

The Milford Historian

Mission Statement: We are organized exclusively for educational purposes. We bring together those people who are interested in history, especially the history of the Village of Milford and Milford Township.

Home Tour Nears



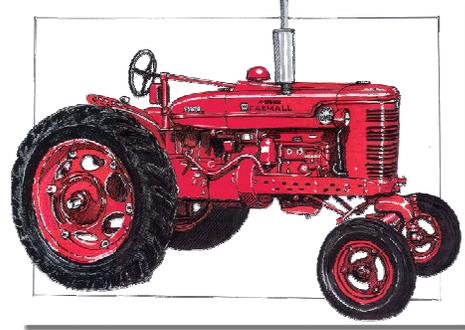
Docents needed! Phone Sue Gumper 685-2691

Milford Home Tour dates and times are **Saturday, September 17th (10-5 p.m.)** and **Sunday, September 18th (Noon-5 p.m.)**. Donations are \$13 for adults, \$11 seniors and students. Tickets will be available on tour days at the home sites and the Museum, which will be open both days. Other featured activities are the newly renovated 1939 Art Deco **Powerhouse** (details on next page), 1800's family activities and games at our **Log Cabin** in South Side Park, "**Views and Visions**" art show and, on Sunday only, the **Classic Car Show** on Main Street, and the Historical Society's **Tractor Show 2005** at Johnson School (details below).

This is the 29th anniversary of the Milford Home Tour, the Society's largest fundraising event. Five beautiful homes and a very historic building will be featured this year. These buildings bring to life the rich history of our town for residents and visitors alike. All sites are conveniently located in the Village proper. They include the **Johnston-Beck Home** (1869) on Commerce Road, the **Coosard-Wright home** (1872) on Houghton, the **Buford-Rose home** (1876) on North Main, the **Lingham-Hammock/Kometh home** (1909) on South Main, the **Smith—Gumper home** (1953) on E. Liberty, and the **Arms Bros. Store—Marvar Newlywed Nest** (1881) on Main Street downtown.

...Something New

Tractor Show 2005



The Society's annual Tractor Show will again be held in conjunction with the Home Tour. Get your tractor ready, or just come and enjoy the hardware. All tractors are welcome: old, new, restored, or those in regular use ("working clothes"). Pre-registration is not required; just show up, then register. See you there on **Sunday, September 18th, 10-4 p.m., Johnson School, 515 General Motors Road.**

From Your President...

The Home Tour is September 18th and September 19th. We still need volunteer docents both days. Please contact Sue Gumper at 248-685-2691.

What a surprise! A gentleman, John Peters, called and identified himself as the great-grandson of Jacob Peters, the original owner of Peters Mill. After the mill was destroyed, Jacob Peters moved to a farm in South Lyon in 1918. Like the descendants of other early Milford families, John has stayed in this area and continues to live in South Lyon. .

John Peters has offered the Historical Society his grandfather's scale from the early times of the mill. This makes the scale 105-150 years old. Duane Freitag and I went to see the scale. Dean describes the condition as being very good. Bill Schimmel and I picked up the scale and it is now housed in Bill's garage waiting cleaning.

David Chase

Spectacular Settings...Tables and More

It's new! It's fun! It's chock full of ideas.

Debuting this year are fanciful, creative table settings and home décor inspirations planned by the "Milford Beauties" for each of our Home Tour sites.



Exuberant and lush, decorative themes range from just-for-fun to romantic, from whimsical to machismo. The table settings are created by partnering the talents of hometown professionals and non-professionals. This local fundraising group will take guests on a flight of fancy and promises that everyone will leave the Home Tour 2005 with imaginative ideas for their own "Spectacular Settings."

For more visit the [2005 Home Tour Page](#)



John Peters with flour sack



Peters Mill Scale

Victorian Architecture



The long reign of Britain's Queen Victoria lasted from 1837 to 1901 and, in the most precise sense, this span of years makes up the Victorian era. In American architecture, however, it is those styles that were popular during the last decades of her reign—from about 1860 to 1900—that are generally referred to as "Victorian."



