Post and Lintel, Winter 2019-2020

Preservation Eastern

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Dr. Ted’s Last Corner

Dr. Ted…out of the corner!

Not many times have I found myself at a loss for words, but that fairly describes the emotions of this term. As I prepare for that day this December when I leave my Strong Hall office as retired faculty it pushes me into unknown territory…and fills me with reverie.

I have been involved in historic preservation since 1974…that’s 45 years working in a profession I love and helped grow from its childhood. When I came to EMU in the fall of 1991, I never imagined that I would end up running the program for 19 years. Looking back, I can honestly say it has been even more rewarding than I imagined, especially the students, faculty, and communities I have been blessed to know.

And that September 21 event celebrating the 40th anniversary of the HP program and my retirement…wow! Never have I been so honored in my life. It was incredibly special to see so many alumni, students, friends, and colleagues…over 220 in all. And I’m pleased to say that $20,000 was raised for the Ligibel Fellowship as a result of the event. The Fellowship will be used to provide support to our students for applied experiences that will help foster academic and professional success.

I’m finding it difficult to say goodbye, so let me simply say thank you until we meet again.
**Telling the Tales of History on Michigan’s Trails**

By Bob Wilson, Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance

One of the great joys of working for the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance is the opportunity to help communities and individuals come together to build trails throughout Michigan.

This experience helps to fuel the passion we have to continually reach out and work with volunteers, public officials, companies and philanthropic organizations to coordinate the resources it often takes to build trails.

We have found that trail lovers in Michigan simply want the chance to be outdoors and experience the many wonders of what our state has to offer. With Michigan leading the nation in miles of trails and the public’s call for more miles more evident than ever, trail building passion is at an all-time high.

One of the fundamental reasons why Michigan’s trails are so popular is the role played by the Michigan History Center’s heritage trail program. Sandra Clark, Michigan History Center Director, and Dan Speigel, the state’s Heritage Trail Coordinator, have spent the past four years helping communities accurately share history for the public along our extensive trail system. Dan describes the impact of their work, explaining “the landscape and communities along a trail are like the last page you’ve read in a book. For it to make sense, you need to know what the previous chapters say. That’s what adding natural and cultural history does, it provides context for that ‘place.’ It identifies why the place is special and unique, which enriches the trail experience.”

Some of Dan’s current work has been interpreting history along the Kal-Haven Trail. He and local volunteers have uncovered some incredibly rich stories, including the fact that former heavyweight boxing champ Joe Louis used to train along the old railbed, and that the village of Mentha (now a ghost town) was once the world’s leading producer of mint oil. He has also provided significant support for many other trails, such as the Huron River National Water Trail, North Central State Trail and the Haywire Grade — Michigan’s oldest rail trail. However, many communities across Michigan have expressed interest in Dan’s help to add history to their trails. Continued on page 3

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**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Welcome, new and returning Historic Preservation (HP) students. I also wish to extend a welcome to our new Preservation Eastern (PE) members. I hope you are having and continue to have an excellent Fall semester.

September was a busy month with so many events. First was the New HP Graduate Student Orientation in Sherzer Hall. The HP faculty and the PE Board met the enthusiastic incoming students into the HP program. I hope the new students will have an insightful and exciting time in the HP program. Following the Orientation was EagleFest. Numerous EMU students have expressed interest in PE. Finally, PE, the HP program, and alumni celebrated Dr. Ted’s career as a preservationist. We all hope Dr. Ted will continue to remain active in the field and travel to places on his list.

PE events continued well into the Fall semester. PE co-sponsored the Matt Cook-Out with Dr. Matt Cook in October. Thank you again, Dr. and Mrs. Cook, the food was excellent. Let’s not forget about the Historic Dexter Walking Tour. Unfortunately, we were rained out on October 26, but we got together on November 2. We had a great time with an original walking tour of Historic Dexter. The walking tour script was donated to the Dexter Area Historical Society for their future use. The tour ended with a trip to the Dexter Cider Mill.

On November 9, 2019, PE hosted the Fall Networking Mixer at the Ypsilanti Historical Society with a Young and Emerging Professionals theme. The Fall Mixer was an excellent opportunity for students to meet with professionals in the field. All seven speakers discussed their experiences getting into the Historic Preservation field. Additionally, the speakers discussed several internship opportunities. Over wide variety of cuisine, students discussed their career interests.

