



*Old Court house Square at
Main + Haron with grass + trees*

KEMNITZ

LANDMARKS HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT February 29, 1988

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PREFACE

The City of Ann Arbor has been designating historic districts since 1973. Public outcry over the loss of a cherished landmark on April 28, 1986, however, made it clear that a new concept was needed for protecting historic structures individually, rather than only through historic districts. The City Council responded by establishing the Landmarks Historic District Study Committee on July 14, 1986 to "identify, research and recommend the designation of appropriate Ann Arbor landmarks..." for protection under a local ordinance.

The Study committee members represent a diversity of backgrounds and expertise, and all have a demonstrated interest in Ann Arbor's history and architecture. They are united by a simple premise which they believe is shared by most Ann Arborites: that the City's identity -- what everyone loves and recognizes as Ann Arbor -- is embodied in its historic buildings. The logical conclusion, particularly as more and more development occurs, is that all historic buildings must have the protection afforded only by local designation.

Preservation of historically significant local buildings has been a goal of the city for over a decade. The 1973 *General Development Plan*, adopted by both the Planning Commission and City Council, urged that the city "safeguard" its heritage by "preserving significant historical and architectural sites and structures" and that the city support "...the efforts of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission to ensure the preservation of historically and culturally significant sites, landmarks, buildings or structures; encourage adaptive uses... and the designation of new historic districts or additions to existing districts". The *Downtown Development and Conservation Strategy*, adopted in 1976, also stated the same goals, and the current Downtown Task Force is recommending designation of significant historic buildings in the downtown. By recommending the attached list of properties, the Study Committee is proposing a means to implement the adopted goals of City Council and Planning Commission as well as carry out the charge for which it was appointed.

Benefits of Preservation

The economic, social and psychological benefits of preservation have been amply demonstrated across the country from Portland, Maine to Seattle, Washington. Ann Arbor's own downtown has survived the pressures brought on by the construction of a regional shopping mall on the edge of town, due largely to the attraction of the downtown's many rehabilitated buildings. The Old West Side neighborhood, once red-lined by local lending institutions, now provides some of the City's most desirable real estate. As *Time* magazine described it: "Walking along an old street among old buildings, the implicit history and sense of continuity are both reassuring and invigorating. The graceful proportions of facades are not arbitrary but the result of craft wisdom worked out over generations of trial and error. The scale of buildings and streets, based on human size and pedestrian stride, makes intuitive sense."¹

¹ Anderson, Kurt, "Spiffing Up the Urban Heritage", *Time*, November 23, 1987, p. 76.

For home owners the benefits are more aesthetic than economic. Having pride in your home is an American institution and having a historic plaque saying "somebody important lived here" or "something important happened here" makes us aware of our past and aware that we are part of America's history and can serve pridefully as caretakers of our heritage. Home owners can be proud not only of their own efforts at beautification but can take pride in the public service they provide by keeping our past alive and in good repair. Caring for our old buildings is one way we demonstrate our concern and love for our community.

Preservation also makes good economic sense. Although property values depend more on the local real estate market than historic preservation per se, it should be stressed that ordinances for historic properties have not lowered property values.

Thus, preservation has been a benefit to the city in a number of ways. In already established districts the results of the historic review process -- which is meant to guide and not to prohibit change -- have been beneficial to the owner, to the structure, and to the visual texture of Ann Arbor.

The Selection Process

Many of the local buildings listed in the following report have already been recognized as historically or architecturally significant. They may already be listed on the National or State Registers, or have been previously documented in books or articles about historic buildings in Ann Arbor. Some have been ranked in architectural surveys commissioned by the city in the past, and have been awarded bronze markers by the Historic District Commission. But at this time they still have no legal protection from changes which could destroy their historic integrity. That can only be provided by a local ordinance.

Beyond these previous designations, what did we use as criteria in determining historical or architectural significance? The Committee created its own set of guidelines to evaluate individual buildings, sites and objects, using as a guide the standards created by the National Park Service to evaluate nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

Buildings and/or sites were selected if they were (1) associated with the lives of people significant in Ann Arbor history, (2) if they were associated with events or historic processes that were significant in our local history, and/or (3) if the architecture either was a well-preserved example of a particular style, period or type of construction, or represented the work of a well-known builder or architect, or had high artistic values such as fine murals, stonework, or an especially well designed landscape. No age limit was set, and many buildings from recent decades were considered, but all the nominated structures are approximately 50 years old or older. In addition to meeting the above criteria, the Committee considered the integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling and association in making its final choices. Thus, buildings or sites which had been unsympathetically altered were usually removed from the list. Some buildings were considered so important that such alterations were not seen as significant enough to preclude designation.

INTRODUCTION

On July 14, 1986 the Ann Arbor City Council adopted the following resolution establishing the Landmarks Historic District Study Committee:

Whereas: the City of Ann Arbor has many buildings that are recognized as historic and/or architectural landmarks by the National Register of Historic Places, the State Register, and/or the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission through its Historic Building Marker program; and

Whereas: some of these buildings are in neighborhoods that have not yet been studied for possible designation as local historic districts and thus are not protected from either insensitive alteration or even demolition: and

Whereas: the loss of these key landmarks would substantially weaken both the character of their neighborhoods and the City's overall architectural heritage,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ann Arbor City Council hereby establishes a Landmarks Historic District Study Committee to identify, research and recommend the designation of appropriate Ann Arbor Landmarks in accordance with Chapter 103, Section 8:408 of the City Code.

The Study Committee held its first meeting on September 30, 1986 and has continued to meet approximately every two weeks since.

FINDINGS

The Study Committee began its task by working up a list of buildings to review. Buildings that had or were eligible for Historic Building markers, buildings rated as A+ by the Washtenaw/Hill Historic District Study Committee, as well as selections suggested by Committee members, made up the initial list of over 170 buildings. (Buildings that were already protected by local historic district ordinances were not reviewed at this stage). The master list expanded at succeeding meetings until the Committee had looked at over 330 buildings.

The Committee's approach during this initial stage was to make the review process as broad as possible. They therefore resolved not to use any fixed age as a cutoff point. This allowed them to review properties built even as late as the 1950's. Examples of unusual and special technology were also included. In several cases groups of buildings were looked at as a collectively distinguished unit. As the process continued, objects such as special signs, hitching posts, historic paving material and even natural features were included in the discussion.

Having established these broad parameters and using concepts developed for the selection of state and federal landmarks, the Committee determined that the historic resources to be selected should constitute an "Ann Arbor Register of Historic Places". The Register would be a listing of all the significant historic and architectural resources in the City. The eight

historic districts already adopted by Council include both large neighborhoods and individual buildings. They would be incorporated into the Register at its inception.

The need for this new concept of a "Register" became obvious to the Committee when they realized that the present code refers exclusively to historic districts. It makes no distinction between such groupings and individual structures.

Over time, the Register will eliminate many of the inconsistencies now present in existing historic district ordinances. It would include basic elements of a common ordinance for all listed historic properties and also allow for existing ordinances to be revised to be more compatible with each other.

The Committee decided to submit an initial group of new entries and recommend that a standing study committee be established to nominate future entries. A somewhat similar process is used in Detroit where the Historic Sites Designation Advisory Board functions quite separately from the Historic District Commission.

In Ann Arbor, study committees at present are not appointed for a defined term, and in most cases remain on the City's records indefinitely whether active or not. Using the proposed concept of a Register, a Historic District Study Committee would still be appointed for each historic district, with strong representation from property owners and residents. These Committee members would serve until Council took action upon their final recommendations. For Register listings of individual properties, there would be a standing "Historic Designation Advisory Board", made up of members with appropriate expertise and interest who are appointed for 3 year terms.

From the beginning the present Study Committee discussed criteria for review. They agreed to rely upon the criteria included in the Historic District Code. These are adapted from the National Register and deal with broad areas of significance and integrity in architectural style, technology and historical association.

The Committee was in unanimous agreement that the specific preservation standards to protect individual properties on the Register should be as uniform as possible. The Historic District Commission's approval would be required for changes affecting the historic integrity of any protected property.

Also, in examining the Historic District Code it was evident that Ann Arbor's ordinance no longer corresponds to the amended state enabling legislation: state law now allows the local government to regulate all structures in a historic district, not just the historic ones. Since several of the existing districts already have standards affecting non-historic structures this change will make Ann Arbor's ordinance consistent with state law as well as with accepted preservation practice.

Because different communities define the term "landmark" in a variety of ways, the Committee determined that, for Ann Arbor, "landmark" should be used as a special extra designation that could be applied, at the request of the owner, to an "eligible" listing, whether listed individually or as part of a district. Properties so designated would both be more stringently protected and would also be eligible for special incentives to encourage their long-term preservation and even restoration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Amend Chapter 103, "Historical Preservation" to:

A. Change the name of the Historic District Commission to the "Historic Preservation Commission" to represent more appropriately the Commission's mandate as the city's agency for historic preservation.

B. Establish an "Ann Arbor Register of Historic Places", consisting of two categories:

1. Historic District, defined as an assemblage of buildings, structures and sites that share a common significant historic element, such as geography, period, style or theme. The parts of a district do not have to be contiguous. Archeological sites would be included in this category.
2. Individual Historic Property, defined as a historic site, building, object, or natural feature not part of a historic district.

C. Establish a standing "Historic Designation Advisory Board" to research, review and nominate new Register listings for Individual Historic Properties. The Committee shall consist of the current members of the Historic Preservation Commission and six Ann Arbor citizens selected for their demonstrated interest and expertise in Ann Arbor history and architecture. The term of office of the Historic Designation Advisory Board members who are not also members of the Historic Preservation Commission shall be for three years, which corresponds with appointments to the Commission.

D. New Register listings for Historic Districts would continue to be researched and recommended by Historic District Study Committees as in the past. The ordinance would state, however, that the terms of office for members of Study Committees for the various Historic Districts shall end when the Council takes action on that Committee's final recommendations.

E. Allow the Historic Preservation Commission to regulate proposed changes affecting the exterior appearance of all properties on the Register, both in Historic Districts and Individual Historic Properties, as is now allowed by state law.

F. Establish general standards to be used by the Historic Preservation Commission for reviewing proposed changes to historic individual properties as follows:

Any change to the exterior appearance of a listed property which is visible from a street or public space shall require the prior approval of the Historic Preservation Commission. All reviewed changes will be evaluated by the Historic Preservation Commission using the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of the Interior in the most recent edition of their publication "The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings".

G. Permit the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant variances and appeals based upon a demonstration of hardship, practical difficulty and exceptional circumstances, as stated in Section 3:7 of the Historic District Code.

H. Establish a "Landmark" designation that may be applied as an additional designation to an "eligible" Register property at the request of the owner.