Queen Victoria

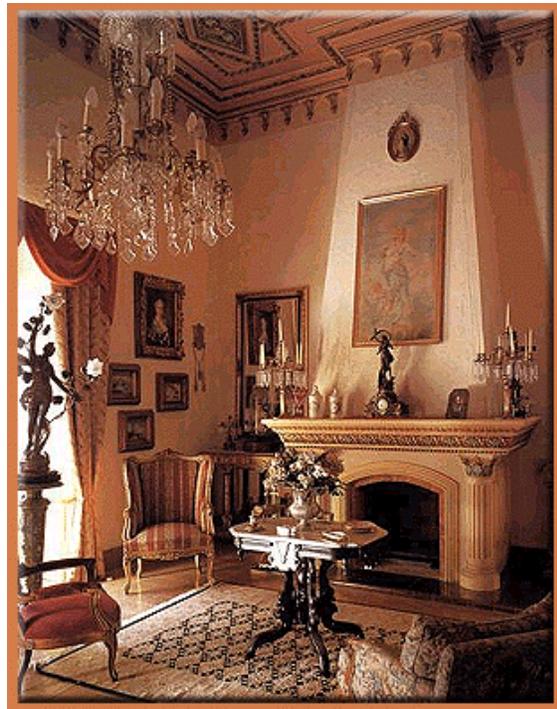
Well-to-do Victorians were extremely status-conscious and in Victorian America, nothing displayed your status like your house. House fashions literally started at the dinner table. Most wealthy Victorians spent what might seem to us to be an incredible amount of time socializing: it was not uncommon for them to either attend or host a dinner party two to five times a week. And Victorian dinners were formal and long, consisting of many courses served over as much as three hours. Afterwards, the gentlemen would retire to the game room for cigars, brandy, and billiards or cards, while the ladies would retire to the drawing room for needlepoint, music, and have sherry or tea.

Inside the Victorian Home

The Victorian Era brought on fancy, beautiful, yet cozy interior designs. The creativity of things was unbelievable. Decor was exceedingly fanciful and household items were transformed into pieces of art. Not all homes were large, but all were carefully decorated.

Furniture showed the wealth of a family and was extravagantly decorated. Victorian furniture brought back classical styles and projected richness. Its appearance reflected that of Victorian buildings with tall arches, ornate curves, large stuffing, and carved heads.

Rooms in the Victorian Home



Parlor The parlor was the most formal room in the home. It was used only for Sunday family gatherings and entertaining guests. Furniture crowded the parlor to show a family's wealth and good manners because a fresh seat would always be available. Fire places warmed the parlor in the winter.

In short, your social circle saw your house a lot, so it was important that the house be impressive. That is to say, designed in the latest fashion. The house of a successful Victorian family was more than merely a home; it was a statement of their taste and wealth, and thus of their education and business acumen.

During this period, rapid industrialization and the growth of the railroads led to dramatic changes in American house design and construction. The balloon frame, made up of light, two-inch boards held together by wire nails, was rapidly replacing heavy-timber framing as the standard building technique. This, in turn, freed houses from their traditional box-like shapes by greatly simplifying the construction of corners, wall extensions, overhangs and irregular floor plans. In addition, growing industrialization permitted many complex house components—doors, windows, roofing, siding, and decorative detailing—to be mass-produced in factories and shipped throughout the country at relatively low cost on the expanding railroad network. Victorian styles clearly reflect these changes through their extravagant use of complex shapes and elaborate detailing, features previously restricted to expensive, landmark houses.



Most Victorian styles are loosely based on Medieval prototypes. Multi-textured or multi-colored walls, strongly asymmetrical facades and steeply pitched roofs are common features. These exuberant mixtures of detailing, superimposed on generally Medieval forms, mean most Victorian styles overlap each other without the clear-cut stylistic distinctions that separate the Greek, Gothic and Italianate modes of the preceding Romantic era. This architectural experimentation continued beyond Victorian times to reach a climax in the early decades of the 20th century when the first truly modern styles—Craftsman



Kitchen In early Victorian times the kitchen was located in the basement. Later it moved to the first floor. Everything was stored in wooden or tin closets. This way they were free from dust and bugs and other pests.



