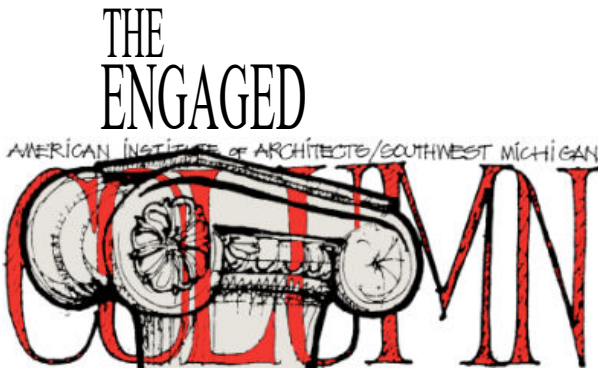




Serving architects and affiliated professionals in Southwest Michigan since 1923.



ON THE MARKET: THREE LOCAL FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT-DESIGNED HOMES



Photo by Jack Schwartz; Stylish Detroit used courtesy Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy

Usonian trademarks in the Weisblat: "cherokee red" floor, Honduran mahogany woodwork, and exposed knit-block concrete masonry with the fireplace and hearth at the core of the house

By Michael C. Hawker, AIA, Editor

There is a Wright opportunity for three fortunate—albeit affluent—buyers looking to own a home designed by Master Architect **Frank Lloyd Wright** (AIA Gold Medal, 1949) in the Kalamazoo area. The houses are part of two National Historic Register developments that Mr. Wright designed in the late 1940s; the homes were mostly built from 1949 to 1951, and nearly all of them have been beautifully renovated.

The David and Christine Weisblat house in The Acres in Galesburg went on the market in January this year, listing for a cool \$2.2 million. Adding to the recent listing is the Robert D. and Winifred Winn house in Parkwyn Village of Kalamazoo, which was put on the market in December 2024 for \$1.85 million. The Acres in Galesburg features a third Wright-designed home for sale: the Samuel and Dorothy Eppstein house, which was listed this past October 2024 for \$2.1 million.

The Ward McCartney house, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1951, in Parkwyn Village, Kalamazoo, was sold last June to the only potential

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Photo and courtesy by: Matthew Turman Photography

The Winn house is one of two recent Frank Lloyd Wright-designed homes up for sale

WRIGHT HOMES FOR SALE (continued)

continued from page 1

buyer willing not to use the house as an Airbnb. Kalamazoo’s ordinance prohibits it. The house still commanded a near \$700,000 price. Meanwhile, at The Acres, the Wright-designed Eric Pratt house also sold last June for \$1.1 million.

“Most residents of Parkwyn Village are ambivalent to the periodic sales of the [Wright] houses. The turnover of these houses doesn’t really affect most of us,” says Peter Copeland, long-time Parkwyn Village resident and owner of the Eric Brown house.

The homes are in two developments listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), each with four Frank Lloyd Wright-designed homes. While the Meyer May house in Grand Rapids represents Wright’s “Prairie” period in design, these homes were designed 40 years later and called ‘Usonian.’

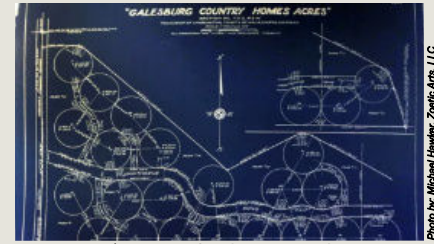
The first is The Acres in Charleston Township near Galesburg, which has 72 acres and was designated NRHP in 2004. This was the original Usonian community planned, until several of the participant families preferred to be closer to their Kalamazoo employer Upjohn Pharmaceuticals and split with the main group to form Parkwyn. All the lots were designed as 1-acre circles with the spaces between as common space.