1. A "Landmark Eligible" designation shall be given a historic property which has (1) enduring historical or architectural importance for the entire city and (2) has been a focus of community activity and/or is a structure which visually dominates its site. A property's eligibility shall be determined by the Historic Designation Advisory Board.
2. A Landmark "eligible" property shall be given the designation of "Landmark" by City Council only after the Historic Designation Advisory Board and the owner of the property have agreed upon and described all the specific elements of the property which shall receive protection. The description of protected elements and the owner's written consent to the designation shall accompany the Advisory Board's recommendations. Council may then confer the Landmark designation by ordinance.
3. "Landmark" designation may be given to any "eligible" property on the Register, whether it has been listed individually or as part of a district. Changes to walls, roofs, porches, openings or appendages shall require the prior approval of the Historic Preservation Commission. Changes to specifically identified elements (which may include interior features, accessory structures, objects or plant materials on the site) shall also require the Commission's prior approval. In making its determination the Commission shall encourage changes that preserve or restore the historic integrity of the original building and its site.
4. Recommended Incentives -- It is recommended that the following policies be adopted as incentives to strengthen the Landmark designation:
 - a. Historic Plaques. Any property designated as a Landmark shall be eligible to receive a historic building plaque from the Historic Preservation Commission.
 - b. Documentation and Recording. The Historic Designation Advisory Board shall coordinate the complete documentation of every property designated as a Landmark, including, as funds permit, deed research, measured drawings and photographs of the exterior, interior, site and significant details.
 - c. Restoration Consultant. The City shall make available to the owner of any Landmark designated property the consulting services of a skilled restoration consultant. Such consultant shall assist owners only

with establishing the scope and appropriateness of work to be done to insure that the goals of this ordinance are met in the best way possible. Work shall not extend to providing normal architectural services. The City shall contract with a qualified person or persons to provide such consultation services on an hourly basis.

- d. Easement Program. The City shall create a program of conservation easements to be available on a voluntary basis to owners of Landmark designated property. Easements that restrict any future changes to specified historic features, allocate funds for continued maintenance and permit regular inspection may be donated either to the City or to the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation in perpetuity in return for a federal tax deduction based on the value of the restrictions imposed.

II. Proposed Entries on the Ann Arbor Register of Historic Places

Historic Districts: Titles I-VIII of the Historic District Code

Individual Historic Properties: Title IX of the Historic District Code

1308 East Ann Street	Detroit Observatory
416 South Ashley	TAA&NM Railway Depot
1001-7 Broadway	Anson Brown Building
1500 Dexter	Eunice Baldwin House
724 North Fifth Avenue	Central Brewery
415 South Fifth Avenue	Clayton Gaskell (Beakes) House
208-10 South First Avenue	City Brewery (Ann Arbor Central Mills - Ann Arbor Implement/ Blind Pig)
106 North Fourth Avenue	Land Title Building
209-11 North Fourth Avenue	Kayser Block
111 South Fourth Avenue	Heinrich Building
423 South Fourth Avenue	Bethlehem Church
2301 Highland Road	Inglis House
206 East Huron	Ann Arbor Tribune Building
116 West Huron	Bus Depot
241 (formerly 213) East Liberty	"Zwerdling Furs" Sign (on west wall)
321 East Liberty	Enoch James House
519-609 East Liberty	Michigan Theater Building

111 West Liberty	Krause/ Bissinger Building
1422 West Liberty	Dr. Robert MacKenzie House (Anna Botsford Bach Home)
220 North Main	United States Post Office
301-3 North Main	Dr. Chase's Steam Printing House
415 North Main	Thomas Earl House
100 South Main	Glazier Building
118-24 South Main	Bank Building (Goodyear's)
126 South Main	Bach Building
201 South Main	First National Building
415 Observatory	Forest Hill Cemetery
700 Oxford	Albert Lockwood House (Sigma Nu)
2301 Packard	Anderson House and Wisdom Chapel
2600 Packard	Stone School
1324 Pontiac Trail	Jonathan Lund House
1425 Pontiac Trail	Guy Beckley House
1136 Prospect	Samuel Miller House
326-30 South State Street	Nickels Arcade
730 Tappan	Memorial Christian Church
1219 Traver	Amos Corey House
1223 Traver	Jacob/ Solomon Armstrong House
219-23 East Washington	Weinmann Block
322 East Washington	Jacob Hoffstetter House
332 East Washington	Methodist Episcopal Parsonage
119-23 West Washington	Germania Hotel
122 West Washington	Wagner/ Schneider Building
2015 Washtenaw	Leander Hoover Mansion
2117 Washtenaw	Cornelius Tuomy House
2460 Washtenaw	Tuomy Hills Gas Station
608 East William	First Congregational Church
1115 Woodlawn	Christian Eberbach House

Landmarks Historic District Study Committee
Final Report February 29, 1988

III. Documentation of Proposed Entries on the Ann Arbor
Register of Historic Places

The Study Committee acknowledges with deep appreciation
the generous assistance of Ms. Alice Davidson and the Lawyers
Title Insurance Company in the documentation effort.

DETROIT OBSERVATORY 1854

1308 E. Ann Street

In 1854, the opening of what was considered the finest astronomical observatory in the United States was the capstone of University of Michigan President Tappan's efforts to transform the University of Michigan into an important center of scientific research. The Observatory building was an unusual structure for the fledging university and marked an extraordinary addition to its campus. Tappan not only designed the building himself, but also solicited its funding. Since donations came primarily from Detroit businessmen it was named the Detroit Observatory. This confusing name was eventually changed to University Observatory in 1931.

Isolated on a hilltop in what was then open countryside, the building combines the symmetry of Classical Revival architecture, seen in its Doric portico and balanced wings, with the cube shape and bracketed eaves of the Italianate style, which was then becoming popular. The outer stucco walls were scored to resemble large blocks of masonry in order to mimic a Graeco-Roman temple. This technique had also been used on eight University buildings, the President's House being the only other remaining example. Crowning the Observatory building is a rotating dome, 21 feet in diameter, which once stood like a beacon overlooking the University and the town.

Of particular importance to the Observatory is its telescope. In continuous use for 130 years, it was the first large telescope ever constructed in the United States. When it was installed in 1857 it had the third largest lens in the world. The telescope was built by Henry Fitz of New York, whose workshop is now preserved in the Smithsonian Museum. The meridian circle and sidereal clock were built by Pistor and Martins of Berlin under the supervision of Professor Eucker, Director of the Royal Observatory and his assistant, Franz Brunnov, who later came to Ann Arbor to become the Director of the Detroit Observatory.

As one of the state's oldest landmark structures, the University Observatory has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places and the Michigan State Register of Historic Places. Today the University's Department of Astronomy has more sophisticated telescopes housed elsewhere, but the original Observatory building and its telescope represent a key milestone in the history of the University.

References:

Hunt, Don, *Points of Interest at the University of Michigan*, 1976: pp. 52-53.

MacInnes, Margo, *Guide to the Campus of the University of Michigan*, 1978: pp. 45-46.

Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1977: pp. 63-64.

University of Michigan Encyclopedic Survey, 1942: p. 465.



TOLEDO, ANN ARBOR AND NORTHERN MICHIGAN RAILWAY 1889

416 S. Ashley Street

The passenger depot for the Toledo, Ann Arbor and Northern Michigan Railway, or Ann Arbor Railway (affectionately known as "Annie") is one of the few physical reminders of Ann Arbor's "second" railroad.

In 1839 the Michigan Central Railroad was established on the north side of Ann Arbor, linking the city with Detroit and Chicago. Throughout the 19th Century, but especially following the Civil War, the need for a second railroad became more apparent. Built to connect Toledo, Ohio with the wheat and lumbering industry in northern Michigan, the Ann Arbor Railway was started in 1877 and the first passengers reached the city on Commencement Day in June, 1878.

The passenger depot, built in 1889, replaced an earlier depot which was converted into a freight house across the tracks. The depot was built on property acquired from Luther James, and both Allen Creek and Second Street (renamed Ashley Street) were rerouted and extended to accommodate the new station. The company had allotted \$3500 for the depot but when finished the price had risen to \$4400.¹ According to a well known local historian the result pleased the directors of the company so much that the pattern, material and color were later officially adopted for all the stations on the line.² However, this could not be confirmed and photographs of other stations on the line do not match the design of the Ann Arbor depot.

As opposed to the more elegant Michigan Central line, the "Annie" was always the "people's railroad". It took families from town to picnics at nearby Zukey or Whitmore Lakes, or further north to the resorts in the Traverse City area, while it brought in farm families to use city and university services. As Duff notes, "... it is true that the Ann Arbor station never had about it the glamour for townspeople that attached to the Michigan Central. One seldom saw expensive luggage bearing foreign labels piled up on the platform. Famous people seldom alighted there... But the place was not without drama. Patients who had to be lifted on stretchers on or off the train on their way to or from the local hospitals were no rarity. In the resort season too there was a special gaiety about the place..."³

The passenger service eventually fell victim to competition from the automobile and airplane and on July 19, 1950 passenger service was terminated. The depot was boarded up for several years, after which it had a succession of uses as a beer warehouse, night club, restaurant, boutique and kitchen counter business. It was beautifully restored in 1985 by the present owner and now it serves as the Law Montessori School.

The depot building is a one-story rectangular clapboard structure measuring approximately 30 by 130 feet. A major feature is the long, hipped roof with wide overhang supported by ornamental wooden brackets. The principal, or west, facade faces the present-day tracks of the railroad and a lumber storage area, the site of the original freight depot. A secondary facade, facing east onto South Ashley Street, is now used as the principal entry in the building.

Originally the depot had two bays centrally located on the east and west facades. It was flanked by two smaller detached structures which were equidistant from the main building. One served as a baggage depot and the other as a bathroom. Sometime between 1939 and

1950 the depot was expanded to the south and a portion of the waiting platform was enclosed. Between 1950 and 1958 the northern baggage building was demolished. Sometime after this the east bay was enclosed and the agent's trackside bay was removed, along with large portions of the roof and the brackets to the north of the bay.

Today the trackside bay, roof area and brackets have been restored, although the original polygonal turret has not. The interior spaces of the original waiting room are remarkably well preserved. Despite varied uses in the past, the room retains an aura of elegance created by its fifteen foot ceilings and three tiers of traditional beaded tongue and groove wall paneling. Deeply incised carved mantel brackets accent the fireplace, and in the area just beyond the entry is a fifteen foot wooden archway with columns capped by carved floral designs.

The station was entered on the State Register of Historic Places in 1985.

1 O.W. Stephenson, *Ann Arbor The First Hundred Years*, 1927: p. 339.

2 Lela Duff, *Ann Arbor Yesterdays*: p. 104.

3 *Ibid.*: p. 104.

