

Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

YHS Museum & Archives

Official publication of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, featuring historical articles and reminisces of the people and places in the Ypsilanti area.



WINTER 2008

John Burton, One of the First African American Mayors in Michigan

By Veronica Robinson

John Burton was elected Mayor of Ypsilanti in 1967 after nearly 20 years on the Ypsilanti City Council. He was one of three men who made history that year by becoming Michigan's first African American mayors. While serving as mayor from 1967 to 1970, Burton faced many important issues, the

Major League parks while the local teams were on the road. Burton "...once played a game pitched by Satchel Page on his team and Dizzy Dean on the other." Burton was the first African American player to participate in Class A professional baseball in Michigan. Later, he managed a baseball team in Ypsilanti.



This photograph of John Burton was published in Life Magazine in 1967 along with pictures of Saginaw's Henry Marsh and Flint's Floyd McCree, Michigan's first African American Mayors.

most controversial being the widening of Washtenaw Avenue.

In his 30s, Burton played in the Class A amateur division and was the catcher on a professional baseball team that played in

Burton, born in St. Louis, Missouri, came to Ypsilanti in 1936 and was appointed to the staff of the International UAW by Walter Reuther in 1954. He served as the Political Action Committee Coordinator of the 1st and
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Seasons Greetings

Holiday Open House
December 27th
6:30 to 10:00pm

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Ypsilanti Historical Society

220 North Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
Tel: (734) 482-4990
www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org

Gleanings Staff

Editor _____ Al Rudisill
Assistant Editor _____ Peg Porter
Design & Layout _____ Keith Bretzius
Advertising Director _____ Pam German
Finance Director _____ Karen Nickels
Distribution _____ Pam German

If you have suggestions for articles or if you have questions contact Al Rudisill at 734-476-6658 or al@rudisill.ws.

Ypsilanti Gleanings is published 4 times a year by the Ypsilanti Historical Society, 220 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197

From the President's Desk

By Alvin E. Rudisill

Our Board of Trustees and the advisory boards for the Museum, Archives and Endowment Fund have been very busy over the past couple of months. The Museum Advisory Board members have been busy decorating the Museum for the holiday season and planning our holiday open house scheduled for December 27th. The Archives Advisory Board members have been assisting with setting up new collections (Map, Blueprint and Letter) and sorting through boxes brought in from storage and placing documents in the appropriate collection files. The Endowment Fund Advisory Board Members have been busy planning fundraising activities for next year.

We have two major projects that we need to raise funds for prior to next spring. The first is resurfacing the parking lot and repairing the sidewalk and curbs in front of the Museum. The second is repairing the front steps and either replacing or repairing the front door of the Museum. These two projects together will cost approximately \$25,000 and we will be unable to proceed

with either until funds have been procured to cover the costs.

The new "Motor Cities" sign has been installed on the north side of the sidewalk leading to the front entrance of the Museum. Our sincere thanks to Bill Nickels for his efforts in getting all the signs placed around the city. Make sure you stop and look at our new sign as it provides some interesting historical facts about our "house" museum.

Peg Porter, Chair of our Membership Committee, would appreciate your assistance in reaching our goal of 80 new members during the 2009 membership year. One of the suggestions she has is for each of us to give one or more YHS memberships as Christmas gifts. This is a great suggestion as a single membership is only \$10 per year and a family membership is \$15 per year. Every YHS member receives four copies of the "Gleanings" so a great deal of history can be passed on with this gift. You might wish to stop by the Museum and pick up some copies of this
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Ypsilanti Historical Society Home Page - Windows Internet Explorer
http://ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org/

Ypsilanti Historical Society
220 North Huron Street - Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Home
Administrative
Archives
Collections
Contact Info
Donations
Event Schedule
Membership
Publications
Search Engines
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Volunteer
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Welcome!
The Ypsilanti Historical Museum is a home. The Museum and Fletcher-Wheeler Historical Society. We are all volunteers non-city residents.

A Matter of Trust
The Ypsilanti Historical Society has initiated a five-year campaign to raise \$400,000. This amount will cover the cost of purchasing the property at 220 North Huron Street from the City of Ypsilanti and completing the many deferred maintenance projects on the buildings and grounds. You may view a Power Point presentation related to the campaign by clicking your mouse on "A Matter of Trust" and then clicking on the first picture. The arrow at the top of the page will forward the program to the next slide.

For Information about upcoming Society events, visit us on-line at:
www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org

Museum: 734-484-0080
Archives: 734-317-4236
[click here for a map](#)

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Technical support for this site provided by Noregon Enterprise at Work's SBC America WebConnect Program. Domain and Web Hosting Services provided by Huron Valley Community Network.

From the President's Desk...
continued from page 2

issue of the *Gleanings* as well as a "Membership Gift Certificate" to place under the tree or to mail to the recipient of the gift.

During the last two weeks of December and during the month of January we will be soliciting sponsorships and advertisers for the four 2009 issues of the *Gleanings*. The rate for sponsors is \$20 per issue and advertising rates start at \$50 per issue. However, during our six weeks solicitation period those sponsors and advertisers who commit and pay for the entire year will receive a 25% discount. Please call the Museum if you would like to be a sponsor or advertiser.

The Museum has been beautifully decorated for the holiday season and we hope you will stop by and spend some time. Also, make sure you make plans to join us on December 27 for the holiday open house. Merry Christmas and best wishes in the new year! ■

John Burton...
continued from front page

13th Congressional Districts.

He was named to the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents in 1985 and was elected chairman of that board in 1989. The EMU Board of Regents later named a street on the campus in his honor and the local community established a \$10,000 endowed scholarship in his name.

Burton received numerous awards during his lifetime including: The UAW Douglas A. Fraser Community Services Common Swift Award, the Civic Humanitarian of the Year Award from Eastern Michigan University, and the Distinguished Service Award from the Greater Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce.

Burton passed away in January of 1992 at the age of 81. ■

(Veronica Robinson is enrolled in the graduate program in Historical Preservation at EMU and is serving as an intern in the YHS Archives.)



Holidays at the Historical Museum

Bring the whole family to celebrate the holiday with us on

Saturday, December 27th
6:30 to 10:00pm

There will be musical entertainment and stories to delight and warm the hearts of all family members, and non-alcoholic beverages along with holiday goodies to warm the body on a cold winter night. Good cheer will abound as we celebrate the holidays in our beautifully decorated historical home at 220 North Huron Street, Ypsilanti. Please come in casual dress. Parking is available in the Presbyterian Church parking lot across the street.

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Gone, But Not Forgotten

By Pamela German and
Veronica Robinson

The greater Ypsilanti area has a long history of innovation in business and industry. Much of this history has been captured in the Archives of the Ypsilanti Historical Society so that present and future generations will not forget our past. This article is the first in a series that will feature some of the Ypsilanti area businesses and organizations from earlier years that may no longer be around, but will surely not be forgotten.

Mack and Mack Furniture

Once located at 211 West Michigan Avenue in downtown Ypsilanti, the Mack and Mack Furniture store was in business for 108 years. A Scottish cabinetmaker, William McAndrew, moved to the United States around 1850 and settled in Rawsonville, but soon moved to Ypsilanti. It was in Ypsilanti that he began the furniture company. His wife, Elizabeth McAndrew, was Washtenaw County's first female physician.

McAndrew started a furniture business with a man named Captain Stanley at 125 W. Michigan Avenue. A year later, William Clarke bought Stanley's share in the company. Shortly thereafter, Clarke and McAndrew took on a third partner, James M. Wallace and began employing McAndrew's son Thomas as an upholsterer. The business prospered for several years, but with the rise in popularity of machine-made furniture in the early 1870s, McAndrew retired from furniture making.

In 1876, Thomas W. McAndrew, William's son and George McElcheran bought the business and it officially became Mack and Mack. This partnership lasted for 30 years until McElcheran's retirement when Thomas' son, Atwood, took an active role in the business.

Atwood McAndrew Jr., grandson of Thomas, was the last generation to mind the store. In 1976 Mack and Mack Furniture was honored by the Washtenaw County Historical Society for being the oldest business in Washtenaw County still in its original location. After three



Mack & Mack Furniture used to be located at 211 W. Michigan Ave.



Mack & Mack Furniture was in business for 108 years and finally closed in 1985.

generations of ownership, due to economic changes in Ypsilanti, Mack and Mack closed its doors in 1985. The first tenant in the building after the furniture store closed was the First Savings Bank.

Cornwell Paper Mill

The Cornwell Paper Mill was the first paper mill located in Ypsilanti and is considered the beginning of the paper industry in Washtenaw County. Though other companies had

produced paper within Washtenaw County boundaries, the Cornwell Mill was the first large-scale enterprise. Records indicate that Cornelius Cornwell in either in 1855 or 1856 built the mill, with significant investment from Mrs. H.W. Larzelere and Mr. VanCleve.

By 1863 both had sold their shares to Cornwell who then became sole owner.

The Cornwell Paper Company manufactured newsprint at a rate of 3.5 to 4 tons per day. *continued on page 6*



The Cornwell Paper Mill was the first large-scale paper manufacturer in Washtenaw County.



