Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

Official publication of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, featuring articles and reminiscences of the people and places in the Ypsilanti area

SPRING 2025

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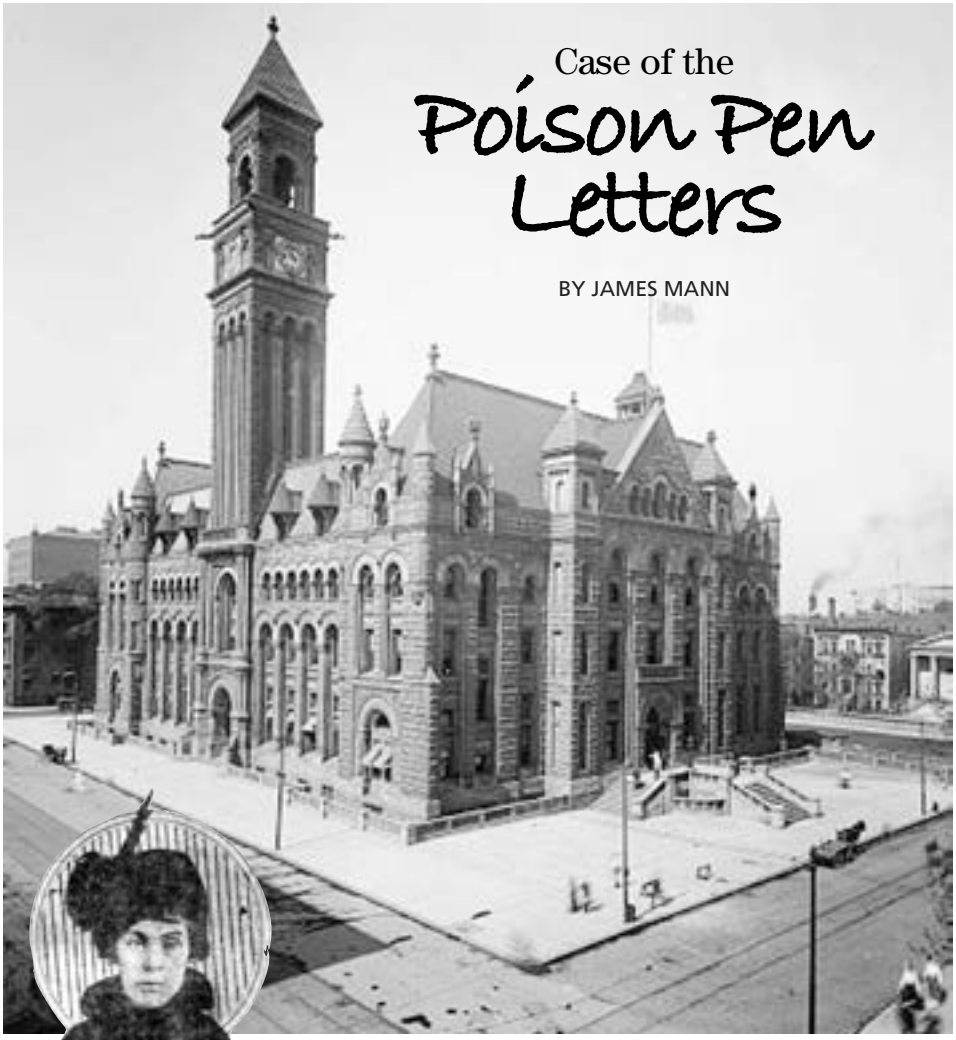
Society Briefs

The Ypsilanti Historical Museum is a museum of local history which is presented as an 1860 home. The Museum and Rudisill, Fletcher-White Archives are organized and operated by the Ypsilanti Historical Society. We are all volunteers and our membership is open to everyone, including non-city residents.

www.ypsihistory.org

Case of the Poison Pen Letters

BY JAMES MANN



The trial of Mrs. Margaret McCready was held in the Federal Building in Detroit. The building was demolished in 1931. *(Courtesy of the Library of Congress)*

The accused Mrs. Margaret McCready. *(From The Detroit Free Press of Friday, December 11, 1914)*

On the morning of April 10, 1914, attorneys for Alvin E. Leas filed three lawsuits in the Washtenaw County Circuit Court. The first was against James Clark, a baker in Ypsilanti, for alleged slander for $10,000 in damages. The second was against William C. Fisk for alleged slander for $10,000 in damages. The third suit was against Clark and Fisk for alleged conspiracy to undermine Leas's reputation in the Ypsilanti community. Clark, it was learned, contemplated filing a suit for recovery of $20,000 from Leas for slander, that Leas is alleged to have uttered to the damage of Clark.

As the *Ann Arbor Daily Times* News of the same date noted, should any of these cases be *"aired in open court, standing room would be at a premium. The three suits involve the essence of some of the frisky gossip that has kept the Normal's city's tongues wagging for many moons."* The trouble began two

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Ypsilanti GLEANINGS is published 4 times a year by the **Ypsilanti Historical Society**, 220 N. Huron Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

BY BILL NICKELS

Europeans arrived in what is now Ypsilanti around the end of George Washington's terms as president. What became Ypsilanti, quickly caught up with American history and paralleled the problems and growth of the United States. Our rich history has intrigued many, some took the time to write about it.

Pastor Harvey Colburn wrote *The Story of Ypsilanti* for Ypsilanti's Centennial Celebration in 1923. Milton Barnes wrote Ypsilanti history columns for the Ypsilanti Press from the 1950s until the early 1980s. He was a regular on Bud Guest's *Sunny Side of the Street* show broadcast on WJR, Detroit. After Milton died in 1985, we did not have a writer of Ypsilanti history for many years.

James Mann is now well known as Ypsilanti's history writer. He informed the Board of Trustees in December that he was retiring from the Ypsilanti Historical Society (YHS) as a Saturday and Sunday Archives volunteer and opening and closing the museum for weekend docents. He did this as an unpaid volunteer for more years than James or I could exactly remember. He is well known as an Ypsilanti history writer, but few of us really know James, it is not something he talks about.

He graduated from Detroit's Cody High School in 1975 and attended Wayne County Community College (WCCC) until 1977. While deciding on a college to transfer to, he fortuitously met EMU's professor Jack Harris who visited WCCC on a recruiting mission. His WCCC counselor encouraged him to attend Western Michigan University. James' dad said, *"I am not driving to Kalamazoo!"* James arrived in Ypsilanti to attend EMU in 1977.

James Mann in the Ypsilanti Historical Society archives.

James lived in the student dormitories for his three years while attending EMU. He worked at the library's circulation desk and majored in English language and literature. Fortuitously a second time, he was a student in Jack Harris' literature class, graduating in 1980. It was during his student years that walking was his only way of getting around. Many of us know that continues to be his method of transportation.

After graduation in 1980, James rented an apartment on Pearl Street. Fortuitously a third time, it was next to EMU professor Jack Harris' house. Jack was president of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation (YHF) and invited James to their next meeting. That led to a second invitation to write and submit Ypsilanti history articles to be added to the *Heritage News*, YHF's publication.

While writing for the *Heritage News*, to do research, he visited the Ypsilanti Historical Society's Archives in 1992. It was there he met YHS members Doris Milliman and Billie Zolkosky. It was also there that he became intrigued with Ypsilanti's cyclone of 1893 that went down and destroyed much of Michigan Avenue. That led him to be interested in Ypsilanti's Opera House which was on Michigan Avenue. As James describes it, interest in the Opera House led to interest in Michigan Avenue, which led to interest in something else…which eventually led to something else he researches today.

While searching through old Ypsilanti newspapers in the Archives, James printed stories he thought were interesting. While shopping at the Farmer's Market, James met Market Manager Gary Urick. Gary learned of the stories James found and suggested that he meet Tom Dodd, editor of the *Depot Town Rag*, a Depot Town publication. James shared the stories with Tom, and

he reprinted them in the *Depot Town Rag*. Tom and James then co-authored *Our Heritage: Down by the Depot in Ypsilanti*, available for purchase in our Archives.

Noticing James'writings, Judy Busack of the Ypsilanti Courier newspaper asked if he would be interested in writing a monthly column on local history for the Ypsilanti Courier newspaper. James says he *"carefully considered the question for a full half-second before saying yes."* Instead of a monthly column, it changed to a weekly column before the first story was published for the April 1,1999 issue. That was the first time James made money for his writings.

A new sign was installed in front of the museum in early March

One of the stories James wrote for the Courier was about a hunter who accidentally shot himself and froze to death before he got help. As the author, the editor placed Jame's photograph in the upper left-hand corner of the front page next to the tease line *"Tragic Death Sad loss for Local History."* The actual story was on page 7. Connecting Jame's picture with the tease line, Mark and Judy Fisher were reported to ask, *"My God, what happened, I knew him?"* James now tells others, *"My death made the front page of the paper, how many people can say that?"*

The Ypsilanti Courier was produced by local people that were previously employed by the then defunct Ypsilanti Press. They sold the Courier to a corporation which changed the nature of the publication. The original Ypsilanti Courier locals urged James to leave the Courier and start writing for the Ann Arbor News – Ypsilanti Edition. He mentioned the move to Emma Jackson of the Ann Arbor News; she made it happen. He was again compensated for writing one article per week; that went on for a couple of years. Eventually the paper edition of the Ann Arbor News – Ypsilanti Edition morphed into an internet newspaper with James writing a column once per month. That too ended, leaving Ypsilanti without a local newspaper.

After Al Rudisill became the Ypsilanti Historical Society president in 2004, he moved and updated the Archives to the basement of 220 North Huron. Sometime later, Mae and Joe Butko volunteered to pay for a theater-like television with electronics to do almost everything. With this very nice equipment, Al wanted it used. With an interest in movies, James used the opportunity to initiate Friday Night at the Movies in the Archives. He uses movies from the Internet Archives that are in the public domain to host movies Friday evenings from September to May. The events are free of charge and even free popcorn is provided. The series will conclude later this spring.

Over the years, James has written and published seven books; four of them about Ypsilanti, two about Washtenaw County, and one about Ann Arbor. Most are available for sale in our Archives. His latest book is titled *The Torch Murders*. In 1931, the murders terrorized Ypsilanti and Southeastern Michigan. and will be available for purchase in the Archives this spring.

James started writing for the Gleanings when then President Al Rudisill updated the Gleanings in 2005 to its present form. That's twenty years, four issues per year, about two articles per issue equals one hundred sixty articles about Ypsilanti's rich history. THANK YOU, JAMES! Although he is retiring from his weekend volunteer work, James informed Al that he will continue writing for the Gleanings.

years before, in 1912, when someone began sending anonymous letters to prominent families in Ypsilanti, accusing the husband or wife of infidelity. Over the next two years, some one hundred letters are reported to have been received. *"The only places where these letters were discussed for a long time,"* noted the account, *"were the barber shop, grocery store and other places—where Ypsilanti society folks would meet."*

At first the letters were given little credence, but as the letters continued into 1913, husbands began to investigate the conduct of their wife's and wives began to investigate the conduct of their husbands. The letters, it is reported, caused the break-up of several families. The way the letters were written made it appear that a man was the author. The author of the letters accused a man named Lease as the one seeing their wife's affections. In the letters to the husbands, the author harangued the man for not doing something to stop Lease from running around with their wife. The letters clearly implicated Alvin Leas as the man, but in the letters his name was spelled Lease.

An excerpt from one letter to a husband reads: *"I see he still carries letters to Lease for your wife, for he told a fellow what a fool your wife is. I would be ashamed to ride down the street with that woman you call wife. The other day they rode by the barn six times, and you went by as they came down Michigan Avenue, for I stood on the corner and watched it all. I have written his wife and told her all about it. I don't try to watch Lease for he has so many that you can't keep up."* The wife of the man also received a letter, which read in part: *"Well, I see you were out with Lease Saturday night. I followed you and seen him and you go out together. You are a fool to run with him when I would give you anything if you would only drop that little rooster. He has a widow that he ran with for a year or more. I don't know how he got her, she is a – of a swell girl. I don't care if she does go out with him, but he has got to let you alone. He has many. Once a normal school girl, I don't remember her name, then a widow on Hawkins street. The night he met you after the storm I followed you right into the park."*

The letters accused the wife of being out with a man named Lease and gave details of their actions. One day James Clark was publicly accused of being the author of the letters. Clark began his own investigation and even submitted samples of the letters to a handwriting expert in New York. *"One day,"* continued the account, *"it is alleged, Leas heard that he was being charged with the authorship of all of these havoc raising missives. He claims that he investigated the rumor and charges that Clark had prevailed upon a prominent society woman to accuse him as the author of these letters. One of the features in connection with the accusations and recriminations, is an alleged trip on the part of Fisk to New York where he is charged with having consulted a handwriting expert, who he claimed had said that Leas was the author of the trouble breeding epistles."*

On Friday, April 10, 1914, *The Detroit News* published an extract from one of the letters. It read: *"I would watch my wife if I were you. She has been running around with – and I know positively that their conduct was not as it should be. I saw them at — hotel and they need watching."*

The letters contained material considered obscene, which is illegal, under the Comstock Law of 1873, when sent through the U.S. Mail. Because the letters were sent and received through the U.S. Mail, the case came under federal authority. Inspectors for the U.S. Postal Service had been investigating for some time. In fact, a Federal Grand Jury in Detroit was hearing evidence even as the lawsuits were being filed.