In December PE co-sponsored the Holiday Party with the Historic Preservation Program. At the Ladies Literary Club in Ypsilanti, there was an excellent dinner at the Holiday Party. The following day, PE went to the historic Redford Theatre in Detroit to attend a screening of White Christmas in 35 mm print and a backstage tour.

Stay tuned to the PE Facebook page for updates. Remember, you are always welcome to attend PE meetings and join us at our events.
Telling the Tales of History on Michigan’s Trails
Continued from page 2

About a year ago, Dan, Sandra and I began to explore the possibility of expanding their current work on trails to meet growing demand. Using an agreement between the Michigan History Center and Eastern Michigan University to operate the state’s Historical Marker Program as an example, we sought to develop a program that offered a unique and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for graduate students. These students would work with Dan to carry out large-scale heritage trail interpretive projects near their schools. In order to meet this goal, the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance would need to secure funding to support a multi-year, multi-university trail history program.

Motivated by this calling and supported by our enthusiastic and supportive Board of Directors, I reached out to likely the state’s most passionate trail advocate, Mike Levine of Pinckney. Mike has a vision to create the state’s first Great Lake-to-Lake Trail stretching from South Haven to Port Huron and has single-handedly supported development of this trail with millions of dollars and the passionate drive that has helped to clear the roadblocks that often face trail-builders.

I asked Mike if he would like to support a program that would make a trail-user’s experiences so much richer by being able to appreciate the history and legacy behind these corridors and he jumped at the chance. With a hefty donation of $100,000, Mike started us on our way and allowed us to retain our first history graduate student in Josh Kaminski from Eastern Michigan University.

Josh is now working closely with Dan to supervise a history-telling effort along the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park and has gathered significant local tales of history from the residents of this area in public meetings and is now researching these tales to help tell the history. One of his early “finds” is an old bunkhouse near the trail that may have housed German prisoners of war during World War II, who were made available as farm laborers through a government program. Josh is conducting research to verify the historical accuracy of this story and many others.

Josh is learning the value of working directly with residents and is excited about the opportunities for a career in history. “It’s inspiring to see how much support and dedication the community has towards this project,” Josh said. “I’m not only able to research many aspects of Michigan’s rich history but help present it in a form that connects people to our past. My biggest takeaway from the fellowship is how much people truly care about historical and cultural heritage, and to me it’s very gratifying.”

Josh’s work on the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail has shown the important role that motivated and educated graduate students can play in helping him to complete his work as the Heritage Trail Coordinator. Dan, Sandra and I are now considering two more history-telling scholarships with students from Central Michigan University and Wayne State University to reach out to both students and the residents of the area around these two universities to engage them in another significant “history-telling from our trails” effort. The value of this work is two-fold in that these students will benefit from the practical approach to telling local history and local residents and trail users will be able to feed valuable local trail lore to expand local history-telling.

It is our collective hope that these efforts will have launched a deeper appreciation for the rich history of trails in Michigan and hopefully will fuel the additional support for retaining even more graduate students and expanding the opportunities we can provide for our students of history.

Michigan’s motto of “If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you” can be clearly on display when we all visit Michigan’s trails due to the incredibly-rich legacy of trails in Michigan. Supplying the connection between this history and the public is the calling that we all feel.
Imagine today that our nation is involved in a massive military conflict overseas. At home money is tight, supplies are scarce, and everybody knows at least one person who is on active duty or has been a casualty. One morning you and your neighbors wake up having received a letter from the U.S. Government declaring that enemy prisoners of war will be transferred to your area. With the intent to work on local farms, canning food, logging, and other various forms of labor. Not only is this supposed “enemy” working right down the road from you. The “enemy” has also become befriended by the community and in some cases is paid a small sum for his work. Today this scenario may sound bizarre, but for many Michigan communities during WWII it was a reality.

In August 1943, a bilateral agreement was made between the US War Department and War Man Power Commission (WMC) which allowed for the distribution and utilization of some 400,000 enemy prisoners of war throughout the country. Due to widespread labor shortages brought on by the war, hundreds of POW camps were strategically created throughout the states. In Michigan, 32 camps were established in the Upper and Lower Peninsula on former Civilian Conservation Corps camps, military bases, and even a dirt racing track in Owosso. At the peak of the program it is documented that over 6,000 German and Italian prisoners were working in Michigan, predominantly in agriculture and food preparation.

