

History Explorer

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

www.LansingHistory.org

September 2012

The History of the Boys Training School – A State of Michigan Operated Facility

On Thursday evening, September 20th, HSGL Trustee Jesse LaSorda will give a presentation about the infamous Michigan Boys' Training School, located near the campus of Eastern High School in Lansing. Come and learn the stories behind the institution, including the identity of the first superintendent of the Boys' Training School (who was involved with the Underground Railroad in Michigan), as well as the identities of the sixty-one boys who died while at the facility (including where they are buried). Learn about the ties between the Boys' Training School and the United States military, the land on which the school was located, and why the facility was finally closed.

In addition to serving as an HSGL board member, Jesse LaSorda is also the president of the Lansing African-American Genealogical Society, and the co-chair of the Ingham County Historical Commission.

When: Thursday, September 20, 2012, 7:00pm
Where: Downtown CADL library auditorium, 401 S. Capitol Ave.

HSGL would like to welcome our new members who have joined this summer! We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

Please note that in order to save funds and stretch your membership dollars, HSGL is asking members to consider receiving their newsletter by e-mail. We spend about \$12 every year per person on printing and postage, and the rates will only go up. If you'd like to receive your newsletter by e-mail, send an e-mail to info@lansinghistory.org. Thank you!

Upcoming Lansing School Exhibit, How You Can Help...

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing needs your help gathering objects for our next exhibit, which will be about Lansing's High Schools. We hope to launch the exhibit in November.

We're looking for people to loan and donate objects from their high school days at Everett, Eastern, Sexton, Central, St. Mary's High (later Mons. John W.O'Rafferty), Resurrection (later Monsignor High), Lansing Catholic Central, and the Michigan School for the Blind.

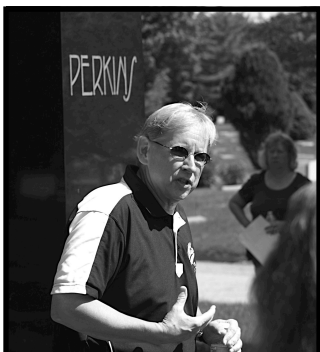
Examples of desired objects are: graduation gowns, varsity jackets, sports uniforms, school spirit memorabilia, class rings, yearbooks, prom attire, drama costumes, report cards, band uniforms, trophies and awards, and school club memorabilia. If you have something you'd like to donate or loan, please send an e-mail to info@lansinghistory.org or call (517) 282-0671 to speak to HSGL President Valerie Marvin. All items need to be donated or loaned by October 15, 2012.

2012 Cemetery Tour A Success

Thank you to everyone that attended our 2012 Cemetery Walk at Evergreen Cemetery and special thanks to our presenters: Gary Koelsch, Jesse Lasorda, Valerie Marvin, Susan Palmer-Alvarez, Jim Perkins, & David Votta.



Jesse Lasorda



Jim Perkins



Valerie Marvin



David Votta



Susan Palmer-Alvarez

Fall 2012 Silent Auction at the Michigan / Strand Theatre!

Saturday, October 6, 2012 - 4:00pm to 7:00pm

The Old Michigan / Strand Theatre

(Atrium Office Building)

215 South Washington Square, Lansing

\$15.00 per person

We have begun preparations for our annual silent auction to raise funds for founding a Lansing area historical museum. Last year, with the help of our members and the community, our society raised nearly \$10,000 towards our goal. Since that time we've taken many significant steps, including leasing a space in the Creyts building and launching our very first mini-exhibit, *When Everyone Shopped Downtown*.

This year we hope to build on our success from last fall to continue our fundraising efforts to create this new museum. We have already obtained a number of unique and one-of-a-kind items for the the auction on which you will not want to miss the chance to bid. We shall share more about those items in next month's *History Explorer*.

In order to make the auction a success once again, we need your help! Please consider donating an item or experience for the auction. You may also contribute to the auction by serving as a financial sponsor of the event. We have several sponsorship levels available that include advertising in our program and free tickets to the auction.

If you would like to donate an auction item or serve as an event sponsor, please fill out the enclosed donor form and send it in to the Historical Society at P.O. Box 12095, Lansing MI 48901. Additional forms can be found on HSGL's website, www.lansinghistory.org, under the heading *Silent Auction*. **Please note that all donations must be made by September 17th, 2012.**

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

P.O. Box 12095 ~ Lansing, MI 48901
www.LansingHistory.org

Officers & Board Members

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Valerie Marvin - President | Lille Foster - Trustee |
| Bill Castanier - Vice President | David Houston - Trustee |
| Adam Beckwith - Secretary | Jesse LaSorda - Trustee |
| Nathalie Winans - Treasurer | Erik Nelson - Trustee |
| Joan Bauer - Trustee | Zig Olds - Trustee |
| Harry Emmons - Trustee | David Votta - Trustee |

If you have any questions about making a donation, or need your donation to be picked up, please call Valerie Marvin at (517) 282-0671.

Thank you to everyone who has donated items for the silent auction. We've had a wonderful response from the community. Items are still coming in at this point. We will have a complete listing of items up on the website for you to peruse by September 24, two weeks before the auction.

Some of the items available at the auction:

Genuine City of Lansing Main Street street sign

Jim Abbott Baseball Package - includes a signed baseball, a signed baseball card, and a copy of his autobiography.

Michigan State Capitol Dome Tour

Image of the Mustang Bar in Old Town c. 1975

English Inn Deluxe Getaway Package

Wine Tasting for Four at Burgdorf Winery

One Hour of Appraisal Services from Triola Gallery

Free admissions to some of Michigan's Best Cultural Attractions, including the Henry Ford Museum/ Greenfield Village, Detroit Zoo, Grand Rapids Public Museum, John Ball Zoo, Meadow Brook, the Edsel & Eleanor Ford Home, and more!

