Downtown architecture offers peek at past

In the town of Farmington, where he built barns, houses and businesses. Evidence of his building and design skills can still be seen in the family mansion of Joshua Simmons, built in 1841 and now referred to as the Hill House in Livonia's historical village

at Greenmead.

As an increasing number of sot-tlers arrived, they built dwellings and businesses within the heart of the village of Farmington. In winter 1866-67, the village was incorporat.

ed. On Oct. 9, 1872, tragedy struck the village as fired roared down Main

Willage as lired roared down main. Street.

Timber structures lining Grand River burned with fury, leaving nothing but charred wood and ashes. The lone building to survive the distatrous fire in Farmington's business district now houses the Korner Barbershop, at Grand River and Farmington Road.

The Korner Barbershop was built sometime between 1850 and 1870," said Lee S. Peel, author of the 1971 sook, "Farmington: A Pictorial History," out-of-print but being revised. "It is the oldest known business directure in downtown Farmington," Peel said.

The oldest known business is not significant from an architectural standpoint. It is a plain, boxy build-ing constructed strictly for function.

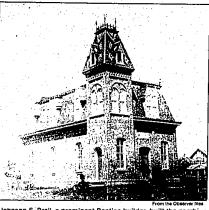
IN 1873, local businessman and politician P. Dean Warner replaced the structure that he lost in the first of 1872 with a twe-story brick building known as the Warner Block. Its veracular architecture style was popular in the late 19th century.

"The structure is primarily a combination of turn-of-the-century architecture," said Carl E. Gaiser of Farmington, an architect for 35 years.

Farmington, an attended present of the property of the providing eyelld brickwork, graced the facade of the building's second floor. Twin rows of dentils secontated the area below the roof line.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the building was revised to give it ar "early art dece look, terra cetta brickwork and a single row of dentils," Gaiser said.

Ilis." Gaiser said.
"A palladian window was added and a parapet, where the facade conlinues up beyond the roof structure."
The seven windows became five.



Johnson S. Prall, a prominent Pontiac builder, built the combination Township Hall/Masonic Temple in 1876. He built Farmington's most notable piece of architecture for \$4,300. The structure includes the influence of French, Victorian and Roman design. The Victorian influence was in "all the ginger-bread and Iron work."

'In any and every case, the site is the beginning of the building that aspires

In 1990, all the iron work is gone from the Farmington Masonic Tomple, at downtown Farmington's historic crossroads, Grand River and Farmington Road. An addition was built on the west end of the structure in 1915-18 at a cost of \$6,200. It duplicated the original archiate in 1869. His son, Frederick Malt-

- Frank Lloyd Wright architect

to architecture.'

nal style of the architecture, including the woodwork on the caves and durmers. Farmington's first library was housed in this historic hall.

Today, all the ironwork is gone from the 114-year-old structure, now known as the Masonic Temple. Alongside the Governor's Mansion, the Town Hall/Masonic Temple, purchased by Farmington Lodge No. 151 F. & A.M. from Farmington Township in 1965, is one of Farmington's most notable pieces of architecture.

BUILT IN 1867, the Governor's Mansion ranks among the most nota-

ble architectural structures in Farmington.
"The Governor's Mansion shows a Victorian influence," Gaiser said, "It is traditional, colonial-looking with round columns. There's eyell brickwork around the windows."
There are decorative brackets under the overhanging roof of the second story and lantern. A balustrade decorated the entire length of the first-floor roof line.

decorated the entire length of the first-floor roof line.

The Governor's Mansion, when first built, was known as the Sena-tor's House. Pascal De Angelis Warner was elected senator from the fifth district in the Michigan Sen-

ate in 1899. His son, Prederick Malti-by Warner, was governor 1905-11. P.D. Warner built the house two years before he became a Michigan senator, therefore it became the Sen-ator's House. When Pred M. Warner became governor, his father, P.D. "Dean" Warner, built himself a smaller house alongside and Ict his son use the senator's house as the Governor's Mansion.

The front porch has been folined by a side proft. A porte occhere was added that allows webledes to drive under and release passengers without expeding them to the elements. The balustrade that ran along the first floor roof line is about to be returned to its rightful place on the roof. The front porch has been joined by

A \$6,000 grant from the Interna-tional Organization of Questers, plus \$50 from the local Quakertown Que-sters chapter, plus \$4,400 from the

museum budget, plus the donation of services by Galser has made replac-ing the balustrade more than just a dream.

Restoration of the Farmington Historical Museum's balustrade is a significant step toward preserving history for generations to come.

tecture, including the woodwork on the caves and dormers. The first floor of this historic building, formerly the Township Hail, has served as a church, library, polling place and tax office.