The first time the topic was mentioned to me was last October. I had recently been awarded the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail Fellowship, a two-year project exploring community & cultural heritage along our state trails through the use of interpretive panels. Created by the cooperation between EMU, Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance, and the Michigan History Center Heritage Trail Program, the project is focused on the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail: a former abandoned Grand Trunk Western railroad line in Southeast Michigan. As I was beginning to research communities near the western part of the trail, I started uncovering rumors regarding muck farms along the trail that used German POWs as farm labor during the war.

From the moment I heard the rumors I was obsessed. How could you not be? Whether it was the ambition to make my mark in the preservation program, or the kid in me that grew up idolizing Indiana Jones, to me the topic was a dream. However, unlike Indy, the beginnings of my research was met with a lot of dead ends. First it was rural property inventories at the state archives, local newspapers between 1943-1945, and questioning members of the community. Every stone I unturned seemed like one step forward and two steps back.

When all seemed lost I was given a glimpse of hope. While looking at the National Archive’s online database, I found that their archival repository in Chicago held collections of the WMC. With the guidance and cooperation of HP faculty members, I was able to receive funding through the Marshall McLennan Fund which allowed me to spend three days researching in Chicago. The trip was planned during spring break. With my budget set, hotel booked, and pencils sharpened, I was off to the Windy City. Though it may not have been the typical spring break in the eyes of most college students, I was absolutely excited to see what I could discover. Plus, how many people get to say that they spent their spring break in Chicago looking for eye opening information?

On my first day I was given a 30 minute briefing on how to conduct research in the National Archive. Security and surveillance was tight and when questioning this I found to my amazement that the archives has had problems in the past of individuals posing as professional researchers and stealing federal documents. Once the presentation was concluded, I was able to dive into files that I requested several weeks in advance. Most of the documents I previewed were administrative. The WMC and Emergency Farm Labor Program was divided into sections based on regions that contained 2 to 3 different states. Region V headquarters was located in Ohio and had jurisdiction over Ohio, Kentucky, and Michigan. After sifting through box after box of federal reports I found documents on Prisoner of War placement at Camp Waterloo. Located roughly ten miles southeast from the Mike Levine Lakelands Trail, near the Vegetable muck farms of southeast Michigan, Camp Waterloo was a former CCC camp that was reported vacant prior to 1942. Letters between the US War Department and engineers of the Great Lakes Division in 1944 confirm command installations of the POW camp at Waterloo. The report detailed a total housing capacity of 872, the maximum prisoners at the given time were 250. The POWs that were used in the region between 1943 and 1945 were German, specifically from the Afrika Korps. Other various reports I looked at from the WMC, War Department, and Agricultural Agents of Jackson and Ingham County revealed farm management reports, POW wages, and even suggestions of using “Japanese Evacuees” for labor. The Japanese labor was discouraged and ultimately abandoned due to the public’s opposition.

Though I was unable to find documentation that confirmed individual farms using POW Labor, I found substantial evidence proving farms in the area along the current Mike Levine Lakelands Trail participated in the program. The research trip to Chicago also gave me insight of where to look next. Since my initial visit I have been able to find a wealth of information at the Michigan State Archives in their MSU Agricultural Extension Service Collection, where I discovered letters to Ingham and Jackson county growers about POW Labor, labor request forms, and transportation memos of prisoners. Today I continue to pursue my research into this unique tale of Michigan’s history. Without the trusted help and assistance from colleagues and faculty members in the EMU Historic Preservation Program, I would not have been able to uncover such a fascinating topic. Lastly, I want to give a special thanks to the Marshall McLennan Fund, in which its contributions provide opportunity for students in the Historic Preservation community and grants the inspiration to make history worth preserving.
Over the summer, I not only returned to Germany, I also got to visit Zurich, Switzerland. Previously, I participated in Dr. Jesse Kauffman’s travel course on Nazi German Society and the Holocaust. This trip however, was for visiting family and exploring other historical sites.