On Thursday, June 18, 1914, United States Marshal John Trollope arrived in Ypsilanti to serve an indictment on Mrs. Margaret McCready charging her with being the author of the letters. A trained nurse, Mrs. McCready had been for a time employed in the home of James Clark, to care for his wife, who was dying. The letters began to arrive sometime after the death of Mrs. Clark. *"Some time after the death of Mrs. Clark,"* reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press*, *"Mrs. McCready, the nurse, went to California. The night she left, a poison pen letter was mailed in Ypsilanti, and from that time until her return from California no more were received. Coincident with her return from the west letters again began to be received."*

Mrs. McCready was arraigned before Federal Judge Tuttle on an indictment charging her with mailing *"obscene, lewd and lascivious"* letters. She entered a plea of not guilty. Bond was set at $1,000, which she posted, and returned to Ypsilanti by afternoon. *"They are,"* said District Attorney Webster, *"without exception, the worst letters that have ever come into my hands."*

"There are two sides to this case," declared Mrs. McCready on Friday, June 19, 1914, *"but at present I have nothing to say."* At this time Mrs. McCready was living with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harper at 210 South Huron Street, which Mr. Harper had built seventeen years before. Eight weeks before Mr. Harper, a builder, had fallen from a roof and injured his back, after which he was unable to walk. His daughter, Mrs. McCready, stayed at the family home to care for him. *"It is one of those homelike houses with a wide porch, on which sit potted plants. The white paint glistens through green old trees,"* noted *The Detroit News.* When a reporter for *The Detroit News* called at the house, Mrs. McCready remained on the second floor so as not to speak to him. Her father, however, was willing to speak about the case. *"My daughter will not only prove her innocence,"* he said, *"but will make those responsible for her arrest squirm. We have the evidence, and we will use it. She is not guilty and this whole thing is an outrage: it's spite work on the part of this man Clark. He will be sorry before we get through with him. We don't want to talk about this because we don't want to expose our line of defense, but we have the evidence: not only*

the evidence to clear her, but to implicate somebody else."

The trial of Mrs. Margaret McCready opened on Monday, December 7, 1914, in the Federal Court in Detroit. Entering the building through the main entrance on Fort Street, Mrs. McCready and the others passed under the dome ceiling of marble mosaic. Then made their way up the marble stairs to the third floor where the courtroom was. *"The court was crowded,"* reported *The Detroit News* of Monday, December 7, 1914, *"several score coming from Ypsilanti, and many others, having no connection with the case, jamming their way in, impelled by curiosity aroused by the sensational developments hinted at."*

"Garbed in a suit of velvet," reported *The Detroit Free Press*, *"cut in the latest mode, and wearing a stylish turban trimmed with feathers, she swept into the court and took place beside her attorney, Frank H. Watson. She was neatly booted and gloved and carried a large fur muff."* Mrs. McCready watched from her seat at the defense table as spectators scrambled for seats. She was reported to have an expression of a half sneer and half smile playing about her face. The first witness called to the stand was Mrs. Frances Killian, who identified some letters sent to her in August of 1912. At that time, she said, she did not know Mrs. McCready.

One letter was read, opening with the line, *"I seen you with Leas last Saturday night."* This was followed by actuations and threats, including, to *"give you acid in your face if you don't stop going out with him."* Mrs. Killian said she did not know Leas. *"Do you know James Clark?" "Yes." "Did Clark ever make any advances to you?" "He sent word to me that if I were a widow, he would pursue me: he would do anything for me, for he loved me dearly."* This was stricken from the record. *"Louis Killian, the husband, followed his wife to the stand. He came from amid the crowd of spectators while his wife entered the court from an adjoining room. They did not recognize each other in any way. Mr. Killian testified to receiving letters in August 1912." "I see Leas still runs around with your wife,"* stated one letter. *"You are a fool to live with such a girl."* Killian testified that in several of the letters he received, he was advised to kill Leas.

The last witness for the day was Alvin Leas, who said he had received letters as well. One of the letters stated, *"I will kill you yet — I wish Killian would kill you."* The trial was adjourned until Tuesday morning. *"At the close of the opening session of the trial, Mrs. McCready tossed her head in defiance at District Attorney Webster and then turned to chat coolly with her attorney."*

The first witness called was Mrs. Eva Winegar, who said she had been a friend of Mrs. McCready. *"According to Mrs. Winegar's own testimony this morning, she deceived her husband and carried on high jinks with Mrs. McCready and met men friends. She said in one of her letters her husband had forgiven her and had acted 'perfectly lovely,' about it all."* The admission including admitting to having carried on an affair with another man. Her friendship with Mrs. McCready ended, as she became suspicious of Mrs. McCready as the author of the letters.

Mrs. Louis Killiam, witness at the trial of Mrs. McCready.
(From The Detroit Free Press of Wednesday, December 9, 1914)

Mrs. Winegar told the court of carriage rides with Leas, Mrs. McCready, and a man named Lyons, who was from Detroit. She said nothing improper had taken place on these carriage rides. She did tell of seeing Mrs. McCready and Leas in a bedroom at the McCready home on one occasion. The next witness called was James Clark, the so-called *"pursued"* in the case. He testified with a gay smile on his face. As Clark testified Mrs. Winegar, and her husband exchanged smiles with each other and with Clark. *"Clark"* noted *The Detroit News*, *"wore several rings on one hand, a dimple in his left cheek and a necktie that contained all that riot of color which was first revealed to Noah through the medium of the rainbow. These three appurtenances gave the lie to*

Artist drawing of Mrs. Louis Killiam, Mrs. McCready, and Alvin Leas.
(From The Detroit News of Tuesday, December 8, 1914

the masculinity which characterized his every other feature. Short, stocky, florid of face, black pompadour — all the men mixed up in this case seem to favor the closely cropped head and bristling pompadour — black pompadour slightly tinged with gray, black eyes and heavy jaw, Clark looks like a man of strength."

As Clark testified, Mrs. McCready held her face in her hands and wept. *"Clark testified that the letters he attributes to Mrs. McCready appeared to have been by the same person as the author of the anonymous communications. This led him to gather up the anonymous letters written to other residents of Ypsilanti, and to take them to the handwriting expert,"* reported *The Detroit Free Press*. Clark answered questions with a smirk and joked with the lawyers. When asked if he had told Louis Killian he could get proof of his wife's behavior, Clark replied, *"I was too smart for that."* He said he could not prove anything but said he did not believe the letters contained the truth. He also said he had never pursued Mrs. Killian. He first came to know Mrs. McCready when she was employed to care for his wife when she was ill. Clark said he was never familiar with Mrs. McCready but did call on her several times. *"She used to lay for me in front of Mrs. Winegar's,"* said Clark, *"and ask me to take her home. I did this several times and also called on her."*

"In my opinion," testified Mr. Osburn, *"it would have taken a person of incredible skill to write as many letters as are in this case in the handwriting of another person and have done so nearly like the person's own writing. Some of the letters were so well disguised that I would not say that I have an opinion that the same person wrote them,"* said Osburn. *"The series, as a whole, makes my opinion firm that the author wrote the letters which I used as my standard."* The standard letters had been supplied by Clark and identified as having been written by Mrs. McCready. *"Osburn admitted that he had received but a single page of the anonymous correspondence and a single page of Mrs. McCready's known handwriting, he could not have traced the resemblance definitely enough to swear that the two specimens were written by the same hand,"* reported *The Detroit Times.*

"Osburn prefaced all his statements as to the identity of the handwritings by saying 'in my opinion' or 'my investigations have led me to the positive conclusion. "I am a dangerous man—I will spoil your looks." This statement from one of the obscene letters led Mr. Osburn to conclude the author of the letters was a woman. At one recess Mrs. McCready threw herself into the arms of Mrs. Killian. At the end of the day, she was described as finished. Mr. Osburn would continue his testimony the next day. Under question by the defense Osburn admitted being first retained by James Clark and was still in the employment of Clark when he testified before the grand jury. He said he was employed by the government after he was represented by James Clark.

"Now," Osburn was asked, *"you say that in your judgment both the anonymous and standard writings were written by the same person, yet you say you don't arrive at your conclusion by study of individual letters?" "Oh, I studied the habits of the writer and took enough examples to avoid taking any that might be mere accidents." "Are most of them written with pen or pencil?" "Pencil."* When the testimony of Osburn was concluded the prosecution rested its case.

The defense opened its case by calling Herbert H. Harper, the brother of Mrs. McCready to the stand. When a letter was posted on February 20, 1913, Mrs. McCready was too ill even to lift a pen. He told the court that Mr. Fish called on him at his home the day after his sister returned from California. *"My sister came back from the west on April 1,"* testified Dr. Harper. *"The next day Fisk called me on the phone and asked to see me and my sister. The interview took place in my home with my wife, my sister and myself present. He told me that it was a matter that concerned my sister greatly, and that he had a document from Mr. Osburn, the handwriting expert, saying that my sister's handwriting and that in the anonymous letters was identical. He said that Clark had paid Osburn $100 for his work. Fisk told me that he had stolen the document from Clark's attorneys. Then Clark came in. He said my sister had written the letters, but Leas had made her do it. He said that Leas had gone around to saloons and barber shops talking about him and that he was going to 'show him up'*

and 'get' him. He said he had spent $1,000 and would spend $10,000 for the purpose." "Why don't you settle it with Leas?' I said. *"Then it will all be right!" 'No' said Clark. "It has gone too far now but if your sister will make an affidavit that Leas made her write them, I have influence enough in certain quarters to see that she is not punished." "I told Clark that my sister had not written the letters and could not possibly have done so."*

Clark then spoke about Mr. Osburn and told me what a wonderful man he was. He said that he could tell a person's handwriting by looking at a straight line the person had made. I told him that if he knew anything about the letters, he had better straighten it out with Leas; that my sister had had nothing to do with them. He then said that Leas had told others that he had written them and that he was going to 'get' him. *'If your sister will get some lawyer and make an affidavit that Leas made her write these letters, I will fix it up so that she will not be harmed.'* Clark told me. I said *"Clark your proposition is damnable, and you had better leave my house at once."*

The testimony of Harper was later confirmed by his wife, who said she had been standing at the head of the stairs and heard every word. When Mrs. Margaret Harper, the mother of Mrs. McCready was questioned; she said no such envelopes or papers as that used to write the letters were ever in her house. Dr. George Hull, the family physician, was called to the stand. He was asked about the time when Mrs. McCready was under treatment for illness in early 1913. *"What was the nature of the illness?"* asked the district attorney. *"Was Mrs. McCready in a delicate condition?" "She was not in a delicate condition,"* answered Dr. Hull. *"She suffered a nervous breakdown."*

The first witness of the day was called to the stand. This was Dr. Herbert Harper for cross-examination. District Attorney Webster asked if he could identify the handwriting on several letters said to have been written by his sister. He would not commit himself, but said the anonymous letters were not written by his sister. This he knew by the content of the letters. After a few questions he was dismissed.

The next witness called to the stand was James Clark. His smile and dimple, noted The Detroit News, were missing for the first time. *"Did you tell Mrs. Killian that all you wanted to do was get Leas and that if she would start litigation against him, you would pay all the expenses?"* asked Watson. *"I don't recall any such conversation,"* his reply. "Will you say you didn't?" *"I'll state positively I didn't."* Now Watson asked about the meeting with Dr. Harper. *"How did you come to go there?" "I was called on the telephone." "What conversation,"* asked Watson, *"took place there, Mr. Clark." "Well,"* answered Clark, "Dr. Harper said, *'What is there about this, Jim?'* I said *"Doc, I have been accused of writing anonymous letters, and I have employed detectives and got copies of the handwriting and have sent them to an expert. I have had an affidavit from him, and it seems to point strongly to your sister.' I was talking quite loud and he told me to talk low, that he didn't want his wife to hear. I then said, 'Doctor it is not a nice thing to have this said about me and if your sister knows about the writing of these letters and tell what she knows it will help all parties concerned.' He turned around to his sister and said: 'Margaret have you anything to say?' She answered: 'I did write those letters to Jim.' She didn't have much more to say. The conversation lulled for a minute and then Dr. Harper said he wanted to know if we couldn't get together and hush the thing up. I said that was my desire. I went to all these parties as a brother and friend to see if I couldn't find out where the information came from that I was accused of writing the letters, but I couldn't seem to learn."*

Now Webster asked, *"Did you mention anyone's name?" "No sir,"* answered Clark, *"I was careful not to."* The defense now called Mrs. Robert Killian, the mother-in-law of Mrs. Lewis Killian to testify. *"Mrs. Killian, you heard the question asked of Mr. Clark—you may tell the jury whether or not you had such a talk with Mr. Clark and repeat, if you can, what he said on that occasion."* Mrs. Killian responded: *"He said if my son would bring suit against Leas for damages that he, Mr. Clark, would pay all the expenses."*

Mrs. Louise Harper, the wife of Dr. Harper, was now called to the stand. She gave her version of the meeting between her brother and James Clark. *"Mr. Fisk called Mr. Clark by telephone. He came. He said, 'Mrs. McCready wrote these letters. There is no doubt she wrote them. Here's a document. I paid the expert $100 for this affidavit. If you were to draw a straight-line Mr. Osburn could tell who drew it. He could tell who used a typewriter if it were type written.' He said 'she wrote them all right, but she was forced to do it by Leas. If you'll make an affidavit that he wrote them, I'll use my money and influence to see that you aren't punished."* District Attorney Webster was unable to shake her testimony.

The Detroit News called Mrs. Harper the best witness produced by the defense. At 10:15 am Mrs. Margaret McCready was called to the stand to testify in her own defense. She approached the stand without assistance, but her face was described as *"pale as death."* Taking the oath, she then answered the formal procedural questions, name, place of residence, and so on. Her answers came in a low voice. Then her attorney Watson asked, *"Your father is an invalid, isn't he?"* Mrs. McCready replied, *"Yes." "When was he injured?"* At this Mrs. McCready broke down and began to weep violently. At this Judge Tuttle ordered a ten-minute recess. Then leaning over Mrs. McCready, he tried to comfort her. He advised her that above everything else, she must maintain her self-possession.