The Acres includes the Curtis Meyer, Eric Pratt, Samuel Eppstein, and David Weisblat houses, and a fifth Usonian house—a “not quite Wright”—designed in 1960 for Günther and Anne Fonken by Taliesin Fellow Francis “Will” Willsey,

whose home was in Battle Creek. It met the other residents’ approval to be built. Of the 21 total lots in The Acres, seven were owned and only five houses built. The open lots remain undeveloped, likely never to be built on.

The second Wright development is the 47-acre Parkwyn Village in Kalamazoo, which includes the Eric Brown, the Robert Levin, the Ward McCartney, and the Winn houses. Parkwyn also includes several houses designed by **Norman F. Carver, FAIA**, an architect of national fame who practiced out of Kalamazoo. There are 38 or so houses on Taliesin and Lorraine Drives in Parkwyn and it achieved NRHP in 2022. Parkwyn was also designed with circular lots, but the FHA would not issue loans unless the lots were reconfigured in the familiar rectangular plots. The Galesburg families found the way to finance without the FHA, so the lots remain circular.

Parkwyn also has a “not quite Wright” house that was initially designed by Wright for Lawrence and Ruth Strong. But the house was completed in 1965 by its second owner, William and Rosemary Wechter, who made significant changes to the original design and warranted Wright disowning it; Carver designed a screened-in room for the Wechters.



Wright’s design for Galesburg Country Homes Acres shows 1-acre circular lots

Photo by: Michael Hawker, Zoetic Arts, LLC
(plan made available by the Johnson family)



Courtesy: Michigan State
Historic Preservation Office



Photo by Andy Schwartz, Spylfish
Detroit, used courtesy: Frank Lloyd
Wright Building Conservancy

Above and right: The Weisblat house stretches around a crest in the yard; corner mitre windows open up the wall corners to accentuate the cantilever roof



Photo and courtesy by: Matthew Truman Photography

Above: The Winn house has a curving sun room to provide daylight as well as an overlook of Lake Asylum



Photo and courtesy by: Emeline Leone

Above: The Eppstein house has a series of varying height rooflines with perforated block windows; Right: main living room ceiling capture north light



Photo and courtesy by: AcroDaily.com

David and Christine Weisblat House

11185 Hawthorne Drive, Galesburg

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright

John Howe, Taliesin Associated Architects

William Wesley Peters, Taliesin Associated Architects

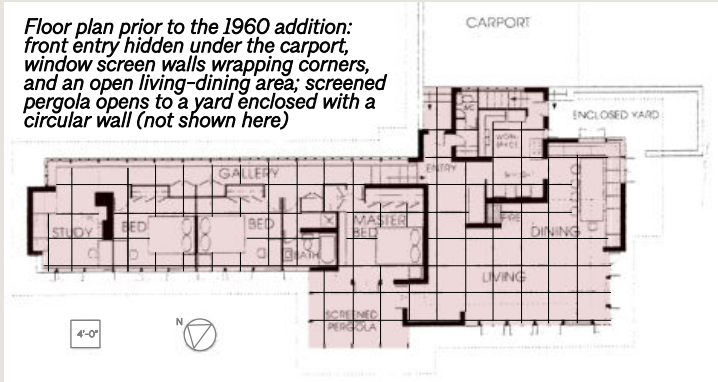
Built: 1948 **Style:** Organic Modern

The Galesburg Country Homes subdivision plan was drawn up in 1947. The Weisblat house was the first to be constructed and employed the Wright textile concrete block system and honduran mahogany. The concrete blocks were cast with special molds and mix that resulted in a natural earthen-tinted unpainted color, and are reinforced both horizontally and vertically with thin rods. Once in place, a slurry mix of concrete is poured into all the cells and channels to form a unified knit structure.

The living room roof is cantilevered from the central masonry fireplace core, so that the floor to light deck windows carry no structural load and require no intermediate supports. The living room windows act more like screens, opening outward to the outside. The space flows around the masonry mass, accentuated by a light deck soffit at the top of the windows that winds around the house. The soffit houses both downlights and uplights that reflect off the wood paneled ceiling, and plays an important role in emphasizing “compression and release” of vertical space. The soffit underside also reflects light from the outside.