Dining Room Most dining rooms were located near the kitchen and were only used for dinner. Other meals were served in the kitchen. The furniture was made dark and heavy and usually large enough to seat several people. If the kitchen and dining room were located on separate floors, a dumbwaiter, a shelf that moves vertically in a chute, transported meals quickly.

Bed Chambers Although bedrooms were kept very private they were still kept very proper. These were located on the second floor and used for reading, sewing, relaxing, and sleeping. Bureaus and wardrobes were used in place of closets. Popular four-poster beds contained mattresses stuffed with goose feathers or horse hair. These sometimes had canopies to add warmth and privacy.

and Prairie –rose to popularity.

There are six major styles of Victorian houses each with characteristics that define and distinguish them. **These styles are presented and discussed below.**

Nurseries Some houses contained a separate nursery for children. This is where they slept and played. Most nurseries were plain and had simple furniture. Strollers were a common item in these nurseries.

Some of the more wealthy families also had **ballrooms, smoking rooms, water closets, music rooms, and conservatories**

For those of you who really want to explore the Victorian Era in all aspects and to a great level of detail, the site below is a great starting point. Click on the picture below to be whisked back to the time of Queen Victoria and learn about everything from the politics to the art and architecture of the era.



The
VICTORIAN
Web



Victorian Fun Facts

—When a woman entered a room, it was rude for a man to offer his seat to her because the cushion might still be warm.

—Glancing into a bedroom was improper for visitors, so bedrooms were located on the second floor.

—People were shy about having water closets (bathrooms), so fixtures were disguised as dressers and cabinets. Tubs were enclosed in wooden boxes resembling chests and toilets were hidden behind curtains, screens, or in a room of their own.

—Children rarely saw their parents. A special trip was made to the nursery each evening, and the visit lasted about an hour.

—Women made pictures, wreaths and bouquets from their hair or that of a family member to display in the parlor.

—Many men used macassar oil to slick back their hair. Crocheted doilies, called antimacassars, were put over the backs of chairs to prevent this grease from staining the furniture.

—For a lady to show her ankles was considered very risqué!

—Many people kept a **hedgehog** in the basement. It slept by day, but roamed the dark kitchen at night eating cockroaches and other insects.

Thank You Home Tour Home Owners

The Milford Historical Society extends its sincere thanks to the following 2005 homeowners:

- **Anne and Greg Beck**
- **Fiona Hammock and Cindy**
- **Kometh**
- **Katherine and Kevin Rose**
- **Virgene Wright**
- **Sue Gumpper**
- **Sandi and Todd Marva.**

Powerhouse is Looking Good!

The finishing touches, historically correct windows and doors, have been installed in the Milford Powerhouse. This completes Phase I, the exterior restoration.

The building (Pettibone Creek Hydroelectric Station) in Central Park has been undergoing a metamorphosis this summer as the Historical Society, Village and Milford's DDA put into action the Village's first major restoration project. With the building secured,



Home Tour Sponsors: Thank you!

Your generous contributions help support the Museum and our works in the community.

- Platinum: **The Milford Times** (2nd year)
- Gold: **Italy American Construction** (2nd year)
- Silver: **Milford DDA**
- Supporters:
 - Tige Reader, RE/MAX Homes (2nd year)
 - Steve and Natalene Susser, Sparkies Bar & Grille, Highland (2nd year)
 - Dave Armstrong, Monthly Shoppers (2nd year)
 - Chris Meredith, Your Nesting Place
 - The Feigley Family
 - Bakers Restaurant of Milford
 - Huron Valley State Bank, Milford

New Milford Historic Video Offered



The Society is pleased to announce it will begin selling a new video titled "Keeping Milford's Memories." It is made possible through the time, talent and generosity of longtime member Howard Armstrong.

The video captures and communicates Milford's history through the use of outstanding images,

volunteers will begin the interior work—electrical, carpentry, painting, plumbing and sewer/water hook-up— that will prepare the building for a tenant

The Powerhouse will be open to the public 12 days a year as a condition of the grant from our major funder, the Michigan Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Commission. As part of this commitment, the Powerhouse will be featured on the Society's 2005 Home Tour, September 17 and 18. This is a community project and a piece of Milford's history of which we can all be proud.



