

# Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation

Governor Jennifer Granholm is leading the mission to strengthen and revitalize Michigan cities and neighborhoods. Her Cool Cities initiative has as its goal to attract and retain a creative vibrant population that will thrive and contribute to Michigan's economy and sense of community. Historic resources provide information about who we are as Michiganders: where we came from and where we are headed. They give us a sense of place and make communities livable. Historic sites and other cultural resources are key components of communities where people want to live - and those that people want to visit.

With the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation, Governor Granholm recognizes outstanding historic preservation achievements: homeowners who rehabilitate their homes, developers who transform underutilized historic structures into vital economic assets, academic institutions, archaeologists, educational projects that inspire people to preserve historic buildings, and policy makers who demonstrate commitment to the preservation of historic resources through innovative planning activities.

## 2006 Governor's Award Recipients

Linda and Richard Mueller for the Rehabilitation of the Loeb Farm Barn Complex, Charlevoix

City of Traverse City, City Opera House Heritage Association, City Opera House LLC,  
and Quinn Evans Architects for the Rehabilitation of the City Opera House, Traverse City

Michigan State University, East Lansing, for the Excavation of Saints' Rest

General Motors Corporation and Building Conservation Associates, Inc. for the  
Rehabilitation of the General Motors Technical Center, Warren

Jon A. Carlson for the Rehabilitation of the B & C Grocery Building, Royal Oak

Dearborn Public Schools and TMP Associates, Inc. for the Addition to Fordson High School, Dearborn



[www.michigan.gov/shpo](http://www.michigan.gov/shpo)  
51.7373.1630



# Historic Preservation

# 2006 Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation

Sponsored by:



# Sponsors





## Jon A. Carlson for the Rehabilitation of the B & C Grocery Building, Royal Oak

When the B & C Grocery closed in the 1960s, the vibrant façade of yellow, burgundy, and salmon-colored porcelain enameled metal panels became hidden. “Updated” with brick and a tall, shingled pent roof that obscured the building’s Art Deco architecture, the once-eye-catching structure became a dull nonentity on one of downtown Royal Oak’s main corners.

In 2005 Jon A. Carlson’s Real North, L.L.C., completed a rehabilitation of the former grocery building. Carlson tore off the 1960s brick face and revealed the metal panels still in place underneath. He restored the ones he could and replicated where the old panels were too badly deteriorated. Taking advantage of the federal historic preservation tax credits, Jon Carlson invested \$2.5 in rehabilitating the structure and met the need for more exciting, vibrant venues in Royal Oak to serve the city’s younger population.

The project transformed the intersection of Fifth and Main Street. Rehabilitated and now housing a restaurant, a wine bar and shop, a coffee house, and a club, the building is a vivid visual exclamation mark of color and Art Deco/Moderne design in downtown Royal Oak.

**Architect: HF Architects**

**General Contractor: JC Beal Construction**

# Historic Preservation in Michigan







## Dearborn Public Schools and TMP Associates, Inc. for the Addition to Fordson High School, Dearborn

When it was dedicated on March 22, 1928, Fordson High School was hailed as “one of the finest school buildings in the United States.” In September 2003 the architecture firm TMP Associates, Inc., on behalf of the Dearborn Public Schools, contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding a significant addition the firm was planning for Fordson High School. Both TMP and the school board were well aware of the architectural and historic significance of this registered historic site and were interested in including the SHPO as an active partner in the design review process for the addition.

Building on the school’s history of inspirational design, TMP created a spectacular 372,583 square foot addition that reflects the detailing and materials of the original building, but accommodates new fully modern classrooms, a student-run spirit store, science and computer labs, and a state of the art cafeteria and kitchen. Among the details that were critical to the spectacular success of this addition were the school board’s willingness to put a stone veneer on the addition using materials from the original quarry, the inclusion of carved stone details at window and door openings derived from the historic building design, the use of a high pitched slate roof, and picturesque building massing.

