

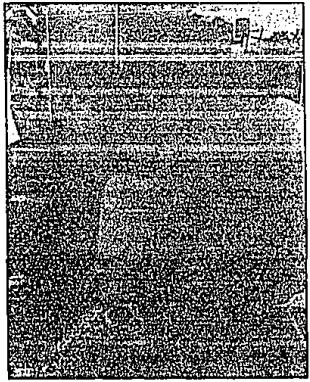
STREET SCENE

Romantic getaway

Don't be looking for the falls and a collection of tourist traps when you visit Niagara-on-the-Lake. While it may bear the name of the famous falls, it's attraction isn't water, but serenely mixed with a touch of romance and history. For more on this romantic getaway, see Page 6D.

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

★10



Avant-garde dress is a somewhat common sight along the streets of downtown Royal Oak.

The real Royal Oak

By Sharon Dergay
staff writer

I admit it. I'm biased about Royal Oak. I've lived there for 35 years, and I like it. But I'm a tad rattled by the increasing number of people who paint my hometown as a haven for the hip, trendy, avant-garde — a sort of Mayfield-cum-Birmingham — and nothing more. "Royal Oak is a lot more than upscale restaurants, art galleries and kids with magenta-colored crew cuts," I inwardly hear the June Cleaver side of me fuming. "It's families strolling the streets on summer nights,

Dondero's homecoming parade decked out in blue and white, and sinking your teeth into a jelly-filled doughnut from Hermann's Bakery." I reason, shaking my hip violet tresses until my avant-garde earrings from Patti Smith's jangle like cymbals. For a native Royal Oaker like me, the town is both as mundane as a trip to Ace Hardware store for garden hose and as offbeat as a shopping spree for leather whips and lace stockings at Noir Leather. IT'S A little schizophrenic. But that's part of the city's charm. The search for downtown Royal Oak starts with the

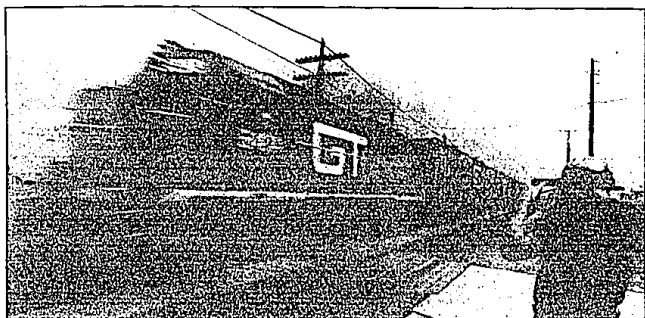
people who work, live and shop the city. I've always wanted to talk to a punk rocker, so one Saturday, I headed for the corner of Washington and Fourth. Beth Miller, a member of Royal Oak's first family of publishing, mixed easily with others who sported leather jackets and neon-colored hair. Her uncle ran the town newspaper before the family sold out to a corporation several years ago. BUT SELLING out definitely wasn't Beth's problem. The 16-year-old Birmingham Seaborn High School junior held a red carnation in her hand and talked about her plans to ("Thank you, Lord") move back to her native Royal Oak.

Dressed in white stretch pants and a black Betty Boop T-shirt, Miller is a bookend to her best friend, Holly Drozin, who's 16 and a Dondero student, outfitted in black stretch pants and a white sweater. Jeers and stares from passing motorists don't faze the pair, who prefer sedate picnics in Oakview Cemetery with their spiky-haired friends to shopping sprees at Benneton. "I'm happy the way I am," she said. "I've tried many different ways to belong. I don't believe in preppy things. I don't like going out and drinking. I don't feel like I belong when I go out with people like that." "THE BIGGEST thing is to be yourself. You don't have to be like the other girls," Drozin chimed in. Ferndale, turned heads in passing cars with his be-yourself statement of leather, air-conditioned blue jeans and earrings, trinket-laden jacket and whips of chartrouse hair, colored with ink and acrylic paint and baked by a crimping iron, were secured with leather and bone. Like Moore, many of the punks are "artistic or musically inclined."



Jim Moore, 28, an artist from Ferndale, turns heads in Royal Oak with his be-yourself statement of leather, air-conditioned blue jeans and earrings, trinket-laden jacket and whips of chartrouse hair.

photos by STEVE CANTELL/staff photographer



Tom Riley of Hobby Attie has shelves jammed with models, railroad memorabilia and old photos and knows a lot about the freight trains that cross Fourth.

Warp Factor Karlos Barney



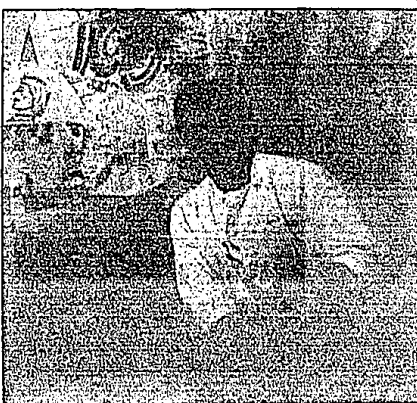
"That's me — right body, wrong century."

Doodlers delight in Crayola Club

By Joan Boram
special writer

The Detroit metropolitan area, like that of most large cities, can boast of several clubs whose select membership is based on social connection, family connections, school affiliations and/or net worth. One of the most exclusive clubs is, fittingly, one of the most non-ostentatious. No charity balls, no regattas, here! Membership is strictly limited to 140 born-again children and is, for now, irrevocably closed. We're referring to the Crayola Club at Les Auteurs, the popular 150-seat bistro in Royal Oak, one of Esquire magazine's best new restaurants in 1988. In keeping with the bistro image, chef/proprietor Keith Famie used shiny white paper to cover the tables. Providing architects, cartoonists, doodlers and graffiti artists with an assortment of crayons just naturally evolved.

LES AUTEURS attracts an arty group of gourmets, who raved about the mozzarella pizza and basil linguine, but complained when their periwinkle crayon was dull or burnt slenna missing. Finally, a patron brought in her own box of crayons and requested that it be put aside for her. Voila! The idea of the Crayola Club was born. "It just took off," Famie said. For an annual fee of \$5.00, members get their very own box of 64 crayons. Each box is numbered and placed in the Crayola Vault. Each member's name and membership number is engraved on a brass plate that marks his or her crayons' location in the vault. Soon, a "crayoller," bearing a sharpener on a silver chain, will go from table to table. "Would you like your magenta sharpened tonight, sir?" For now, staff members take



The walls of chef/proprietor Keith Famie's kitchen are covered with artwork provided by members of his exclusive Crayola Club.

STEVE CANTELL/staff photographer

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