Damage to the Cornwell Mill after the 1876 boiler explosion.

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Gone, But Not Forgotten *continued from page 5*

Purchasers included the Chicago Times, Detroit Post, and Detroit Tribune. The mill operated on water power, used a 30 horsepower steam engine as a backup generator, and was lit by gas that was manufactured on the grounds.

A series of fires made work in the mill quite dangerous. On January 14, 1876, at noon, a boiler exploded killing two workers and injuring another. The explosion was caused by a faulty steam gauge, which misread the boiler pressure, allowing it to build to disastrous levels. The boiler flew nearly 180 feet into the air. A local paper reported that many nearby residents felt the explosion and thought it was an earthquake. The damage cost to the Cornwell family, the owners of the mill, was around \$10,000. The Peninsular Paper Company opened soon after, and the Cornwell Paper Mill was no longer the only paper mill in the city.

Dixboro General Store

The Dixboro General Store was located in nearby Dixboro on 5210 Plymouth Road. Its time of construction is disputed, but most sources say it was built between 1840 and the 1860. A later wing addition was added onto the store in 1924. The structure served as a general store for most of its early years, but later it also operated as a post office and antique store. Several different people have owned and operated businesses within the building. In 1980 the building was designated a state historic site and a sign indicative of this honor was placed at its location. The last store to operate in the original building closed in 1989.

The Ypsilanti Hay Press Company

Frank T. Newton started the Ypsilanti Hay Press Company in 1907. The company was located on Forest Street just east of the railroad tracks. The claim was made that the facility was the "Largest Factory in the World devoted exclusively to the manufacture of Hay Presses."

The Ypsilanti plant specialized in belt-powered presses that were available with



The Dixboro General Store has been the site of many businesses, including the antiques store pictured above.

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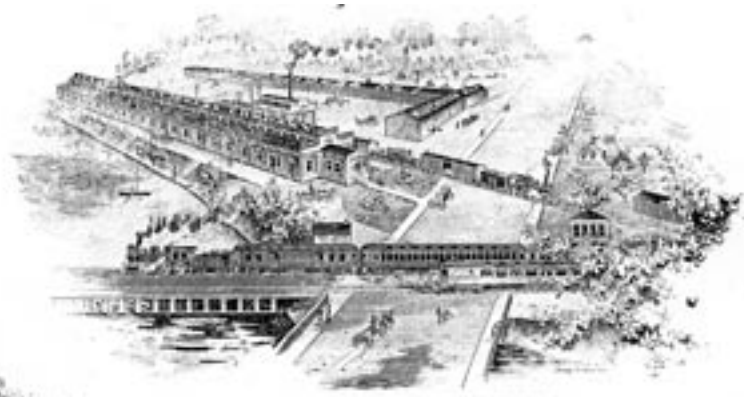
In 1912 three sizes of the Wolverine Tractor were manufactured by the Ypsilanti Hay Press Company.

wood or steel frames to suit the purchaser. The 1910 offerings of the Wolverine Balers included a number of sizes including 14x18, 16x18, 17x22, and 18x22, so that baler operators could regulate the length of their desired bales.

In 1912, the Ypsilanti Hay Press Company was also building tractors with the Wolverine

name that utilized 18, 25 and 35 horsepower engines. Each tractor had a sliding gear transmission and a pair of forward speeds off a two cylinder opposed engine.

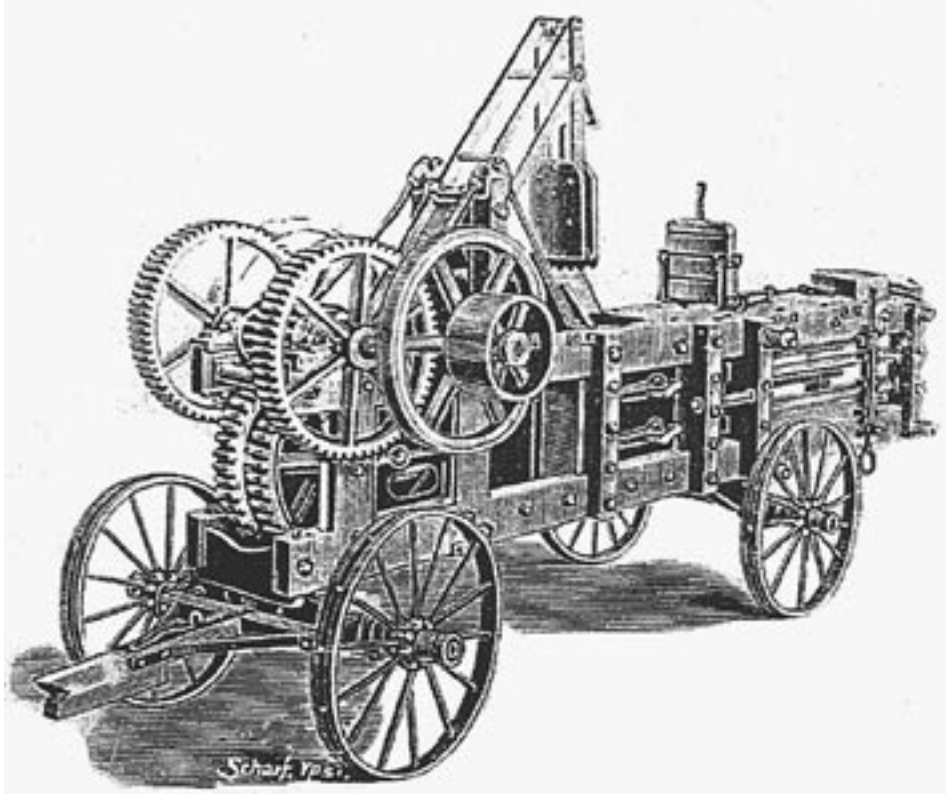
Frank Newton moved to Ypsilanti in 1890 with his wife Ella and lived at 110 Park Street until 1931 when they moved to 216 South Huron Street. He was first employed as a



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The Ypsilanti Hay Press Company on East Forest Street was advertised as the "Largest Factory in the World devoted exclusively to the manufacture of hay presses."



The Wolverine Baler was manufactured by the Ypsilanti Hay Press Company.

teacher but left to become an agent of the Union Central Life Insurance Company and later an agent for Equitable Life Insurance Company of New York. In 1898 he joined with John S. Haggerty, a former Secretary of State, to found the Newton and Haggerty Ladder Company in Detroit. The ladder company moved to Ann Arbor in 1907.

Newton served four years as the Sheriff of Washtenaw County, was elected to the Michigan State Senate from the 12th District, and served as a Director of the Ypsilanti Savings Bank. At the time of his death, in 1931, he was the U.S. Marshall for the Eastern District of Michigan.

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An YPSIAEROTROPOLIS

By Tom Dodd and James Mann

Futures of the Past

In the early 1970s Washtenaw Community College President Gunder Myran invited Ann Cleary Kettles to come to “just one meeting” to discuss the future of Ypsilanti. Kettles remembers how that group became the Ypsi

Futures project for the next several years. After witnessing the demise of the Ypsilanti Greek Theatre, the group made more modest predictions for what they wished for Ypsilanti’s future. Kettle attributes their creative thinking with the origin of the Full Circle Community

Center, the establishment of a City Charter Commission, the first stop of the Michigan Artrain, and the start of revitalization of the depot district. Myran, Kettles and the Ypsilanti Futures group also recommended Ypsilanti stop trying to be so modern and focus on its heritage through what was to become an annual festival of local history. A renewed emphasis came to the Ypsilanti Historical Museum and the “modern cheese graters” covering several downtown buildings - including City Hall - were identified as “inappropriate” to the City’s history. Clearly, their visions of the future included a look into our community’s rear-view mirror. Ironically, an important part of Ypsilanti’s future was its past.

Futurists beyond the confines of Ypsilanti had higher-flying visions of the future as they imagined swarms of personal helicopters descending from space ships to lighter-than-air floating factories. Buckminster Fuller and Peter Max were their visionaries and ideas flowed toward a bright future. That kind of “futuring” was neither new nor novel. Nor was such up-in-the-air optimism limited to the committee in Ypsilanti.

Fair set the theme

More than 44 million attended the 1939-40 New York World’s Fair to see “The World of Tomorrow.” “The eyes of the Fair are on the future,” said the official World’s Fair pamphlet, “- not in the sense of peering toward the unknown nor attempting to foretell the events of tomorrow and the shape of things to come, but in the sense of presenting a new and clearer view of today in preparation for tomorrow; a view of the forces and ideas that prevail as well as the machines. To its visitors the Fair will say: ‘Here are the materials, ideas, and forces at work in our world. These are the tools with which the World of Tomorrow must be made. They are all interesting and much effort has been expended to lay them before you in an interesting way. Familiarity with today is the best preparation for the future.’” The Fair’s logo, a clean and unadorned “Trylon and Perisphere” shouted “NEW!” as gentle roller-coaster rides whisked thousands of tourists into a Disneyesque animated model of a 1960 world in defiance of gravity. The future was coming and it was just around the corner.