WLNS Channel 6 Behind the Scenes Tour

2012 Michigan Notable Books Package

Motown Records Package

WKAR Things Remembered DVDs

Dinner with State Rep. Joan Bauer and Doug Langham

Mackinac Historic State Parks 2013 Family Membership

Unique Poster of Jim Harrison, Richard Ford, & Tom McGuaine

Michigan Cookbooks Package

Lansing's Strand Theatre

By Valerie Marvin, HSGL President

Lansing's beautiful Strand Theatre opened on Thursday evening, April 21, 1921 to a capacity crowd of 1,786 patrons. During its opening weekend the theatre played host to a variety of vaudeville acts, with two shows on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, as well as an afternoon matinee on Saturday and Sunday.

The theatre was owned by W.S. Butterfield, a Michigan theatre giant. He owned theatres across the state, with locations in Lansing, Jackson, Monroe, Ann Arbor, Holland, Niles, Grand Haven, Sturgis, Kalamazoo, Bay City, Saginaw, Traverse City, Bay City, Flint, Ypsilanti, and Mount Pleasant. Butterfield made his home in Battle Creek. Tradition states that the two female figures found on the Strand Theatre's façade are those of his two daughters. In actuality, though, Butterfield was the father of four daughters, putting this tradition in doubt.

The theatre and arcade was designed by John Ebersson, a well known architect who specialized in atmospheric theatres, designed to bring the brilliance of the night sky inside. Ebersson was born in the city of Czerowitz, then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (today a part of modern Ukraine). He came to the U.S. as a child, working first in the Midwest, and then eventually in New York City. He designed theatres in America, Mexico, and Australia. Like many theatre architects he worked in a variety of styles designing structures that were Moorish, French, Italian, NeoClassical, and as the years passed, Art Deco.

While the theatre itself was the main focus of the building, the structure also included a large arcade that housed many shops and offices that could be entered from the enclosed central walkway accessed from Washington Street.. Such arcades were very popular in the early 20th century, and are an architectural descendant of the popular glass exhibit halls and train sheds that became popular in both Europe and America following Prince Albert's Crystal Palace Exhibition in London's Hyde Park in 1851. Arcades were popular because they allowed many small businesses to rent space without having to care and pay for an entire building. Arcades are, in many ways, the parents of the enclosed shopping

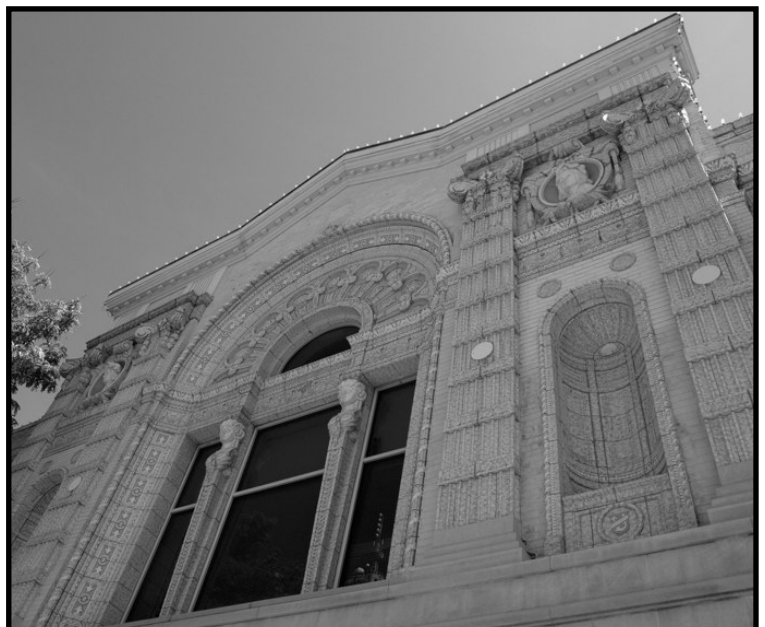
malls that sprang up across the country in the 1960s and 1970s.

Among the businesses located in the Strand Arcade's original fourteen shops were: the Arcade Tire Shop, Kies Millinery, the Lansing Phonograph Company, A La Ville De Paris Ladies Tailor Made Suits, Coats, & Dress, DeFrees Milinery, J.A. Ulvern Tailor, G. William Davis Inc. Men's Clothes, Arcadia Class & Crockery Company, the Palace of Sweets Candy Shop, and the Cinderella Tea Shop.

The second floor of the building boasted office spaces available for rental. In addition the Strand also offered a large banquet hall used for many parties and receptions.

The basement level of the building housed a recreation hall that included, at various times throughout the building's history, bowling alleys and a billiard parlor. Interestingly, the proprietor of the billiard hall offered specific hours for women who wished to play billiards with their girlfriends, away from the company of men.

The Strand Theatre was eventually renamed the Michigan Theatre in the mid 20th century. Today many Lansing residents have lovely memories of shopping and watching films in the lovely old picture palace. Sadly, the theatre portion of the building was eventually removed. Evidence of the balcony, though, can still be found on the Grand Avenue side of the building.





Historical Society of Greater Lansing
P.O. Box 12095
Lansing, MI 48901

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Historical Society of Greater Lansing - Membership Application

Please accept my application for:

- New Membership
- Renewal Membership
- Gift Membership

in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing

I have enclosed:

- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$100 Business Membership
- \$_____ Additional Gift to HSGL

Member Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email Address _____

Please Send The Newsletter
Via Email

Make Checks Payable to
Historical Society of Greater Lansing

*The Historical Society of Greater Lansing is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.
Thank you for your support of our programs and activities.*