At the end of the recess Mrs. McCready resumed her seat on the stand, having regained her self composure. As questioning resumed, her attorney Mr. Watson Held in his hand the eight letters on which the indictment against her was returned. He showed one of the letters to her. *"The letter postmarked August 27, 1912, addressed to Mrs. Frances Killian; State whether you wrote that letter."* Mrs. McCready examined the letter and answered, *"No sir, I did not." "Did you mail it, or caused it to be mailed, or did you know anything about it?" "No sir,"* Mrs. McCready was made to examine each of the letters in question and asked the same questions each time. She gave the same answers every time. *"Did you ever see any of these letters until I showed them to you today?" "No, sir."* The witness was handed a letter and was asked to examine it. Counsel explained that it was one of those designated as a 'standard' letter by A. S. Osburn, the handwriting expert and used by him in reaching his conclusion that the anonymous letters were penned by Mrs. McCready, explained *The Detroit Times*. *"What do you say as to this letter?"* asked Mr. Watson. *"I think it has been changed,"* replied Mrs. McCready. *"Some of the words are different. That is not the paper I wrote the letter on, either. I wrote the letter on my brother's stationery."* Now Mr. Watson showed Mrs. McCready a second letter. *"What do you say about this one?" "I wrote this one, but not the other. That one was copied from one I wrote." "I want to read this letter to the jury,"* said Mr. Watson *"The letter,"* noted *The Detroit Times*, *"which was read, was one that the witness said she had written to James Clark. It referred to alleged improper conduct with Clark while she was nursing his wife and reproached him for having told her to take poison. The letter stated that the writer had reports that since he had refused to marry her, he had circulated scandalous reports about her."*

The Detroit News published what it called the printable portions of the letter Mrs. McCready said were true. The letter reads as follows: *"Jim...How dare you lie and say you had nothing to do with me, when you know you took advantage of me when I left Bay City—and because I would not go and keep house for you, you turned me down. Then that wasn't all...You told me to take poison. Then you lied—and told him what you did...Then you called Mrs. Jarvis up and told her I didn't bear a good name and was meeting a man there in Ann Arbor. I presume you didn't think we knew who it was, but I did...You cannot deny what I wrote, for every word is the truth, and there isn't one person in Ypsilanti who wouldn't believe me before you, for you haven't a clear record. Not even your partner in business would say a good word for you. How you ever had the nerve to join the church is more than I can say, after you were kicked out once. After you got your wife in trouble and you told me that yourself, I wrote Rev.--and told him all. He knows what you are anyhow, for your wife told him...What a cur you are to use me after all I have done for you and your children, for I surely did try to do all I could, and it was bad enough to turn me down without going around talking about me. It was all for the children. I haven't done anything, but I know they will have to know for I have stood all I can. I will bring a breach of promise suit against you. I know just how you stand, and you can't change anything, for I have a lawyer looking into it now. I am coming back in three or four weeks to see it through. You cannot run me out of town, as you told a party you had. When I come back, I will tell Sarah L. what you said about her and see if she is the kind of woman to stand for it. When I get through, I guess you will wish you had never been born, for no man can abuse me as you did and get off. ...I admit I did love you and think what an escape I had. Your wife told me you were the meanest man on earth... All your neighbors can tell how good you were to her. I am*

*now not surprised that you lied to others. The friends of mine that you talk about are people that couldn't be classed with any one so low as you. There is one of the men that works in your shop that saw you, loving me the day your wife died, for he told me so and since you have used me so mean he said he would prove it if I wanted him to... Every time I hear anyone pray, I think I hear you saying the Lord's prayer or repeating the psalm, 'The Lord is my shepherd.' And after the breath was just out of your wife's body you told me you had never loved her, anyhow: that you were glad she was dead. You killed her and tried to get me, so I will live just to see you suffer. So, beware... And you told friends of Eva's in Detroit what kind of a girl she was. You see we know more than you think we do. I also told Eva what you said about her and there are some other people I will tell what you said about them when I get back. You did not expect I would tell, and I wouldn't have if you hadn't said what you did about me...You also wrote several men's wife's, saying Eva and I were going with their husbands, but those wives knew better. I should think you would be ashamed to use me as you did. You told some people that I had to get out of town. You cannot run me out, for I will be back soon...I am not through with you yet. Show this letter if you like to everyone, for every word I have written is the truth and you know it and cannot deny it, unless you lie, and you are pretty good at that I have found out. But I have proof of what you are and will be so glad if you are kicked out of the Masons. Every word you told me Frank said was a lie for a friend of mine asked him. The best thing you can do is to run your old Ford into the river. Ypsilanti will be better off without you. How did I ever love such an ignorant, low-down man as you, that eats with his knife. I must have been crazy—I really don't think I did love you and don't love you now and am mighty glad I escaped having to live with you***I should think the ghost of your wife would be with you all the time for the way you used her. I cannot go to church and pray like you for I am not a hypocrite—etc.—*

"Throughout the reading of the letter," reported *The Detroit News*, *"the complacent, smiling Clark hung his head and gazed steadily at the carpet. In one corner of the room sat her loyal brother, Dr Harper, weeping piteously. Clark's face blanched when the portion of the letter referring to his religious professions was read."* Osburn, the handwriting expert, said afterward: *"Well, that doesn't controvert my testimony that the letters were written by the same hand. They may have to pay me $100 a day again to find out of what she says is true—if the letters really have been changed." "Mrs. McCready,"* asked Watson, *"those charges were true, weren't they?" Yes, sir."*

A portion of the letter, not included above, referred to an alleged attack on Mrs. McCready by Clark, and that he later advised to her to *"go home and take poison." "Did you follow his advice?" "Yes, sir, I took laudanum." "What was the effect?" "I took too much, and it made me vomit and made me sick, but didn't kill me." "Did this lead to your nervous breakdown?" "Yes, it was the cause." "Did you ever write an anonymous letter?"* asked Mr. Watson. *"Never in all my life."*

Now Mr. Watson showed another letter to Mrs. McCready, this one sent anonymously to Mrs. Killian. He asked her if the language was hers. *"It is not,"* she replied. *"Did you ever use such language in your life." "No, sir."* At noon Judge Tuttle recessed the court until 1:30 pm. *"After the jury had been excused,"* reported The Detroit News, *"Mrs. McCready, who apparently had held herself pretty well in hand during her testimony—broke into violent and hysterical weeping."* That afternoon District Attorney Webster sneered as he cross-examined Mrs. McCready but was unable to shake her story. Suddenly he dismissed her, examined one more witness, and then rested his case. Judge Tuttle adjourned the hearing until Friday morning, to give attorneys time to prepare their closing arguments.

The next morning the attorneys made their closing arguments and Judge Tuttle charged the jury speaking for about 30 minutes. Then, at 12:43 p.m. the members of the jury retired to begin to deliberate their verdict. As the jury withdrew, Mrs. McCready and her brother, Dr. Harper, sobbed. *"The accused woman,"* noted *The Detroit Times*, *"had collapsed soon after the jury was charged, and was taken into an anteroom, where a physician attended her, throughout the time the jury was considering her fate. When word came that a verdict had been reached, Mrs. McCready was half carried into the court room by her brother, Dr. Herber Harper, of Ypsilanti".*

"Mrs. McCready," continued the account, *"sank into her chair with her pallid face turned toward the men who had decided whether she was guilty or innocent. Then her head sank into her arms, and she moaned. When the usual formalities had been gone through, and the foreman's words, 'Not Guilty,' were spoken in loud tones, cheers and joyous sobs arose in noisy unison. Judge Tuttle and court attendants promptly hammered for order and choked off any further demonstration. Dr. Harper, who had sat by his sister throughout the trail, when he heard the words 'Not Guilty', said 'Oh,' and then twisted his arm about his sister's neck."*

After hearing the verdict, Mrs. McCready sobbed for a moment and then fainted. She was revived. Then, just over a half an hour later, she was on her way back to Ypsilanti.

Sources: *The Ann Arbor Daily Times; News Detroit Free Press; Detroit News Detroit Times; The Daily Ypsilanti Press*

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

Elijah McCoy – The Real McCoy

BY JANICE ANSCHUETZ

The Starkweather farm on Huron River Drive in Ypsilanti where the McCoy family farmed and operated an Underground Railroad station.

Anyone enjoying or traveling through the small park in Ypsilanti at the southeast corner of Michigan Avenue and Adams Street will notice the Michigan Historic Site marker honoring Elijah McCoy who once lived in what was the village of Ypsilanti. He is famous for his engineering genius and filed 57 patents during his lifetime ranging from mechanical parts for machinery to a folding ironing board and a lawn sprinkler. His name lives on in various historical plaques throughout Michigan where his genius is recognized. I would like to briefly tell you about this man and his life.

Elijah McCoy

Elijah McCoy was a black man who was born to escaped slaves, George and Mildred McCoy, who were living on a 140-acre farm in Canada with nine children before moving to Ypsilanti where they defied Federal law and operated a station on the Underground Railroad. If you are interested in learning more about him, the late Ypsilanti historian Albert P. Marshall researched, wrote, and published a comprehensive biography "The Real McCoy of Ypsilanti" which is available in the Ypsilanti History Center Museum & Archives and there is a great deal of information on the internet about this famous engineer.

Elijah's life story really began on a tobacco plantation in Boone County, Kentucky, where his father George was born about 1816. George lived in a three-room house with his mother and grandparents not far from the "big house" of his master. One biographer claims that George's father was his white master but provides no evidence for this. Not only did George's master grow tobacco but he dried the leaves and operated a tobacco shop in nearby Louisville, where a few teenage boys from his plantation were taught to carefully roll the tobacco leaves into cigars. When he was about fourteen years old, George was selected to leave the back-breaking work in the tobacco fields in order to work in the shop. Better clothes were provided for George and he was allowed to ride a horse into Louisville each day to work in the shop while still living on the plantation. Soon the young man was promoted to a supervisor and trained other "rollers" on how to make a good cigar, which was the smoke of choice at the time since cigarettes were rarely smoked in the United States. With this promotion came a small stipend. Since his food, lodging and clothing were provided by his "master," he was allowed to save his money and as the amount grew so did George's dreams of freedom.

Once George turned 18 years old, he bravely approached his master to present him with the possibility of purchasing his freedom. An agreement was made that for the sum of $1,000 his master would provide him with his freedom papers. Part of the agreement was that George would continue to work

for him and receive a salary sufficient enough for George to live in town and supply for his own needs – food and clothing. The enthusiastic young man worked hard and within eighteen months was able to be a free man.

Now this was only one part of the young man's hopes and dreams. George had been courting a young slave girl, Mildred Goins, known as "Millie" on a nearby plantation and his next hope was to purchase her freedom too so that he could marry her. Attempting to negotiate a price for her freedom, George approached her master and the discussion did not go well. Not only did her owner refuse to sell her but he demanded that their courtship end and that George was no longer welcome on his plantation.

Not to be discouraged, George searched for other ways to make his dream of marrying Millie come true. He learned that there were men in Louisville who might be able to help them. George was told to go about his usual everyday business but be prepared to move fast when the time would come for Millie's escape. This occurred within weeks on a dark night and George and Millie were prepared for the flight. Millie had reservations about leaving her family behind and also not letting them know her plans but she didn't want to involve them in this illegal venture and face punishment. First, a single stranger met them and then led them down a path to the Ohio River where a small boat was hidden. They were rowed across the water into the free state of Ohio. A man with a large hat, a Quaker, met them and he led them into a town to a large house where a white woman welcomed them and served them hot tea and cookies. After a tasty meal George and Millie were led to separate bedrooms while arrangements were made for their freedom.

The Michigan Historic Site marker honoring the inventor Elijah McCoy in the library park on Michigan Ave. and Adams St. in Ypsilanti.

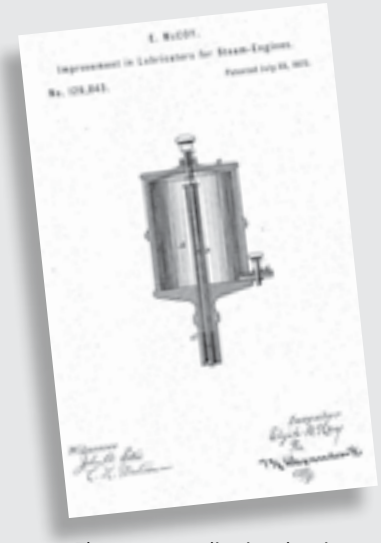
Four days later the young couple continued their journey through free states that did not allow slavery, Ohio and Michigan. George was a free man and had legal papers to prove it, but Millie was not. Not only could Millie be captured but George would be breaking the law by aiding her and perhaps lose his

freedom as well. Surely a legal notice of her escape, with an offer of a reward for stolen property, had already been published. At that time, slave catchers made their living by seeking out escaped slaves and returning them to their master's possession and collecting a reward. It was common for those runaways to be branded and then sold to rice plantations where they would literally be worked to death. George and Millie were warned to travel by night in order to reach Canada where slavery had been abolished and they would be welcomed and finally safe. They began their journey by being directed to the first of many Underground Railroad stations where they would be given detailed instructions on how to reach the next one until finally, they would be taken across the Detroit River to Canada and freedom. There are no facts, but only speculation that the couple traveled through Ypsilanti and possibly met or even stayed with Dr. Helen and Thomas McAndrews, who had emigrated from Scotland and came to Ypsilanti after the school which they were operating for black children in a northern state became too dangerous to continue this work.

It is believed, without documented proof, that Millie and George met several citizens who were abolitionists, including Mary Ann and John Starkweather who owned a great deal of land and may have suggested that the young couple stay and raise a tobacco crop. There is no evidence that this happened but it may have. However, they soon found not only refuge but welcome in a country where slave hunters were not allowed. At that time, Canada offered 40 acres of land to emigrants of any color or nationality and the McCoys were quickly married and settled into a small cottage on their own land. At this time, in 1837, Canada was involved in a sort of revolution called the "Rebel War" and George enlisted in the army. His reward for this service was 160 acres of farmland and a mule. After the war was won the Canadian army had a surplus of mules and so the government gifted a mule with each plot of land. The McCoys lived in an area near Colchester in Essex County, Ontario, which even to this day, has many descendants of Ypsilanti African Americans who went there to find freedom, especially after the Fugitive Slave Act became Federal Law around 1850. There was free public education for their children even though the schools were segregated and the nine McCoy children attended black schools. Elijah was their fourth child.