The Ypsilanti Aerotropolis began in 1919 and continues today.



All hailed modernity in the shadow of the Trylon & Perisphere at the New York World's Fair of 1939.



"Regards sur l'avenir: Gratte-ciel cylindrique avec gare aeriennne" proposed high-rise modern structures in France's future.

A Washtenaw Aerotropolis may have grown around us without our even knowing. The 2006 edition of DeLorme's Michigan Atlas & Gazetteer lists 20 airports, air parks, or landing strips in Washtenaw County and in nearby Wayne County. All would be clearly visible on a clear day from a few thousand feet above Ypsilanti:

Ann Arbor Municipal Airport
Bielec Airport
Cackleberry Landing Strip
Chelsea Landing Strip
Coon Landing Strip
Detroit Metropolitan Airport
Detroit Willow Run Airport
Downwind Acres Landing Strip
Flying B Landing Strip
Larsen Airport
Lima Center Landing Strip
Martz Road Landing Strip
McEanan Airport
Mettetal Airport (Plymouth)
Rosetti Landing Strip
Saline Airport
Talladay Farms Airport
Young Airport

Fantasies came true

American children had read the fantasies of Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, and Edgar Rice Burroughs and more modern kids learned of futures through their pulpy comic books. Modernistic characters like Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon, and Brick Bradford flew across the horizon with shoulder-strapped jet packs. The popular heroes were credited with bringing into popular media the concept of space exploration in four-color, off-set newsprint.

Dreaming of what might be was as popular with these kids as with the ancient Greeks.

Slickers challenged our imagination

Popular Science and Popular Mechanics magazines of our childhood predicted what "The Future" might look like - if only we were handy with bending plastic, laying cement blocks, and arranging corner windows made of glass blocks. Neon-lined shop windows and shiny, glass tiled storefronts helped to make old buildings appear modern. We even covered façades in Ypsilanti with metal grids to hide the old-fashioned architecture of yesterday. Some Ypsilantians harbored the hope that they could be projected into a futuristic Utopia where they could fly to work in private helicopters and take off in giant passenger air-borne passenger ships for exotic vacations around the world and into outer space.

Ypsilanti's "aerotropolis" set the standard. Realizations of "The Future" surrounded the City of Ypsilanti with an airpark on Warner's farm just south of Recreation Park, the development of the Ypsilanti City Airport to our west, McEanan Airport to our south and, with the outbreak of World War II, the giant Willow Run Airport was developed just across the county line to the east. Ypsilanti was surrounded by total modernity.

Warner Field

An emergency forced a plane from Selfridge Field in Mt. Clemens to make a landing in the field behind Warner's farm in Ypsilanti in 1919. The field backed up to Recreation Park where Ypsilantians were accustomed to seeing races, circuses, ball games, and other large expositions. The pilot could not have chosen a more propitious landing site. The

aircraft's landing drew the whole town to the field that today is known as Woods Road and Pleasant Drive.

For the next year, locals who had their own airplanes used the field as their own private landing strip with Warner's permission. Soon after, state laws and local ordinances began to set the standards for such an operation and "Warner Field" went back to grazing cows for the Warner Dairy on Michigan Avenue.

Calf in the air

The Holstein-Friesian Association of Washtenaw held its first annual picnic at Recreation Park on Monday, August 11, 1919, with a fair sized crowd in attendance. As part of the program a Holstein calf from Shady Knoll farms was auctioned off to the highest bidder, who was John Bazley who bid \$500. The calf was to be delivered to Bazley's farm by a Curtis plane which was at Recreation Park for that purpose. The calf was led to the Warner barn to be prepared for the flight, where it seems it objected to the idea of a ride in the plane. As the crowd was waiting patiently to watch the start of the flight, a bag of straw was substituted for the calf.

The plane took off as planned, but it was soon evident that something was wrong with the engine. The plane was flying low and turned to head back to the park. As the plane attempted to land it was caught in the top of a tree, turned partly around and crashed into another tree and then crashed to the ground. Fortunately no one was hurt in the crash, but the plane suffered extensive damage. The aircraft needed to be repaired before it could take off - without the calf. "So ended a perfect day," concluded *The Ypsilanti Record* of Thursday, August 14, 1919.

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An YPSIAEROTROPOLIS *continued from page 9*

Ypsilanti City Airport

During the 1920s those who wished to see a vision of the future, looked to the sky, and many saw the future in the shape of an airplane. The 1920s was the age of aviation and the airplane was all the rage. No city was complete without an airport, and that included Ypsilanti. To make the vision of the future a reality, the Ypsilanti Board of Commerce formed a committee on finding ways of securing an airfield.

On Tuesday, July 27, 1926, a group of twenty men interested in the possibility of an airfield near Ypsilanti listened to William Mars, an airplane manufacturer who spoke on the general developments in aviation. Ypsilanti, Mars pointed out, was on the biggest air route in the country - New York, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. Airplane factories near Ypsilanti were six months behind in deliveries, he contended, and prospective buyers living in Ypsilanti would place orders if a landing field were near the city. Within five years government officials expected people to fly to and from their place of employment in metropolitan areas miles apart. Airplanes were then selling at \$2,400, the cost of a medium priced automobile. "Air transportation is not coming," said Mars, "it is here now."

"With airplanes making short work of such distances," noted *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* on Monday, August 2, 1926, "it will be possible to start out for a vacation at the close of business in the afternoon and be in the Upper Peninsula for dinner, to return for work again in the morning. A businessman could under those circumstances spend the nights with his family at a lake and fly back and forth to work, rather than see them only over weekends or not at all as is the case with many persons now. Government would be more efficient, for legislators at Lansing could return to their constituencies during the evenings to talk over new measures with the voters." All that was needed was a landing strip.

The Daily Ypsilanti Press published as part of the story specifications compiled by the United States War Department. These included having the airport within reach of ground transportation facilities, as there was no point

in saving time by air travel only to lose it by a slow drive on bad roads. The size of the airport should allow for a clear unobstructed area of at least 900 yards in the direction of the prevailing wind, if not in all directions.

"The ground must, of course, be firm under all weather conditions. It is best for it to be sodded on account of the great quantities of dust which will otherwise be stirred up by propeller and wheels, which is not only disagreeable but is harmful to the working parts of the motors. The surface must be level and fairly smooth, as deep furrows or ditches will seriously damage or wreck machines."

"Standard markings for landing fields have been adopted by the government," continued the report. "An important one of these is a large white landing circle in the center of the field, 100 feet in diameter made of bands four feet wide built flush with the ground, to prevent interference with the rolling of airplanes over them. The markings are to be made of crushed stone or perhaps planking."

"Within the landing circle should be a direction landing marker, in the shape of a cross or bar, depending upon the shape of the field. This marker is to show the aviator overhead in what directions are the best runways. To be seen distinctly from the air, these markings must be panels fifteen feet long by three feet wide."

Aviators of the day followed railroads to keep their bearings, so markings on the roofs of buildings near the railroad were advisable. "Lumber sheds have proven good locations for such markers. Simple block letters in white with dull black backgrounds are best. Gravel and pitch roofs are to be avoided as markers on them become blurred quickly. If a roof has a slope of over 30 degrees, the sign must be painted on both sides. Such signs can be used to indicate the name of the town, the direction of the landing field, distances to other points, etc."

Land for the airport was procured at Carpenter and Morgan roads in Pittsfield Township, by a syndicate of thirty people. The airport included one hundred sixty acres in a field a half mile square. At the airport a hanger was constructed, 32 feet wide and 114 feet long, with room enough for four planes. "It is so arranged that each plane can be wheeled



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into place with a large door exactly in front of each plane,” reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of January 24, 1927.

The Ypsilanti City Airport was dedicated with three days of events at the airport on June 10, 11 and 12 of 1927. Some twenty-five hundred people watched as the program began with an aerial parade which was followed by a speed race around the field. Planes raced that day at over 80 miles per hour. The next day, the planes raced at speeds of over 100 miles per hour. Each day included a dead stick landing contest and a parachute drop.

“The program closed with a double parachute drop, Robert Manier and Leon Snyder leaping simultaneously from planes while at an altitude of 1,500 ft. Snyder, who had given the parachute drop the two preceding days, Sunday landed on the field. The wind the days before drove him beyond the landing field, into fields across the road from the airport,” reported *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Monday, June 13, 1927.

“Leaders in aviation in Michigan who attended the meet here credit Ypsilanti with having carried out one of the few successful air meets so far held in the state. Pilots expressed appreciation of the courtesies extended them and entertainment provided. The crowd proved enthusiastic and intelligently interested in aviation and the program was not marred by mishaps or controversies. In addition to proving constructive as well as interesting, the meet was a financial success,” noted the account.