"The site is the beginning of the building that aspires to architecture," said Frank Lloyd Wright. Arthur Power and pioneers after him built structures based on the site, using the only material available, Farmington's trees.

Farmington as a site "has a fine rolling surface and a most produc-tive soil" watered by several small streams.

As buildings constructed on the site aspired to Farmington's fine his toric architecture, it is our response some aremeeture, it is our responsi-bility to preserve their integrity and beauty for future generations, so that they will be able to relate Farmington's history to the next generation of children.

whose use it was extensively re-vived. The Town Hall/Masonic Temple was built for \$4,300. In 1915-16, an addition was constructed on the west side of the building at the cost of \$6,200. The addition duplicated the origi-Jefferson influenced Farmington bank designs

By Linda Ann Chomin special writer

After World War I ended in 1918, a building boom soon followed in downtown Farmington. Two bank structures arose within a year on

structures arose within a year on Grand River.

On March 18, 1922, the Farmington State Savings Bank opened at Grand River and Farmington Fload. A massive structure, it not only housed the new savings bank, but 11 other businesses as well.

Bank structures followed the lead of Thomas Jefferson's institution de-

signs, built in the style of a classical

IN 1876, a combination Town Hall and Masonic Temple was built by Johnson Stout Prail, a prominent

Jonison Stoot Prail, a prominent Pontiac builder.

"The structure includes the influ-ence of French, Victorian and Roman architecture," Galser said.
"The Victorian influence can be seen in all the gingerbread and iron-work."

The French influence is noted by

work."
The French influence is noted by the Mansard roof. The roof was named after the design of the 17th century architect, Franceis Mansart. The roof was the keystone of the Second Empire style of architecture. The style originated in France during the relign of the Second Empire, that of Napoleon III (1825-27), under whose use it was extensively revived.

signs, built in the style of a classical Roman temple.

Twin Ionic columns grace the front corner facade of the Farmington State Savings Bank, founded in 1898. Six columns line the side of the building on Grand River, six more columns adorn the side of the buildings as Environted Park ing on Farmington Road.

This is how the Farmington En-terprise described the new bank building in March 1922:

"The bank building proper is con-structed in a most substantial man-ner, the exterior being of Bedford

stone and granite base coupled with reinforced concrete and tile; making the same fireproof."

Bedford limestone is named after the town it is quarried from: Bed-ford, Ind. The newspaper also noted that the interior is of Missourl mar-ble and Kansas walnut.

PEOPLE'S STATE Bank opened to the public on Feb. 16, 1923. Paired lonic columns adorn the facade of the bank. Stahl & Kinsey were the architects and engineers.

The Farmington Enterprise de-

scribed the bank in the Feb, 23, 1923 edition:

"The exterior of the building is shown of white artificial stone and especially designed with heavy Coriothian columns flanking the main entrance and extending the full height of the building, supporting a bandsomely patterned entablature, the structure presents a substantial and pleasing facade."

After World War I, banks were designed to relay the idea, they were stable and secure. "There's a little Roman influence

"There's a little Roman influence in the People's State Bank," Gaiser

said, "very much like the Parthenon with the fluted columns."

WHEN BUILT, People's State
Bank, except for the position of its
clock and a baluster along the roof
line, was identical to the Plymouth
United Savings Bank on Main Street
in Plymouth, Mich.
The caps on the columns of the
People's State Bank building in
Farmington have since been removed, Gatser said.
The ornamental scrolls on the captials were dangerous to pedestrians

itals were dangerous to pedestrians walking by because they were disin-

tegrating. They were removed and what remained, smoothed nearly flush with the columns. They now appear as columns of the Dorle or-der, instead of the Ionic.

Today the engraving in the stone, People's State Bank, no longer re-mains. It has been sandblasted off the facade.

"The Farmington State Savings Bank shows French influence, with the urns and entablature." Gaiser said, "also a little Roman." Farmington State Savings Bank is now the Village Mall.

creative impressions

This column appears regularly: Send news items to: Creative im-pressions, Creative Living, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150.

AT GREENMEAD

• AT GREENMEAD

For a tirp into Livonia's past, visit
the Hill House at Greenmead Historical Village this month.

Tours are 1-4 p.m. every Sunday in
December. The house, built in 1841,
sports a partroitic theme. Cost is \$2
for adults and \$1 for sentors and students.

gents.

Free holiday concerts are held at 4 p.m. each Sunday in December at Newburg Church in the village, Newburgh at Eight Mile.

The village will be closed January-April.

DSO STATUS

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra increased ticket sales by 28 percent and revenue by 45 percent in 1989-90.

90.