With all of these improvements to the lives of former slaves, Canada did not have a good climate for George to raise tobacco and then make cigars to sell. George, though not educated in the traditional way, had demonstrated that he was a good problem solver, farmer and business man. So, in 1849, the couple contacted the Starkweather family in Ypsilanti about obtaining farmland to grow tobacco. Soon, a section of the Starkweather property was devoted to growing various strains of tobacco that might be suited to the Michigan climate and George and his older children planted fields of tobacco and made cigars. He soon had not only a farm but a house behind the Starkweather home on Huron River Drive. He also had horses and two large carefully built wagons with false bottoms for transporting slaves who were seeking their own freedom in Canada. George's cigars were greatly appreciated for their fine quality and he and his oldest son William would nearly daily transport a full wagon of them and sometimes fugitive slaves into the downriver area south of Detroit where other conductors of the Underground Railroad would quickly find boat transport into Canada and freedom.

Two more children were born to the large McCoy fami-



The patent application drawing of the lubricating cup which made Elijah McCoy famous.

The Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional United States Patent and Trademark Office located in the Stroh Building on Detroit's Riverfront.

The George and Mildred McCoy homestead in Canada where the McCoy family lived before moving to Ypsilanti.

ly when they moved from Canada, making eleven in total. Meanwhile, Elijah attended the free and integrated school in Ypsilanti. He graduated in 1859 at the age of 15 and was considered not only an excellent student but something of a genius. George and Millie had no formal education, but they did all that they could to encourage Elijah to obtain his dream of becoming a mechanical engineer. The common belief, though I have not found evidence of it, is that fellow Ypsilanti conductors on the Underground Railroad, Dr. Helen McAndrew and her husband Thomas may have helped with the difficulty of finding an engineering school for a young black man in the United States, especially a man as deserving as Elijah was. The couple were from Scotland and it was there, in Edinburgh, that Elijah obtained the required training to become an engineer in the railroad industry. There has been speculation, but no proof, that the McAndrews helped pay for Elijah's expenses and education. Another biographer of Elijah speculates that George was informed by men from Scotland that he met while fighting for Canada that black men were welcome in colleges in Scotland. In countless biographies it states that Elijah attended the University of Edinburgh but further research shows that he was never a student there but it seems he was in an apprentice-type program where room and board were exchanged for his labor while he learned to become an engineer. The end result was a degree in mechanical engineering.

At any rate, Elijah returned with credentials in hand from Scotland five years later in 1864. In 1868 he married a Canadian woman, Anna Elizabeth Stewart, who was born in 1847. He applied for a job as an engineer at the Michigan Central Railroad headquarters in Ypsilanti but was denied and he accepted menial work, usually performed by strong black men, in a position known as a fireman. This meant that for hours on end he either had to shovel coal to fuel the fires which ran the steam locomotives or climbed down from the sweltering cabin to oil moving parts of the train so that it would not overheat, wear out parts, or even cause a fire by friction. In his time off, Elijah would retreat to his father's barn in Ypsilanti to find a better solution to this constant need to stop the train and oil parts. Thus came United States patent number 129,843

on July 23, 1872 titled "Improvement in Lubricators for Steam-Engines." He did not have the way or means to manufacture this invention so the rights to this lubricating cup was shared with S.C. Hamilton of Ypsilanti. Sadly, his father George had died in 1870 and was not alive to celebrate Elijah's first invention. That same year Elijah's young wife died. His mother lived until 1872 and was able to go back and visit friends and relatives on or near the plantation she escaped from many years earlier before she passed on.

Elijah's invention had the capability of greatly improving passenger rail travel because the steam train did not have to stop to have moving parts oiled and of course, this saved the railroads thousands of dollars and many hours of time transporting people and goods. Others tried to imitate his invention but railroad engineers insisted on buying and using "the real McCoy" or so the legend goes. Elijah's position and status quickly grew and he was promoted to the job he had been educated and trained for – a railroad engineer.

Elijah married for the second time in 1873 in Ypsilanti to Mary Eleanor Delaney, who had been born in Indiana while her mother was escaping slavery. Elijah's biographers agree that the couple lived in Ypsilanti for five years. However, one account has Elijah moving to Detroit to work as an inventor and engineer in 1872 , living in a white pillared home at 5720 Lincoln complete with a workshop in his backyard. The site of this home now boasts a historic plaque praising McCoy for his genius and inventions but does not give any credit to Mary and her charitable and generous pursuits.

The railroad industry soon put Elijah to work as a traveling consultant for his inventions, making sure that they were installed properly and training other engineers in their appropriate use. He traveled throughout the country doing this type of consultation. McCoy was considered the top of his class in railroad engineering in the United States. He often shared or sold some of the 57 patents he obtained to partners who then manufactured and distributed the parts. His business thrived in the industrial city of Detroit and many of his patents were assigned or sold to the Detroit Sheet Metal and Brass Works, the Penberthy Injector Company, and the Detroit Lubricating Company. Elijah also served as a paid consultant to other manufacturers or inventors. Not all of his inventions involved superior parts for mechanical devices. It is said that he dedicated at least two of his inventions to his wife Mary, including his patent for a folding ironing board and also a lawn sprinkler. To honor Elijah's 57 Michigan patents, the Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional United States Patent and Trademark Office opened in 2012 in the Stroh Building at 300 River Place in Detroit.

Elijah McCoy lived to be 86 years old and died in Westland, Michigan.

Elijah McCoy headstone and footstone at the Detroit Memorial Park East cemetery in Warren, Michigan.

Several biographers, including Marshall, have described Elijah McCoy as a very serious man who found social interaction difficult and was more interested in machines than people. His wife Mary, on the other hand, with her outgoing personality and interest in the world around her tirelessly worked for the rights for all people, especially people of color, women and the disenfranchised. She seemed to have been the perfect match for him. Sadly, Elijah and Mary were involved in a serious car accident in 1920. Though both lived, despite what some biographies attest to, they both suffered poor health because of the accident. Mary died shortly after their 50th wedding anniversary on November 17, 1923. George's health and ability continued to decline and his amazing and productive life ended as a very disabled old man at Eloise Infirmary in Westland, Michigan, where he died on October 10, 1929 at the age of eighty-five.

When I first started reading about this very intelligent black man who went against all odds of success as a mechanical engineer, it was thought that he was buried in an unmarked grave in the cemetery at the Eloise compound. I would often think about him and his life as I drove home from work down Michigan Avenue past this desolate graveyard. However, I am happy to report that this was never his final resting place. He is buried at the Detroit Memorial Park East in Warren, Michigan. His name is mentioned on a Michigan Historic Site marker designating the cemetery as the final resting place for African Americans from the world of sports, music stars, performers, legendary politicians, authors, and inventors such as Elijah McCoy.

I've enjoyed telling you Elijah's story as well as I am able and invite you to read my accompanying article about his equally amazing wife Mary, who is deserving of a biography of her own.

(Janice Anschuetz has lived in the historic east side of Ypsilanti for over 50 years. She is an Ypsilanti historian and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

YPSILANTI MUSEUMS

Michigan Firehouse Museum
110 W. Cross St. – Ypsilanti 48197
734 547-0663
www.michiganfirehousemuseum.org

Hours: 12 to 4 Thursday thru Sunday
Admission (online pricing):
Adults - $10 • Kids - $5 • Kids (under 5) Free

Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum
100 E. Cross St. – Ypsilanti, MI 48198
734 482-5200
www.ypsiautoheritage.org

Hours: 1 to 4 Thursday thru Sunday
Admission: Adults - $10 • Kids (under 12) Free

Ypsilanti History Center House Museum & Archives
220 N. Huron St. – Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Museum 734 482-4990
Archives – 734 217-8236
www.ypsihistory.org

Hours: 2 to 5 Tuesday thru Sunday
Admission: Adults – Free Kids – Free

Michigan Flight Museum
47884 D St. - Belleville, MI 48111
734 483-4030
www.miflightmuseum.org

Hours: 10 to 4 Tuesday thru Saturday
11 to 4 Sunday
Admission: Museum Members – Free
Adults - $13 • Seniors (60+) & Vets - $10
Kids (3 to 17) - $10 • Kids (Under 3) – Free

Willow Run B-24 Bomber Plant, Hangar One, and runways. Hangar One and the runways were converted to the Willow Run Airport in 1947.

History of the Willow Run Airport

By Robert Anschuetz

Much has been written about the famous and historic Willow Run B-24 Bomber Plant, but less has been written about the commercial airport that served as Detroit's primary passenger airport for almost two decades following World War II. The Willow Run Airport evolved directly from the Bomber Plant's Hangar One and adjacent runways and it also has an interesting history. Many of us older folks may have once used the airport, or at least picked up or dropped off relatives traveling the blue skies. My parents, Bob and Janice Anschuetz, used to take short weekend trips out to Willow Run Airport in the 1960's in order to find the nearest copy of the Sunday New York Times.

Prior to the end of World War II, most of the passenger airlines serving Detroit utilized the Detroit City Airport, which had begun service in 1927, to fly to destinations across the United States. Detroit's primary passenger service continued at Detroit City Airport until shortly after World War II. At the conclusion of the war, many military air bases around the country began to be converted to passenger airports because they were typically larger than the existing municipal airports, had longer runways, and could handle more air traffic. The airline industry was taking off, the war was over, and people were eager to move around the country as people were discovering the convenience and speed of air travel. The military air bases also weren't needed any more to support the war, so instead of sitting vacant, many were converted to passenger airline service.

Willow Run was slightly different than a military air base, but it was a manufacturing, production, and test facility for aircraft. As such, it was built with three runways, an air traffic control tower, and had a very large hangar that could easily be converted to a passenger terminal. This made the Willow Run facility a natural fit for conversion to a passenger airport. Hangar One, which was converted to the airport terminal resides in Washtenaw County, while the airport runways reside in Wayne County.

As part of the original Willow Run facility, renowned Detroit architect Albert Kahn designed the large eight-bay Hangar One building that would in the future become the Willow Run Airport. The Hangar One building originally was used to house the completed planes after they were delivered from the bomber plant, and wasn't completed until 1944 after the nearby Bomber plant was already operational. The Willow Run bomber plant was built with three runways. Two parallel runways were oriented east-west and designated 9L-27R and 9R-27L. A northeast-southwest runway was designated 5R-23L. The initial control tower was built right into the cen-

ter of Hangar One, as it provided an excellent view of all of the runways. Shortly after Hangar One was finished, Hangar Two was built to accommodate the overflow of B-24s that were being produced. Hangar Two was ultimately torn down in 2015.

Between 1946 and 1947, passenger airlines serving Detroit quickly moved from Detroit City Airport to Willow Run Airport, which was also referred to as the Detroit Willow Run Airport, to highlight the fact that it was the primary passenger airport serving the Detroit area. When the Willow Run passenger airport opened after WWII, there really wasn't too much thought put into the interior design of the old hangar building. The space was wide open, with a few dividing walls, counters and seating areas. It was functional, but the interior and exterior still looked like a hangar with the interior featuring a very high ceiling with exposed beams, with the exterior maintaining its rectangular shape. The airport aimed to innovate, however, and in 1948, Willow Run Airport became the first airport terminal in the United States to feature a movie theater. An airport hotel was also embedded within the terminal building.

Willow Run Airport was far enough from the city of Detroit that arriving passengers didn't have a public transportation option other than infrequent buses and taxis to get them to their final destination. As a result, Ann Arbor resident Warren Avis started a rental car service at Willow Run Airport, which was the first rental car operation at any airport in the United States. Warren Avis was born in Bay City, Michigan and served in the Army Air Force during World War II as a bombardier and later became a captain. As a pilot, he was often frustrated that he couldn't get ground transportation at airports where he landed. After the war, he began developing a plan to rent cars at airports. Avis founded the company in 1946 with $10,000 of his own money and $75,000 borrowed against his name. He started the operation with three cars at Willow Run Airport. The company quickly expanded to several other locations around the United States, and is now one of the largest car rental companies in the world.

Warren Avis started the first airport-based car rental service in the United States at Willow Run Airport.

Concurrent with passenger services,

Willow Run Airport terminal as it looked in the heydays of it being a commuter airport serving the Detroit metro area.

Exterior view of the Willow Run Airport terminal, showing the air traffic control tower.

The interior of the Willow Run Airport terminal after it had been converted from the B-24 Bomber plant's Hangar One.

Willow Run Airport terminal after it had been updated in 1957. Note the prominent mid-century design elements in the ceiling.

Willow Run also hosted a military base. In 1951 the United States Air Force moved to Willow Run and established Willow Run Air Force Station east of the runways, which were shared with the passenger planes. Willow Run Air Force Station was only operational for about eight years and closed in 1959. In 1956, there were seven passenger airlines at Willow Run. The April 1957 Official Airline Guide documented10 airlines operating 68 weekday flight departures on Capital, 45 on American, 23 on Eastern, 17 on Northwest Orient, 14 on United, 13 on North Central, 13 on TWA, 8 on Delta, 5 on Allegheny and 3 on Mohawk. United had a nonstop DC-7 service to the west coast at Los Angeles. TWA had a weekly two-stop flight to Paris via Gander in Newfoundland and Shannon in Ireland aboard a Lockheed Constellation aircraft.