“*Lucky Lindy*” landed here Charles Lindbergh and his wife, Ann Morrow, landed at the Ypsilanti City Airport at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, September 1, 1930, in their Lockheed plane. The two were making a coast-to-coast tour and stopped in at Ypsilanti to visit Dr. Alexander Ruthven, President of the University of Michigan. The two took off for Buffalo, New York at 4:45 p.m. They were forced to land at Bellefonte Pennsylvania because of heavy fog.

“In keeping with the Lindbergh policy of private trips for brief visits, the ship was set down here with no advance word of the
continued on page 22



Right: Charles and Ann Morrow Lindbergh.

Below: Lindberghs refueling that same year, but in Minneapolis. No pictures were taken of their landing in Ypsilanti.



The Ypsilanti Community Band - The First 30 Seasons

By Jerry Robbins, Ed.D.

It's a Tuesday evening. Wayne Jahnke assembles his trombone as he readies for a rehearsal of the Ypsilanti Community Band (YCB). Across the room, Lorne Kennedy warms up his clarinet. Both Jahnke, a retired utilities administrator, and Kennedy, a retired postal worker, have met for this purpose most Tuesday nights for the past 30 years. Both are charter and continuous members of the YCB.

The YCB began on January 22, 1979, when Lynn Cooper, then in his 10th year as a band director in the Ypsilanti schools, called together a group of 23 of his friends, his former students, and band students from Eastern Michigan University (EMU). At that exploratory meeting, it was decided to continue with the organization of a community band. The first rehearsal was set for February 20, 1979. More than 50 people attended that first rehearsal and the Band was under way. However, this was, by no means, the first adult band organization in the community.

Predecessor Bands in the Community: There are references to a city band in the mid-1800's, led by Fred Cutler. This may be the same as the Ypsilanti Cornet Band, said to be founded in the 1870's, also led by Cutler. This band dissolved and was replaced by the Light Guard Band, which appears to have been founded in 1872. A second Ypsilanti City Band was organized in 1876, led by Charles Skinner.

Perhaps the best remembered former Ypsilanti adult band was the "Barnhill Band," founded by John F. Barnhill, a professor of mathematics at Michigan State Normal College (now EMU), and its successor (after the death of the founder in 1941), the Barnhill Memorial Band. (See Lois Katon, "Ypsilanti High School Boys Band and the Ypsilanti Community Band," *Ypsilanti Gleanings*, fall 2006, p.14.) Unfortunately, this band's numbers began to dwindle and it dissolved in the 1960's.

YCB - The Beginnings: The original purposes as set by Lynn Cooper and the other founders

of the YCB, with minor changes in wording, remain firmly in place. Among the features that have made and continue to make YCB different from many other musical groups in the area are (a) no auditions, (b) any player of a concert band instrument is welcome, (c) all

concerts are free, and (d) all personal services are donated.

YCB - The Conductors: The YCB has had five conductors. Their lengths of service have ranged from one season to more than 10 seasons.

- **Lynn Cooper (1979-1985)**, the founding conductor, received all of his formal education in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor institutions. With the exception of his first three years of teaching, through



Paul Stanifer, the Ypsilanti Community Band's second conductor, leading the Band at Ypsilanti High School in 1986.



Harold Goodsman (right), a charter member of the Ypsilanti Community Band, who had 80 years of experience playing in area bands at the time of his death, and others in the YCB trumpet section at a 1990 concert.



Lynn Cooper conducts the first rehearsal of the Ypsilanti Community Band at Ypsilanti High School in February, 1979.



Jerry Robbins with the Ypsilanti Community Band in Recreation Park in June, 2004.

the time that he led the YCB, his career was as a band director in the Ypsilanti schools. He accepted a position at Asbury College in Kentucky in 1985, from which institution he has retired recently. During his years at Asbury he completed his doctorate (from UM) and became chair of the Department of Music at that institution. In 1979, Cooper felt that the area was ripe for a post-high school musical performance group. Cooper led organizational and musical activities of the YCB during the formative first seven seasons.

- **Paul Stanifer (1985-1986)** served as the second YCB conductor for the 8th (1985-1986) season. Stanifer lived at the time in Temperance, MI, where he had conducted award-winning bands in the Bedford schools for 17 years before switching to a management and sales career. Stanifer later joined the staff of the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association and he currently serves as the Executive Director of that organization.
- **Charles Lee (1986-1988)**, a native of Indiana, served as YCB's third conduc-

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The Ypsilanti Community Band *continued from page 13*

tor for the 9th and 10th (1986-1988) seasons. A former high school band director, he also had directed bands at St. Joseph's College and Morehead State University. He was the first director of bands at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Lee received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in higher education in 1982. At the time of his appointment as YCB Music Director and Principal Conductor, Lee was the corporate marketing manager for education at the Burroughs Corporation. Following his service with the YCB, Lee held other corporate positions. He has recently retired and lives in South Carolina.

- **Kenneth Bowman (1988-1998)** served as the fourth YCB conductor for the 11th through 20th seasons (1988-1998). He grew up in Connecticut and received his first degree from Danbury State Teachers College. Bowman served in the U.S. Army after graduation and played tuba with the First Army Band (NY) and the Ninth Army Band in Fairbanks (AL). Bowman began his teaching career in 1961 in Fairbanks. After earning his masters degree from UM in 1965 he taught band in Armada, MI

for two years. He came to Lincoln High School in 1967 and was the band director there until his retirement in 1989.

Bowman was a charter and 20-year member of the YCB. He died in 2007.

- **Jerry Robbins (1998-present)**, the fifth conductor, Jerry Robbins, has served in that role from season 21 (1998-1999) to the present time. A native of Arkansas, his bachelor's degree is in mathematics and music from Hendrix College and his masters and doctorate are in educational administration from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. After a brief career as a high school band director in Arkansas, he went on to become a high school principal, university professor, department chair, and central university administrator at several institutions. Robbins served 25 years as Dean of the College of Education at three institutions. He retired from that position at EMU in 2004. Active in community music groups all his adult life, Robbins served 11 years as the assistant conductor of the North Fulton Community Band (now the Atlanta Wind Symphony) in Georgia. When he came to EMU in 1991, he joined the YCB as a trombone player. In 1993, he was named assistant conductor of the YCB, a position he held until being named



Ypsilanti Community Band in Pease Auditorium at Eastern Michigan University in December, 1987.



The third conductor of the Ypsilanti Community Band, Dr. Charles Lee, leads the band in a 1987 outdoor concert.



Founding Director Lynn Cooper conducts the Ypsilanti Community Band in Recreation Park in July, 1983.



Ken Bowman, the fourth conductor, leads the Ypsilanti Community Band in a 1993 concert.

YCB conductor in 1998. (The Band was known as the “Barnhill Band” during the indoor seasons from 1998 to 2002.)

YCB - The Assistant Conductors: There have been periods of time when there was no assistant conductor. In some cases, an individual served several times as “guest conductor” before being officially named “assistant conductor.” YCB’s assistant conductors have included: Michael Chiumento (1979), John Mason (1983-1985), Lawrence VanOyen (1986-1987), Michael Letovsky (1988-1990), Janet Williams (1990-1991), Diane Joslin (1990-1992), Jerry Robbins (1993-1998), George Thompson (1998-2002), Jon Margerum-Leys (2002-2005), James Wagner (2007-present), Pat Padilla (2007-present), and Vince Chrisman (2008-present).

YCB - The Players: There were 59 players listed for the first concert in May 1979, a number that increased to 68 for the next con-

cert in July of that year. The least number of players on record for an indoor concert was 35 for the March 2, 1995 and May 1, 1997 concerts. The greatest number of players listed on the program for an indoor concert was 89 for the October 18, 2001 performance and, for an outdoor concert, 92 for the June 28, 2007 performance. (In recent years, each printed program has listed the formal membership of the Band at that time, rather than the number of persons actually playing.)

During the Lynn Cooper years, the number of players at any given time was typically in the 60’s, but this declined to the 50’s during the next three years. During the Ken Bowman years, the number of players at any given time gradually dropped from the 70’s to the 40’s. During the “Barnhill Band” years (1998-2002) under Jerry Robbins, there were typically 70-85 players at any given time during the academic year. After that, without the EMU affiliation, the number of players

at any given time was in the 50’s and 60’s, gradually increasing to the 70’s--and more--of recent times.

The 30 seasons of printed programs include 878 different individuals who have played with the Band during that period. The mean number of seasons per player is three, but there is a dedicated group of players who have or have had a long history with the Band. Wayne Jahnke (trombone) and Lorne Kennedy (clarinet), both charter members, have completed their 30th season with YCB. Other long-serving members are the late Harold Goodsmann (trumpet, a charter member) with 29 seasons; George Craven (trumpet) with 27 seasons; and Jim McGraw (clarinet) with 26 seasons. Both Rich Valencourt (trumpet) and Tom Warner (percussion) have completed 25 seasons.

Val Kabat (bass clarinet) has 23 seasons to her credit and both George Appel (clarinet) *continued on page 16*

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The Ypsilanti Community Band *continued from page 15*

and Jane Bishop (horn) have 21 seasons in which they have participated. Wendell Birdsall (clarinet, saxophone, etc.), the late Ken Bowman (tuba, conductor, and a charter member), Duane DeButts (saxophone), and Earl Holbrook (trumpet) each were involved for 20 seasons.