References:

Information based on the National Register nomination prepared by Susan Wineberg, 1985.



ANSON BROWN BUILDING 1832

1001-1007 Broadway

The oldest surviving commercial building in Ann Arbor, the Anson Brown Building (originally known as the Exchange Block) was constructed by Asa Smith for Anson Brown and Josiah Beckley in 1832¹, eight years after Ann Arbor was founded. Constructed of brick, it has a symmetrical front facade and stepped parapet end walls, a characteristic of 18th Century Dutch-influenced buildings more commonly found in the Eastern United States. Handhewn wood beams with mortised and tenoned oak framing are still visible in the attic. Because of the Dutch influence its style has been referred to as "Colonial Survival".

Anson Brown was an early Ann Arbor pioneer who arrived from upstate New York in 1826 to join other members of his family. After prospering as a grocer, he built a grist mill and dam where several Indian trails met at Broadway and Pontiac Trail. Shortly thereafter he constructed several large brick buildings, or "blocks", on the east and west sides of Broadway, intending to create a rival commercial district in this section known as "Lower Town". When Brown became postmaster, his Exchange Block housed the Post Office, to which all citizens had to come to retrieve their mail (home delivery did not begin until 50 years later). Brown might have succeeded in "developing" Lower Town into a thriving commercial district had he not died in the cholera epidemic of 1834. The Post Office returned to the upper village and Lower Town's business district entered a long period of stagnation.

Upon Brown's death his wife Desire inherited his property and his debts. She and her new husband Caleb Ormsby were finally forced to sell the building to her brother Edward Fuller² in 1843. The building remained in Fuller's family until the 1850's. It then fell into a long period of neglect and inappropriate use (as a garage) until the present owners, the Colvins, became interested in the 1920's. The Colvins took deed in 1940 and have lovingly cared for it since.

1 Chapman, Charles, *History of Washtenaw County*, 1881: p. 440 and J.Q.A. Sessions, *Michigan Pioneer Collections*, Lansing, 1877: pp 334-6.

2 *Huron Valley Ad-Visor*, February 28, 1968.

References:

Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1966.

Hunt, Mary, "Then and Now", *Ann Arbor Observer*, July, 1987.

Lorch Collection, Bentley Historical Library

Stephenson, O.W., *Ann Arbor The First Hundred Years*, 1927: p. 46.



EUNICE BALDWIN HOUSE

1500 Dexter

The Eunice Baldwin House exemplifies a New England type "one-and-a-half cottage" rendered in a countrified version of the Greek Revival style. This dwelling is representative of a modestly conceived housetype which was very common in Ann Arbor in the pre-civil war period. While some other examples survive, few have maintained their physical integrity to the extent seen in the Baldwin House. Changes, none of them recent nor visually incompatible, are basically limited to the addition of a rear wing, installation of somewhat wider clapboard siding, and a late nineteenth century construction of a spindled, half-hipped portico. In the basement the original 12 by 12 timbers and stone foundations can be viewed.

Some fifty years ago, its pleasing appearance won the attention of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Drawings and photographs resulting from this survey, which are in the Library of Congress, show the Baldwin House as it looked then, before later asphalt and aluminum siding were added. Its position at "the Forks," its charming proportions and its simple design make it instantly recognized as a local landmark.

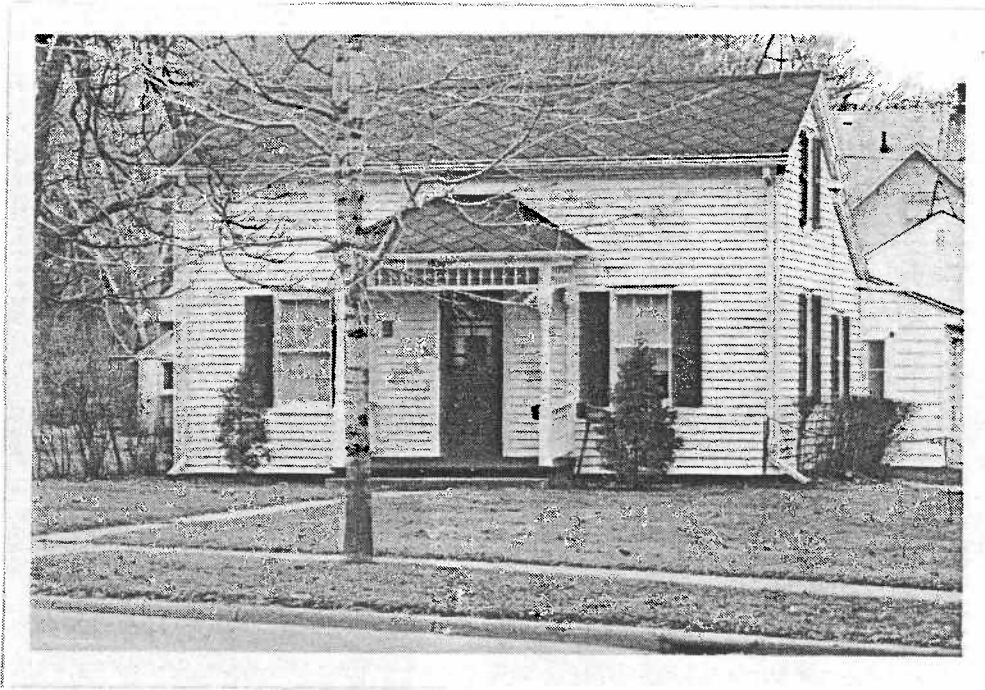
The house was built on an 80 acre piece of farmland, very likely by carpenter/ builder Norman Covert for his new mother-in-law, Eunice Baldwin. The Covert farm was separated from this parcel by what is now North Revena Boulevard. When Mrs. Baldwin died in 1868 she willed her house and land to her two daughters, Nancy Baldwin and Lucy Covert. In 1887, Andrew Heimerdinger acquired the property. Though the original 80 acres has long since been subdivided into residential lots, the small house is still owned by a fourth-generation Heimerdinger, Mrs. Martha Van Zant, and her husband Ben.

References:

Abstract of Property

Martha Van Zant, interview, 1976

Lorch Collections, Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Library



ANN ARBOR CENTRAL BREWERY 1860 and 1865

724 N. Fifth Avenue

Since these buildings form two distinct units, it is possible that a brewery existed here as early as 1860, when the City Directory for that year lists Lawrence Trube, brewer, as living on Fifth. By 1866, a building is visible on a Bird's Eye map, and by 1868, John Adam Volz is listed as Proprietor of the Ann Arbor Central Brewery. A fairly simple example of the Italianate style, the brick structure at the corner of Fifth and Summit has some characteristics of this style in its arched windows and window hoods of brick. The gable roof is somewhat unusual for this type of building as is the first story ashlar foundation. Facing Summit is a second, slightly shorter section, with more windows and no decorative exterior details. This may be the earlier portion.

Although Volz built this large brewery and elaborate home in the late 1860's, by 1875 he had moved to the west wide of town and taken up carpentry. The brewery became a residence, first for various German families and later for Italian immigrants (during the Twenties it was known as "Little Italy" because it housed many newly-arrived Italian workmen) and for Japanese-Americans returning from detainment camps after World War II. Long owned by Italian clothier Daniel Camelet (from 1921-1956), the building still contains the arched vaults in the basement used for lagering beer. Germans preferred a lighter beer, and thus barrels lagered or 'rested' for months in these cool brick vaults. These vaults are often misinterpreted and have led to theories about their use for hiding runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad.

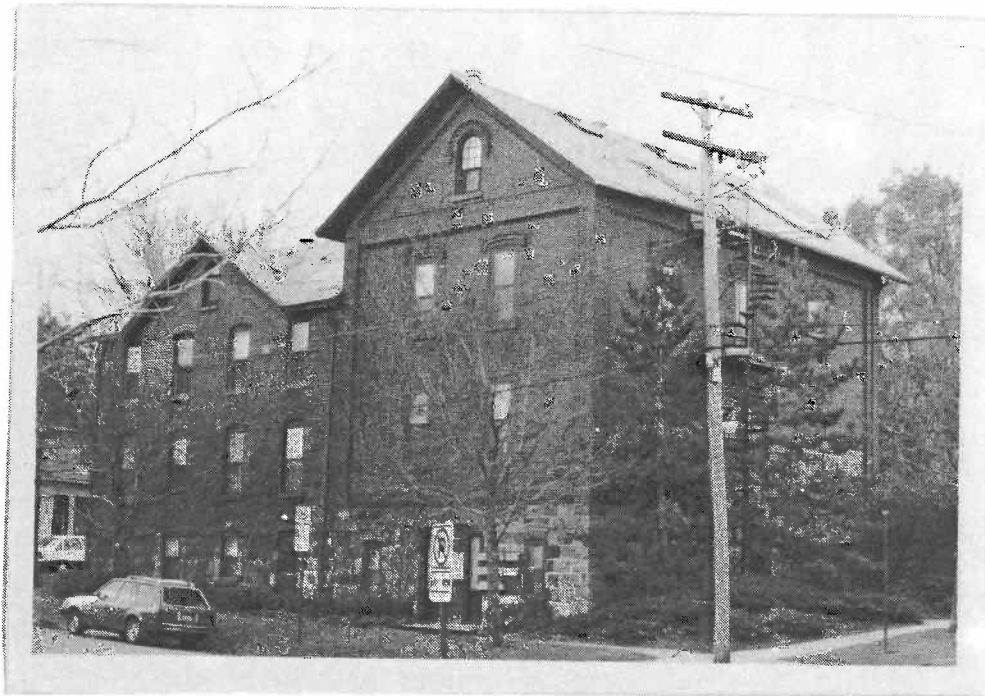
Today, the building has been renovated into apartments and has helped form the nucleus of a new community in a very old neighborhood.

References:

Ann Arbor News, November 19, 1973.

Ann Arbor Architecture, 1974, P. 74.

Ann Arbor Observer, December 1979.