The floor is the signature Wright “cherokee red” concrete floor, meant to only be maintained by waxing it with Johnson’s Wax. The concrete covers the radiant heat piping, and is divided into a uniform 4-foot square unit system. All of Wright’s plans were drawn with no overall dimensions, but rather, using the unit system to locate partitions and window units. The entire house is arranged off the unit system. The house is filled with custom-built furniture, shelving, and cabinetry. These integrated features not only enhance the functionality of the space but also showcase Wright’s philosophy that every aspect of the home is part of a cohesive whole.

In 1960, John “Jack” Howe and William “Wes” Peters of Taliesin Associated Architects executed a 120-degree angled addition extending the basic T-plan of the original plan. The addition, designed by Wright before his death in 1959, added a new gallery, bathroom, green house, and utility room. Collectively, the house wraps around the crest of the front lawn.



Floor plan prior to the 1960 addition: front entry hidden under the carport, window screen walls wrapping corners, and an open living-dining area; screened pergola opens to a yard enclosed with a circular wall (not shown here)

Drawing courtesy of William Allen Storer



Window walls are screen-like and help to open the “box” to the outside

Photo by Andy Schwartz, Stylish Detroit, used courtesy: Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy



Shelves in the gallery are follow the vertical unit system of the block

Photo and courtesy by: Jessica J. Tremino, Detroit Free Press



Photo by Witford, used courtesy: Wikipedia Commons



Photo courtesy by: Bing

Low horizontal roof lines offer cantilevered overhangs for shade and give the home a sense of repose

Robert D. & Winifred L. Winn House

2882 Taliesin Drive, Kalamazoo

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright

Built: 1950 Style: Organic Modern

The Winn house is situated at the southwest corner of the Parkwyn Village at the end of Taliesin Drive, and remains private in proximity to its neighbors. The only two-story of Wright's designs in Parkwyn, the lower level is on the lake side following the site contour. The rectangular living room adjoins the dining area and faces a hemicyclic enclosed skylighted balcony overlooking the lake. The house employs a 4-foot unit system for the floor layout.

Though the front entry is familiar with other Wright homes—tucked under the carport—in this case, the entry leads directly into the Living-Dining open area and not directly adjacent the kitchen.

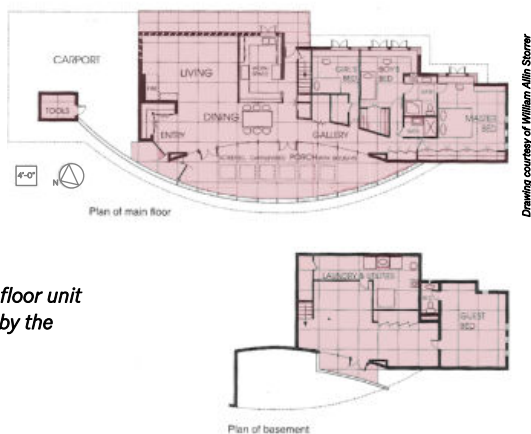
Similar to the other Wright homes in both Parkwyn and The Acres in Galesburg, the Winn was constructed using knit-block unit concrete masonry and mahogany wood on the interior. The blocks for the Winn have been painted white, unusual for Wright's homes, but in this case very reminiscent of Alden Dow's block homes.



The Winn has been beautifully restored; here the daylight from skylights is easily seen on the interior of the enclosed hemicycle balcony



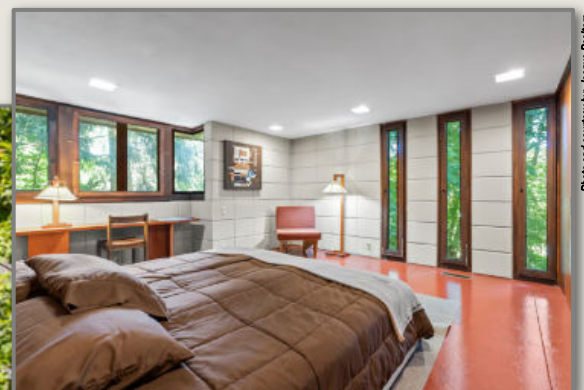
Patterns of filtered light enter the living area from the perforated masonry blocks; a built-in banquette seat faces the fireplace.