Landing in Munich, Germany, I toured Alt Stadt including Marienplatz with the new city hall and the Residenz. Formerly, the Residenz was a royal palace, now a museum to the Bavarian kings and dukes who resided there. The Residenz is the largest inner city palaces in Germany, documenting the expansion of the palace, artwork, and royal Bavaria. The Residenz is only one of many highlights of Munchen.

I can’t forget the BMW Museum across the street from BMW World Headquarters, with its modern architecture resembling an automotive cylinder head. The BMW Museum has a post-modern design. Visitors start at the top of the structure and make their way down. Along the way, visitors see the wall of motor bikes, several rooms documenting the evolution of BMW designs and BMW’s motor racing history, all leading to a large showroom of historic vehicles. It was a great way to conclude a visit to Munchen.

From Munich, I hopped on a train to Zurich. Ride was comfortable and passed the Rhine Falls, the largest waterfall in Europe. Had I known, the Falls were along the route. I would have had my camera ready. Nevertheless, it was a spectacular site to see.

Once in Zurich, I quickly learned the Swiss pride themselves on being efficient, punctual, and friendly. The best way to travel in Zurich is via public transit. Whether by tram, bus, water taxi, or ferry, patrons can expect great service. If you have questions about the transit, the staff will answer all your questions without grief and sell you a ticket, too. When the tram, bus, ferry, etc. is scheduled to leave at 11:22 AM, it will leave at 11:22 AM, no exceptions. All routes are designed for speed and desirability for patrons. Even if you do not take the public transit, walking throughout most of Zurich is quick and easy. Just not as quick as the transit.

This pride for efficiency, punctuality, and friendliness applies to the speech of Zurich residents. Almost everywhere in Zurich, visitors can find staff members who speak German, French, Italian, Romansh, and English. Speaking to the Zurich residents can be a little challenging outside of English. In Zurich, the Swiss don’t speak High German, they speak Schweizerdeutsch, a German dialect. Schweizerdeutsch has its own slang, accent, and combines words from Switzerland’s other three official languages. Sometimes, I did not know how to respond, either in German or French.

The main reason I went to Zurich, was to see my uncle, aunt, and cousins. They have been adjusting quite well in Switzerland. My uncle and aunt have adjusted more so than my cousins. They miss their friends in Philadelphia.

One of the sites my aunt took me to was the Landes Museum or the Swiss National Museum. It was at the Landes Museum, where I had a surreal moment. I was reading about an executioner’s sword used during the persecution of the Anabaptist Church in Zurich. The Anabaptists were persecuted for their promotion of adult baptism, education, and pacifism. The last of the Anabaptist leaders to be murdered in Switzerland was Hans Landis.

While reading this my aunt, a Genealogist and Ph. D in Anthropology mentions, we are descendent from Hans Landis’ brother who moved the Anabaptist Church to Germany. Walking to find a restaurant along the Limmat River, we saw a memorial to the murdered Anabaptists, which contains the name, Hans Landis.
While walking through Zurich, we reached the Arboretum along the shore of Lake Zurich. I noticed how this prime real estate is a park with all of reminders of its past use. At one area to the south is the Halfen where the city maintains its ferries. Continuing south there are a number of private clubs and old factories. While in the Arboretum itself, are the remains of several bunkers from the Second World War (WWII). Switzerland never participated in WWII, it prepared for the conflict and fought several border skirmishes with Nazi Germany. I find it amazing how the Arboretum has become a public park and has not been privatized like many of the picturesque sites of the city.

Lidenhoff is a hill which is also prime real estate. Lidenhoff is one of the natural highest points in Zurich and has been used by various cultures over the centuries. The heights of Lidenhoff have been pre-historic settlements, a Roman fort, royal residence known as a Kaiserpfalz, graveyard, and the first public park in Zurich. At the top of the Lidenhoff is the Hedwig Fountain. The fountain is a memorial to the women who defended Zurich from the Duke Albert I’s German army. The water of the Hedwig Fountain, like all water fountains in Zurich, are cleaner than bottled water.

Nearby the Lidenhoff, are the remains of a Roman bath steam rooms. While city workers were conducting underground utilities maintenance, they discovered the Roman ruins. Instead of removing, destroying, or covering up the ruins. The city of Zurich choose to cover the ruins with steel grates and create a walkway of interest in the city.