CLAYTON GASKELL (BEAKES) HOUSE c. 1838

415 S. Fifth Avenue

The builder of this Greek Revival style "gable-fronter" is unknown, but the house is believed to be one of the oldest surviving houses in the city (1830-1840). With its pedimented gable-front orientation, lunette in the attic, well defined cornice, corner pilasters, and classical side entry, the building shows affinities with the Greek Revival homes of upstate New York. The entry is distinguished by a classical entablature with square columns and pilasters and a paneled enframingent with four pane sidelights. Although the building has undergone considerable alteration, especially the conversion of the interior to apartments in the 1930's after which it became known as "The Colonial" and the earlier addition of a bracketed Italianate style bay window on the south wing, it remains architecturally significant. Although noting that the structure "has been much altered," Emil Lorch, Dean of Architecture at the University of Michigan, photographed and studied the house as a possible candidate for the Historic American Buildings Survey.²

The Gaskell House also has historical significance. This house is one of the earliest built in the city and still remaining. Although generally known as the Beakes House, the Beakes family did not come into its possession until 1859. In 1909 Cornelia Corselius noted in her paper that... "Mrs. Beakes' house next door north (to lawyer John Gott's home) must also have been built in this decade (1830-40). Mrs. Hiram Beakes spent over sixty years under that roof as maiden, wife and widow. It has been modified and modernized, but the low, spacious rooms are still charming and old fashioned. A spirit of kindly hospitality always pervaded this home as Mrs. Beakes enjoyed having her friends around her."²

Mrs. Beakes, who was Sarah Swathel before her marriage, inherited the property through Ann Spellman, who had purchased it in 1846 from Clayton Gaskell. Gaskell had purchased it in 1838 from Mr. Mundy, who had purchased a large lot in this section in 1837 from the Ann Arbor Land Co. for over \$3600. It seems unlikely that Mundy built this house, however, since he is known to have lived on Fifth Avenue in the 1830's and 40's.³

At various times the house has also served as home for two important Ann Arbor mayors. Hiram Beakes, who lived in it from 1860 until the late 1880's, was elected Probate Judge of Washtenaw County in 1874 and was Mayor of Ann Arbor from 1873 to 1875. His daughter Annie Beakes was married in 1886 to Samuel Beakes (no relation), who also served as Mayor of the city, from 1888 to 1890. Beakes Street is named after him, and he was a major figure in local politics as well as being editor of the Ann Arbor Argus, which he bought in 1886. In 1891 he was appointed as Treasurer of the City, and later he was Chair of the Democratic City Committee. He was well known for the many public improvements made under this leadership. Beakes also authored the voluminous history of our area, PAST AND PRESENT OF WASHTENAW COUNTY, in 1906.

1 Emil Lorch Collection, Bentley Historical Library

2 Corselius, Cornelia, *Some of the Early Homes of Ann Arbor, Michigan*, Illustrated by Lucy Chapin, 1909, p.21.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 24.



CITY BREWERY (ANN ARBOR CENTRAL MILLS/AN
BLIND PIG)
1853 (Basement) and 1880/1900 (Upper floors)
208-210 S. First Street

When the Ann Arbor Central Mills opened in 1882 wheat growing in Washtenaw County was so profitable (due to the increased use of the thresher) that over a million bushels were being grown locally every year. The Central Mills, which exported flour to New England and abroad, operated from 1882 to 1927.

The property was originally the site of a brewery, and the existing building still has the basement tunnel vaults which were used to store and age beer (the German method of aging beer, or lagering, which required such vaults, was becoming more predominant as Ann Arbor's population became increasingly German). The building was first known as G.F. Hauser's City Brewery, which advertised in the 1860 City Directory. By 1868 it was John Reyer's City Brewery, and in 1872 as Ekhardt Bros. Brewery.

The site for the original flouring mill was probably chosen because of its proximity both to Allen Creek and to the Ann Arbor Railroad tracks. Central Mills took over the property in 1882, under the leadership of Robert Ailes who retired two years later and left the management of the firm to G. Frank Allmendinger (who was very active in banking and Republican politics) and Gottlieb Schneider. During these years agriculture in Washtenaw County was very productive, and the mill's owners prospered. However, wheat as a local crop declined when the Great Plains states began growing "hard" wheat. By the end of World War I the mill was operating at a loss, and after Schneider's death in 1925 only feed was ground. In 1929 the present owners, the Lohr family, purchased the mill and continued to use it as a feed store. It was remodeled in 1939 for their farm implements business, and Ann Arbor Implement still serves its customers today, selling garden supplies, mowers and tractors. Antique farm implements are stored in the former lagering vaults in the basement.

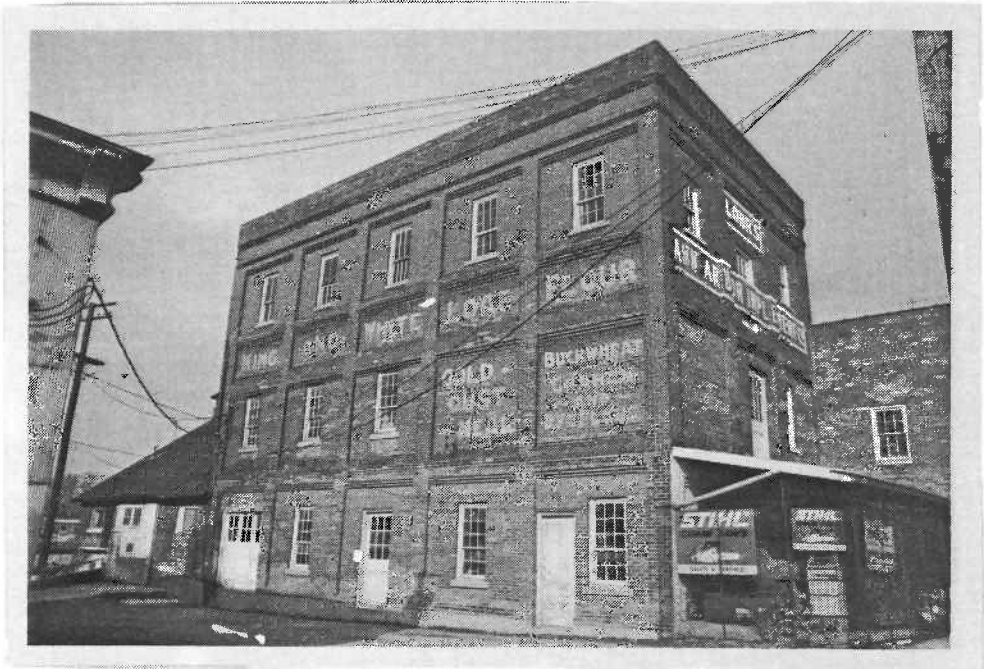
Although the present brick buildings are believed to have been built in 1900, many believe that the older frame building lies just under the exterior. Comparisons of photographs of the mill taken in 1880 and 1900 show buildings with almost identical configurations for the windows and doors. The third floor was probably added at this time (c. 1900), which is likely when the office building at 208 S. First St. was also built.

Many reminders of the old mill survive. Especially beloved are the painted exterior signs advertising the mill's products: KING AND WHITE LOAF FLOUR, GOLD DUST MEAL and BUCKWHEAT, GRAHAM AND WHEAT FLOUR. No other signs of this age and in this fine condition still exist in Ann Arbor, and they make the structure one of the most unique industrial buildings in the city. In 1976 the Ann Arbor Bicentennial Commission awarded Paul Lohr a Bicentennial Award for preserving and maintaining this fine structure.

Next door at the Blind Pig Cafe can be seen the original Central Mills safe, which now holds wine rather than cash. The Blind Pig is renowned in its own right, having spawned its own record label (Blind Pig Records) and a number of musicians who have earned national reputations. This portion of the old Central Mills ceased operating in 1925 and has had many owners since then. The Blind Pig opened in 1971, adding a steel and glass cafe structure in 1973.

References:

Most of this material was taken from an article written by Grace Shackman for the *Ann Arbor Observer*, April 1982.



LAND TITLE BUILDING

Facade, 1927 (1909)

(Lawyers Title Insurance Corporation)

106 North Fourth Avenue

In 1909 Attorney Arthur Brown, a former mayor of Ann Arbor, and his wife, Cora, purchased this lot to construct a building for the Washtenaw Abstract Company, which he had founded in 1893. The original small building was known for years as Brown's Little Old Office. Additions have been made several times and the building now extends to the alley at the back. As in many of the older buildings downtown, the partial basement is below the city sewer system and requires a pump.

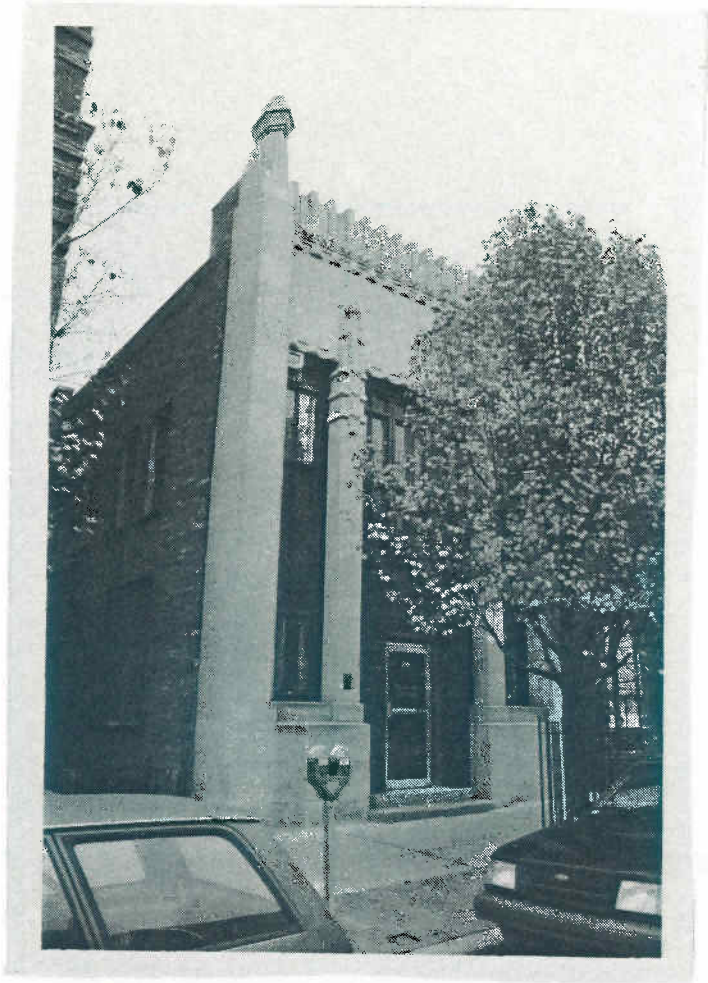
Gertrude Norris, who joined the firm in 1900, succeeded Brown as president in 1917. It was a matter of community interest that Miss Norris employed only women until Brown's daughter, Ruth, and her husband, George Wyman, joined the staff in the 1930's.

Gertrude Norris' tenure as president ended in 1956 when the Abstract and Title Guarantee Company absorbed the original company. In 1960 the Lawyers Title Insurance Corporation, a nationwide organization, purchased both the company and the building and still occupies it today.

This building is notable for its Art Deco front facade which was added in 1927, when it became the Land Title Building. A wonderful example of Art Deco architecture, the facade has a strongly vertical composition which carries from ground level to parapet, as well as overscaled, stylized decorative elements typical of the style.