Drawing courtesy of William Allin Storer

Floor plan shows the floor unit system being broken by the hemicycle shapes

Below: An elevated view of the Winn house; masonry fireplace chimney (right) and masonry bathroom core (left) rises above the flat roof



Master bedroom

Photo and courtesy by: Jacques Realtors

Samuel Eppstein House

11090 Hawthorne Drive, Galesburg

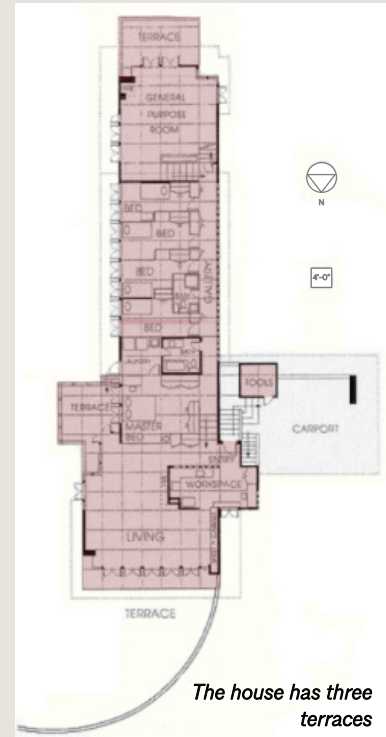
Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright

Built: 1948 Style: Organic Modern

The Eppstein in The Acres was designed by Wright in 1948 and planned in an “I” arrangement, oriented southwest-northeast. The Eppsteins moved in to the first completed phase in 1953, the northern half of the house. The remainder toward the south end was built in other stages. It has been beautifully restored in the early 2020’s after nearly 20 years of neglect. Similar to the other Wright Usonian designs, the masonry is the knit concrete block and the floor is the “cherokee red” integrally-colored concrete dimensioned in a 4-foot square unit module. Wood windows and door frames are made of mahogany.

The living area is at the northern end and the general purpose room, elevated a few steps from the bedrooms, is at the south end. Unlike other Usonians in the Kalamazoo area developments, the Eppstein has a sequence of turns from the carport to the living room. The entry is practically hidden from the approach and is reached by rising a few steps from the carport. Note on the floor plan the kitchen is called the ‘Work Space’, common on all Wright’s plans.

The living room is a vaulted ceiling angled by its shed roof facing north to allow soft light. The screen of floor to ceiling windows open to a semi-circular patio. Several Wright-designed pieces of furniture, tables, beds, built-ins, and hassocks are in the home. Similar to the Winn residence, the Eppstein features cut-out patterned masonry block along the gallery to emit light while maintaining privacy along the western facade. The bedrooms all face east.



Drawing courtesy of William Allen Storer

The house has three terraces



Photo courtesy of Marisa Broere



Photo courtesy of Marisa Broere

The Eppstein house features an open living-dining area with a large window wall allowing light to reflect off the vaulted ceiling and reach the inner area by the entry; Above right, the higher windows offer both daylight entry, but also more privacy from the front drive and approach by visitors



Photo and courtesy by Emiliana Leone

One of three terraces, this one offering a sense of privacy behind its semi-circular shape



Photo courtesy of Fred Taber, Jeana Reulenz

The larger of the four bedrooms with wall-to-wall bank of windows for daylight and built-in closets with drawers for storage

Editor's Eye

It is a new era for SW Michigan Chapter

By Michael C. Hawker, AIA, Editor

Dear AIA Southwest Michigan members, colleagues and friends,

Welcome your new Editor. This is my first role in the AIA, but 25 years as editor for other non-profits' publications—Mission de los Ninos, Friends of Kebyar Journal, The Taliesin Fellows Journal, and The Globe newspaper—I am thrilled to contribute my talents.



