of the attic, in which the bricks are uncovered. The brick walls extended straight up from the basement, with the house having the same floor plan on all floors.

At the Irish Hills towers, we picked up Rob Burg, another EMU graduate, and he helped interpret the roadside "kitsch." After lunch in Brooklyn, Rob took us to the Walker Tavern, a fine example of a stagecoach stop along the Chicago Pike. This presently is a State Historic Park.

Rob continued on our bus to McCourtie Park in Somerset Center. This park, part of the Somerset Township Park system, was originally built by William McCourtie, who amassed his fortune in Portland Cement.

He turned his estate into a tourist attraction of 17 concrete bridges cast to look like logs and planks. Cast-concrete "trees" with few branches and no leaves served as vents for his underground rathskeller, which was also made of concrete.

... evidence of past cultural landscape forms is still available to those who are willing to take some time and ride the "blue highways" of the southeast Michigan countryside.

Our last stop of the day was at the Glenn Wiseman farmstead, southeast of Chelsea. Glenn was just wonderful to talk to, and his daughters were there to give us their thoughts about living around the farm and how suburban sprawl has changed the area.

The change can be seen even in Glenn's hat. I noted he was wearing the classic green John Deere farmer's hat. What was different was the name of the implement dealer. In the small farming community of Napoleon, the dealer is now known as "John Deere Farm and Leisure."

This farm did give us a feel that there is still hope for farming around this area. Glenn has kept the barns in excellent shape, and they were as red as if freshly painted. The oldest barn dates to about 1860. Some of the hand-hewn interior posts still have bark on them.

So ended a special day in the country. And as if to announce the ending, the rain finally arrived as we made our way back to Dearborn on Interstate 94, leaving behind the quaintness of the Old Sauk Trail.

Other tour guides on the trip included Patricia Condon and Gladys Saborio. Marshall McLennan and Ted Ligibel were always available to bring their knowledge to light on many issues and sites along the way. In fact, I believe that Ted has another calling. Decades from now when he retires, it is my suggestion that he start his own tour company. He was at his best while at the front of the bus giving us all little tidbits of information as we passed shrines of preservation!

Note: More information on the area of the tour is available in the "Tour Brochure" available for \$3 from Preservation Eastern.

Our thanks to ...

Preservation Eastern thanks the following area businesses for sponsoring our Second Annual Art Contest:

Ypsilanti Meijer
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And our appreciation goes to the following for sponsoring and being a part of our Annual New Student Orientation:

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ART CONTEST

****Cash Prizes Available****

**Subject: HISTORIC BUILDINGS ON CAMPUS;
McKENNY UNION, STARKWEATHER, WELCH, SHERZER HALLS.**

SUMMARY: The deadline for submissions will be November 17. Rules and entry forms are available outside room 233 in the Geography & Geology Department in Strong Hall.

**The Art Contest Sponsors include:
Ypsilanti Meijer, Ann Arbor Meijer,
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Ned's, EMU Bookstore, Rosa's Salsa,
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Haab's Restaurant, Graphic Art
Wholesalers, and EMU Student Government.**

For further information call Neva Baron at 480-3688 or Ted Ligibel at 487-0232 or room 233 in Strong Hall.

**Students compete against students in one contest.
Alumni, faculty and staff compete in another contest.**

**Advertisement sponsored by the
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Why join Preservation Eastern? Well, it's the best way to keep up on historic preservation activities within the department and throughout the area. Dues are only \$10 annually, and your membership and involvement will insure future growth and success in the organization. For more information, contact Neva Baron or any other Preservation Eastern officer.

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ E-MAIL _____

PROGRAM OF STUDY _____

Mail this application and your \$10 check to Preservation Eastern, EMU Dept. of Geography and Geology, Historic Preservation Program, Strong Hall, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

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EMU Department of Geography
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Historic Preservation Program
Strong Hall
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

INSIDE:

- * Reports on the successes of the Pioneer America Society meeting and U.S. 12 tour
- * Deadline: Nov. 17 for Second Annual Art Contest; reception Nov. 18.
- * A look at the history and evolution of design of gas stations.

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Abstracts from papers presented at the Pioneer America Society Annual Meeting.