References:

Bolen, James, Manager, Lawyers Title, 1969-1978.
City Directories



KAYSER BLOCK 1899

209-211 N. Fourth Avenue

Originally known as the Kayser Block, this simple brick commercial structure, with its "sunburst" brick pattern fanning out from the windows on the upper floors, was built in 1899 for office and retail use. By 1905, however, it was already known as Foerster's Hotel. Shortly thereafter the area of Fourth Avenue and Ann became known as Ann Arbor's "red light" district.

This transition was recounted in a 1978 interview with John Ragland, a 1930 UofM Law School Graduate who was closely associated with the NAACP and the Colored Welfare League. Mr. Ragland recalled that money left over to help blacks after World War I was used by the League to purchase the building. At that time the building housed the Huron Club, a local gambling den and center of prostitution. Those tenants were evicted and the building gradually became a black community center when the nearby YMCA refused to let black children use its facilities. The Welfare League had originally been the idea of Ralph Gilbert, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church, who was then aiding in the settlement of black construction workers who were being temporarily housed at the Dunbar Center at Fourth and Kingsley. Today the building remains the only downtown commercial building owned and operated by a black businessman.

References:

John S. Ragland Collection, Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Minutes of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, May 8, 1986: p. 4.



HEINRICH BUILDING c. 1870

111 S. Fourth Avenue

There has been a saloon at this location since the time the first courthouse was built in the 1830's until Prohibition. With Solon Cook's Temperance hotel across the street the saloon was probably a popular refuge. It survived a reform period in the 1870's which saw the number of saloons plummet from 80 to 32.

John D. Heinrich, proprietor of the Kossuth House Saloon at Pontiac (Beakes) and Summit Streets in the 1860's, acquired this property and replaced the old saloon with this commercial Italianate brick structure, c. 1870-71. It was operated by Heinrich and his son-in-law George Stein as a hotel/ saloon/ residence until his death in 1890.

The building continued to be a saloon, changing management several times, until 1918. After that it housed a number of small businesses. For many years it was the home of the Knights of Pythias Fraternal Organization. No. 113 S. Fourth, to the south was erected between 1888 and 1892 and was originally a blacksmith shop.

The Heinrich Building is unusual in that its original Italianate bracketed cornice and most of the ground floor facade are intact. It is thus one of the very few commercial buildings within the downtown core of Ann Arbor which retains its original cornice, windows and storefront design. The ground floor facade is also somewhat unusual, having stone quoins at the corners terminating in Tuscan capitals and square pilasters with composite capitals between the windows. The upper facade is more typically divided into three bays by brick piers which terminate under the massive cornice brackets. Bonnie and Peter DeLoof and Estelle and Herbert Schneider renovated the building in 1975-76, one of the earliest conversions of 19th Century buildings into new offices and residential units (there are two bi-level apartments in the upper floors of both 111 and 113). The facade was stabilized with its original appearance intact.

References:

Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1977: p. 35.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1888 and 1892.

Ann Arbor City Directories.



BETHLEHEM GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

1895, with additions in 1935 and 1966

423 S. Fourth Avenue

The history of Bethlehem Church is closely tied with the history of German immigration to Ann Arbor, and the subsequent splits within the city's German community. In 1833 Frederick Schmid arrived from Basel, Switzerland, responding to the call of Ann Arbor's German community for the gospel to be preached in their own language. Schmid and his congregants met initially in a schoolhouse on the site of the present Salem Church. The first church formally organized by Schmid was Bethlehem Church. In 1874 some of the members split off to form Zion Lutheran. Schmid, although retired, helped found this breakaway church, in part over denominationalism, in part because of egotism. "For a time, there were strong feelings between Bethlehem and Zion, not known as love."¹ Today the two churches enjoy warm relations and continue to serve two denominations, Lutheran and United Church of Christ, and have in common a large number of descendants from Ann Arbor's original German families.

No less than four congregations have asserted that they are the oldest German church in Michigan, and all have good reasons for their assertions. However, in 1982 Bethlehem Church was placed on the State Register of Historic Places, being recognized as the first German Protestant congregation in the state. A State Marker was erected in front of the church, detailing the history of the congregation in Michigan. The church's congregation celebrated its sesquicentennial in 1983.

The building is constructed of fieldstone in an Italian Renaissance style reminiscent of the Richardsonian tradition.

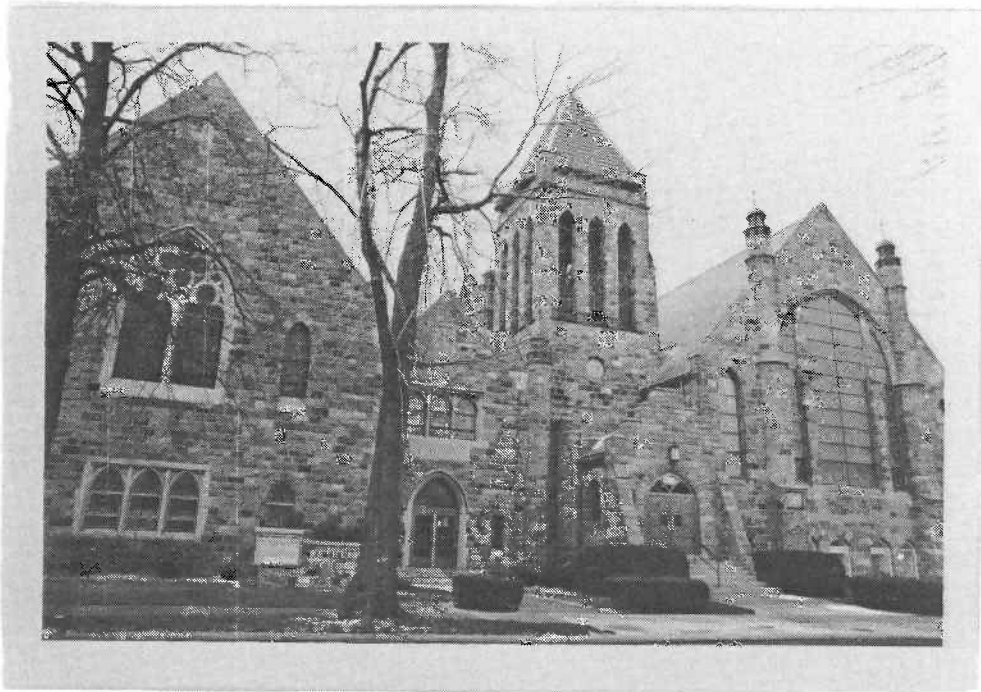
¹ Rev. Orval Willimann, in a talk before the Washtenaw County Historical Society, September 11, 1983.

References:

Ann Arbor News, September 24, 1983.

Ann Arbor News, December 16, 1982

Old West Side News, October 1983.



JAMES INGLIS HOUSE 1927

2301 Highland Road

This beautiful residence was built in 1927 as part of an exclusive subdivision on the eastern edge of the town, located near the University Arboretum. It was situated on the back part of the farmstead owned by the Inglis family since 1901. Nestled away from the bustle of Central Campus, the Inglis House is now owned by the University of Michigan and is used as a guest house and reception center for visiting dignitaries. Used as the University's official guest house, it has hosted world-famous scientists, musicians, government leaders, kings and shahs, all who have been guests of the University and entertained magnificently in these quarters.

Kate Inglis Smith, daughter of Scottish-born Dr. Richard Inglis of Detroit, began the exodus of Inglis family members from Detroit when she and her husband purchased the farmland in order to get out in the good country air. Carol Inglis Spicer, niece of Kate Smith, fondly remembered her aunt's grape vines strung along Geddes Street, between what are now Highland and Concord Streets. Chickens were also raised on the Inglis' farm, as well as apples and pears.

It was natural, says Ms. Spicer, that Kate's younger brother James, a successful Detroit industrialist who owned American Blower Co., should choose the back seven acres for the construction of his new house, for it was the piece with the view. As Ms. Spicer described it, "It was truly a 'creating' - building that house - and most particularly that garden, where there had been before only long grass and wild blackberries and a few pear trees. In my Aunt Elizabeth's later years... in California... it has been the garden... that looms in her memories of those halcyon days." Her gardener Walter Stamphli remained after the University took possession in 1951. In 1974 he still lived in the "Hans Christian Andersen-like cottage" on the grounds.

Ms. Spicer's cousins also have memories of the house: its cost - \$250,000; the asparagus in their mother's garden; the electrically operated garage doors; and the separate wash bowls in the parents' bedroom. The tennis courts, golf course, panelled and book-lined libraries - all stir fond memories among those who grew up there.

The four-story residence has twelve rooms plus servants' quarters, the caretaker's cottage, three car garage, greenhouse, workshop and pumphouse. The house was designed by Lilburn "Woody" Woodworth, at the time a young and obscure architect/friend of the family whose only other building had been the Arch Diack residence at the bottom of Geddes Heights. Today, the French Chateau style building, with its steeply pitched roof, sits amidst the lush foliage of the original gardens. It elicits praise from many of the notables who have wined, dined and lodged there. In 1986 it was featured on the Ann Arbor's Women's City Club house tour. As the city's only true "country estate" it is an architectural as well as social landmark.

References:

Ann Arbor News, May 19, 1974.

Ann Arbor News, May 11, 1986.

32

ANN ARBOR TRIBUNE BUILDING

Facade circa 1930

206 East Huron

The distinctive Art Deco front, with its overscaled brick angular arch facade, recessed window plane and wide-banded limestone door surround, was added to this brick building in the early 1930's when the *Ann Arbor Tribune* occupied the building. It had been the site of Fred and Mary Heusel's City Bakery since the late 1890's, and the building itself likely dates to the 1860's.

The *Tribune* was an outgrowth of a series of German language newspapers, most directly *Die Neue Post*, published by Eugene J. Helber. Helber was outspokenly pro-German during the initial years of World War I, before the United States joined the conflict. After some difficulties with the federal authorities he deemed it wise to change to the English language and a new masthead. In the late 1930's the paper became the weekly *Washtenaw Post-Tribune*, moving its offices a few doors away. In 1937 the *Tribune* lost its young reporter-editor, Arthur Gallagher, to the *Ann Arbor Daily News* (now the *Ann Arbor News*), where he remained until he retired as Editor-in-Chief in 1976.

The Springer family bought this building in 1939 for an insurance office. In business since 1926, the firm merged with Kleinschmidt to become the Springer-Kleinschmidt Insurance Company. It is now known as the Kleinschmidt Insurance company.

Although more recent changes have been made to the interior, the old molded metal walls and ceilings of the 1890's remain in place under new paneling and tile.

References:

City Directories

Springer, William, of Springer-Kleinschmidt Insurance Company, 1976.



