

## DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society For the Restoration of the DeTour Reef Lighthouse, St. Mary's Canal

Determination, cooperation, and perseverance among the members of the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society led to the preservation of one of Michigan's most important lighthouses. The existing DeTour Light, which is offshore at the mouth of the St. Mary's Canal, has guided ship traffic on the St. Marys River between Lake Huron and Lake Superior since 1931. The U. S. Coast Guard declared the lighthouse surplus property in 1997. In 1998, the National Trust for Historic Preservation placed Michigan lighthouses on its list of 11 Most Endangered Historic Places, and a group of residents from nearby Drummond Island and DeTour Village, formed the DeTour Reef Light Preservation Society (DRLPS). The dedicated volunteers acquired donations and grant funding for the project worth over one million dollars.

The first step in the project was to make it possible to get supplies off vessels and up onto the lighthouse deck. In 2001 the DRLPS received a Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grant to rebuild one of the two deck cranes. In order to ensure that the deck crane replacement was historically accurate, several salvaged portions of the original crane, including the manufacturer's nameplate, were incorporated into the new one.

With the deck crane in place, the DRLPS was ready to tackle a complete rehabilitation project. With several grants in hand, as well as donated services and financial contributions, the society teamed up with U.P. Engineers and Architects and Mihm Construction to repair and restore every interior and exterior square inch of the structure. Replica window sash were installed; the exterior steel plates were blasted, primed and painted to the original paint color scheme; plaster was patched; new flooring was installed; and new cabinetry was built and installed to perfectly match the original as documented in the original construction drawings.

The society plans to open the lighthouse for tours this summer, adding to the local tourism economy. The restoration of the DeTour Reef Light demonstrates that even Michigan's offshore beacons can and should be preserved.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan

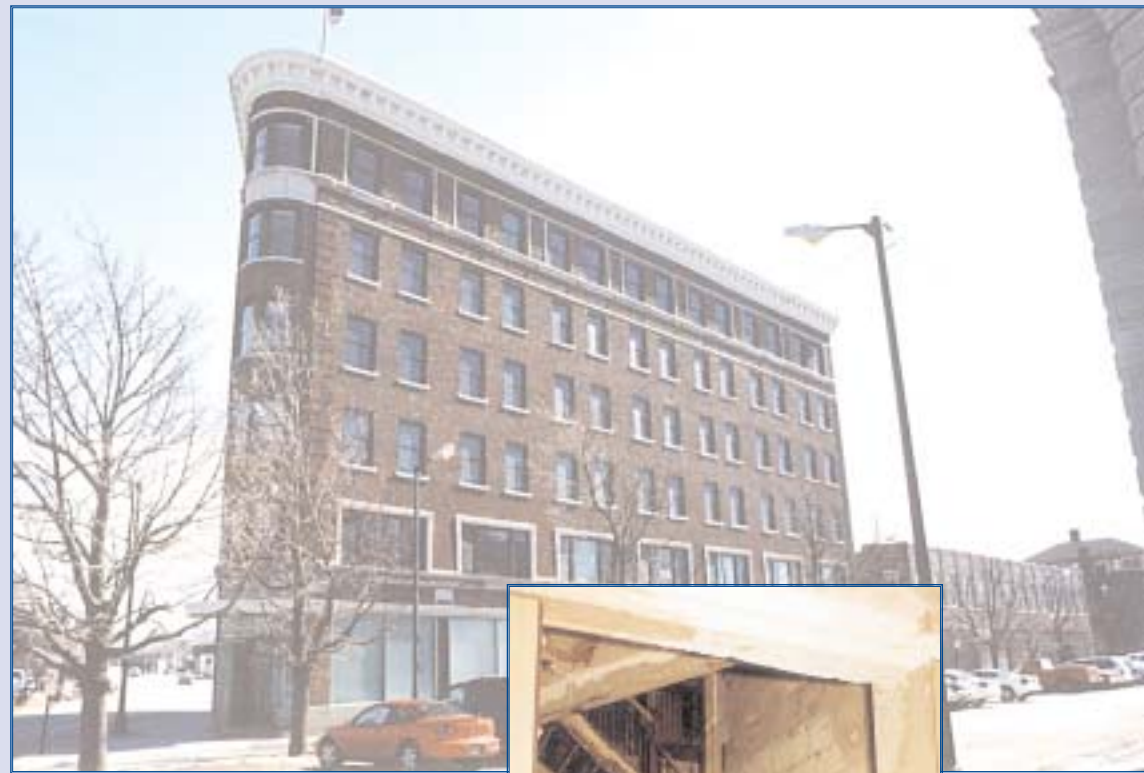


## David and Barbara Huyser for Multiple Rehabilitations in the Fairmount Square Historic District, Grand Rapids

Fairmount Square, a local historic district designated by the city of Grand Rapids, is becoming a better place to live, work, and spend free time thanks to the efforts of property owners David and Barbara Huyser. The Huysers, with the financial assistance of the Michigan Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, have rehabilitated several commercial and residential properties in the district. The Ebeling Building could be called their flagship rehabilitation project. Located at 337 Diamond Avenue SE, at a prominent corner in the district, the vacant structure was turned into an outstanding mixed-use project. Much of the rehabilitation work on the exterior of the building was based on a historic photograph. Since they started work on the Ebeling Building, the Huysers have tackled several other residential rental rehabilitation projects. Work on these properties included removing decades' worth of deteriorated, non-original siding and roofing materials while preserving and maintaining the historic integrity of the houses. Through their forward thinking, hard work, and financial investment, the Huysers have demonstrated commitment to the revitalization of the Fairmount Square community







## Findley Development for the Rehabilitation of the Fidelity Building, Benton Harbor, and the Youth Building, Battle Creek

Two historic preservation tax credit projects undertaken by Findley Development—the rehabilitation of Benton Harbor’s Fidelity Building and Battle Creek’s Youth Building—resulted in approximately \$11.7 million in rehabilitation investment, the creation of seventy new urban residences, and the strengthening of the cities’ urban cores.

The Fidelity Building is one of the few remaining “skyscrapers” built during Benton Harbor’s heyday of the 1920s. The last tenant left the Fidelity Building in 1976 and the building sat vacant with little or no maintenance for nearly 30 years, reducing it to a crumbling shell. Years of neglect resulted in the loss of most of the interior plaster, woodwork, and mechanical systems, and caused serious structural problems. Adding to the complexity of the project was the fact that the building’s plaster was asbestos rich and had been painted with numerous coats of lead based paint.

Undaunted, Findley set about creating a supportive environment for seniors that would bring people back to the city’s historic urban core. After painstaking remediation efforts the building was recast as thirty-one senior apartments. The rehabilitation retained the historic exterior and the few remaining interior features, including the primary circulation pattern and the main stairs/elevator lobby at each floor, while creating unique and attractive apartments.

Dedicated in 1928 as the Boys and Girls Building, the Art Deco-style Youth Building was the first large-scale philanthropic gift made by W. K. Kellogg to the city of Battle Creek. When the building closed in 1988, the city and the school district slated it for demolition. Concerned citizens stopped the demolition, and the building was stabilized. Over time a community-based vision for future uses was created, the building was aggressively marketed, and a development team with the necessary skills and vision was found in Findley Development.

Findley transformed the Youth Building into the Village at Irving Park, a senior-focused housing development with 25 unique residential units within the historic building. The developer also constructed a new building, containing 14 additional traditional residential units, which is connected to the historic building by an enclosed glass and steel breezeway. The new building was designed and sited to allow the historic building to remain dominant on the site.

Thanks to the vision, courage, and commitment of Findley Development the Fidelity Building and the Youth Building are spectacular community assets once again.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan





