

2000 Historic Preservation Awards

Centennial Awards

Awarded to: District Council 22

For: Painters Local 514 - 1899

Painters Local 514 was chartered on November 18, 1899 because the “workers wanted a better way of life and better standard of living through collective bargaining (*Ann Arbor News*, 1999).” In the late 1890s, painters were paid \$2.57 a day and worked 52-hour weeks. Members of 514 ran the union independently until 1976, when they joined Michigan District Council 22, a group that combined eight area locals together with an executive board working for all the member groups. The district and its council are affiliated with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades.

Awarded To: Fr. Roger Prokop

For: 517 Elizabeth Street, St. Thomas Catholic Church - 1899

The first church building for St. Thomas’ congregation was built in 1845 on East Kingsley Street. By the time Fr. Edward Kelly arrived in 1891, the parish was in need of a new church. The Detroit firm of Spier and Rohns designed this majestic Romanesque building, reminiscent of Italian hill churches. The local firm of Koch Brothers built the church of granite fieldstone and Bailey bluestone, laying the cornerstone in 1897. St. Thomas was dedicated in 1899 and is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District.

Preservation Awards

Awarded to: David S. Bailey & Kristine Zvirbuils

For: 303 N. Division, Andrew DeForest House - ca. 1848

Andrew DeForest, local contractor and builder, arrived in Ann Arbor in 1836 from Montgomery County, New York. Located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, DeForest’s house is said to have been originally a Greek Revival house with a colonnaded portico facing Catherine Street, much like other houses he built around Ann Arbor. DeForest reportedly changed his house before selling it to the Henry Brown family. The Browns employed Loius H. Boynton, University of Michigan Professor of Architecture, to remodel the house into the Colonial Revival style and it served as the Colonial Inn after the Browns’ tenure ended. In 1979 the asbestos siding and wooden arbor over the entry were removed to reveal the earlier structure. Dr. Bailey and Ms. Zvirbulis have owned and occupied the building since 1988.

Awarded to: Paul & Maxine Rosasco
For: 1028 Woodbridge, Frank Bowen House - 1929

Built in 1929 and designed by local architect Hugo Mann, 1028 Woodbridge was the home of Frank Bowen. This nicely maintained Tudor has original steel casement windows. The current owners are only the third family to live at the address and have consistently provided attractive landscaping on their property. The Rosascos have lived here since 1959.

[Mr. Rosasco's letter reads: "The house was actually built in 1927 by Weinburg and Kurtz Construction Company of Ann Arbor. It was built for Hugo Mann, a bank official for the old Farmers and Mechanics Bank located at Main and Huron (now National City Bank). Mr. Mann died suddenly in 1928 and the property was sold to Mr. Frank Bowen. Mr. Mann has two sons still living in this area. Robert Mann retired from Detroit Edison and is living in Chelsea. Eugene Mann retired from Michigan Bell Telephone Company and is living in Ann Arbor. Mr. Bowen was a partner in the Bowen, Jensen, Farrell Engineering firm. I don't believe it is in business any longer."]

Awarded to: Charles & Joan Weber
For: 2204 Lafayette, Earl V. Moore Hosue - 1931

This brick, side-gabled Tudor Revival with original double-hung windows was built in 1931 for University of Michigan music professor Earl V. Moore and his wife, Blanche. Earl Moore was appointed University Organist in 1915 and became a Professor of Music in 1919, remaining as such until his retirement in 1961. In 1923, Professor Moore was named Director of the University School of Music and Conductor of the Choral Union. In 1946, Moore's title was changed to Dean of the School of Music, and he remained Dean until 1960. The university later named its new School of Music building on North Campus for this widely regarded organist, composer, administrator, and much loved professor. The Webers have owned the house since 1964.

Awarded to: Conrad & Isabel Kottak
For: 2025 Seneca, Nina Burton House - 1926

An unusual Norman brick house featuring Flemish bond brickwork, architect Albert Kahn built this house in 1926. The home was built for Nina Burton, widow of University of Michigan President Marion Leroy Burton, with money raised by university alumni. Some original steel casement windows are still in place and the home has been well maintained. The Kottaks purchased the home in 1975.

Rehabilitation Awards

Awarded to: Detroit Edison

For: 987 Broadway, Argo Substation - 1905

The Argo Hydroplant (now the Argo Substation) has a long industrial history dating back to the earliest dam across the Huron River. Designed in 1905 by local architect and University of Michigan Professor of Architecture Emil Lorch, it has been well maintained by the Detroit Edison Company, who recently provided sensitive window replacements and tuck pointing to the exterior of this Individual Historic Property.

The substation was purchased from the Michigan Milling Company in 1909 by Alex Dow, president of The Detroit Edison Company. The property was acquired as part of a greater property acquisition to develop a series of hydroelectric facilities along the Huron River. Some of the facilities were located at Delphi, French Landing, and Belleville. The original plan of development of water power on the Huron River encompassed a total of nine hydroelectric plants.

Prior to the acquisition of the Argo site, it was used for milling of grains into flour and other products by the Michigan Milling Company. Many of the other sites purchased by Alex Dow were former milling sites as well. The locations were ideal for milling because of the natural formations and water resources of the Huron River. These features also made them ideal for hydroelectric generation.