With the volume of passenger travel expanding rapidly at Willow Run Airport after a decade of operation, funding was dedicated toward an expansion of the airport's terminal building. Architect Minoru Yamasaki was best known for his design of New York's World Trade Center. He was awarded the contract for the World Trade Center in 1962, with the first of the twin towers being finished in 1970. Yamasaki was a Detroit-based architect who started his own architectural firm in 1949. Besides designing many beautiful buildings in the Detroit area and around the world, Yamasaki designed the $1.5 million updates to the Willow Run Passenger Terminal in 1957. Yamasaki kept the bones of the original building, but added a mid-century design flare to the interior. The ceiling was re-modeled with a sweeping archway composed of geometric tiles reminiscent of his later work on the World Trade Center. Yamasaki also designed the Lambert St. Louis International Airport main terminal in 1956, Dhahran International Airport Civil Air Terminal in Saudi Arabia in 1961, and Eastern Airlines Terminal at Logan Airport in Boston in 1969.

Minoru Yamasaki was the architect for the interior updates to the Willow Run Airport terminal in 1957. He was most famous for designing New York City's World Trade Center and its twin towers.

Almost all of Detroit's scheduled passenger airline flights used Willow Run Airport until 1958, when the coming of the Jet Age drove traffic to the newly renamed Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport. Detroit Metro Airport offered carriers the new Leroy C. Smith Terminal designed for the new aircraft and a newly expanded runway layout. In 1958 the Detroit-Wayne Major airport received new long-range radar equipment, enabling the airport to become the first inland airport in the United States certified to handle jet airplanes. American Airlines moved from Willow Run Airport to Detroit-Metropolitan Airport in October 1958, followed by Northwest, Allegheny and Delta in the next few months. Passenger airline flights ended completely at Willow Run in 1966 when United, TWA, Eastern, North Central, Mohawk and Lake Central moved to Detroit Metropolitan Airport. With the closer proximity to Detroit and the ability to handle jet airplanes, the end of Willow Run Airport's use as the primary Detroit airport came to an end. In 1966, Willow Run Airport was converted to a cargo,

A postcard of the Willow Run Airport Hotel.

executive aviation and general aviation airport.

Today, Willow Run Airport covers 2,392 acres, has two operational runways, an FAA control tower, and a U.S. Customs operation. The three-letter FAA airport designation for Willow Run Airport is YIP - for Ypsilanti. Willow Run Airport is operated by the Wayne County Airport Authority, which also runs Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Willow Run Airport is one of the largest cargo airports in the United States, and is the headquarters of Kalitta Air, USA Jet Airlines, Avflight Willow Run, Odyssey Aviation YIP, and the Roush Aeronautic Center. Of course, Willow Run Airport is also home to the Michigan Flight Museum, formerly known as the Yankee Air Museum.

The largest airline currently based at Willow Run Airport is Kalitta Air, which is owned by Conrad "Connie" Kalitta. Kalitta began in the airline industry in 1967 when he piloted parts for the automotive industry in his Cessna 310. Kalitta, who is also known for his drag racing career, formed the company known as Connie Kalitta Services. In 1984, the Willow Run-based airline's name was changed to American International Airways (AIA) and continued to ship freight by air worldwide. AIA also provided air ambulance and charter passenger services. In 1997, AIA merged with Kitty Hawk International, and Kalitta stepped down from the company. In 2000, Kitty Hawk International ceased operations and declared bankruptcy, and Kalitta bought the company back and renamed it Kalitta Air. Kalitta Air currently operates 22 Boeing 747 and 5 Boeing 777 air freighters.

In 2024 the Wayne County Airport Authority closed Hangar One, the building formerly used for B-24 storage and later served as the Willow Run Airport passenger terminal. Hangar One is currently slated for demolition, another piece of history may soon be lost at the historic Willow Run facility.

(Robert Anschuetz grew up in Ypsilanti in the historic Swaine house at the corner of Forest Ave. and River St. He is a regular contributor to the Gleanings).

A Public Health Program in Rural Washtenaw County, 1932 – 1934

BY LAURA GELLOTT

James Mann in his Gleanings article "Rural Schools and the Ypsilanti Kiwanis" -Ypsilanti Gleanings, Summer 2024- recalled an article I published some years ago in the journal Mid-America: An Historical Review (69:1, January 1987). In revised form, I present here the story of a rural health education program in Washtenaw County, one whose efforts were similarly assisted by the Ypsilanti Kiwanis Club.

Moreover, this is the story of my grandmother, Laura Kress Weber. Letter and copies of reports on which this article is based are in my possession. Originals, plus additional material, are contained in the papers of the Washtenaw County Medical Society at the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. I also made use of the archives of the Ypsilanti Press and the former Ypsilanti Daily Press. This revised article also benefits from the use of online sources unavailable at the time of original publication.

In the winter of 1932, Laura Kress Weber began a program of health education in rural Washtenaw County. In so doing, she drew upon her experience in private duty, mostly rural, nursing. As a young nurse she preferred the challenge of caring for patients in their homes to the convenience afforded by hospital nursing. It was this experience that she would utilize to develop a program in which, aided by local physicians and assisted by members of Kiwanis, she went to rural schools, Grange Halls, and homes, "to take to people the knowledge of how to care for themselves and for others in their family who were ill."

Laura Kress, Graduate of Dr. Peterson's Private Hospital nurse training program, Ann Arbor, 1913.

Laura Kress was born October 10, 1890 in Lodi Township, the third of six children. The Kress family was, by local standards, a prosperous one. Simon Kress and his wife Anna Reidel were second-generation German immigrants, who instilled a sense of ambition in their children, notably their daughters. In 1911 Laura enrolled in the training program at Dr. Peterson's Private Hospital, 620 S. Forest Avenue, Ann Arbor, one of a number of "proprietary hospitals" then in existence in the city, and serving exclusively women and children. In 1913, at the age of 23, Laura Kress began work as a private duty nurse in Washtenaw County.

Private duty nursing presented challenges, sometimes calling for impromptu and ingenious solutions. Laura later recalled: "Nursing in those days was a real task…. It was done mostly in homes and it seemed that I got mostly rural cases.

Laura Kress Weber with her children Theodore Jr., Monica, and Richard. This photo accompanied the profile of Laura Weber in the Detroit Free Press, December 11, 1932.

I well remember the night in January 1914, some 20 miles from Ann Arbor. I was called to care for a family of six children and their mother [who] was soon to be a patient [too]. Nothing to work with. Two little boys so very very ill. I knew they must have hot packs if they were to see another day. No hot water bottles, no fruit jars, so I sent the father to the barn to get me a half a bushel of ear corn. This I heated and packed my little patients. It was not the best pack but it worked."

That incident made a deep impression on her. From that experience came the first seeds of Laura's plan for rural health education. "As the night was drawing to day-break I promised my dear Lord that I would give myself to help people at large to know how to help themselves and their loved ones."

World War I intervened. Laura was among a number of nurses mobilized to deal with the influenza epidemic of 1918. That, in addition to service she rendered at the site of the train wreck in Chelsea, on July, 20, 1918, where 15 soldiers were killed and 85 others, soldiers and civilians enroute to Detroit, were injured, qualified her for membership in the nurses' auxiliary unit of the American Legion, an involvement maintained for the rest of her life.

A year earlier, on July 17, 1917, Laura Kress married "the

best and the finest man in the world," Theodore S. Weber. Ted Weber also came from rural Washtenaw County, a farm in Sylvan Township near Chelsea. The third of eight children, Ted alone of the four boys completed high school, a feat he accomplished by moving into Chelsea, boarding with a family, and working nights as a dispatcher at the train station. After graduating in 1906 Ted helped to put two of his four sisters through high school as well. Ted Weber went to work as a clerk in turn for the Albion Gale Manufacturing Co., the Detroit-Jackson-Chelsea Railroad, and then the Detroit Edison Company. Following their marriage the couple lived in Ann Arbor and Detroit before moving in 1922 to Ypsilanti, where Ted worked and was eventually promoted to manager of the Ann-Arbor Ypsilanti office of the Edison Company, 64 N. Huron Street. The young family was touched by tragedy when their infant daughter Patricia died of diphtheria in 1923. Three more children were born over the following five years: Theodore Jr., Richard, and Monica.

But Laura's energies and interest went beyond the scope provided by marriage and motherhood. Never happier than when she had a project or a program to organize, she became a clubwoman. She joined the Ypsilanti Women's Study Club, the Ypsilanti Child Study Club, and served as a delegate to the State Federation of Women's Clubs. By the early 1930s she was program chair for the Women's Study Club and headed its committee on adult education. She was active in the Altar Society at St. John's Catholic Church, where Ted served as president of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, a role he continued into the 1970s.

The coming of the Great Depression shook the stable foundations of Ypsilanti. The Depression reached the tree-shaded porch of the comfortable Weber home at 1023 Washtenaw Avenue. Unemployed breadwinners came to the door late in the evening to ask Ted Weber to carry their accounts at the Edison for yet another month. Homeless men stopped at the back door asking for a meal. By the summer of 1933 children at the Harriet Street School were growing vegetables on land behind the school to take home to their families. The Ford Motor Company's Ypsilanti plant put several acres of its property along the Huron River under cultivation and hired back 180 of its workers to cultivate produce for distribution.

Economic privation told its story in sickness and disease as well. The Ypsilanti Press reported an increase in the number of contagious diseases in the city. Incidents of tuberculosis soared. As the effects of the Depression settled on the city, Laura Weber found an opportunity to put her nursing skills into practice. "I took an active part in the Home Association and Welfare. I was at 27 births and 10 deaths in one winter."

In January 1932 the Women's Study Club turned its attention to the local situation by sponsoring "Health Week," a series of programs held at Ypsilanti High School. The success of this program crystallized Laura's determination to proceed with plans to implement a program of health education in rural areas of the county where, she believed, "the work was needed and could be accomplished with gratifying results."

In 1932 there were 131 one-room schoolhouses in Washtenaw County. Laura Weber developed a list of over three dozen topics, ranging from "Why Think About Eating?" to "Health Problems on the Farm," "What Science Knows About Cancer," and "What Shell I Tell My Child About Sex?" After securing commitments from a number of doctors from the Medical Society, she drove throughout the county, securing invitations at schools for a series of talks. In three months, she arranged for 49 programs.

The first took place on October 28, 1932, at the Rentschler School in Lodi Township. There, fifty people heard Dr. Harry Britton talk about first aid. "In the little school where I went as a little girl the people were so very kind and all turned out. That sold the township at Lodi and I went to Freedom and on and on so that at the end of three months I had 4,300 people at my health talks."

Laura Weber kept written notes on each program held that fall and winter of 1932-1933:

November 17, 1932: Carl Mast Home. Webster Township. I, Mrs. Weber, talked on home care of our sick and I also gave a demonstration of temperature bath, preparation of douche, reading pulse, care of bed, placing hot pad or water bag, etc. A fine meeting with fine people. Attendance 32.

November 30, 1932. Sylvan Center School. The Principles of Healthy Living by Dr. D.N. Robb of Ypsilanti. In his love for children, he put to the parents at that meeting an understanding of their duty and in so doing left many helpful thoughts to be used in everyday life. He did fine work – many thanks. Attendance 85.

December 2, 1932: Chelsea High School. Bed demonstration and first aid talk by Dr. Britton of Ypsilanti and demonstration by Mrs. T.S. Weber. The stage was transformed into a bedroom, and furnishings loaned by Mr. A. Handelong. Attendance 170.

December 8, 1932: Beach School. Prevention of Communicable Disease by Dr. Inez Wisdom. Dr. Wisdom truly left a well-informed people. She spoke so clear and sincere that a mother said afterwards "I'll take my children and get the anti what you call it." I trust her. So now a family of 5 children are enjoying the "anti what you call it." It proved that we are understood, the trusted. What more could we ask for. Attendance 68.

The Detroit Free Press, in a profile of Laura Weber's work published on December 11, 1932, stated that "Mrs. Weber finds the response to her work much greater than she had expected. From 200 to 500 persons gather at the meetings and it is sometimes nearly midnight before the crowd is through asking questions." Equally successful were presen-

The Weber home, 1023 Washtenaw Avenue. The house has long since been converted to apartments.

tations in homes, which allowed Laura to focus on her special interest of helping women. According to the Free Press, "In the afternoon meetings Mrs. Weber demonstrates care for the sick in their own homes. She puts a 'patient,' usually one of the audience, to bed and then by actual demonstration shows how various conditions should be handled, including giving a bath, taking temperatures, and making the patient comfortable." These instructions were not limited to women. One of Laura's concerns was what would happen in the event of a mother's illness, and she insisted that someone else in the family learn these skills as well, to the delight of the women in the audience.

In carrying out her work, Laura Weber drew not only upon doctors she knew from her years of nursing but on a network of resources woven over the course of more than a decade in Ypsilanti. Not the least of these was the support provided by her husband, who bought Laura a car and provided money to assist his wife in her work.

Ted Weber was deeply involved in Ypsilanti's civic life. He joined the Kiwanis Club in 1927, and remained an active member until his death in 1988, at age 101. He was instrumental in bringing the Salvation Army to Ypsilanti during the Depression years, and served on its board of directors for many years. Among other commitments, he served several terms on Ypsilanti's Board of Commerce, the board of the Ypsilanti Community Fund, as well as the Washtenaw County Board of Supervisors.

The car and money which Ted Weber provided for his wife were essential. From 1932 to 1934 Laura drove nearly 3,000 miles arranging programs, and another 9,000 miles at night to attend lectures and provide transportation for the doctors, a cost absorbed by the Webers. "[I] have had no financial aid from any source," Laura wrote in a report to the State Medical Society in early 1934. "The cost to me has been approximately $800, which I have gladly given to have accomplished the results." Of this money, $50 towards her phone bill was eventually repaid as a contribution from the County Medical Society. Laura wrote: "I have many times been questioned as to why I have been willing to spend…my own money to put such a program across. My only answer…is that if I could tell you of my experience of seeing others benefit, principally mothers and children, they would never question the generosity of my husband who has made it possible to use this extra money."