"An excellent artistic product and improvements in programming and the appearance of the hall had a dramatic impact on ticket sales," said Robert Miller Jr., Detroit Symphony Orchester Hall board chairman.

An audited summary of the year-old financial statement showed the DSO met or exceeded goals of the five-year business plan in all financial categories, Miller said.

The annual fund raised almost \$5

cial categories, Miller said.

The annual fund raised almost \$5 million, than is n part to a Skiliman Foundation grant. A fund-raising appeal to corporations and government sources raised \$9.2 million with \$3 million from a supplemental state allocation. The volunteer council raised \$9.000.

The educational concert series reached \$3.000 young people. The DSO performed free concerts for

such groups as the American Red Cross, the NAACP, Detroit Aglow and the International Freedom Fest. The IIrst African American Com-posers Forum was a big success. "The hall restoration is complete,

"The hall restoration is complete, one of the finest conductors in the world today, Neeme Jarvi, is on board as music director, and we can now turn our thoughts towards recordings and a major endowment campaign, two of the most important building blocks for today's orchestras."

ART AWARDS
The Arts Foundation of Michigan announces that nominations are open for its annual 1991 Michigan Arts and Patrons Awards. This marks the 16th year the foundation will honor Michigan artists by awarding cash or

miceigan artists by awarding casi prizes.

The arts awards are given annual-ty to Michigan artists in recognition of outstanding achievement in vary-ing fields. Three artists will receive \$5,000.

35,000.
Patron awards are bestowed upon individuals for outstanding service in support of the arts. Patrons receive a commemorative plaque of Powabic Pottery.
Winners are recognized at the foundation's annual Michigan Arts Award ceremony in May. The dead-line to submit nominations is Jan. All nominees must live in Michigan. The foundation has ponored 80 artists and 39 natrons since the wards.

The foundation has honored 80 artists and 39 patrons since the awards were established in 1976. The foundation was established in 1966 as a nonprofit organization that encourages and supports excellence in the arts through a variety of granting programs.

For nominating forms, write or call the Arts Foundation of Michicalles

gan, 1352 David Whitney Buidling, Detroit, MI 48226 or call 964-2244.

POETRY CONTEST

POETRY CONTEST
"When we choose the \$1,000 grand prize winner, we always look for a new, undiscovered poet," says Robert Nelson, American Poetry Association publisher.
"Were always happlest to receptive ordinary people who write extraordinary poetry. Anyone can see the content of the prize ordinary poetry.

win."

The grand prize is \$1,000 and the first prize is \$500 in the APA contest. The 152 prizes total \$11,000. There is no entry fee.

Poets should send or more original

Poets should send or more original poems, no more than 20 lines, along with their name and address on the top of the page to American Poetry Association, Dept. CO-95, 250-A Poetror St., P.O. Box 1803, Santa Cruz, CA 95061. The deadline for postmarks is Dec. 31.

Marks is Dec. 31.

Al submitted poems are oensidered for publication in the American Poetry Anthology, a collection of

Peetry Anthology, a collection of current verse.

As a bonus, entrants receive the Poet's Guide to Getting Published, a four-page booklet.

The APA has sponsored poetry

contests for nine years. It has awarded \$200,000 in prizes to 3,500 winning poets.

CRAFT FAIR
 Henry Ruff School PTA in Garden
City is taking applications for its
spring craft fair on March 16. Table
cost is \$15. Call Debra Szypula at
427-9099 or contact the school.

GOOD CHEAR
 The holidays will be happier for abused and neglected children in

metro Detroit, thanks to Operation

metro Detroit, thanks to Operation Good Cheer.

'The Spirit of Detroit-Sweet Adelines, along with the Ford Motor Co. Chorus, the Meri's Renaissance Chorus SPEPSQSA, the Quartets-According to the Company of the Compan

Operation Good Cheer for the past three years.

Spirit of Detroit coordinated this year's musical event, which took place under the auspices of Ford Mo-tor Credit Co. and in occoperation with the Ford Communication Net-work and Cablevision of Dearborn/

Wayne. Admission was free.
The nearby Ritz Carleton Hotel
was the scene of an afterglow. Quartets performed as they strolled
through the tables.

UP WITH SONG
 The Plymouth Oratorio Society
will begin its fifth season Sunday,
April 21, performing the Brahms Re-

quiem (in English) with the Michigan

Sinfonietta.

The organizational meeting and first rehearsal will be 7:30-9:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 14 in First United Methodist Church, 45201 N. Territorial Plurguth

The society is open to all adult singers (and experienced high school singers) without audition. Vocal scores will be on sale at the first rehearsal. The G. Schirmer edition will

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