David Peele (flute) and John Reves (trumpet) each have 19 seasons to their credit. Virgil Christophel (tuba), Rich Cranston (percussion), and Judith Mohl (clarinet) each have 18 seasons. Those who have been involved for 17 seasons include Lisa Q. Muenzenberger (clarinet, a charter member), Jerry Robbins (trombone, conductor), Aaron Taratsas (percussion), Sandy Wagner (clarinet and saxophone), and the late Carl Young (tuba).

Sixteen seasons of service have been contributed by Joe Burke (trumpet), the late Randy Katon (percussion), Dick Pitcher (horn), and Erick Starnal (tuba). Ralph Cobb (trumpet), Laura Durham (clarinet), the late Tom Herman (trombone, a charter member), Jon Kennedy (saxophone, a charter member), Peter Sparks (trombone), and Michelle Tripp (clarinet) all have been involved for 15 of the 30 seasons. Another 110 persons have played between five and 14 seasons.

YCB - The Performances: As of the end of the 30th season, the YCB (and ensembles from the Band) had performed at nearly 300 events, according to available records, with a range per season from two (1979) to 19 (2007-08). The Band has increased its performance activity over time, as indicated by the fact that 42% of all known performances have occurred during the most recent 1/3 of its life.

YCB - The Length of the Seasons: The first (organizational) season began with a February 20, 1979 rehearsal, included a May 4, 1979 concert in the Ypsilanti High School auditorium, and concluded with a July 5, 1979 concert in Riverside Park. However, in seasons two through seven (1979-1985), the season started with a concert relatively early in the calendar year (and rehearsals that began in the late fall of the previous year) and concluded in mid-July. A late fall through mid-August calendar of rehearsals and performances was

maintained from season eight (1985-1986) through season 20 (1997-1998). However, since 1998, the Band has been a "year-round" band, with a September through mid-August rehearsal and performance season.

YCB - Indoor Performances 1979 to 1998: From 1979 through the spring of 1998, almost all indoor concerts of the YCB were held in the auditorium of Ypsilanti High School. The few exceptions included performances at the Ypsilanti Central Community Building (1980, 1984), Pease Auditorium at EMU (1986, 1987, 1988, 1989), and Holy Trinity Chapel (1995). YCB provided the music for EMU's December 1987 Commencement Ceremonies in Bowen Field House. The YCB performed concerts in the West Middle School gymnasium in 1996 and 1997.



YCB conductor Jerry Robbins as Paul Lavalle, in YCB re-creation of "Paul Lavalle and the Cities Service Band of America" radio broadcasts in October, 2007.

YCB - Indoor (and fall/winter season) Performances 1998 to date: As a result of the Band's affiliation with EMU, all of the (Barnhill Band's) indoor concerts from the fall of 1998 through the spring of 2002 were held in Pease Auditorium at EMU. Since the fall of 2002, most of the Band's indoor concerts have been held in Towsley Auditorium in the Morris Lawrence Building at Washtenaw Community College (WCC). There have been a number of interesting exceptions, which include: 2002 - "Change of command" ceremony, Selfridge ANG base; 2005 - The first of four (to date) consecutive annual invited appearances at the prestigious Red Cedar Festival of Community Bands, held at Okemos (MI) High School; YCB Pep Band for ESPN's live coverage of the Professional



Ypsilanti Community Band in performance at the Red Cedar Festival of Community Bands in Okemos in February, 2007.

Bowling Association finals, held in the EMU Convocation Center; Pease Auditorium, EMU, for a re-creation of a Sousa Band concert; 2005-2007 - Brass quintet music once a year for Ypsilanti civic events. A brass quintet also provided much of the music for Ken Bowman's memorial service in 2007; 2007 - Senior citizens event, Ypsilanti Township Community Center; 2007-2008 - Lobby of Morris Lawrence Building at WCC for ensemble concerts; 2008 - Whitmore Lake High School Auditorium, with the Whitmore Lake High School Band; brass/percussion ensemble in a portion of the Ypsilanti Community Choir's (YCC) 25th anniversary concert at Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

YCB - Outdoor/Summer Concerts 1979 to present: From 1979 through 2005, the Band performed frequently in the summer in Ypsilanti city parks—most frequently and originally in Recreation Park, but later in Riverside, Prospect, and Candy Cane parks as well. Other outdoor/summer performance locations have included: 1980 - Ypsilanti Regional Psychiatric Hospital; 1984 - St. Matthews United Methodist Church; 1984, 1986, and 1987 - Manchester Chicken Broil; 1986 to date - Annually at the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. In 1989 the YCB also performed at ceremonies honoring the 100th anniversary of the Ypsilanti water tower; 1988 - McAuley Health Center; 1988 to date - Annually at the Yankee Air Museum Memorial Day ceremonies; 1989 - UM Hospital courtyard; 1989 through much of the '90's - Annual concert in the Belleville area; 1999 - Downtown Ypsilanti - Ypsilanti's Depot Town; 2000 - EMU Lake House/University Park, for the annual convention of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration; 2001 - Near the Mark Jefferson plaza, EMU campus; 2003 to date - EMU Convocation Center,

annual pre-event concert and ceremonial music for the United Association (plumbers and pipefitters) Completion Ceremony (affiliated with WCC). A brass ensemble provided music for 2003 ceremonies at WCC related to new facilities for UA training activities; 2006 - EMU Lakehouse/University Park; 2006-2007 - WCC's Community Park; 2007 - Ford Lake Park - Concordia University campus, part of a concert by three invited area adult bands; Ann Arbor's Top of the Park series (provided a 20-player "back up" ensemble for Lady Sunshine and the X Band); 2007-2008 - Wilson Park in Milan - Pep Band for Dexter-Ann Arbor Run; 2008 - Clarkston, MI, for joint/combined band concert with the Clarkston Community Band; Lakeshore Apartments, Ford Lake, for a (rained out) concert and fireworks show; provided many of the wind/percussion players for the pit orchestra for the Hartland Players production of "West Side Story."

Guest conductors: Several prominent guest conductors have led the Band over the years. The first of these was H. Robert Reynolds, then the Director of Bands at UM, in 1980. He was followed the following year by Carl St. Clair, conductor of several prominent orchestras. Max Plank, former Director of Bands at EMU, has guest conducted the band four times--1982, 1988, 1998, and 2000. Michael Krajewski, then Assistant Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, was a guest conductor in 1983. David Woike, then Assistant Director of Bands at EMU, guest conducted in 1997.

Soloists. In addition to a number of members of the YCB who have soloed with the band, guest soloists have included Paul Bravender, baritone (1980, 1981); combined church choirs from the area (1981); EMU
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marimba quartet (1982); Carter Eggers, trumpet (1983, 1987, 1988, and 2007); Al Townsend, trombone (1984); the late Louis Stout, Sr. and Daniel Ross, horn duet (1986); Debbie Baer, trumpet (1987); J. Whitney Prince, xylophone (1990); James Wagner, piano (1994); Kimberly Cole, clarinet (1998); EMU Ballroom Dancers and EMU Swing Society (2000); hand bell choirs from the Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor First United Methodist Churches (2000, 2005); David Vaughn, bass (2001, 2005, 2007, and 2008); Candice Johnson, soprano (2001); Ausra Motuzaitė-Pinkevičienė, organ (2002); Scott Elsholz, organ (2002); Patrick Echlin and Kevin Trombley, trumpets (2004); Amy Feldkamp, violin (2005); and Greg Hulbert and Scott Hulbert, marimba duet (2008).

Twirlers who have performed with the YCB during Heritage Festival concerts include Cara Jasiolek (2001, 2002); Chelsea Palazolito (2003); Nathan Magyar (2004, 2005, and 2007); Mary Ciotta and Stacey Girbach (2006); and Chrissy Houle and Conner Potter (2008). The Willow Run High School Junior ROTC color guard presented the colors at 2006 and 2007 outdoor patriotic concerts.

A number of civic leaders have served as announcers for concerts. In addition, then-Mayor Cheryl Farmer spoke at the Sousa Band anniversary concert in 2005, as did Mrs. Mary Ross Miller, who had attended the Sousa Band concert 75 years earlier.

A memorable speaking appearance was that of “Queen Elizabeth, Too,” accompanied by “Prince Philip,” as portrayed by the late Lila Green and her husband, at a 2002 concert of British band music. Another memorable speaking appearance was that by Jon Margerum-

Leys, playing the role of announcer Ford Bond in the YCB’s 2007 re-creation of two radio broadcasts of the “Paul Lavalle and the Cities Service Band of America” program.

YCB - Music performed: A tabulation compiled at the time of the YCB’s 25th anniversary showed that the Band had performed, at that time, 624 different compositions. It is estimated that the number now exceeds 750. The Band has performed most frequently “Star Spangled Banner” (at least 60 times), “Stars and Stripes Forever” (at least 58 times), and “America the Beautiful” (at least 52 times).