Not only did Ted Weber contribute financial resources to his wife's program, but he mobilized his own social and civic connections as well. By the second year of the program, when the number of talks had grown to a point where two or three were scheduled on the same evening, transportation for the doctors was provided by members of the Kiwanis Clubs of Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and Chelsea. The local office of the Detroit Automobile Club presented a program on highway safety. The Detroit Edison Company, Ted's employer, provided speakers and equipment for lectures on proper heating, lighting and ventilation.

Programs during the second (1933-1934) year of the program broke new ground. Laura's notes indicate some of the topics:

October 17, 1933: Subject: "The Anatomy of the Human Sex Organs." Dr. Gladys Kleinschmidt. Attendance: 32. Remarks: Many expressions of approval from individuals saying that this series is exactly what they have been wanting for some time.

October 31, 1933: Subject: "The Mental Hygiene of Sex." Attendance, 52. Remarks: Very few questions are asked during the course of these lectures themselves but many are asked by individuals who come to me at the close of meetings.

November 10, 1933: "What Shall I Tell My Child About Sex?" Dr. Gladys Kleinschmidt. Attendance: 63. Remarks: After the lecture a corner of the room was turned into a consultation room and one by one parents came to discuss their individual problems with me, 'til the clock struck 12, midnight. In the meanwhile, coffee, sandwiches and pumpkin pie were served.

The program's second year was highly successful. One hundred schools hosted talks, attended by a total of 9,000 people, compared with 49 schools and 4,300 in attendance in the first year. But Laura Weber's involvement with the pro-

gram ended in the spring of 1934. The program's success proved, in a way, to be it's undoing. It became harder to recruit a sufficient number of doctors to cover the growing number of speaking engagements. And Laura recognized that health education was taking a new direction. There was a drive for both professionalization and the embedding of such programs in an expanding county bureaucracy. The year 1927 had seen the creation of the first county health department in Michigan. Within ten years, 60 of the state's 83 counties had health departments, whose tasks included preventive medicine, control of contagious diseases – and public health education. Such programs were, moreover, eligible to receive funding from newly-created state and federal sources.

The campaign for a Washtenaw County Health Department was spearheaded by members of the Medical Society, including a number of doctors who volunteered for Laura Weber's program. Attractive pamphlets explaining the new approach to public health were distributed throughout the county, outlining the role such a department would play in identifying and isolating outbreaks of communicable diseases, inspecting water supplies, slaughter houses, and sources of milk, as well as testing pools and lakes for swimming. Little was said concerning woman and children, Laura Weber's greatest concern, but one leaflet mentioned that the health department would oversee a "maternal hygiene program which [would] instruct prospective mothers with regard to their preparation for confinement…. Our infant mortality is rather high, but it can be reduced by proper medical care."

The decade-long campaign reached its conclusion on October 19, 1939, when the County Board of Supervisors voted 18-4 to establish a health department in Washtenaw County and to accept state and federal funding. Professionalization and bureaucratization of public health care and education had arrived in Washtenaw County and a

Laura Weber in the early 1940s.

new era had begun. In taking leave of the program she had established, Laura Weber paid tribute to the men, both physicians and Kiwanians, whose help had been critical. She told an audience at the Women's Study Club: "I could spend hours enumerating cases in which Ypsilanti men have eagerly and gladly helped individual cases for which neither city nor country saw fit to care…. I wish other club women … would do the same, because there are hundreds with talents and gifts greater than mine who could do much if they would only consider it, not an obligation, but a privilege and a pleasure." She concluded: "When life looks dull my advice is: Take the gift or gifts God has given you and serve others because the most tragic part of living today as I see it is that so many marvelous gifts and talents are never used and that hundreds of adults and children are starving for their use. With faith one can do much."

Laura Weber died of cancer on July 1, 1943, at the age of 52. She had already had a bout with the disease prior to her work with the rural health program. In 1934 she corresponded with the American Society for the Control of Cancer and set up a local committee on cancer education. The records of the County Medical Society indicate her involvement, as late as 1937, with the Women's Field Army against cancer. Once again, personal circumstances translated into public service. Laura Weber's story is an illustration of the possibilities for volunteerism inherent in a small-town society, at a time when women with professional training, but absent from the workforce by circumstances of marriage and motherhood, possessed the time and resources necessary to engage in such activity. What set Laura Weber apart from untold numbers of women in her situation was her deep commitment to the ideal of service and her abiding faith in its possibilities for good.

(Laura Gellott is professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Kenosha, Wisconsin. She previously published "Growing up in Ypsilanti in the '60s Before"The Sixties," Ypsilanti Gleanings, Spring 2021.)

A 1987 EMU Graduation Speech

BY ALVIN RUDISILL

In 1987 I was serving as the Dean of the College of Technology at Eastern Michigan University. On Monday of the week of the EMU Spring Graduation in 1987, I received a call from EMU President John Porter. He indicated to me that I was the back-up speaker for the EMU graduation to be held the following Saturday. I informed him that I was flying to Texas for a conference that afternoon and would not return until Friday. He said "…that's OK because graduation is not until the following day." That afternoon I flew to Texas but began to be concerned about the possibility of having to give a speech before thousands of people in just four days. On Tuesday I called the President's secretary and told her I had gotten a call from the President the day before about being a back-up speaker for graduation. She informed me that the Governor of Michigan had been invited to speak but that "…we have known for two weeks that the Governor would not be available and that you are the speaker." The rest of the week was spent writing this speech between conference sessions, and it was delivered to approximately 8,000 people the following Saturday.

TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE:

Thank you President Porter and good morning trustees, officers, faculty, honored guests, friends and graduating students of Eastern Michigan University. It is a significant honor and privilege for me to have the opportunity to speak to you today.

I feel a special kinship to this institution because I have worked with many of you here today and thousands of other outstanding people over the past seven years since our College of Technology was established. It shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone here that my topic today deals with technology.

The topic "Technology and Change" is important because I believe these two factors will impact each of you and society in general more than any other major forces. Also, these forces will impact your generation more than any previous generation because of what John Naisbitt calls the "megashift" from an industrial to an information society and what Alvin Toffler refers to as the third wave – the actual restructuring of our entire civilization. Many of us may not agree with the writings of social forecasters like Naisbitt and Toffler but most scholars agree that we are in the middle of a major transformation in our society that we do not fully control or comprehend.

Let me start by telling you about some of my own personal experiences with technology and change. I was born in 1933 and for the first nine years of my life lived in a new house in a rural area of the United States. The most advanced technology in that house was a battery operated vacuum tube radio. The indoor plumbing consisted of a hand pump for drawing water from a well and kerosene lamps were used for lighting because commercial electricity was not yet available in that rural community. Heating was accomplished with a coal fired stove that left something to be desired on cold winter mornings. I might also add that for the first three years of my schooling in that rural community I attended a one-room school which was also without indoor plumbing and electricity.

Contrast that rather bleak picture of technology in my early home with that of my current home here in Ypsilanti. Central heating and cooling are controlled throughout the day and night at pre-set temperatures by an automatic thermostat. Outdoor lighting is automatically turned on at night and shut off in the morning by photocell controlled switches. An unwelcome intruder needs to work fast because police arrive within two or three minutes after motion sensors activate a central burglar alarm system which automatically dials

the police station. If a fire breaks out, the fire department is called by the automatic dialer on the central alarm system. We have our choice of watching movies originating from a video cassette recorder or from a cable station that receives the signal from an orbiting satellite. We listen to music originating from a compact disc which is "tracked" by a laser beam only one millionth of a meter wide.

The telephone is answered automatically and callers can leave messages that can be retrieved from the telephone in my office here at EMU, or at any other remote telephone station anywhere in the country. Our home computer can be used to make airline reservations, purchase computer equipment, or access data bases in my office here at Eastern or from a wide variety of data bases throughout the country which are affiliated with our network information subscription service. A computer treadmill and rower helps keep me in shape by computing pulse rate, distance traveled, speed, and number of calories burned while exercising. That is quite a contrast to that rural house that I moved out of just 44 years ago.

EMU's 'Salute to Tech' graduation fouled by crossed signals with guv

By Press Staff

It seems ironic that a commencement ceremony high lighting a "Salute to Technology" would be victimized by something as simple as a garbled telephone call.

But then, if all communications between Eastern Michigan University and the govenor's office were done by computers - which operate on hard-to-confuse binary comands - a somewhat embarrassing snafu might never have occured.

Rudisill Banchard

Article in the local newspaper about the fouled signals with the Michigan Governor about the graduation speech.

Now let's look at the future. In approximately eleven years I expect to retire and build a retirement home somewhere in Michigan. In these next eleven years there will be more advances in technology and more changes taking place in our society than in the 44 years since I moved out of that rural home. In eleven years, the fourth generation of computers will have arrived, which will probably be thousands of times more powerful than the third generation computers being released this year. In our retirement home a single central computer will undoubtedly control all of the technological systems in the home. The computer will talk to us and respond to our voice commands, it will print out the latest news direct from the wire services or will provide a verbal capsule of the news while you are getting dressed or eating. We will probably be able to dictate entire letters into the computer and have them electronically mailed to their destination. Banking, shopping and travel accommodations will all be accomplished on the home computer system. Although I expect to be retired, it is predicted that a significant part of our population at that time will work at home and have total access to the data bases at their local company offices and at other company locations throughout the world. Consider the potential changes in the home when it becomes a combination living and work environment for large segments of our population.

I'm certain that everyone will agree that our generation has been unbelievably successful at developing and implementing technological innovations. This is true not just in the home but in all the major activities which form the techno-economic base of our society. Technological advances in communications and transportation already developed and implemented have reduced the entire world into a single global community. However, our generation has not been nearly as successful at dealing with the complex interrelationships and impacts of advanced technological systems with each other and with social, political, economic and behavioral systems and in dealing with our rapidly accelerating rate of change. Let me give you some examples:

The leadership of the United States was instrumental in rebuilding the entire economic and technological base of the western world after World War II – but just recently technology and the acceleration of change shifted the United States position within three years from the world's largest creditor nation to the largest debtor nation. In 1986 our balance of payments deficit in the United States reached over 170 billion dollars.

Technological advances in communications, manufacturing and transportation enable us to buy automobiles from the dealer next door that were manufactured halfway around the world – but major disruptions in our work force resulting

from this international trade are continuing and we have not seen the last of plant closings and unemployment in our own automobile industries here in Michigan.

Advances in agricultural technology have given us the ability to produce enough food to easily feed all the people on earth - but we pay farmers not to grow food when we have starving people in many places throughout the world.

Technological advances have enabled us to build space ships that take us to the moon in protective environmental suits and capsules - but we haven't solved the problems related to pollution of the atmosphere, the land or the sea here on earth.

We have developed the technological capability for people to travel around the world in hours - but we can't stop a handful of terrorists from making that travel undesirable for the citizens of many countries.

Our nuclear power plants and our space vehicles are outstanding examples of how complex multiple technological systems can be integrated into super systems to achieve here-to-for unattainable goals – but the Chernobyl and Challenger disasters give mute testimony to the fact that we must make sure in the future that we fully understand how these complex systems interact and impact each other.

Advances in communications technology have made instant millionaires out of boxers, baseball players, musicians, and actors – but we still pay beginning teachers of our children wages just above the poverty level.

We have extended the life of the elderly - but over 75 percent of hospital costs in this country are spent on the last 90 days of the life of elderly people while millions of young people do not have adequate doctor and hospital care.

We have developed the medical technology which allows for surrogate motherhood - but we haven't begun to solve the social and behavioral issues which result from these advances nor have we even begun to discuss predicted future advances in medical technology that are certain to involve far greater moral and ethical issues.

We have developed sophisticated educational technology that provides 360 degree "artificial reality" that is so realistic that simulated flight training makes even veteran fliers airsick – but in major cities like Detroit we still have close to 80 percent dropout rates for ninth grade males prior to graduation.

Advances in medical technology have enabled us to conduct research which has proven that smoking one pack of cigarettes a day will shorten your life by eight years - but we still spend significant amounts of public money to support the tobacco industry.

We've developed military weapons that have the potential for destroying the human race many times over - but we haven't done very well in resolving the major differences between political systems that will be essential to any kind of global disarmament program.

I believe that everyone would agree that our times demand a more concerned and involved citizenry than ever before – but instant communications has allowed the outcome of elections to be predicted before major sections of the country even vote and the 1986 congressional elections brought out the lowest voter turn-out in more than 40 years.

The list of unresolved problems related to technological advances and the accelerating rate of change goes on and on. Many social forecasters believe we are currently caught between two major eras, the industrial era of the past and the information era of the future, but that we are neither here nor there. We have not quite left behind the self-contained, self sufficient, industrialized America of the past nor have we quite reached the global information age of the future.

If the social forecasters are correct the goal of your generation must be to redirect and reconstruct our political, social and economic systems so they can effectively control and direct technology in the information age. To achieve this goal your generation must not only become and remain literate about the major issues related to technology and change but must be willing to participate in our political and social processes.

There will be no easy or permanent solutions because the accelerating rate of change in the information age will require a continuing reassessment of public policies and social perspectives. Two things are certain: 1) technological innovation will continue to occur; and 2) the rate of change will continue to accelerate. Our only solution as a society is to plan ahead for new developments in technology rather than to react to technological innovations after they have been implemented.

Technological innovation now and in the future has tremendous potential for improving the quality of our life here on earth. However, your generation must do a far better job than we have done in planning ahead for that future. I know I can speak for all of us here today as I extend our best wishes to each of you as individuals and to your entire generation as we move into the global information era.

As a final note I might add that advances in medical technology will enable us old timers to be around quite a bit longer than past generations. We'll be looking over your shoulders to see how you are doing.