ANN ARBOR BUS DEPOT 1940

116 W. Huron Street

Shortly after it opened on September 5, 1940 the Ann Arbor Bus Depot was featured in a book entitled MODERN BUS TERMINALS AND POST HOUSES. In the book's introduction the authors noted that new bus terminals were being designed to meet new demands by travelers, but also recognized the importance of the aesthetics of the building and its site. Designed by the architecture firm of Banfield and Cumming of Cleveland, Ohio¹ in association with Ann Arbor architect Douglas Loree, the Ann Arbor Depot was a response to these considerations, and was one of a small number of new bus stations designed in the streamlined Art Moderne style (an adaptation of the Art Deco style) popular in the 1930's and 40's. It was erected at a cost of \$42,000 and opened on September 5, 1940. With its wide expanse of curved glass, smooth-sawed Indiana limestone, black granite base, and porcelain enamel sign trimmed in stainless steel, the Depot represents a simple yet dramatic and eye-catching example of this style. Its sleek, geometrical looks are created both by these materials and by the vertical thrust of the sign playing off the horizontal sweep of the windows, and ends in a semi-circle at the west end of the facade. Many locals also remember the elegant interiors: wide stainless steel stairways and railings, birchwood cabinetry in the restaurant and newsstand. In fact, it is a popular local photographic subject and was voted a favorite city building by a majority of a panel selected by the *Ann Arbor Observer*.

This depot replaced a previous bus depot built in 1898 for the interurban railway which ran from Detroit through Ann Arbor to Jackson. The railway was the extension of the first interurban built in Michigan, and originally went only between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. Started by local newspaper publisher Junius Beal and a group of Ypsilanti businessmen, the system hauled freight as well as passengers until 1929. When the new bus station replaced the interurban station the *Ann Arbor News* lamented the passing of an era, when the big event in the lives of Ann Arbor families was a trip on the interurban to Detroit.

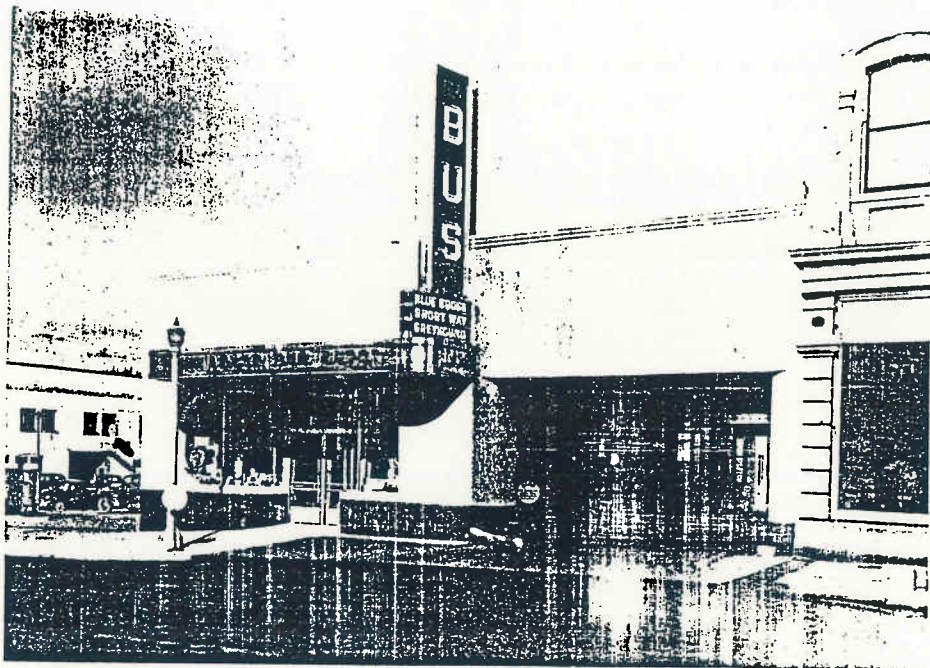
Because of both the long history of this site as a focus of local transportation activity, and the rarity of Art Moderne architecture in Ann Arbor, this building is considered one of downtown Ann Arbor's landmark buildings.

1 Other stations designed by this firm were built in Kalamazoo and Windsor, Ontario.

References:

Ann Arbor Observer, April, 1986.

Modern Bus Terminals and Post Houses, edited by Manford Burleigh and Charles M. Adams, Ypsilanti, Michigan: University Lithoprinters, 1941.



ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

ZWERDLING FURS SIGN 1915

West wall, 213 E. Liberty Street (now 241)

The "Zwerdling Furs" sign, a very early Art Deco style advertisement showing a wolf baying at the moon amidst a forest of trees, was painted in 1915. It was painted not by an ordinary sign painter, but "by an artist". These were the words of Osias Zwerdling as reported in the *Ann Arbor Observer* of March of 1978. Zwerdling had always remained proud of that sign, even after he had retired from his fur business, and spoke with the developers of the building about it after citizens became concerned over the sign's fate in the summer of 1977. Recognizing that the sign was both a work of art and a historic artifact, the developers wisely left the sign untouched. Today it remains the only artist-designed advertisement dating to before World War I.

The sign was repainted shortly after Zwerdling built the Zwerdling Building on the site of 213-219 E. Liberty. Zwerdling came to Ann Arbor in 1903 and worked for Mack and Co. for a year before opening his own business on Main Street. Three years later he bought the old Koch residence on E. Liberty and in 1915 he moved the house to Fourth Avenue and built the present building. Zwerdling was a "ladies tailor" and furrier who was successful enough to later buy the Darling Block next door at 221-227 E. Liberty. When he retired in 1943, he was a well-known philanthropist as well and a leader in Ann Arbor's Jewish community. He was the organizer of the Beth Israel Congregation and was responsible for the second Hillel Foundation in the U.S. being organized here for University students. When interviewed in 1974 at the age of 96, he still maintained an active interest in the building and its occupants and kept his own accounts. Mr. Zwerdling died in 1977.

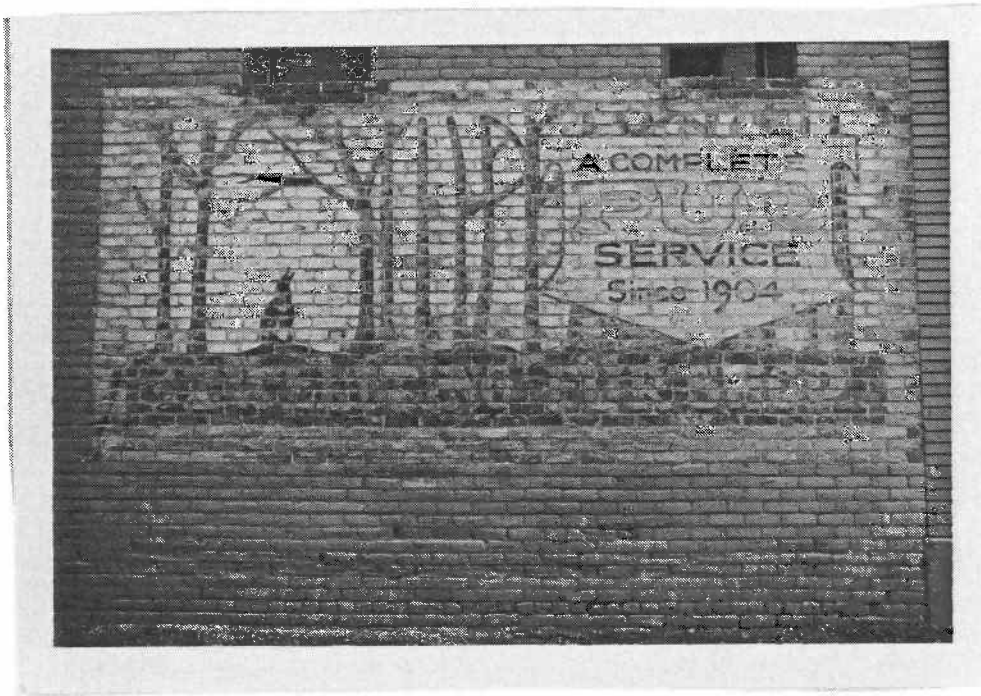
The sign is representative of an art form which is almost non-existent (sign painting), is an unusual example of this art form in having been designed by an artist, and represents a piece of local history and perpetuates the memory of a citizen who gave much to his city.

References:

Ann Arbor News, November 13, 1953.

Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1977: p. 38.

Ann Arbor Observer, March 1978.



ENOCH JAMES HOUSE C. 1847-49

321 E. Liberty

The Enoch James house is an austere example of the style that University of Michigan architectural historian Kingsbury Marzolf has labeled "Federal Survival." Previously, architect Emil Lorch, when making his HABS survey, described this house as "a two-and-one-half story Eastern City row type, rare in Michigan." The core block comprises a three bay rectangle with the entry and stair hallway at the western end of the structure. The door surrounds include sidelights and a rectangular transom. A set of four square block pilasters enframe the entry and sidelights. An open entablature type porch may have been a later addition, but with its rounded Tuscan columns, blends with the original design. The gables are characterized by stepped parapets which recede from the core block along rear wings. This stepped gable motif, also characteristic of the Anson Brown Block, reputedly reflects Dutch influence upon the Federal style as developed in New York State.

Several blocks of the original plat of Ann Arbor were purchased by pioneer Alpheus Stout in 1826, but there is no record of a building on this site until after Stout sold the lot to George D. Hill, who is listed in the 1850 census as one of the three richest men in Ann Arbor. Olney Hawkins began to build the house for "Gov." Hill, but in a few months George Hill was in over his head financially. In 1849 he assigned his properties to W.S. Maynard to pay his debts. After several years of fancy mortgage footwork the property went to Olney Hawkins and then to Enoch James, who held a major mortgage on the house. It is not known if either George Hill or Olney Hawkins lived in the house, but by 1855 Mr. James and his family had full possession. George Hill later recovered financially, built a much more pretentious house on Hill Street, named after himself, and provided Ann Arbor with several more notable buildings, including Hill Opera House.

Cornelia Corselius describes the James family as "prominent society people". At his death in 1867 Enoch James left the property to his son Lyman, with his widow, Amarilla James, having a lease interest for the rest of her life. By the latter part of the 19th Century the home was a rooming house. After it was sold to George G. Stimson in 1898 it was divided into three apartments until the early 1930's, when it was further divided into seven apartments.

Elizabeth Stimson Peterson, who lived there as a child, recalls that the walls between the rooms were of solid brick and that there were five fireplaces.

Irving T. Copi purchased the property in 1973.