The property on which the Barton Hills Subdivision was developed was one of the first property acquisitions for the planned hydroelectric project. Portions of the properties weren't necessary for the completion of the Huron River Hydro Project, and were later developed by Detroit Edison into the Barton Hills and Geddes Farms Subdivisions. Barton Hills Subdivision was the first development project created by The Detroit Edison Company.

Awarded to: Washtenaw County Administration

For: 110 N. Fourth Avenue, YMCA - 1905

Ann Arbor's first YMCA building was designed by Irving and Allen Pond, natives of Ann Arbor and graduates of the University of Michigan. Erected in 1905, the three-and-a-half-story rectangular red brick building is reminiscent of a Renaissance/Baroque palace in its grand scale and architectural detail. Washtenaw County carefully rehabilitated the exterior façade, with special care given to the original windows.

Awarded to: Avalon Housing

For: 1217 W. Huron - 1870s

Originally a farmstead, the property at 1217 W. Huron Street was incorporated into the city limits by 1887 and owned by Benjamin Crookston, president of Peninsular Soap

Company. In 1935, while it served as home to Esther and Arthur Dunham, it earned the distinction of being the founding place of the local Friends (Quakers). (There was a Friends' Meeting House on North State Street in the 1860s.) After World War II, it was divided into apartments. Avalon Housing bought the property in 1996 and spent two years rehabilitating it inside and out to serve as affordable housing.

Awarded to: James & Marjorie Wessinger

For: 419 E. Kingsley, Mrs. Gladys Lambert House - 1928

This English Cottage style house was built in 1928, and is first listed as the home of Mrs. Gladys Lambert. The current owners removed the siding siding to reveal the original cut shingle exterior, greatly enhancing the appearance of the house, which is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District.

Awarded to: Bill Zirinsky & Ruth Schekter

For: 114 S. Main, Crazy Wisdom Tea Room – 1860s

The owners of Crazy Wisdom Bookstore and Tea Room completely transformed this 1860s building. The exterior façade was rejuvenated, which involved replacing a non-original storefront with recessed wood and glass in a more traditional manner, relating to the triple windows at the second and attic floors. Seventy years of paint were removed from the natural brick, “literally stripping away the recent past to reveal the building’s original character.” Transoms were made operable again. The second floor’s ornate tin ceiling and original pine floor were made the focal point of the upstairs Tea Room.

“A decorative painting consultant extensively cleaned the ceiling and repainted damaged areas. The cornice and escutcheons—the decorative panels surrounding the tearoom’s three chandeliers—were repainted a salmon color to complement the muted gold of the ceiling’s main panels. The interior finishes of the building were gutted, stripping away the commonplace drywall and acoustical ceiling panels. Now, antique furniture, pine floors and finely crafted wood casework, bookcases far beyond your basic bookshelf, bring the interior to life.” A sumptuous, paneled stairway of mahogany draws patrons to the second floor, which had been vacant for almost seventy years. In addition, all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in the building were completely replaced, bringing the building into the 21st century.

The renovation has also earned a Huron Valley Chapter of the AIA Honor Award. Architect for the project was Lorri Sipes of SmithGroup, Inc., and work was completed by Phoenix Construction.

[The quoted sections are from an article entitled, “Beyond Conventional Wisdom—Crazy Wisdom Bookstore’s New Facility Feeds Body and Soul,” from May 2001 Construction Association of Michigan Magazine.]

Special Merit Awards

Awarded to: Cathleen Connell

For: 445 S. Fourth Ave., George and Emma Wahr House - 1890

Bookseller George Wahr built this, his first Ann Arbor house, in 1890. Detailed with high-style Queen Anne elements, such as carved verge boards, sunbursts, dormers, bays and gables, the house is an excellent example of the style. The home received a major renovation in the early 1980s, and the present owners are receiving a special merit award for a spectacular, historically correct paint scheme.

Preservation Project of the Year

Awarded to: The University of Michigan

For: 947 Wall St., Nathan Burnham House - 1837

Nathan Burnham built his home at 947 Wall Street in the old “New England” style with a high brick foundation, double fireplaces at each end, four rooms on each floor, and central hallway. After the building has been used as a physician’s office for many years, the University of Michigan bought the property to use as a parking lot. The brick building, including its separate smokehouse, was then moved to 1610 Washington Heights, where it has been restored and now serves as the Reader Learning Center for the Nichols Arboretum.

Preservationist of the Year

Awarded To: Ray Detter

For: 120 N. Division Street

In 1988, a group of citizens interested in promoting local history began a project to research, design, and install historical markers in downtown Ann Arbor. Working with the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation, and the Downtown Development Authority and staff, as well as architects, contractors, donors, and volunteers through all those years, Ray has been the single-most important person holding the project together. His work and the city’s heritage were well rewarded in June 1999 with the installation of the first exhibit at Courthouse Square. Not one to rest on his well-deserved laurels, Ray continues to direct the project, which celebrated the installation of 9 more exhibits in November 2001.