In today's fast pace world, with focus in our cell phone feeds, it tends to erode our deeper connections. Little is left behind to invest in building relationships or appreciate fine architecture in our corner of Michigan. The past is forgotten too quickly, successes seldom celebrated, and we fail at maximizing shared fun and collegiality with colleagues.

I hope to help change that by refreshing our past *Column* newsletter and "Straight from the Bird's Mouth" regular into a full-featured AIA chapter newsletter: colorful, with architecture, and stories about our peers. Robust and proud. Our goal is to exceed the quarterly minimum and issue six per year, but small editions may appear in between to catch last-minute items, and upcoming chapter happenings. Perhaps along the way, a few surprises too.

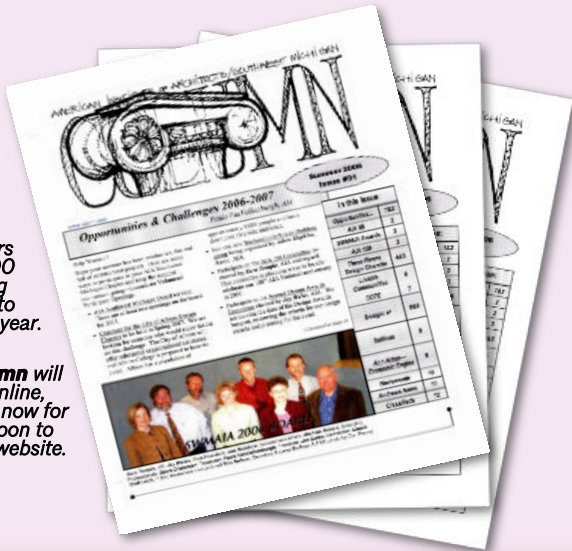
Goals for *The Engaged Column* are to present more architecture, to build the Explore App to serve all ten of our chapter's counties, and also focus on the AIA members in our region, to hear their stories and spark more engagement. This is only the start...Enjoy and cheers!

Let me know your thoughts at:

zoeticarchitecture@yahoo.com

The Column was a staple for many years (decades?)—over 100 editions in an analog format—mailed out to members 4 times a year.

The Engaged Column will be interactive and online, emailed as we have now for several years, and soon to be available on the website.



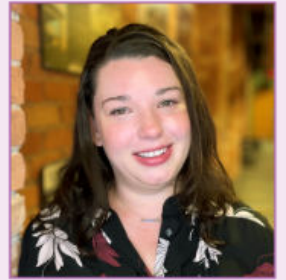
President's Post

Introducing your new President

By Melissa Morse, AIASWM President

Hey there!

I'm your new AIA Southwest Michigan President for 2025, and I might be a fresh face around here! I moved to Kalamazoo in June 2023 to join Eckert Wordell, and I've been focused on healthcare design for over 10 years now. Originally from Detroit (go Motor City!), I went to the University of Detroit Mercy. Fun fact: this year's AIA MI Director is **Dan Pitera, FAIA**, the U of D Dean—small world.