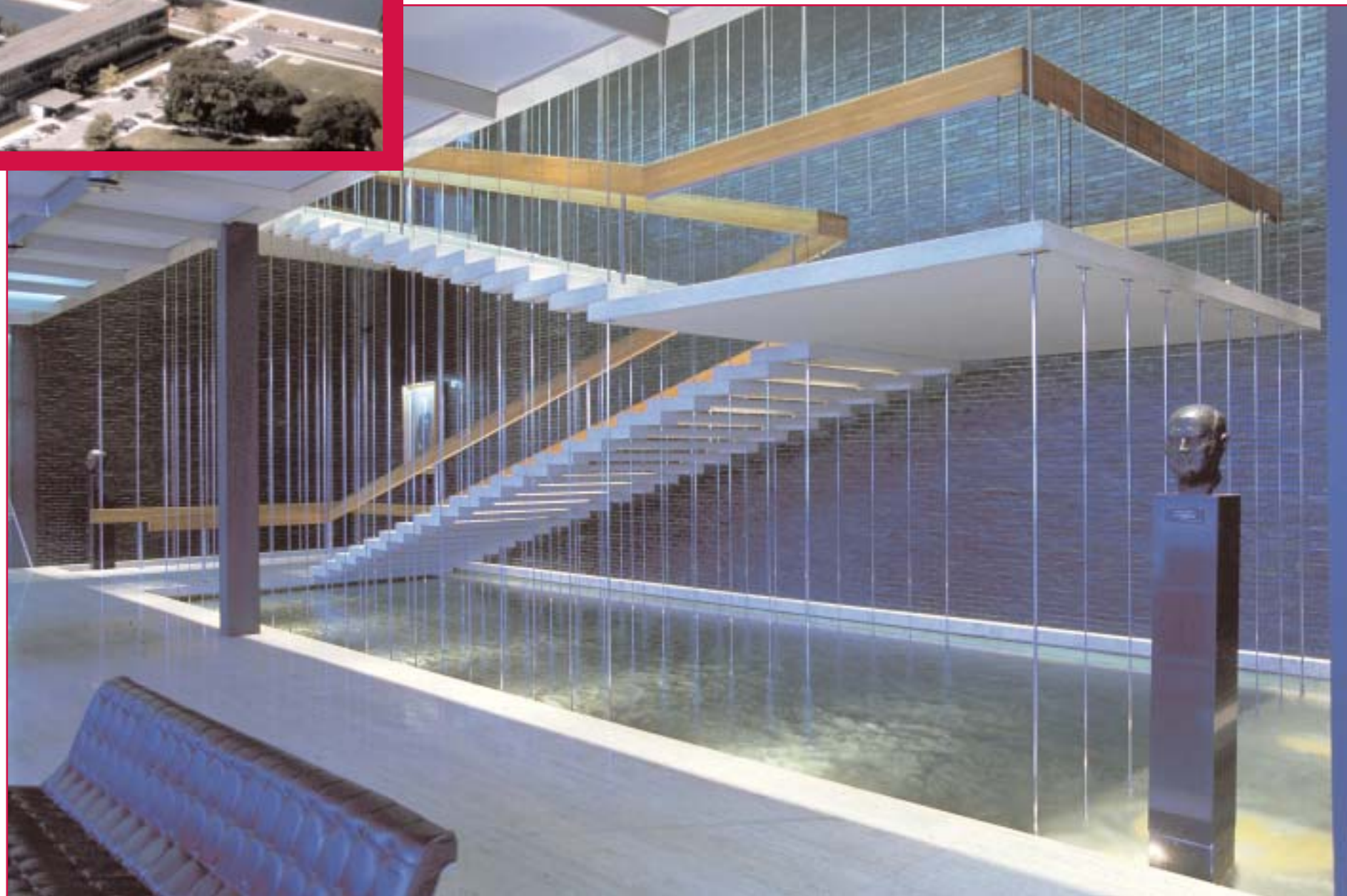
This project demonstrates that through a combination of thought, skill, dedication to excellence, and collaboration Michigan’s historic schools can be rehabilitated and enlarged to accommodate the changing needs of students and educators and provide students, staff and the community at large with an inspirational environment in which to live, learn, work, and play.

Construction Manager: Skanska Building USA, Inc.