South of Zurich, is the suburb of Kilchberg, the home of Lindt and Sprungli chocolate. While factory tours were not available, we were not disappointed with the Lindt and Sprungli store. Patrons could try the latest Lindt flavors, such as milk chocolate Lindor pistachio. Believe me, I did more than just eat chocolate, I saw some too.

Throughout Zurich are excellent examples of adoptive reuse. The Tram Museum was converted from an old tram maintenance shop. Patrons can read, walk around, under, and onto the retired trams. On summer days, the retired trams are put back into service with conductors riding along checking tickets, to give riders a sense of past services. During the 1980s, the Zurich Bahnhof or train station was becoming part of the urban blight. However, an S-bahn or surface train route was installed and the underground shopping center was expanded in the lower levels of the Bahnhof, which helped revitalize the downtown area. Adoptive reuse has not be confined to Zurich itself.

Over in the neighboring town of Rapperswil, the thirteenth century Schloss Rapperswil or Rapperswil Castle, has been converted into a public park and a Polish Museum. Originally, the Polish Museum was founded by nineteenth century Polish expats. The Polish Museum has a great location. However, the exhibits seemed random and confusing, since the museum lacked a narrative. The only theme my aunt and I could come up with was that the Polish Museum had cool Polish artifacts.

The City of Zurich is a historic preservationist’s dream. The past exists side by side with the present. Historic sites are incorporated into the everyday functions, where accessibility is highly valued. Many people who have traveled to Zurich will tell you to put it on your list. Nevertheless, Zurich would make an excellent location for a Historic Preservation Program travel course.
Early Dwellings of the “Lost” Township:

The HP Program’s 1982 Rural Buildings Survey revisited

Dr. Dan Bonenberger

Students in the Preservation Research Techniques course spent the fall 2019 semester investigating some of the oldest surviving dwellings in Washtenaw County. The class began by examining earlier research on vernacular and Greek revival architecture in the county. The most significant existing inventory is the rural buildings survey conducted by Marshall McLennan and his students during the 1980s, the first decade of EMU’s Historic Preservation Program. However, while exploring the records of the survey in the EMU Archives and Digital Commons, one of our students noticed that the records from Lodi township were missing.

After some discussion, the class adopted Lodi as “our township,” recognizing that our need to gain experience with archival and field research techniques could be applied to filling a gap in the digital archive and also fulfill a critical role of community service. Just as Lodi township was attractive to early settlers due to its proximity to Ann Arbor and the Chicago Road (today’s U.S. Route 12), the growth of Ann Arbor and Saline continues to impact the cultural landscape. Developers buy and demolish historic farms and construct new subdivisions with little recognition for the value of early farmhouses and barns. Thus the work of our students can help raise awareness about the location and significance of early farms and perhaps contribute to their preservation.

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Continued from page 7.

The thirty-six sections of Lodi Township were divided among fifteen class members so that each student had two or three sections containing a total of about ten properties surveyed by McLennan’s students in 1982. Each student gathered existing survey records for their sections from the county’s Histweb, an online GIS database and map server. Thus the McLennan surveys and those from the Michigan Centennial Farms program were downloaded and saved on local and remote computer hard drives. Township plat maps of 1856, 1864, 1874, 1895, and 1915 provided names of property owners and approximate construction dates for extant properties, which were recorded in a separate document for each section of the township. In the second half of the semester, each student selected one property as a case study to gain experience doing intensive research on a building and discovering the stories of its people.

The course was enriched by guest lecturers and site visits. The class visited the Washtenaw County Register of Deeds and the Bentley Historical Library in November, and gained insights into research techniques. University Archivist Alexis Braun-Marks presented resources and tips for conducting online research on historic people and places, Washtenaw County Preservation specialist Melinda Schmidt provided an overview of the organizations and mechanisms that promote preservation locally, and SHPO survey coordinator Katie Klokithas explained the state survey program and gave feedback on our work. The preliminary results of the research project were presented to at Strong Hall’s small auditorium on the evening of December 12th which include ten visitors, and plans are underway to continue this work in 2020 and find ways to sustain and provide access to the research.
Lake Zurich and the Swiss Alps: Zurichsee und Schweizer Alpen

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