The YCB has performed original compositions by several of its members, including Scott Guthrie, James Wagner, and Alan Singer, and transcriptions/arrangements by Band member George Appel. Several other compositions are believed to have received their local-area premier in YCB concerts, one of the recent ones being “The Story of the Five Joaquins” with composer Keith Otis Edwards in the audience.

YCB - Special Concert Features: The YCB has celebrated its 10th, 20th, and 25th anniversary concerts with special programming, including inviting former conductors to participate. A memorial tribute at concerts has been paid to Band members who have died, including William Wade, Thomas Herman, Carl Young, Erika Anstett, Art Cofer, and Harold Goodman. Living members of the original Barnhill Band were recognized at a 2001 concert.

Many of the indoor concerts of the past decade have been “themed.” Two concerts of recent years have required a good deal of historical research and other preparation in order to be “authentic” in terms of implementing the theme.

The first of these was a re-creation of a Sousa Band concert, held in Pease Auditorium (the site of three Sousa Band performances) on October 20, 2005, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the final appearance in Ypsilanti of the Sousa Band. Almost all music on the program (which was carefully structured like a Sousa Band concert) had been performed in Ypsilanti during one of the three Sousa Band appearances in our community.

The second of these (October 25, 2007) was a re-creation of two 30-minute radio broad-



Ypsilanti Community Band in performance at the Red Cedar Festival of Community Bands in Okemos in February, 2007.



Ypsilanti Community Band in performance at Yankee Air Museum Memorial Day Ceremonies in May, 2007.

casts of the 1950's era "Paul Lavalle and the Cities Service Band of America" weekly radio programs. The performance included verbatim (from actual broadcasts) commercials for Cities Service (now CITGO) products and services, "on the air" and "applause" signs, vintage microphones, NBC chimes, a male quartet, and careful timing to make sure each segment was exactly 30 minutes long.

YCB – Ensembles: Ensemble performances have been important during most of the history of the YCB. There was a "jazz ensemble" that began in 1982 and which performed regularly as part of concerts for several seasons after that. Later, the Riverside Big Band provided similar portions of performances. Around 1989, there was a Dixieland group. Each December concert, starting in 1998 (with one exception), has included an ensemble feature.

Since 2006, there has been an annual Sunday afternoon Ensemble Concert in March, in which numerous members of the Band (in some cases, joined by "friends" from other musical organizations) have presented an entire program of music written for small groups.

YCB - Rehearsal Locations: Rehearsals were held in the band room of Ypsilanti High School from the beginning through the summer of 1998. From the fall of 1998 through the summer of 2002, YCB rehearsed at EMU as part of the "Barnhill Band" arrangement. In 2002-2003, the Band rehearsed in the Morris Lawrence Building at WCC. Because of WCC's space needs, the Band moved its rehearsals to the band room at Ypsilanti's West Middle School in the fall of 2003 and remained there through 2007, with the exception of being elsewhere for three summers.

The YCB outgrew the capacity of the West Middle School band room. There were comfort and potential safety problems because of the numbers, along with a lack of access to the facility from time to time on rehearsal nights. For these reasons, possible (preferably free) alternative rehearsal spaces were sought and considered. No appropriate space was to be found in the City of Ypsilanti or Ypsilanti Township.

Whitmore Lake High School (WLHS) offered the free use of highly-appropriate

rehearsal space in a new high school building, including storage space, and offered support in other important ways in terms of lack of disruption of rehearsal schedules. After considerable discussion, the Band accepted this offer and began rehearsals at WLHS in the fall of 2007. Rehearsals and storage have continued there to this time.

YCB - Organizational Affiliations: From the beginning, the YCB has been structured as a "stand alone" organization, deriving no formal financial or logistical support from any other civic or governmental organization. This structure has been maintained to the present time, with the exception of the fall 1998 to summer 2002 period when, for many purposes, YCB was part of the University Bands program of the Department of Music at EMU. Even during that time, the formal, legal structure of "Ypsilanti Community Band" was maintained.


The YCB is a member of the Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce and the Association of Concert Bands. It has been the beneficiary of substantial in-kind services from such local organizations as the Ypsilanti schools, EMU, WCC, the Lincoln schools, Whitmore Lake schools, the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti First United Methodist Church, and numerous other governmental and private organizations in the area.

YCB - Special Projects: The YCB assisted with the organization of the Ypsilanti Community Choir (YCC) during the 1983-1984 season and the two musical organizations have shared an annual concert since that time. Alan Singer was the winner of an original composition competition in 2003-2004.

In 2007, the YCB created the Kenneth Bowman Memorial Scholarship to be awarded each year to a middle or high school band student in the county to attend the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. The first award was made in 2008 to Isabell "Izzy" Salley, a trumpet player from Clague Middle School in Ann Arbor.

In memory of a long-time community musician, the Band created the Harold Goodman Award, to be presented each year to a YCB member who has contributed outstanding service to the Band in addition to playing. Aaron Taratsas received the first such award in 2007.

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The Ypsilanti Community Band *continued from page 19*

In memory of charter member and 10-year conductor Ken Bowman, the Band created the Bowman Memorial Music Fund. This fund receives donations from Band members and other friends to purchase new music. In addition, the YCB Board has established a policy that at least once each year the Band will perform a joint concert with an area middle- or high school band, giving young musicians an opportunity to play side-by-side with more experienced players. The first such concert was held in 2007 and involved the Whitmore Lake High School Band directed by Mike Kirby.

YCB - Equipment and Storage: From 1979 through 2002, the YCB owned little equipment. Wind instrument players were (and still are) expected to provide their own instruments. With the exception of some very basic instruments, percussion players used equipment privately owned or owned by the Ypsilanti schools or EMU. Storage was a very minor problem.

In 2002, as rehearsals and performances began at WCC, YCB found itself seriously short of access to major percussion equipment. Major fund-raising efforts were undertaken to buy first two, and then four, matched timpani, along with chimes and other large and ex-

pensive percussion instruments. Additional percussion equipment has been acquired since that time, along with an outdoor sound system, music stands, and other accessories. Between 2002 and 2007, much equipment and library storage was in commercial facilities and in band member's homes.

YCB - Library: Similar to the situation with equipment, YCB owned little music in the years between 1979 and 2002. During this time, almost everything played by the YCB was music borrowed from the host institution (YHS or EMU) or from other local-area high school band libraries. A 1991 library inventory shows that YCB owned only 64 titles at that time, all of which easily fit in one file cabinet.

However, in 2002, YCB began the systematic acquisition of almost all of the music it has played from that point forward. As of this writing, the YCB library contains more than 450 band arrangements, with a goal of acquiring more than 30 additional ones each year.

YCB - Financing: The YCB has always operated on a principle of relying heavily on donated services—personnel services, rehearsal and performance space, and the like. Expenses were modest during the first 24 seasons and largely were met, through much of the history of the Band, by numerous relatively small donations by members and patrons. For example, during calendar year 1980, the Band

had expenses of only \$237.86. The Band received a small grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts during 1979-80 to secure special guest artists and for various Band promotional materials.

An annual pie sale started in 1991. Membership dues were initiated in 2002. Advertising in the printed program began with the 2004-2005 season. Some of the major advertisers of recent times include Armstrong Art Studio, Close to My Heart, Fourth Wish, Huron Valley Ambulance, Pentamere Winery, Ride-Life Photography, and the Ypsilanti Area Credit Union.

Although the Band always received relatively small amounts of money for performing at such events as the Yankee Air Museum Memorial Day activities and the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival, in 2003 YCB began receiving larger amounts of money for various summer performances. More intensive fund-raising for the Band's general fund began around 2007, with a particular focus on solicitation of larger gifts and on soliciting concert sponsorships. Some of the major donors of recent times, including concert sponsorships, include an anonymous donor, Alan Aldworth, Suzanne Beutler, Mary Bowman, Don and Barbara Chaffin, Walton and Charlene Hancock, Jim and Mille Irwin, Catherine and Greg Mickle, and U Haul of South State Street.

As a result of these various fund-raising efforts, the band's budget has increased rapidly in recent years to more than \$22,000 per year, not including money related to the Bowman Scholarship Fund or the Bowman Music Fund. All personal services and use of space continue to be donated.

YCB - Governance Documents - Local documents: A constitution and bylaws document was drafted in the weeks immediately after the January 22, 1979 organizational meeting and quickly adopted. This document easily fit on a few sheets of paper and received minor amendments from time to time over the next 27 years. In 2006, the Board and the Band were persuaded to adopt a total replacement document—one of 15 pages in length—that some say is much better suited to a different type of organization than it is to the YCB. Further amendments were made in 2008. Board policies and reference material were put into handbook format and first issued



Charter (and continuous) YCB member Lorne Kennedy (left) and Andrea Duval prepare for a 2006 Ypsilanti Community Band concert.



Charter (and continuous) YCB member Wayne Jahnke performs on his trombone during a 2004 concert of the Ypsilanti Community Band.