# Historic Preservation in Michigan







## General Motors Corporation and Building Conservation Associates, Inc. for the Rehabilitation of the General Motors Technical Center, Warren

The General Motors Technical Center, designed by Eero Saarinen and constructed between 1949 and 1956, comprises fifteen complexes of buildings and numerous outbuildings located on an approximately 600-acre site in Warren. The Technical Center has served as General Motors Corporation's (GM) main facility for advanced research, engineering, and product design since its initial construction, and continues to serve this essential function. Many of GM's most important technological advances have taken place on these grounds. The Technical Center, a nationally significant site, is not only one of the preeminent corporate research and development centers constructed in the United States following World War II, but also an outstanding example of the work of Eero Saarinen, an internationally acclaimed architect.

From 1999 through 2004, GM carried out an extensive rehabilitation project at the Technical Center. Recognizing the historical significance of the site, GM worked with a project team that included a historic preservation consultant from Building Conservation Associates. Because the planned financial investment at the Technical Center property was so significant, GM also worked with the State Historic Preservation Office to obtain federal historic preservation tax credits.

The rehabilitation project at the Technical Center continued GM's effort to streamline and consolidate its global engineering operations, facilitating common vehicle development processes and systems for improved competitiveness. The comprehensive and coordinated facilities plan was developed to reduce structural costs, align facilities to future business needs, eliminate redundancies, achieve maximum utilization and efficiency, provide flexibility to accommodate change, and ensure the highest return on the investment. From a business perspective, the goal of the plan was to transform GM's non-manufacturing work environments into settings that support and enhance the motivation and spirit of every employee, fostering creativity and innovation.

The GM Technical Center rehabilitation is the largest historic preservation project ever undertaken in the state of Michigan. With this project General Motors demonstrated that the fulfillment of business goals could be achieved in tandem with historic rehabilitation.

# Historic Preservation in Michigan







## Linda and Richard Mueller for the Rehabilitation of the Loeb Farm Barn Complex, Marion Township

When Linda and Richard Mueller first encountered the Loeb Farm Barn Complex, commonly known as “Castle Farms,” it was a remnant of the magnificent stone farm complex built by Albert H. Loeb, an early top executive at Sears, Roebuck, and Company. In 1917 and 1918 Loeb conceived of the farm as a model in which agriculture could be practiced with modern business efficiency and as a place in which he could showcase Sears farm implements and equipment. With the death of Albert Loeb and the farm depression of 1927, the Loeb estate decided to close the farm. John Van Haver purchased the property in the 1960s. He changed the name to Castle Van Haver and converted a portion into a foundry for producing aluminum art. In 1969 the property was purchased and renamed Castle Farms. In the mid-1970s a stage structure was constructed at the rear of the cattle barn and became a popular entertainment venue and hosted rock and folk concerts for twenty-two years.

Over the years, individuals and nonprofit organizations tried unsuccessfully to invest in and rehabilitate the structures. The property survived years of hard use and neglect. Then in 2001 Linda and Richard Mueller recognized the potential and value of the once-stately complex. Taking advantage of the federal historic preservation tax credits, they invested over \$10 million in restoring the complex and in rebuilding the additions that were torn down in the 1970s. The project included the reconstruction of a long-missing roof section on the cattle barn, the recreation of the missing cattle barn wings, the rehabilitation of the horse barn and icehouse, and the creation of an entirely new landscape reflecting the pastoral setting of the original farm. Silo roofs were painstakingly reconstructed using the original construction details, the fountain in the inner courtyard was returned to operation, and numerous missing windows and doors were reproduced based on remaining original examples.

The site and its building are once again an events venue, but this time the historic character of the site is a major attraction for the public. The fully rehabilitated facility includes four individual buildings consisting of approximately 40,000 total square feet. Castle Farms now hosts tours, meetings, fundraisers, receptions, reunions, weddings, art and antique markets, craft shows, and more.

Through the vision and dedication of Linda and Richard Mueller a new life has been given to this once deteriorated and threatened historic resource. Michiganians and visitors alike now have an exciting new opportunity to visit and enjoy one of our state’s most unique architectural treasures.