## Schostak Brothers and Company and the Sterling Group for the Rehabilitation of Merchants Row, Detroit

Schostak Brothers and the Sterling Group have set an excellent example for creating vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods as exciting places to live and work, a component of the Cool Cities initiative. The multi-building Lofts of Merchants Row is the largest single residential rehab project in downtown Detroit and exemplifies the loft conversion projects that have occurred in several historic buildings in the downtown area in recent years. The rehabilitation of five former department store buildings into market-rate loft apartments brings attractive living units to the heart of Detroit. These buildings on Woodward Avenue in the Lower Woodward Avenue Historic District were vacant for over twenty years and were blight on Detroit's "Main Street." The district is both listed in the National Register of Historic Places and designated as a local historic district by the city of Detroit. The rehabilitated buildings range from an 1886 elaborate cast iron front building to a ten-story white decorative terra-cotta-clad building built in 1923. The project began in the summer of 2003 and was completed in the late fall of 2004. Now known as Merchants Row, the five buildings contain 157 loft apartments with the street-level storefronts retaining a commercial presence on Woodward Avenue, known historically as Detroit's premier shopping district. The project also included construction of a nine-story parking structure, designed to fit into and complement the historic streetscape. This \$33 million project was assisted with both state and federal historic preservation tax credits combined with Brownfield cleanup tax credits available through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

The Lofts of Merchants Row transformed Lower Woodward Avenue. The project is sure to spur redevelopment of the surrounding buildings and additional investment in the city of Detroit.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan





## The City of Niles Planning Department, the Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance, the Niles Downtown Development Authority, and the Greater Niles Community Development Corporation for the Big Brown Take Down

In 2003 the city of Niles embarked on “the Big Brown Take Down,” a major facelift for two blocks of the city’s commercial district, using grant funds from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The “Take Down” involved the removal of the aluminum facades and masonry repair on two complete city blocks at no cost to the property owners. Business owners were then able to consult with a local sign company to design a new sign for the front of each building. Streetscape improvements and rehabilitation of upper-level residential units for Main Street properties were also included in the grant project.

The rehabilitation of Main Street in Niles is an ongoing project. Niles was selected as a Michigan Main Street community in 2004, which will assist property owners with the restoration of storefronts. The streetscape along Main Street was completed and rededicated in December 2004. The overall effect brings cohesion to downtown Niles and an atmosphere that is pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing. In addition to the initial state grant of \$780,000, a local funding match of \$500,000 and \$1.4 million private dollars financed this major downtown overhaul, creating approximately one hundred jobs.

The Niles Main Street Revitalization project began with the full cooperation of individuals from four entities: the Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance (SMEGA), the Niles Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the Greater Niles Community Development Corporation (CDC), and the Niles planning department. The team worked diligently to ensure that everyone involved acted in the best interest of the city of Niles. Their efforts resulted in the complete transformation of the downtown. The Big Brown Take Down revealed the historic character of the buildings that sets Niles apart from other communities.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan





## Samuel and Peter Shaheen for the Rehabilitation of the Temple Theatre-Elf Khurafeh Complex, Saginaw

The Temple Theatre/Elf Khurafeh Complex, located in the East Saginaw Historic Business District underwent an extensive rehabilitation by the father and son team of Samuel and Peter Shaheen. Built in 1927 by the Elf Khurafeh Shriners, the building consists of theater space and an attached clubhouse. The building was designed to allow the theater and clubhouse to function as independent spaces but included ways to accommodate the Shriners' use of the theater for major ceremonial and gala functions. The Shaheens reinvented this 67,695 square-foot vacant theater and events complex as a major community resource and downtown destination for the residents of Saginaw.

The key elements of the rehabilitation included the careful cleaning and faithful restoration of the theater's elaborate interior decorative design, while accommodating the needs of a modern multi-function theater. The entire theater dome was cleaned, and damaged areas were repaired and repainted by the skilled artisans of Conrad Schmitt. In other areas where the original paint scheme had been lost under years of over-painting the project team skillfully recreated the elaborate original appearance. The design team, including Wigen, Tincknell, Meyer & Associates and GlasTender, replaced a concession area added during the 1950s with a secondary concession area designed to complement the newly rehabilitated historic interior. Other project elements included the expansion of lobby functions and afterglow spaces, providing much needed reception and banquet space.

The Temple Theatre/Elf Khurafeh Complex Rehabilitation represents approximately \$5 million in private investment. The Shaheens took advantage of the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits and completed the highest quality rehabilitation possible. The project brings new life to downtown Saginaw and demonstrates the unique opportunities the city offers.



# Historic Preservation in Michigan