Erik Starnal performs a tuba solo with the Ypsilanti Community Band in concert at Washtenaw Community College in 2005.

for 2007-2008.

YCB – Governance Documents - State and Federal Documents: With the assistance of John Barr, long-time Ypsilanti City Attorney, who donated his services during the early years of the Band’s organization, various state and federal documents were prepared, including articles of incorporation and state and federal tax-related documents. Incorporators were Lynn Cooper, Amy Lawrence, Mark McClure, Glenn Fuller, Ken Bowman, Tim Vesey, Rosie Cooper, Harold Goodsman, Cheryl Waldenmeyer, and Giles Carter. The YCB has maintained 501(c) (3) status since the early years.

YCB - Officers and Board Members: YCB has been governed over the years by a 10-12 member Board of Directors elected from among the playing membership of the Band. Leadership of the YCB has been ably provided by its chairs/presidents over the years. The chairs of the Board were Mark McClure (1979-80), the late Harold Goodsman (1980-1986), Lisa Querfeld Muenzenberger (1986-1992), Jim McGraw (1992-2002) and Jennifer (Peters) Lowenberg (2002-2007). Meagan Bush (2007-2008) and Carter Adler (2008-present) have served as presidents of the band.

YCB – Publicity: The YCB has received generous publicity from the local-area print (and, to a lesser extent, electronic) media throughout its history, particularly from the former *Ypsilanti Press*. Using donated hosting services provided by WCC, YCB first posted a web site several years ago. With the help of donated design services, this site was substantially re-worked and the revisions went “live”

in January 2008. It has since been expanded considerably in terms of the content included. The site may be found at www.ypsicommband.org.

YCB - The Future: In 2006, the Board considered (and later formally adopted) a “Vision Statement” that provides that “by the year 2011, the Ypsilanti Community Band (YCB) can be described as follows:” The Board subsequently adopted a Five-Year Plan and a succession of One-Year Plans to implement this “vision.”

At the time of this writing, the YCB is approximately half way through this five-year planning period and is generally “on schedule” (ahead in some respects, behind in others) to accomplish and implement all the provisions of the Five-Year Plan (and thus the provisions of the Vision Statement) by 2011.

Assuming this progress continues, by 2011 the YCB should be accomplishing, far better than ever, Lynn Cooper’s 1979 dream of a community concert band that would educate and stimulate members in addition to providing an entertaining opportunity for large and diverse audiences.

An expanded, detailed version of this history, with citations, is posted on the Band’s web site. For that and other information about the Ypsilanti Community Band, see the “About Us” section of www.ypsicommband.org. ■

(Dr. Jerry Robbins, former Dean of the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University, has served as director of the Ypsilanti Community Band since 1998.)



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An YPSIAEROTROPOLIS

continued from page 11

arrival and attendants at the airport failed to attach sufficient significance to the landing to prompt local announcement of any kind," noted *The Daily Ypsilanti Press* of Tuesday, September 2, 1930.

Privatized and gone

The airport was made a private field on June 10, 1931, when it was purchased from the original owners by Milo and Mrs. L. W. Oliphant. They in turn sold the field to Dwight Reynolds in January of 1945. The airport was sold once again in August of 1946, this time to Donald J. and Lucy J. Gridley.

Gridley Airport

Fifty-nine private planes responded to the Dawn Patrol Fly-in at Gridley Airport in 1947. The airport was located on the northwest corner of Carpenter and Morgan, Pittsfield Township, and was sometimes referred to as the Ypsilanti City Airport.

I-94 later crossed through a portion of the airport and US-23 went through the western portion of the airport. Today the Daniel L. Jacob & Co. Inc. (Budweiser beer distribution outlet) and an inflatable tennis court occupy much of the corner property.

The Gridley Airport remained in operation possibly as late as the 1960s. The story of the airport ends because the space needed for the expansion of U.S. 23 made it unsafe for the landing of planes. Airplanes and airports were once the vision of the future, and this airport was closed because of the need for other means of transportation. U.S. 23 and Interstate 94 now meet at the northwest corner of the former Ypsilanti City Airport.



Gridley Airport at Carpenter and Morgan Roads was the last incarnation of the Ypsilanti City Airport. Looking northeast, an inflatable tennis court and a beer distribution company occupy this land today next to US-23. (Photo by Lucy Gridley. Mary Campbell, Pittsfield Township Historical Society Board member, donated the photo to Meijer's Thrifty Acres who greatly enlarged it to post on the north wall of the store's coffee shop.)



McKannan Airport with Stony Creek Road at the bottom and Textile Road going west at right; Pine Grove Golf Course today.

McKannan Airport

McKannan Airport at Stony Creek and Textile Roads has been mowed over to become

Pineview Golf Course. Lucille McKannan's note posted with a photograph of the airport indicates the McKannan Airport was operated



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Detroit Willow Run Airport turned out bombers in World War II and today hosts private airfreight companies.



Future City art of the 1950s a' la Popular Mechanics magazine: Could a Buck Rogers aerotropolis still be in our future?

by the family until 1959 and that several others operated it after that.

Detroit Willow Run Airport: Willow Run Airport is neither in Ypsilanti nor in Washtenaw County. The airport was built in 1941 just across the Wayne County line. The Willow Run bomber plant, where Ford Motor Company produced B-24 bombers for the war effort, sat at the eastern boundary of Washtenaw County, spilling its product onto the airfield of the county next door. After the war the Washtenaw County buildings served as a passenger terminal. Commercial passenger traffic was moved from Detroit City Airport on Detroit's east side, making Willow Run Detroit's primary airport.

Warren Avis founded Avis Airlines Rent-a-Car Systems in 1946 at Willow Run Airport creating the first rental car operation at an airport location. The Government sold the airport to the University of Michigan in 1947 for \$1 to be used as a research facility, and the Michigan Aeronautical Research Center (Willow Run Research Center) was founded. UofM students came to live in the same housing units built for the bomber plant workers.

Seven commercial passenger carriers flew out of Willow Run in 1956, eventually moving to nearby Detroit Metro Airport. In the 1950's driving out to Willow Run to watch planes

take off and land was a popular family pastime. By 1967, commercial passenger service had ended here. In 1977, UofM sold the airport to Wayne County for \$1, not much appreciation in that real estate transaction. Today Willow Run Airport serves freight, corporate, and general aviation clients with no commercial passenger services available.

The Yankee Air Museum opened at Willow Run in 1981. A fire in October of 2004 destroyed the museum building and most of its artifacts. Museum artifacts like the B-52 and others that were too large to display inside the hangar were not damaged. The museum has been rebuilding their displays and gathering more WWII memorabilia since 2005.

Dreams are still flying

Contemporary plans for an "aerotropolis" - a new urban form comprising aviation-intensive businesses and related enterprises - are coming into the news headlines once more. Like a traditional metropolis made up of a city core and commuter suburbs, an aerotropolis has an airport city at its core, encircled by related businesses and services.

Dr. John D. Kasarda, an American academic, has redefined the aerotropolis. Kasarda points out that aerotropoli (*pl.*) "typically attract industries related to time-sensitive manufacturing, e-commerce fulfillment, telecommu-

nications and logistics; hotels, retail outlets, entertainment complexes and exhibition centers; and offices for business people who travel frequently by air or engage in global commerce."

Ypsilanti could soon see the development of a new kind of air park system with "clusters of business parks, logistics parks, industrial parks, distribution centers, information technology complexes and wholesale merchandise marts located around the airport and along the transportation corridors radiating from them," says Kasarda.

Plans are up in the air

The dream of a futuristic aerotropolis has not crashed and burned. In May of 2008, Gary Gosselin reported in Michigan Business Review a contemporary vision to "create a business development hub between and around Detroit Metro and Willow Run Airports. The 25,000 acres in seven communities would become home to logistics companies, international headquarters, mixed-use developments and spin-off services." Gosselin predicts participants would create "a potential streamlined process," but there were not any accompanying futuristic illustrations of personal helicopters swarming in an airborne traffic jam in his projections. ■

Museum Advisory Board Report

By Virginia Davis-Brown, Chair

With Christmas and the New Year just around the corner it is a good time to reminisce about the past year and think of the new one coming up.

In April, Kathryn Howard and her committee were able to gather about 25 local artists and together they presented an interesting and beautiful Art Exhibit. We were honored to show the works of art to over 200 visitors, everyone seemed to enjoy them immensely.

The Lost Ypsilanti exhibit was next. This year it was devoted primarily to people who helped make Ypsilanti into the wonderful city that she has been through these past many years. Agriculture and industry were important right from the beginning in 1823 when the city was established. It does take several months of research to put on an exhibit like this, but it was well worth it to share local history.

The Quilt Exhibit was very well accepted again this year, with all the furniture covered with beautiful handmade quilts. Some were very traditional, antique, or modern, and some were made to just keep you warm on those frosty nights in the winter. It is hard to imagine how they can come up with so many original ideas.

Now is the time for Christmas and the holidays. The mannequins are already dressed in their holiday finery and ready for all the holiday parties and activities. The museum will be completely decorated before Thanksgiving so you, and your guests, will be able to enjoy it for several weeks.

