

## Meadow Brook's flicks

Kick back with classic films, picnic food

BY CINDI COOK  
SPECIAL WRITER

You've seen *Spiderman* and *Scoby Doo*, you've been earnest in your interest to see *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and believed that *The Believer* would solve your woes after a long week at work.

But it's Friday night, and you're hoping for some new cinematic stimulation. What to do?

Hit Meadow Brook Hall's classic movie series, appropriately entitled "Friday Flicks." Granted there's no popcorn but there is a gourmet picnic provided by the Hall.

This is the first year that Meadow Brook has held a festival of this kind — the Cannes of suburban Detroit.

And so far, so good says Sally Victor, External Relations Director for Meadow Brook Hall.

"We've had a great response," she says. "The 'Flicks' don't start until 9:30 p.m. and it's B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Blanket)." Viewers can bring a lawn chair, but are encouraged to sit toward the back.

For \$22, each person receives a picnic basket when they arrive filled with gourmet cheeses, crackers, dessert, and a bottle of Chardonnay — and even the corkcrew to open it. Bottled water also is included. There is no choice of wine, and the Hall prohibits (state law-enforced) any other liquor being brought on the premises.

"It's a nice way to end the week, sitting in a lovely garden, on a Friday, surrounded by beautiful plants and the lovely images on screen," Victor says.

The lovely garden is Meadow Brook Hall's beautifully restored rock garden, which seats 150 to 175 people comfortably. It lies behind a brick wall, found through a doorway that opens up to a beautiful Flagstone area. The films are a slew of classics, from *The Women* to *The Thin Man*, shown on a 20- by 40-foot screen. Kicked off in May, the Flicks celebrate the 1930s and the memorable movies that made it such a decade of glamour.

So you get a good seat, the doors open at 9 p.m. with the flick of the night starting at 9:30 p.m.

### Coming attractions

Friday Flicks started at the commencement of the summer, with the line-up including classics of the vintage cinema. Yet to come are *Holiday*, with Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant on July 12, *The Women*, with Joan Crawford and Joan Fontaine on July 19, and *The Thin Man* with William Powell, Myrna Loy, and Maureen O'Sullivan on July 26.

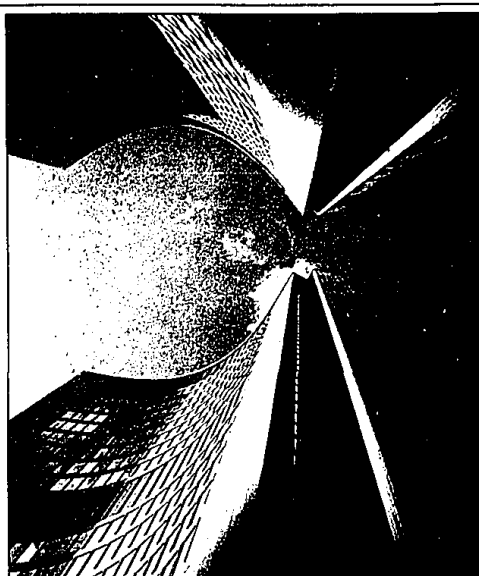
Meadow Brook Hall is the fourth largest historic house museum in the United States (it has often been referred to as an "American castle" and was featured on the Biography Channel's program of the same name). Now owned by Oakland University, the house was opened to the public in 1971.

Originally the home of Matilda Dodge Wilson, the widow of automobile pioneer John Dodge, and her second husband, lumber broker Alfred Wilson, the house stands as a symbol of the glory of the industrial age. Each room is more exquisite than the next. Highlights include: English oak paneling; an Aeolian organ dating from 1919; a 1907 Steinway Stickley furniture; Tiffany glass, and paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough DuPont, as well as other prominent artists of the time.

The Roaring Twenties and the glamorous Thirties saw many different and wonderful events at Meadow Brook Hall. For her eldest daughter's sixteenth birthday party, Matilda Dodge held a small dinner party in the ballroom on the lower level. She invited Tommy Dorsey's orchestra to play, but was worried that none of her guests would know the new singer whom the band was featuring, a young man by the name of Frank Sinatra.

That same ballroom served as a space for many parties where films were shown: There is a projection screen at one end and a retractable movie screen at the other. The Wilsons were holding their own Friday Flicks even then.