Remembering Denise Leja

Denise Leja passed away on Wednesday, July 13, 2005 after a courageous battle with cancer. Many of you may remember Denise and her husband, Phil, and their son, Jeff. Denise...always quiet, but always willing to help. In fact, a few Christmases ago, Denise made a small lap quilt and brought it to the Museum for a raffle to raise money for the Society. Denise will be missed by all who knew her.

Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to announce that **Joyce Turner** and **Sharon Jensen** are our newest Society members. Welcome aboard, Joyce and Sharon!

Upcoming 2005 Events

Sept. 17-18...Home Tour 2005

Sept. 18.....Tractor Show

Nov. 17.....General Meeting
(Victorian Christmas)

Nov. 19.....Museum Holiday

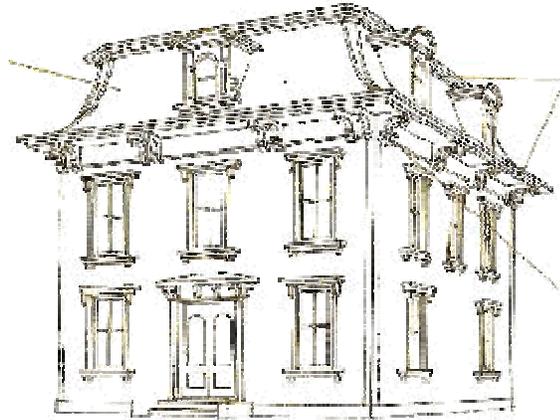
narration and original music. The two-hour documentary is available through the Museum as either a DVD (\$20) or a VHS tape (\$15). Purchase yours today...quantities are limited.

Decoration

Victorian House Styles

Second Empire (1855-1885)

Named for the era when Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie reigned, the key characteristic of this style was its mansard roof heavily pierced by dormer windows with elaborate surrounds and decorative brackets beneath the eaves. Colored tile or slate patterns on the roof and iron crestings were often employed. Second Empire derives from French architecture which featured mansard roofs (named after French architect Francois Mansart) mostly as a dodge around Paris building codes which limited buildings to a certain number of stories. Since the area directly under the roof was not considered to be a story, the mansard roof was a clever way to expand living space while remaining within the law. In America, it was solely the look and romance of the style that appealed to the Victorian upper crust



Second Empire Style House

Stick Style (1860-1890)

This style is sometimes considered to be a transitional style between Gothic Revival and the succeeding Queen Anne style. Whereas the slightly later Shingle Style focused on the skin of the building, the Stick Style emphasized its bones—that is, the exposed wood framing and cross braces on the exterior walls were intended to express the internal construction of the building. While it looks a bit like Medieval half-timbering, these pieces were generally superficial decoration applied to more modern

balloon-framing. Other distinguishing features include steeply pitched gabled roofs with cross-gables, decorative trusses at apexes, overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends, and porches with diagonal or curved braces. Houses with additional applied decoration are sometimes called Eastlake after British furniture designer Robert Eastlake.



Stick Style

Queen Anne (1880-1910)

The Queen Anne Style so utterly dominated Victorian architecture that became synonymous with the phrase “Victorian house.” The style at its most extreme is characterized by bewildering excess, featuring large projecting bay windows, towers, turrets, porches, balconies, spectacular chimneys, stained glass, roof finials and crestings, wall carvings and inset panels, cantilevered upper stories, acres of decorative trim, patterned shingles, belt courses, elaborate brackets, banisters and spindles. But it is a mystery where the “Queen Anne” name comes from, because the architecture during the reign of the historic Queen Anne (1665—1714) has little in common with the architecture of Queen Anne homes.

The Victorians also painted their Queen Annes in a rainbow of colors. The fashion of the time was fairly dark colors: sienna red, hunter green, burnt yellow, brown. Subsequent generations reverted to the all-white paint scheme of houses before the Civil War. Thus it came as a shock when the “Colorest” movement of the 1960s and 1970s set in, and people began painting their Victorian houses in rich colors again. The movement spread and today Victorian houses sporting three or four bright colors are once again the norm. Few modern homeowners try to duplicate original Victorian colors, partly for reasons of expense but mostly because bright colors are preferred by modern eyes over the darker colors used by the Victorians.