As you have heard there will not be a New Years Eve Jubilee this year, which was a disappointment to most of us. We decided that this was such a wonderful idea we would continue it here at the museum on December 27th from 6:30-10:00 PM, we will be cel-



ebating instead the First Annual Holiday Reception. There will be entertainment, story time for children, and lovely refreshments as we have had before. On December 27th look for the candles in front of the museum and follow them inside for a gathering of old friends and the making of new. As always it will be free, but donations will be accepted to help with the expenses. Since we do not charge for admission, donations are always welcome so that we are able to bring you the exhibits and keep the museum running.

The schedule for 2009 is already finished and this will give you the opportunity to get it on the calendar you get for Christmas:

- Art Exhibit: April 5-19
- Lost Ypsilanti Exhibit: July 19-August 30
- Quilt Show: September 27 -October 11
- Christmas Open House: December 6

Our number of visitors has increased thanks to the program sponsored by Macy's. Many visitors have come from outlying areas and down river. This program brought us almost 400 visitors who would not have visited us without it. We are very fortunate to be able to continue our participation in it.

Thank you again for all your support and hope to see you on December 27th from 6:30-10:00 PM for the Holiday Reception.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your Museum Advisory Board! Kathryn Howard, Jack Livisay, Kathleen Campbell, Virginia Davis Brown, Rita Sprague, Midge Fahndrich, Fofie Pappas, Bob Southgate, Nancy Wheeler and Joy Schulke. ■

Outreach and New Member Campaign: Update

By Peg Porter, YHS Membership Committee Chair

In August 2008, we began a campaign to increase Society membership. A goal of 80 new members by August 2009 was set. Outreach was identified as a strategy to meet the goal. As a Society we must reach out to both individuals and groups to introduce them to the Society and to encourage them to join. As of November 5th we have 16 new memberships for a total of 20 individuals. Over

the next eight months we need to add 64 additional new memberships. That means *all* Society members have a role to play in meeting our goal. Consider providing a gift membership (or two) this holiday season. Provide copies of *Gleanings* and the membership application to your friends and colleagues. If you belong to a service club or other organization offer to host a program about the Society. We can provide the speakers and materials. For example, Al Rudisill and I presented a program on the History of Ypsilanti and how our history differs from Ann Arbor's at University Commons in Ann Arbor on November 10. About 30 people attended. We received many compliments. Several of the individuals that attended are planning to visit the Museum and Archives. *Become a part of growing our Society. ■*

Gone, But Not Forgotten
continued from page 7

The Ypsilanti Reed & Fibre Furniture Company

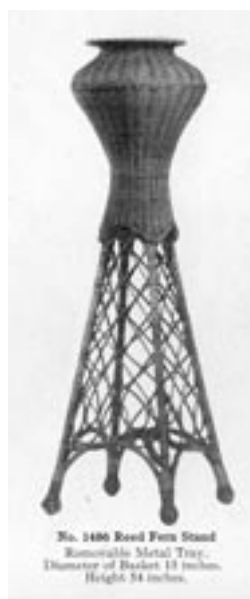
The Ypsilanti Reed and Fibre Furniture Company was established in Ypsilanti in 1901, and was headquartered here until 1903. In 1904 the company moved to Ionia and remained there under the same name until 1942. It was known for its maple and rattan furniture. "The beauty of design and workmanship of Ypsilanti Furniture is due to the years of training of the men and women who produce it." (1922 Good Housekeeping Ad)

During its peak in the 1920's and 30's the Ypsilanti Reed & Fibre Furniture Company carried its unique and skillful designs across the globe. By 1938, it was the largest manufacturer in Ionia, with over 2,400 employees. Its new sales manager that year was Don R. Mitchell. At its most successful point, the Reed and Fibre Furniture Company owned a processing plant in Singapore as well as showrooms in Manhattan and Chicago. The designers included Donald Deskey, who created his own line of rattan furniture that became known as the Ypsilanti "Flekrom" line.

In 1942, the Ypsilanti Reed and Fibre Furniture Company became the Ionia Manufacturing Company and under Don Mitchell's leadership their revenue increased to a peak of \$6.5 million in 1943. The company employed over 10,000 skilled craftsmen in 1949. In the 1950's the Ionia Manufacturing Company developed a replacement prototype for the World War II Jeep, but their design wasn't selected. They lost the bid to Ford, Hupp and Willys.

It was in 1953 that the last remnants of the original Ypsilanti Reed & Fibre Furniture Company were lost, as the newer Ionia Manufacturing Company was absorbed into the Mitchell-Bentley Corporation as a subsidiary part. ■

(Pamela German and Veronica Robinson are graduate interns from the Historical Preservation Program at Eastern Michigan University assigned to the Museum and Archives.)



Far Left: A reed fern stand from a Reed and Fibre Furniture Company catalogue.

Left: Frank T. Newton died in 1932 and is buried in Highland Cemetery.

Below: Advertisement for the Ypsilanti Reed and Fibre Furniture Company.

The beauty of design and workmanship of Ypsilanti Furniture is due to the years of training of the men and women who produce it.

The reed used is selected by our own representative at Singapore from the finest reed gathered in the East Indies.

YPSILANTI REED FURNITURE COMPANY
DEPT. (A) IONIA, MICHIGAN
Largest Makers of Reed and Fibre Furniture

The Ypsilanti Line comprises all the usual articles made of reed or fibre and many novelties originated by us. We will be glad to give you the names of merchants in your city who sell Ypsilanti Furniture.

YPSILANTI

Reed and Fibre FURNITURE

News from the Fletcher White Archives

By Gerry Pety

After more than two weeks of "Indian summer" the weather is closing in on us and becoming quite seasonal. The air is now cool, crisp and clear and taking a breath is exhilarating to the spirit. Almost a cleansing feeling after a hectic summer and finally getting the kids back into the groove of going to school. Now is the time to take a break and come over to the archives and do a little hunting for your family history. Marcia McCrary is available on Thursdays from 2-5pm to assist you in finding your own missing "family links."

This quarter we received some really interesting items from the Ypsilanti Planning Department. In addition to photographic slides from the 1980s and 1990s we received a cache of political maps relating to the changes that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s in Ypsilanti. Thank you Mr. Murphy for your forward thinking on these maps and slides! From Bobby Bowen we received a number of negatives regarding the digging and clearing of the area which was to become Ford Lake, just south of Ypsilanti. As you may or may not know, Ford Lake is a man-made lake. Finally from Mrs. Elvira Pappiatt we received newsletters and ephemera regarding Beyer Hospital. Although not having to do with Ypsilanti, Mrs. Pappiatt also gave us a glimpse of the 1892-93 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago via a set of five souvenir books. To the people of the 1890s this was their awe inspiring moon landing and the pictures are still exciting to view from an historical viewpoint! ■

"The YHS Archives is always looking for anything relating to the people, businesses, and the history of Ypsilanti. If you do not wish to contribute original pictures, we do have the capability of making copies for our records and will return the original photos to you. Also, we are always looking for volunteers, particularly people who can help on Fridays and Saturdays, or people who have special skills pertaining to archival or research work. Thank you for your help and support!"

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Historic Buffalo Street Property Awaits New Inhabitants

By Jeff Davis

The historic house at 113 Buffalo Street in Ypsilanti now has a "For Sale" sign in the front yard. The house was built in 1892 by Frank W. Glanfield, a local contractor and builder who occupied the house until around 1900. By 1901 William and Mary Campbell had moved into the house, and their daughter Sarah continued in the house until 1965. William Campbell is listed in the 1903 Ypsilanti Business Directory as a farmer.

Local newspapers indicate that the house was taken over by the Buffalo Street Commune in 1973. Thirteen members of the commune occupied the house and six others in the community also claimed permanent membership. According to the commune founder, Gary Sawatski, its purpose was to "...create a situation in which we can dispose with the physical necessities of life as quickly as possible, and then spend the majority of our lives developing our human capabilities." Members of the commune included teachers, waiters, an electronics technician, a custodian and a motorcycle mechanic. In order to join the commune an individual had to be sponsored by a permanent member and following a six-week probation period, had to be approved by 75% of the members.



The house at 113 Buffalo Street in the winter of 1899.



An early interior view of the house - note the active gas lighting.



The Campbell Family on the front porch (L to R) Katherine, Sarah, William, Mary R., Mrs. Andrew and Mr. McHitt.

By 1978, the commune had vacated the Buffalo Street property, and it was converted back to private ownership. In June of 1978, fire broke out in a storage room in the house, causing smoke damage to the upper floors.

The house had a series of private owners from the 1980s through to 2007 and currently stands vacant. Information from the Internet indicates the house is currently listed to sell for \$119,900. (Jeff Davis is a regular volunteer in the Archives and resides in Depot Town.) ■

The Circus Train

Imagine finding this under your Christmas tree. The Circus Train was crafted and hand painted by Don Porter for Mary Claire and Bill Anhut. Mary Claire reports that two generations of Anhut children have enjoyed the train. ■



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