For additional information on the current Friday Flicks program or any other activity held at Meadow Brook Hall, call (248) 370-3149 or visit their Web site at [www.meadowbrookhall.org](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org).



■ The best way to obtain distortion is to use a wide angle lens. The wider the angle, the more distortion you'll get.

Cool distortion: How's this for creative distortion? Yes, it's Toronto's City Hall and Monte Nagler used a 17mm extreme wide-angle lens to get this effect.

## Wide angle distortion can add interest to your photographs

### FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY



MONTE NAGLER

I think distortion gets a bad rap in photography. We usually try to eliminate it from our photographs. We want buildings straight, horizons level and faces looking normal. But there are times when some distortion can actually add strength and impact to a picture. Distortion can be an attention grabber and can add an "artful" touch to your shot.

The best way to obtain distortion is to use a wide angle lens. The wider the angle, the more distortion you'll get. Any 35mm camera, even without a normal lens, gives minor distortion when looking up at a building. Rather than appearing vertical, the sides of the building will lean in towards each other. Use an extremely wide angle lens and the sides will dramatically lean.

I prefer lenses in the 15mm to 20mm range. Not only can you get distortion, but the depth-of-field is so great with these lenses that everything in the viewfinder from front to back will be sharp and in focus. Wide angle lenses will distort foreground objects so that they will appear exaggerated in size relative to background subjects. A grouping of flowers or a pile of boulders can be used very effectively in this manner. Dominate and bold in the foreground,

they will serve as an excellent foundation to a picture.

Interesting portraits can be done this way, too. Philippe Halsman's famous shot of Louis Armstrong is made with a wide angle lens looking down into Armstrong's trumpet. The horn appears large and impressively distorted in the finished photo, but after all, that's what "Satchmo" was known for.

Similarly, Art Kane's noted portrait of Joe Louis was taken with a wide angle lens. Placed just inches from Louis' large hands, the lens made the fists look massive compared with the rest of the "Brown Bomber's" body.

"Fun" portraits can be similarly obtained by moving in close to a friend's face with a wide angle lens. Noses will appear large, ears will look funny and the overall shape of the head will be distorted.

Distortion can also be applied to horizons. A wide angle lens on your camera tipped up or down will cause the horizon line to curve upward or downward. A surrealist effect will be obtained that no other kind of manipulation will achieve. So get distorted with your camera. Put a little distortion in your photographs.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave him a message by calling (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. His fax number is (248) 644-1314.

## Cemeteries feature beautiful grounds, structures

(AP) — As a boy living in Des Moines, Iowa, Jack Bradley would almost daily sneak out of the children's home where he and his brother and sister lived for a time during the Depression to play on the cannons and other relics of war at a local cemetery.

"Woodland Cemetery was a grand, Victorian-era cemetery that had all the things that could mesmerize a young boy's mind," the 71-year-old retired photojournalist recalled. "There were Civil War cannons, cannonballs, World War I artillery and stone soldiers. It was a beautiful place, just two blocks from the children's home."

Bradley's fascination with cemeteries didn't end with his youth. To this day, he travels the country visiting cemeteries, searching for stories from the graves and photographing beautiful monuments and mausoleums, many of them designed by leading architects and artists.

He has some 3,000 slides of cemetery photos that he's editing for a book titled *Lost Art of Notion's Cemeteries*, which he is co-authoring with Peoria Journal Star columnist Jerry Klein.

He hopes to have the book published in a year or so. "There are some real treasures in cemeteries," the photographer said.

Among the magnificent Victorian-era cemeteries Bradley has visited is Rosehill Cemetery & Mausoleum in Chicago. At 350 acres, Rosehill is the largest cemetery in the city.

It features an entrance gate of Joliet Limestone, designed by William Boyington; a Romanesque chapel by Joseph

Silabee; and the city's largest public mausoleum. Dedicated in 1914, the Rosehill Mausoleum by Sidney Lovell is constructed almost entirely of marble, including floors of Italian Carrara marble. Its many private rooms have stained-glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

Another showcase of funerary art and architecture is Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago. It features a spectacular chapel and many larger-than-life sculptures, including a great number of statues of soldiers who fought and died in World War I and the Spanish-American War.

Historic Elmwood Cemetery in Detroit also features some beautiful grounds, monuments and famous "residents."

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