On behalf of all of us here today I extend to you, our graduates, our sincere congratulations and our very best wishes. Thank You.

(Alvin Rudisill later served as President of the Ypsilanti Historical Society for fourteen years and has served as Editor of the YHS Gleaning for over twenty years.)

Museum Advisory Board Report

BY EVAN MILAN, CHAIR

The Christmas season was, as usual, a highpoint in the year of the Ypsilanti Historical Society. In keeping with the trend initiated in 2023 by Tim Sabo, our Christmas Committee decked the halls to reflect two different periods in Ypsilanti's Christmas past. The formal parlor reflected the Christmas season of the mid to late nineteenth century when the traditions we now hold near were just gaining prominence. The Dining Room and Family Parlor reflected the post WWII period when economic prosperity and increased production brought a more commercial character to the celebration.

Our annual yuletide open house was held on Sunday, December 8, with over 50 visitors coming though the museum on Huron Street. The highlight of the day was the concert of carols by members of the First Presbyterian Church of Ypsilanti, led by pianist Marijim Thoene. Special thank you is due to Stephanie Kelly and John Scanlon who assisted with the process of taking down and cleaning up the decor at the close of the season.

As we look to the year ahead, a number of new displays are under consideration and development. Keep an eye out for a new display by Nancy Bryk and her class of perspective museum curators. Additionally, look for some new outside accents to the building including a new flowering tree to adorn the southern end of the lot and a new yard light to replace one that was damaged in the high winds of this past winter.

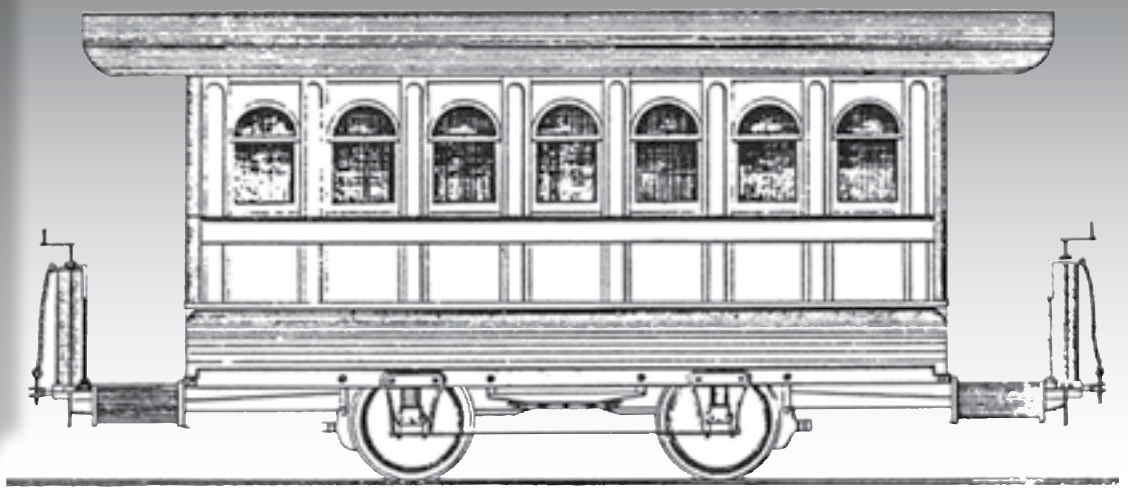
The Museum is always accepting applications for volunteers to help as docents, as well as maintenance, display development, and a host of small tasks that go into running the valued community resource.

Reach out to yhs.museum@gmail.com for more information.

Ypsilanti's First Train Arrival in 1838 at the new Wooden Station

BY ROBERT ANSCHUETZ

Governor Stephens T. Mason, Michigan's first Governor, was instrumental in completing the railroad line to Ypsilanti, and was aboard the inaugural trip from Detroit to Ypsilanti.



A representative sketch of a train from the 1930's with a look similar to what Ypsilanti residents would have seen pull into the old wooden station on February 3, 1838.

When you look at the abandoned train station in Depot Town, you might wonder when the first train made a stop in Ypsilanti. The answer to that question is February3, 1838, and the rest of the article will fill in a lot of the details about Ypsilanti's first train arrival along with the steps involved to get the railroad to Ypsilanti. Many references, including Harvey Colburn's "The Story of Ypsilanti", list the date of the first train arrival as February 8, but an article in the Detroit Daily Free Press on February 3, 1838 states that "We are requested to say, that the commissioners of internal improvement respectfully invite the members of the legislature to take seats in the railroad cars, which will leave the depot, at the Campus Martius, at 10 o'clock this morning, for Ypsilanti."

The first attempt at bringing a train to Ypsilanti was begun in 1836 with the charter of the Monroe & Ypsilanti Railroad. The railroad printed currency and valued its capital stock at $400,000. The banknotes soon were worthless and there was never any progress made on the rail lines from Monroe to Ypsilanti. The second attempt was the Monroe & Ann Arbor Railroad, which fell to a similar fate as the Monroe & Ypsilanti Railroad and never went anywhere. The third attempt was the Ypsilanti & Tecumseh Railroad, which actually got to the point where a few sections of railbed were graded, but the construction stopped as funding dried up.

Meanwhile, in 1831, the Territory of Michigan Legislature granted a charter to the Detroit & St. Joseph Railroad. The Detroit & St. Joseph railroad laid tracks from Detroit to Dearbornville (now Dearborn) as its first steps toward extending the line all the way to Lake Michigan. Local lore states that Ypsilanti's Mark Norris worked with the railroad company to convince them to make a stop in Ypsilanti's Depot Town. Norris had not only civic reasons to get the stop in Ypsilanti, but also business reasons, since he owned many businesses in Ypsilanti that would benefit, and planned on developing a hotel adjacent to the planned railroad stop.

By 1837, the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad had cleared a right-of-way 100-feet wide all the way to Ypsilanti, and a railroad bed extended 13 miles from Detroit to Dearbornville. Daily service was begun from Detroit to Dearbornville, but progress on the rest of the route was slow and financing was shaky. In 1837, the newly formed state of Michigan, with its first governor, 19-year-old "Boy Governor" Stephens T. Mason, decided to boost its public railroad infrastructure and build three railroad lines in the state. Governor Mason realized that without a railroad, the interior of the state of Michigan was inaccessible and would not rapidly be developed otherwise. The three railroads were the Northern Road, running from Port Huron to approximately Grand Rapids; the Central Road, running from Detroit to St. Joseph; and the Southern Road, running from Monroe to New Buffalo. Since the Detroit & St. Joseph route was already under construction, railroad infrastructure resources were weighted heavily toward the construction and extension of the Central Road.

Mark Norris, prominent Ypsilanti businessman, is reported to have been instrumental in getting a train stop in Ypsilanti.

The construction of railroad tracks on the Central Road

was very primitive and labor intensive. Railroad ties were laid on the ground at specific intervals, then wooden planks called stringers were laid upon them forming the base of the tracks. Iron rails were then spiked into stringers. Track-walkers would inspect the tracks each day looking for loose spikes and make repairs on any unsafe sections of the track.

An 1838 bank note from The Monroe & Ypsilanti Rail Road Company – a failed attempt at bringing Ypsilanti its first railroad.

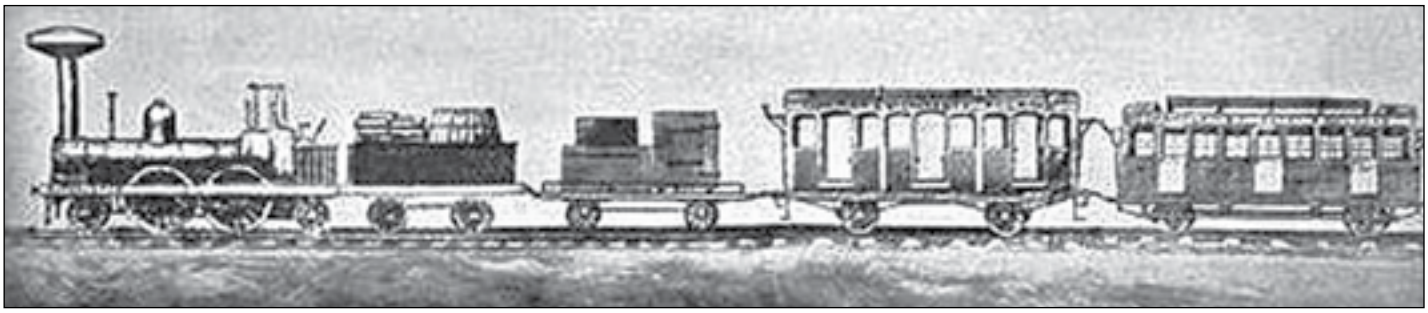
By the start of 1838, the Central Railroad of Michigan had established a train depot at the Campus Martius terminus in Detroit. Ypsilanti was promised service early in February 1838. In preparation for the extension of the line to Ypsilanti, the Central Railroad purchased two passenger coaches, holding 24 passengers each from the Eaton & Gilbert company in Troy, New York. The trains were delivered to Detroit and stored at the state's railway yard near the train depot. The excitement and anticipation of the acquisition of these luxury cars was soon doused by the sheriff of Monroe County, who seized the rail cars at the request of the River Raisin & Lake Erie Railroad. This railroad claimed that they had purchased these specific rail coaches prior to the Central Railroad of Michigan, and demanded that they be delivered to them. After cancelling the delivery of those two rail cars, the Central Railroad of Michigan quickly hired Detroit's John G. Hays to work on a new rail car that would be used on the Central route. The railroad coach was named the "Governor Mason" and had a capacity of 36 people, larger than the two initially desired rail cars.

The wooden Ypsilanti passenger station was built in 1837 in anticipation of the Central Railroad reaching the village. The wooden train station had projecting eves supported by many iron brackets cast to represent eagles. The wooden station and a wooden freighthouse were located on the east side of the tracks, where Ypsilanti's vacant train station is currently located. A large woodshed was built on the west side of the tracks, where the brick freight house stands today. The woodshed had open sides to store the cords of wood that fed the steam engines. The wood was sawn on site, first by hand and later by horse-driven saws.

On February 3, 1838, the first passenger train service from Detroit to Ypsilanti took place with much fanfare. On the cold morning of the 10 am departure, a large percentage of Detroit's citizens showed up to see the train's maiden trip. The train consisted of a locomotive, the stylish "Governor Mason" passenger car, three plain passenger cars, and three additional cars used for transporting cargo. The locomotive was powered by wood, which was piled high in the locomotive's tender. The locomotive had a single pair of drive-wheels and a funnel-shaped smokestack. The locomotive wasn't very impressive, and even its whistle was only able to make a sound that was described as "about halfway between a grunt and a groan." The cadre of passengers for the inaugural trip was carefully planned. Governor Mason, John D. Pierce, the first Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction, and many state officers boarded at the front of the train. They were followed by members of the legislature, the Brady Guards militia, and additional distinguished citizens.

The first train trip from Detroit to Ypsilanti took about 3 hours, averaging about 15 miles per hour, which meant that the train arrived around 1 pm. Almost the entire city of Ypsilanti turned out to witness the arrival, joined by many other inhabitants of nearby towns and villages. The village of Ypsilanti had spent days preparing for the event. A public holiday was even declared, and a public feast was prepared along with an abundance of alcoholic refreshments. Ypsilanti resident and War of 1812 veteran, General John Van Fossen gave a speech and welcomed the VIP contingency to Ypsilanti. Part of his lofty speech stated that "In viewing the commodious train of cars now before us, we read the high destiny to which the enterprise of our citizens will conduct us."

Alpheus Felch was on the inaugural train trip as a VIP member of the Central Railroad. Later he became the 5th Governor of Michigan and a United States Senator. Felch later recalled that the train "proceeded to Ypsilanti very pleasantly and with little or no interruptions and was received by the citizens of that place with liberal and gratifying hospitality. A public entertainment had been provided and the compa-


A luxury 1830s train car similar to how the passenger coach "Governor Mason" would have looked on the inaugural trip to Ypsilanti.

ny sat down to it in right good earnest after their long and chilly ride. After dispatching a hearty and substantial repast, interchanging kind words and good feeling with the citizens and examining the novelties and beauties of the town, the company started upon their return."

The trip back to Detroit departed in the mid-afternoon, and didn't run as smoothly as the trip to Ypsilanti. About 10 miles into the return journey, the locomotive started to malfunction. Alpheus Felch described the return trip as follows: "Before that we had been rolled along very comfortably. Then at Dearbornville there came a dead halt." The cause of the stoppage was a leak in the boiler in the steam engine. The Detroit Daily Advertiser of February 6, 1838, reported that "The engine flatly refused all further services for that night. Neither persuasion, coaxing, or coercion could urge forward another inch that most intractable and asinine locomotive. It was left to digest its obstinacy in its own way. Horses were procured, but these stumbled and blundered about the holes and precipices till they well nigh over set the cars. However, no hurt was done, all was at length righted and horses, cars and cargo proceeded on their way rejoicing. Without further accident, but somewhat late in the evening, the company once more reached their beloved city of Detroit, to the unspeakable joy of their wives, children and friends, benumbed with cold yet burning glory."

Apparently, many of the passengers who finally returned to Detroit that evening were in a state of inebriation, having partaken in much festive drinking in Ypsilanti before the return trip. According to other accounts, several of the passengers were tired of waiting for the train to be rescued and walked the final 10 miles or so back to Detroit, arriving in the early morning hours of the next day.