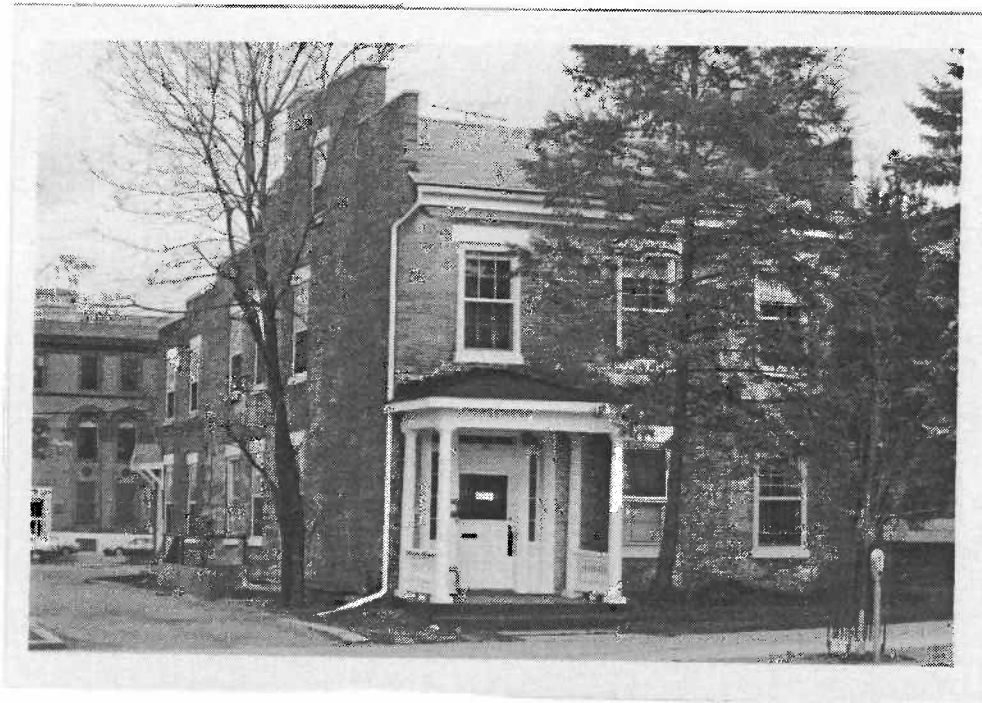
References:

City Directories

Corselius, Cornelia, *Some of the Early Homes of Ann Arbor, Michigan*, 1909, p. 26.

Lawyers Title Insurance Company Records

Emil Lorch Collection, Bentley Historical Library



MICHIGAN THEATER BUILDING

519-609 E. Liberty

Built by Angelo Poulos and designed in 1927 by architect Maurice Finkel of Detroit in a Lombard Romanesque style, the Michigan Theater Building complex consists of an 1800-seat auditorium and an office block of seven stores. The office block consists of retail shops at street level and offices above and is built of the same brown brick with cement and terra cotta trim as the theater. The theater, however, is the jewel in the crown. When it opened January 5, 1928, it was the finest in Ann Arbor. Today, despite some alterations to the facade, it remains an architecturally significant structure and is now the only theater in Ann Arbor surviving from the vaudeville-silent movie era.

The facade's main section, a three-bay wide entry to the theater flanked by stores on either side, is complemented by the seven store fronts which are more simply constructed with a band of square-head doublehung windows topped by a continuous concrete lintel on the second floor. The stores immediately flanking the theater retain the arched window hoods of the theater itself. The simplified western storefronts add a compatible, not competitive, edge to the complex as a whole. Unfortunately, in 1956 most of the building's first floor---including the shop fronts, the theater entry and theater lobby, were remodeled. The exterior facade was refaced with black marble and imitation fieldstone trim and a metal signboard was installed on either side of the theater entrance. The present theater marquee was installed in 1945.

The Romanesque theater entrance is the highlight of the exterior. The columns, arches, and other Romanesque elements, confined now to the second floor since the first was remodelled, are executed in cream color terra cotta. Decorative aprons on the second floor 'arcade' section contain lozenges of green and blue terra cotta. The rondelles in the tympana of those arches are of bright red terra cotta, while the four petal flowers within the rondelles are bright blue.

In the structure's interior, the most significant features are the auditorium and inner lobby, and the exterior lobby is now aging somewhat gracefully, being a good example of the aesthetic of the 1950's. The inner lobby retains many original features including a coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling; Romanesque columns and arch decorations in plaster, wood-paneled wall surfaces and wrought iron balcony. The theater also retains its Barton Organ, which has been recently restored.

Ironically while celebrating its 50th anniversary, the owners of the theater announced they would no longer be leasing it to its long term tenant. Plans were announced to convert the interior into a shopping mall, which alerted citizens to the danger of losing both the marvelous theater and its interior, as well as the organ.

After a good deal of public outcry, the Theater portion of the building was saved from alteration by the City of Ann Arbor when citizens voted several times to finance purchasing it and bringing it up to code. The City purchased the theater in 1979 and appealed to the voters again in 1982 to clear up legalities involved with the bond issues. In 1985, under the leadership of Ann Arbor native Judy Dow Alexander, a campaign to restore the Michigan was undertaken. After raising almost two million dollars, the entire lobby and auditorium portions of the theater were restored to their original paint schemes and designs. It has become a true civic landmark and its restoration is a point of pride for all citizens of Ann Arbor. It is now a cultural and performing arts center, used by theater groups, the Ann Arbor Symphony and others, as well as still serving as a movie theater.

In 1976, the Theater and the Barton Organ Society were honored by the Ann Arbor Bicentennial Commission . In 1980 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and in 1987 it received a restoration award from the Historic District Commission of Ann Arbor and from the Michigan Society of Architects.

National Register nomination form, prepared by Robert O Christensen, Historic Preservation Coordinator, Michigan History Division and Louisa Peiper, Wylan Stevens and Andrew Hall, August 5, 1980.

References:

"The Michigan Theater" *Ann Arbor Observer*, September 1978.

"The Irrespressible Judy Dow," *Ann Arbor Observer*, April 1987.

Ann Arbor News, October 5, 1969.

Ann Arbor News, December 12, 1973.

Ann Arbor News, November 9, 1986.

Ann Arbor News, May 25, 1985.

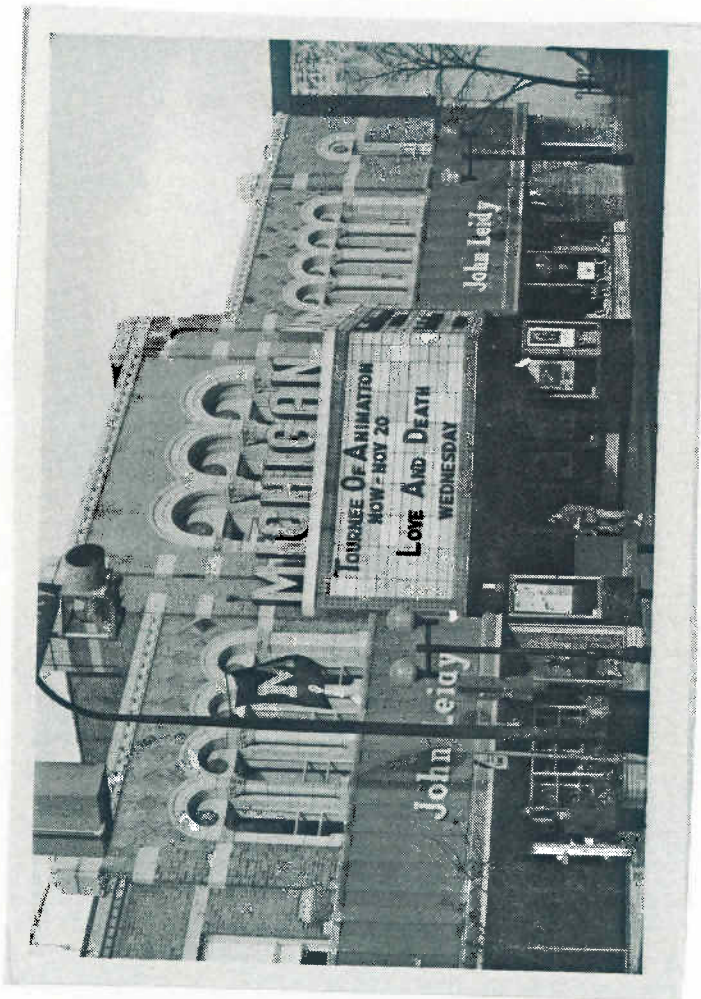
Detroit Free Press, September 25, 1986.

Detroit Free Press, March 27, 1986.

Detroit Free Press, September 13, 1984.

Michigan Alumnus, March-April 1987.

Historical Society of Michigan Newsletter, January- February 1979.



KRAUSE/ BISSINGER BUILDING 1867-68

111 W. Liberty

When Caleb Krause and Godfrey Bissinger built this 3-story Italianate brick building in 1867 to house their painting business there weren't enough buildings on Liberty Street west of Main to qualify for addresses. They were simply described as being "on the south side of Liberty, between Main and Second."¹ The Krause family lived upstairs, as was common at this time. Shortly after construction, however, their business dissolved and Krause went into the painting business with John Ambruster.² By 1874 Krause was in business by himself and by 1878 he was no longer living in Ann Arbor.

By 1883 the building had an address (3 W. Liberty St.). The ground floor was then the grocery and saloon of Ludwig Walz. Walz continued operations here until c. 1895, when it became the printing shop of his son-in-law, Sid Millard. Millard ran his print business from here, and from a small addition built to the east, from the 1890's until the late 1970's. One of his biggest customers was the University's Athletic Department. A wall of autographed photos and programs used to attest to his popularity with the home teams. Upon his retirement the building was purchased by Caroline and Joseph Arcure. It was sensitively restored by them, and even an old bake oven in the basement was kept.

The building is representative of commercial structures built shortly after the Civil War, and because of its restoration, it is one of the superior downtown examples of the type. Italianate in style, it is characterized by tall narrow window openings capped by segmental brick arches with keystones. A bracketed cornice once characterized the facade, as well as varying planes of brick corbeling under the cornice. Today only the cornice is gone from what remains as an almost pristine example of late 1860's commercial Italianate architecture in Ann Arbor. The facade is one of very few remaining examples of storefronts representative of that period. The lower facade, below a wooden cornice, is divided into three bays with the middle one containing a recessed entry and embellished by ornamented door surrounds. Brick pilasters also divide the upper facade into three bays.

1 1868 City Directory

2 1872 City Directory



ROBERT MacKENZIE HOUSE (ANNA BOTSFORD BACH HOME) 1916

1422 W. Liberty

This neoclassical Italian villa with yellow stucco walls was originally built in 1916 as the home of Dr. Robert MacKenzie, who was then a prominent general practitioner and head of the UofM Medical School's Obstetrics Department. MacKenzie was also instrumental in expanding St. Joseph Mercy Hospital from a house on North State St. into the large brick hospital building on Ingalls St. (the house on N. State was also the first to house the Anna Botsford Bach home). MacKenzie was rather a wunderkind, being elected mayor of Ann Arbor only six years after finishing medical school. In those days, however, the position of mayor was more an honor than a daily responsibility.