**Architect: AZD Associates**

**Contractor: Lazer Construction**

# Historic Preservation in Michigan





## Michigan State University, East Lansing, for the Excavation of Saints' Rest

The Saints' Rest archaeology project, initiated during the summer of 2005 as part of Michigan State University's sesquicentennial anniversary, integrated archival research with the study of architectural and other material remains, and provided a unique opportunity for the greater MSU community to connect with its history. Saints' Rest was the first dormitory and one of only two buildings erected at the newly founded Agricultural College of Michigan in 1856. The site of Saints' Rest contains the remains of early life at MSU and is unique because its architectural elements are found in direct association with the cultural remains associated with its use from 1856 to 1876.

Archaeology at Saints' Rest documented the exact location and condition of the dormitory's foundation walls and explored the internal layout and nature of the building. The foundation walls, approximately two and one-half feet in width and constructed of large fieldstones and mortar, are well-preserved only inches below the modern ground surface. When fire destroyed the dormitory in the winter of 1876, while students were away on break, the three-story-high building collapsed inward compacting the structural elements, furnishings, and personal items into a two-to-three-foot-thick zone. From this zone wood heating stoves, architectural artifacts, bottles, writing implements, and toiletry items were recovered. Below this, in the basement level, internal brick walls denote the spatial layout of the building. Archival information indicates the kitchen and washroom were located in the basement; the excavation revealed a raised central hallway with cobblestone floored rooms in the west half of the building and packed earth floored workrooms in the basement as well.

The response and level of interest from students, alumni, faculty, administration, and the greater community was overwhelming. Record numbers of students sought (and continue to seek) participation in the field school and other research opportunities. Hundreds of people visited the site during the excavation and several hundred more attended open house events sponsored by the university to highlight this historic preservation research project.

The excavations at Saints' Rest involved cooperation among many different university departments, most notably the Department of Anthropology and Campus Parks and Planning, which was critical to the project moving forward. The university is to be commended for recognizing the importance of such a project not only for teaching archaeology students, or gaining knowledge through the study of the artifacts collected, but by providing the community at large with the opportunity to learn about life in the past and the role archaeology plays in preserving what we know about that past.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan







## City of Traverse City, City Opera House Heritage Association, City Opera House LLC, and Quinn Evans Architects for the Rehabilitation of the City Opera House, Traverse City

Constructed in 1891 by a consortium of Traverse City businessmen, the City Opera House is among the largest and best-preserved early opera houses in Michigan. Originally designed to seat 1,200 people, the City Opera House also served as a banquet and dance facility. Live performances, speaking engagements and public gatherings continued as the primary use of the facility until about 1920, when the auditorium was leased (until 1940) by a motion picture company; its immediate (and surprising) closure eliminated competition with the company's two other movie theaters downtown. While City Opera House briefly showed films during the early 1940s, the auditorium lights and heat were turned off and the doors closed in 1945. The auditorium sat vacant for almost fifty years.

In the late 1970's the City Opera House Heritage Association (COHHA) proposed the city of Traverse City and the property owner work together to rehabilitate the auditorium as a community cultural center. By 1980 the owner donated the building to the city. The COHHA's role as funding catalyst (its first major gift was received in 1996) allowed serious restoration to begin. Later, the city helped facilitate formation of the City Opera House LLC in 2003, by granting a long-term lease to rehabilitate and operate the auditorium.

With the prominent historic rehabilitation architectural firm of Quinn Evans Architects leading the way, City Opera House LLC set about the task of leading the \$8.5 million restoration and rehabilitation of this community gem. Restoration/rehabilitation work began in earnest in early 2002. The mechanical systems were redone, as were restrooms and the performers' Green Room. The exterior façade and much of the interior was repainted, including the glorious vaulted and domed ceiling. With an investment of some \$5.6 million, the project partners celebrated the reopening of the City Opera House to the public in December 2004.

Thanks to the perseverance of the City Opera House Heritage Association, the cooperation of the city of Traverse City and the partners of the City Opera House LLC, and the expertise and leadership of Quinn Evans Architects, the City Opera House is once again open and available to the community as a grand historic space that meets contemporary needs.

**General Contractor: The Christman Company**

# Historic Preservation in Michigan