The train must have been repaired by the following weekend, because the Detroit Daily Advertiser of February 13th, 1838, reported that "The cars on the railroad made four trips on Saturday (author's note: February 10th) between Detroit and Ypsilanti. The space traveled over would make about 120 miles. None but those who have experienced the delays and vexations of the old mode of conveyance can realize the advantage of the new." Four trips in one day seemed to be only a one-time occurrence, probably to accommodate the numerous curious travelers who wanted to make the trip. In the same issue, the newspaper had an advertisement placed by the railroad that stated "Notice is hereby given that the railroad cars will leave this city for Ypsilanti at half past 9 o'clock A.M., and will leave Ypsilanti on their return at 3 o'clock P.M., each day, unless otherwise directed. Passengers are accommodated with cars of a convenient and highly approved construction, propelled by powerful locomotives. Emigrant wagons and freight, merchandise, produce, etc., are transported at lowest rates. Average running time to Ypsilanti about two hours."

By July of 1838, the Central Railroad of Michigan's rolling stock consisted of four locomotives, two passenger cars, and three freight cars. By the autumn of 1838, the rolling stock consisted of five passenger cars and ten small freight cars. The passenger cars resembled omnibuses and ran on four wheels. The conductor collected fares by putting his head and arms in through the windows. In Ypsilanti, water for the locomotive engines was obtained from the springs under a high wagon bridge east of the station (author's note: probably referring to the Prospect St. bridge over the train tracks). The newly constructed wooden railroad bridge over the Huron River near Forest Avenue was used by the boys in town as a diving platform.

In 1838, with the arrival of the train, Mark Norris built the Western Hotel on property adjacent to the train station. The building was constructed of brick with stone facings. Shops occupied the ground floor, with the hotel above. The Western Hotel officially opened in May 1839, under the management of Abiel Hawkins and Abraham Sage. Around 1860, the Western Hotel was torn down to make way for the new three-story train station which required an extension of the railroad property. The hotel's bricks were used in the con-

The house at the corner of Babbitt St. and River St. incorporates half of the original wooden train station attached to the right side of the house c.1860.

The right side of this house on Babbitt St. likely dates back to 1860 as one half of the original wooden train station, with the addition on the left added sometime later.

struction of the Norris Block building across the street, which were quickly converted to Civil War barracks and later back to businesses in the building known as the Thompson Block. When the new ornate train station was built, the old wooden train station was removed.

Ypsilanti was the terminus of the Central railroad from Detroit for only one year before the line reached Ann Arbor on October 15, 1839, Dexter on July 4, 1841, Jackson in 1841, Albion in July 1844, Marshall in August 1844, and Kalamazoo in 1846. By 1846, the state of Michigan had difficulty funding the Central Railroad, so the state sold the line for two million dollars to the Michigan Central Corporation. Under private ownership, the planned Central route was rerouted away from St. Joseph and instead toward Chicago. The line extended to Niles in 1848, New Buffalo in 1849, and Michigan City, Indiana in 1850. The Central line reached Chicago in 1852 establishing a 270-mile trip from Detroit to Chicago on a route that is still used today.

The 1860's three-story brick Ypsilanti train station was said to be the most beautiful depot on the Michigan Central Railroad line. In 1910, a fire destroyed the upper floor and most of the elegant tower. In 1939, a train derailed and demolished another portion of the building. What remained of the train station served as an operational stop for passenger service until the 1970s. Since then, passenger trains enroute from Detroit to Chicago on the historic railroad line just breeze through Ypsilanti without stopping.

So, what became of the old wooden 1830's Ypsilanti train station when the new highly ornate three-story Victorian brick station replaced it in the 1860s? Harvey Colburn's book The Story of Ypsilanti, published in 1923, guides us to the answer to that question when he writes:

When the brick station was built, Doctor Babbitt cut the long low building in two. One half was added to the house on the corner of River and Babbitt Streets, where it still remains, while the other was converted into the residence just east on Babbitt.

Luckily for us, thanks to historic preservation, these two residences are still standing. The house that Colburn references at the corner of River and Babbitt Streets is located at 14 N. River St. The residence just east on Babbitt that Colburn mentions is most likely the house at 112 E. Babbitt Street. According to property records, that house dates to 1860, which is approximately the date when the new three-story brick train station was built to replace the old wooden station. While I was unable to find a photograph of the original wooden train station in its original location, we still have the actual train station (in two pieces) to witness for ourselves - now that we know where to find it.

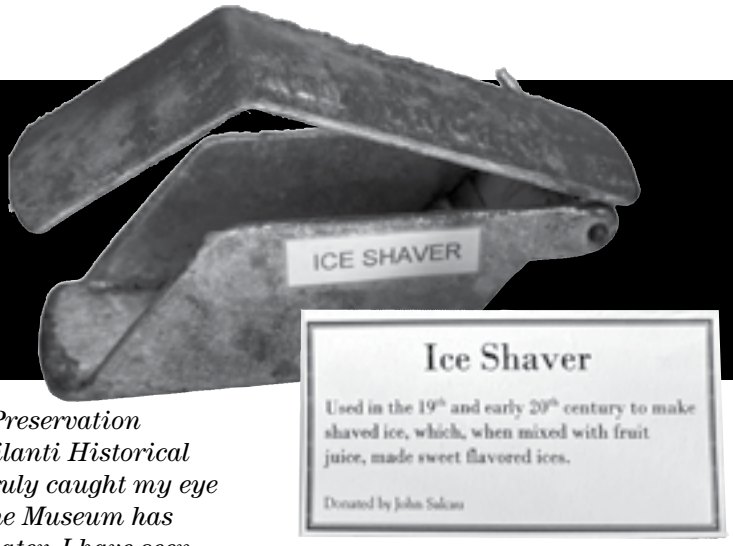
(Robert Anschuetz grew up in Ypsilanti in the historic Swaine house at the corner of Forest Ave. and River St. He is a regular contributor to the Gleanings .The information for this article was primarily referenced from Harvey Colburn's The Story of Ypsilanti and an Ypsilanti Press article from February 3, 1939 titled "TODAY ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST TRAIN HERE – City Made History Feb. 3, 1838 By 30 Mile Railway Trip.")

The three-story Victorian train station built in the 1860s, replacing the old wooden train station.

YHS ARTIFACT:

The Ice Shaver

BY DONNA AVINA



Ice shaver that can be found on the ice box in the kitchen at the YHS museum, donated by John Salcau.

During Introduction to Curatorship class's (EMU Preservation Studies Graduate Program) initial visit to the Ypsilanti Historical Museum & Archives (YHS), the first artifact that truly caught my eye was the ice shaver (also known as ice shredders) the Museum has on exhibit in the kitchen. While I will discuss this later, I have seen this type of ice shaver in my hometown of Compton, California, and wanted to learn more about this one.

The ice shaver, sitting on the icebox in the ca. 1900 kitchen, is made of metal; for being as old as it appears, it has little to no rust formed around it although it does have some color discoloration—some areas are darker than others. It is rather small and can fit into a palm. It has a compartment with a hinged metal lid. There, the ice shavings would have been stored after scraping it against an ice block. At the bottom, it has a blade that would chip the ice. On the top of the shaver, it has the wordings "LOGAN & STROBRIDGE IRON CO. NO-7 NEW BRIGHTON, PA." The label indicates this ice shaver was used in the 19th and 20th centuries for ice-related desserts and includes the donor's name, John Salcau. *(1926-2011)*.

I wanted to learn more about the donor; Connor Ashley located the file on the donor. Mr. Salcau, born in Sharon, Pennsylvania, came to Ann Arbor to school, later moving to Ypsilanti where he worked as a teacher and acting/assistant superintendent for the Ypsilanti Public schools from the 50s until the 80s when he retired. He was also active in community service including YHS. Presumably, this ice shaver was used at his family home either in Pennsylvania or Ypsilanti.

figure 1 : Sears, Roebuck Co. catalog from 1902 that includes an ice shaver (shredder) as a product, unlike the one at the YHS.

I needed to date this item and figure out more about the company that made it. Researching company, Logan & Strobridge from New Brighton, Pennsylvania, was challenging. When I first started my research, I looked through catalogs from the late 1800s and early 1900s trying to find ice shavers like this one—it was mass produced so I thought it might be there. I was frustrated because I couldn't find anything on ice shavers at all- even finding ice tools was a bit difficult. The closest I would get to an ice shaver were other types of models. As seen in figure 1 below, a Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog from 1902, included an ice shaver *(shredder)* as a product. However, it wasn't even close to the shaver design found at YHS.[1]

During an office visit with my professor Nancy Bryk, we did an internet search for the Historical Society in New Brighton, Pennsylvania, where the company was located and just called them. A helpful woman named Jane answered and was willing to help me with my research. She mentioned that the Logan & Strobridge company had a huge influence in their town. Jane put me in contact with the director of the society, who sent me the few files they had about the company.

Logan & Strobridge Company ad of squeezers and shredders found in the House Furnishing Review Vol. 16, July- December 1899.

(Jane happened to have a daughter who lived in Ann Arbor; during Thanksgiving she visited YHS and saw the ice shaver!)

Their information revealed the company was founded by Turner Strobridge in 1874, making iron hardware known as novelty works. They specialized in iron castings, nickel, brass, and

[1] Sears, Roebuck & Co., Cheapest Supply House on Earth, Chicago, 1902, 103.

bronze plated, tinned, japanned, and copper, ultimately purchased by the Wrightsville Hardware Co., another iron company located in Pennsylvania,[2] sometime around 1910. *(I found advertisements for Logan & Strobridge for their products until 1910, when advertisements start promoting the products of the Wrightsville company.)* It was interesting that their products still had the old Brighton logo—not many changes.[3]

The Historical Society also sent me a few advertisements for the Logan & Strobridge Company from 1899. This advertisement features five different types of ice shredders and ice planes, along with fourteen different types of lemon squeezers that were japanned, tinned, or of porcelain. Perhaps they did not feature this exact shaver. Therefore, it is possible that the type of shaver found in YHS was manufactured sometime around 1890.[4]

The use of this tool speaks to a different way of living than what we are accustomed to in modern times. The invention of the electric refrigerator was not realized until the 1930s. Instead, ca. 1900, the icebox, a wood storage container that had insulation all around it, kept cold with an ice block inside. The local ice man would deliver and sell ice blocks to those who own ice boxes, which were rather expensive initially. Ice could be chipped or shredded from that block.

What was the purpose of an ice shaver during the 1890s? Advertisements claim that the ice shaver was perfect for chipping ice from ice blocks, which can come in handy for pairing with fruit, drinks, oysters & clams, olives, celery, radishes, iced tea. They add that the shavers could be used in sick rooms, probably to reduce fever of the ill.[5] Sears catalogs mention that the ice shaver can be used for snowballs, which were shaved ice desserts paired with flavor syrup. It also suggests that it could be a great business to sell snow cones to children and even includes the average of what a man could make in a day selling snow cones— ranging from $3 to $9 a day.[6] Thus, ice shavers were typically used either in the kitchen, for business, and/or in the sick room setting.

Ice Shredder.

The operation of our shredder requires no explanation, being simply to draw the blade upon a piece of ice—the pressure applied producing fine or coarse pieces, as desired. To remove the finely cut ice from the cup, grasp the shredder firmly in the right hand and strike it, inverted, upon the left, at the same time being careful to keep the lid closed. Then scrape the ice into some convenient receptacle. It is not necessary to take the ice out of the refrigerator, as you may reach in and fill the cup from the side, end or top of a cake of ice without disturbing anything or wetting your hands. Its use will be appreciated for fruits, drinks, oysters and clams on the half shell, olives, celery, radishes, iced tea, sliced tomatoes, etc., and for many purposes in the sick room. It is also adapted for use in making "snow balls," which are variously flavored and sold to children on the streets and at their schools, also to the general public at fairs. Men engaged in making "snow balls" are making from $5 to $9 per day.

No. 13475. Price, each, tinned..... 50c

Ice shredder ad found in the Sears, Roebuck Co. catalog from 1902.

I have a personal connection with this tool, which drew me to this object the first time I saw it at YHS. When I was growing up in Compton, California, I used to go to church on Sundays with my grandma. After the church service, she would buy my brother and me raspados, a Mexican ice dessert, like a snow cone, but made of ice shavings and real fruit-based juices *(often homemade)*. I have core memories of the ice man shaving against the ice block he would carry in his wagon—*with precisely this ice shaver model.* He'd ask what flavor I wanted. I would almost always say *"Tamarindo Por favor (tamarind flavor, please)."* In all honesty, during my research, I was confused as to why I couldn't find a similar ice shredder throughout the catalogs-- the ice shaver found at YHS was the only model I had ever seen.

Overall, the ice shaver is a reminder that in the 19th century, people didn't have refrigerators like we do to preserve their food but had blocks of ice delivered for their ice boxes. This tool allowed users to shave ice from that block in the comfort of their homes to pair with dishes or ice desserts like ice cones. Today, we can purchase bags of ice cubes instead of getting ice blocks delivered to our homes *(and there are electric ice crushers)*. Outside of its purpose in the 19th century, it also played a role in my life growing up California, as I remember the tool being used to make ice desserts known as raspados--a dessert from Mexico. This ice shaver is more than just a kitchen tool, it speaks to how different people have used the tool in different periods. It also reminds us that a simple tool can reveal stories about its use from different cultures and different eras, too.

This article is first in a series from EMU's "Introduction to Curatorship class". Each member of the Class finds an article in the YHS museum that interests them. They research the item, write an extensive paper, then present to the entire class and to members of the YHS Board of Trustees. This article is a condensed version of the paper.

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[3] House Furnishing Review, Vol 32-33,1910, 31.

[4] House Furnishing Review, Vol 16, July-Dec 1899, 20.

[5] House Furnishings Review, July-December 1899, 20.

[6] Sears, Roebuck & Co Catalog, 1902, 103.

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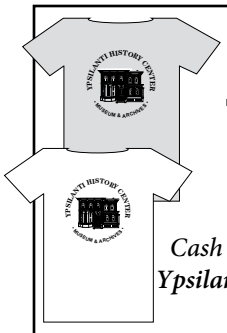

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