Unlike most of his colleagues, MacKenzie and his wife preferred to have more acreage, and thus built their new home on the far west side of town, where many of Dr. MacKenzie's patients lived (he was fluent in German, the lingua franca of the West side). They began construction in 1916. The architect suggested a ballroom for the third floor, but Mrs. MacKenzie vehemently objected to such ostentation. Even without a ballroom it was a grand house, with spacious rooms, verandas, a central hall big enough to play football in, and two large fieldstone fireplaces. Unfortunately, Dr. MacKenzie's health began to fail and in 1926 they moved to Frankfort, Michigan. He died in 1934.

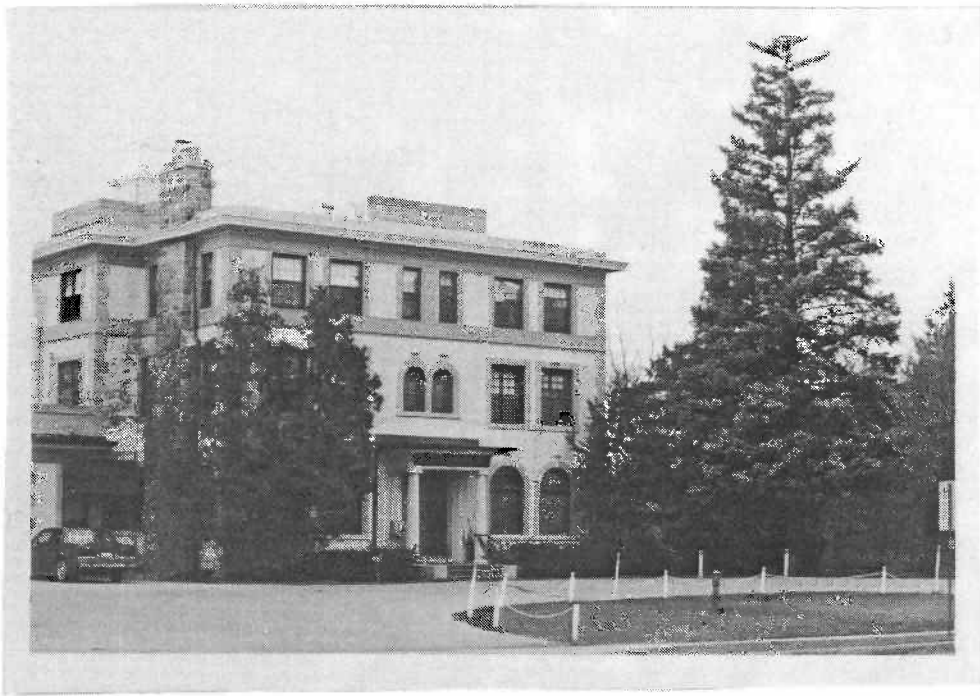
In 1927 the spacious downstairs proved it could handle a larger family. After a 3rd floor was added and the house renovated, seventeen elderly residents inaugurated the "Old Ladies Home". The name was soon changed to the Anna Botsford Bach Home in honor of Mrs. Bach, an energetic woman who had worked tirelessly to form such a home for elderly women.

For more than 80 years the goal of the Anna Botsford Bach Home has been to provide a homelike atmosphere for its elderly tenants. The women are friends and companions, and there is a sense of affection and respect for the special care provided there. Today, this appealing structure still provides a sense of home and also adds grace and charm to Liberty Street, one of the city's main thoroughfares.

References:

Ann Arbor Observer, December 1983.

Anna Botsford Bach Home brochure.



U.S. POST OFFICE

1909 (1926) 1932

220 N. Main St.

The Polhemus Livery Stable occupied this site from 1874-1909, and was demolished for the post office. Although Congress had authorized funds to build it in 1903, money was not appropriated until 1906. Congressman Charles E. Townsend, a prominent area resident, played a key role in the final approval for funds. Completed in 1909, it was the ninth building to house Ann Arbor's postal service and the first architecturally significant federal building in Ann Arbor¹.

Constructed by C. Hoertz and Son of Grand Rapids, the work was directed by architect Fremont Ward who followed plans drawn by the architecture staff at the U.S. Treasury Department. Built in the popular Beaux Arts style, the building was a handsome adaptation of a classic Italian Renaissance palace, with its symmetrical formality, rectilinear characters, absence of roof form and strong horizontal lines and elaborate decorative detailing. As the building began to take shape, photographs and reports were sent monthly to the regional headquarters in Chicago.²

Initially, the building formed a square with entrances on all four sides. A five-bay facade faced Main Street with three central bays flanked on either side by slightly smaller ones with flat topped windows. Although a small brick addition was made in 1926 to handle parcel post, the most significant alterations were made in 1932 when the building was expanded both on the north and south ends. The additions were so carefully crafted to match the original design that today it is impossible to notice the changes. The addition altered the original end bays on the Main St. facade to match the three central ones, and added more bays on either side to mimic the flat-topped bays just changed to match the central ones. Everything was done to maintain the same external appearance: the smooth cut gray limestone, the neo-classical revival features including the sculpted garland architraves and the scroll work on the frieze about the windows, were all matched to the original. In addition, the interior retained many original finishings such as marble wainscoting, terrazzo floors in the lobby, ornate plaster moldings on the sixteen foot ceilings and the wonderful wood trim. The original large glass skylights continued to illuminate the mail sorting room as well. Many of these interior features date to the remodeling in 1933.

The building served as the central post office of Ann Arbor until 1959 when it became a sub-station for the downtown after a newer post office was built. In 1977, with the completion of the new Federal Building, this post office was closed. Within a few years the building was sold to Washtenaw County, which restored the building and maintained both exterior and interior features wherever possible. Today it houses administrative offices of Washtenaw County government.

In May of 1978 the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1 National Register nomination prepared by Ernest O. Moore, 1977

2 *Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan*, 1977: 31-32

3 Ibid.

References:

Duff, Lela, *Ann Arbor Yesterdays*, 1962: 154-56.

1911 post card.

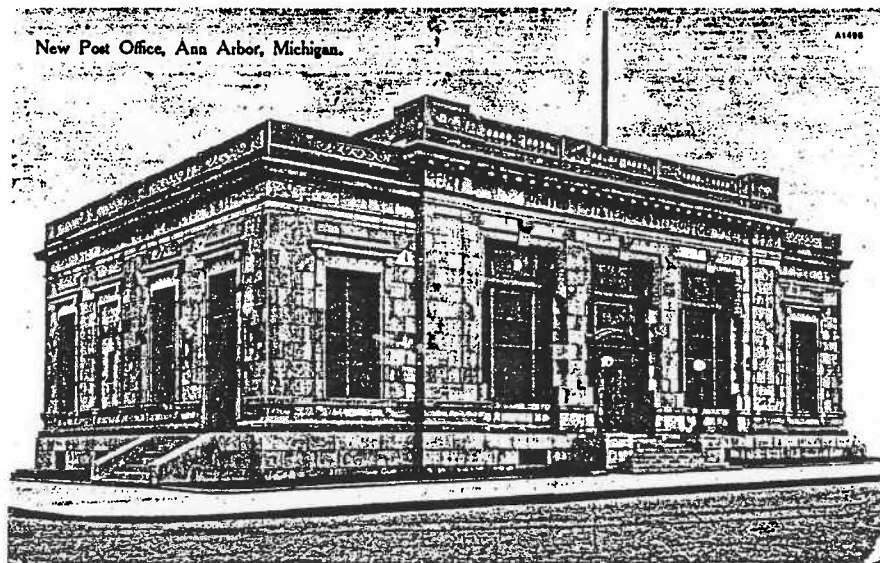
Lorch Papers, Bentley Historical Library.

Ann Arbor Historic Buildings, 1977: 31-32.

Ann Arbor Observer, October 1976.

Ivory Photo Collection, Bentley Historical Library.

Ann Arbor News, February 27, 1977.



1911 Post Card

DR. CHASE'S STEAM PRINTING HOUSE/ COURIER BLOCK 1864 AND 1868

301-305 N. Main Street

This nine-bay commercial brick building, built in two stages in the popular Italianate style by builder W.H. Mallory¹ during and after the Civil War, originally housed the printing plant of Dr. Alvan Wood Chase. Dr. Chase published the local Republican newspaper known as the PENINSULAR COURIER AND FAMILY VISITANT (later shortened to "Ann Arbor Courier"; hence the building's name). Also published here was a pamphlet known as DR. CHASE'S RECIPES, OR INFORMATION FOR EVERYBODY. "From a humble first edition of one thousand pamphlets... there grew a major publishing industry which issued uncounted numbers of Dr. Chase's work, perhaps Michigan's single greatest contribution to American cookbook history".² Although originally only 16 pages, by 1865 the pamphlet was in its 26th edition and was a gilt-embossed, leather bound volume of 384 pages, and was only outsold by the Bible. It listed medical remedies and cooking recipes as well as numerous other household hints. It even explained how to keep bees and detect counterfeit money. It was an indispensable tool for the westward moving pioneers and was translated into several languages. It soon made Dr. Chase a very wealthy man.

In 1869 Chase retired and sold his plant and publications to Rice A. Beal (a decision he later regretted when he saw how rich Beal became!). Beal made a fortune from reprinting "Dr. Chase's", and from his activities in the newspaper business. After he died in 1875 his son Junius, later a Regent of the University of Michigan, continued to publish both the Courier and the Recipes. They were not sold until 1906. Used for a succession of businesses during the twentieth century, it has housed a rug factory, a wholesale grocer and a Montgomery Ward warehouse. Abandoned for two years until purchased in 1968, it was renovated by the present tenants, the firm of Johnson, Johnson, and Roy.

During the 20th century this building has lost some of its most distinctive ornamentive detailing. Originally the building was capped by a projecting wood cornice with carved eave brackets, and it had an elaborate bracketed and arched centerpiece surmounting the cornice over the central three bay unit. The surviving elements of the once elaborate facade are the corbeled arcading within which the roundhead windows and cappings are set, the brick piers which divide the nine bays into sets of three, the stepped window hoods of the three middle bays on the second and third floors, and the dentate brickwork over the third floor within the central unit.

Although no longer a pristine example of its architectural style, the Courier Block dominates an important corner in the original central business district of Ann Arbor and marks the location of a number of important events in the publishing history of both Ann Arbor and the United States. In 1976 Johnson Johnson and Roy were given an award by the Ann Arbor Bicentennial Commission for "their special contribution to the quality of life in Ann Arbor through the renovation of 301-305 N. Main".

1 *Peninsular Courier and Family Visitant*, November 28, 1867.

2 Longone, Jan, *Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor*, Volume 1, June 1987.

