

Old Lady Justice to get new pedestal

Lady Justice, the statue which graced the top of the old Oakland County Courthouse for more than 55 years, will be restored to a place of honor in front of the new courthouse in Pontiac. The statue will be unveiled during ceremonies marking Law Week 1983 at 4 p.m. Saturday, April 30, in front of the main entrance to the courthouse at 1800 N. Telegraph.

Justice, and the purpose of Law Week is to call attention to the American tradition of justice," said Rockwood W. Bullard III, chairman of the Law Day Committee.

"This statue will provide a visible reminder of justice to the residents of Oakland County."

THE 9-FOOT tall, 160-pound statue was restored through the combined ef-

forts of the Oakland County Bar Association, the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society and Oakland County Cultural Council.

Lady Justice reigned atop the old courthouse, located at the corner of Huron and Wayne in downtown Pontiac, from the early 1900s until the building was demolished in 1982 to make way for a new facility at the Oakland County complex.

She has been stored at the Oakland County Facilities and Operations Department for 20 years.

"Efforts were made during the Bicentennial to restore the statue, but they were unsuccessful," said Virginia Rogers of Franklin, a member of the cultural council. "There were other restoration projects that received top priority."

"We're now trying to raise money to pay for the restoration by selling lithographs of the old courthouse and the statue."

LADY JUSTICE'S facelift — she was painted to resemble the patina of aged bronze and was given a new sword, foot and set of scales — cost about \$1,800, Rogers said.

An additional \$1,700 will be needed to cover the cement pedestal. Although Oakland County is donating marble slabs left over from construction of the new courthouse for the pedestal, it will cost that much to attach the slabs onto the cement, Rogers said.

Although Lady Justice has little artistic value, she is recognized for her historical value, according to Gretchen Adler, past president of the historical society.

Adler said the statue was made by traveling craftsmen sometime during the completion of the courthouse in 1905 and probably is patterned after the Statue of Liberty.

FRED PETRUCCI, who refurbished the statue, said he searched for a mark or signature that would identify the artist, but found none.

"She's made of hammered zinc, which was a common and cheap construction material 100 years ago," said Petrucci, who owns the Fine Arts Sculpture Center in Clarkston.

"She is not considered a real work of art. Her body is out of proportion. But I feel her face and head were very well done."

Thursday, April 21, 1983 O4E

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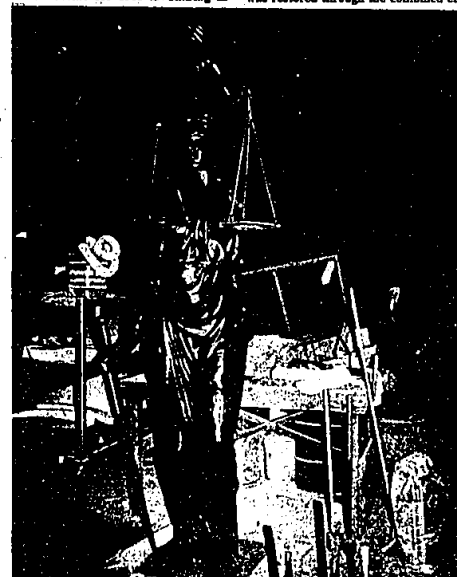
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Lady Justice, shown here in storage, received a major facelift, thanks to efforts by the Oakland County Bar Association, Oakland County Cultural Council and Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society.

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