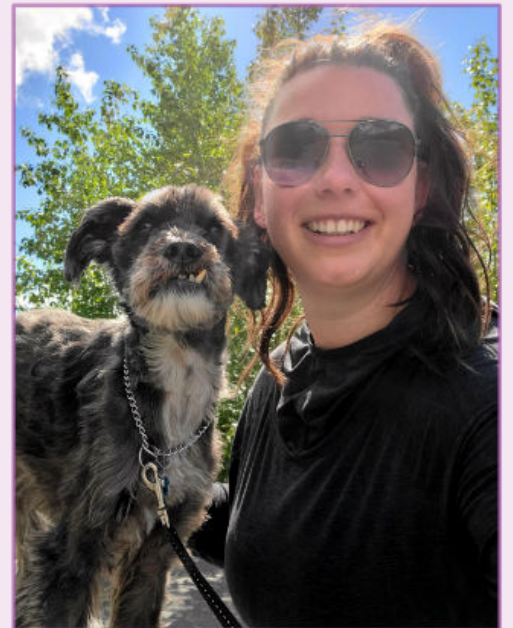


Before making my way to Kalamazoo, I spent 12 years in Anchorage, Alaska, where I served on the AIA Alaska board and various committees for a decade. I also spent a couple of years in the Bay Area working on the owner's side of construction before returning to Michigan.

If you are artsy, you may see me around the KIA doing a class. Also, can't forget my mini schnauzer mutt, Granite, who's been everywhere with me for the last 13 years! I recently bought a house in Kalamazoo Township, near Parchment, and I'm excited to call this place home.

As your President, I'm all about being transparent and approachable. If you have any questions or want to connect in person, feel free to reach out—

MelissaM@Eckert-Wordell.com



Melissa with 'Granite'

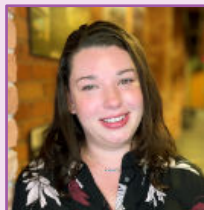
Chapter and Committee News

From the President

By Melissa Morse, AIA, AIASWM President

Renewing for 2025? There is a deal right now for any AIAU users.

<https://www.aia.org/membership/renew>



New members from 2024

Nathan Bolkovic, AIA

Chad Steinke, AIA

Viktoryia Shauchuk, Assoc. AIA

Odin Babcock, Assoc. AIA

Salma Maldonado, Assoc. AIA

Christopher Scott, Assoc. AIA at Tower Pinkster

Megan Page, Assoc. AIA at Tower Pinkster

Matthew Merrill, Assoc. AIA

Newly licensed? Congratulations! I know Eckert Wordell had a few last year. I'd love to hear from you.

AIA leadership Summit—two representatives who are new to the board will be attending the AIA National Leadership Summit at the end of February. This event gives our board members insight into the breadth of AIA National and how we can benefit from it.

<https://www.aia.org/community/events/aia-leadership-summit-2025>

Communications Committee

By Michael Hawker, AIA, Chair

Do you remember *The Column*? We are reinventing it with more content and stories of interest across our entire ten-county chapter. *The Engaged Column* will appear bimonthly in a full feature interactive format to include more local architecture, interviews with local members, local firm profiles, a re-engaged “Bird’s Mouth Cuts,” and ‘headline’ AIA news from other chapters. In between may be shorter editions as well our social media posts from editors **Nadine Rios-Rivas, Assoc. AIA** and **Beth Gibson, AIA**; because news happens!



Sara Tripp, AIA reports that the website will be updated soon to reflect current board members and sponsors.

Troy Huckendubler, Assoc. AIA and a team of committee members are busily ramping up to add more project sites to the Explore App and website. *The Engaged Column* will feature some of the new additions, including historic and lost architecture. 📍

Treasurer’s Report

By Kris Nelson, AIA, AIASWM Treasurer

AIASWM is happy to report that we are in good financial health. At the beginning of 2024, the board approved a balanced budget. That budget included funding three student scholarships for a total of \$4,250. Over several decades of work guided by the past treasurer, **Juliana Garner, AIA** the Chapter has stockpiled a sizable fund balance. The board carefully deliberated and decided to open an interest-bearing money market account where we could move a significant portion of those funds for safekeeping.



The start of 2025 brings a new board and new budget, which we are happy to report was approved at the January 2025 meeting and is once again a balanced budget. The board also decided to set the value of the chapter’s checking account to match the budget. Therefore, the remaining non-committed funds could be moved into the interest-bearing money market account. This year’s budget includes funds for the design awards program, two student scholarships, chapter attendance at the AIA Conference on Architecture and the AIA Leadership Summit, and a significant amount toward public outreach. 📍

Public Outreach Committee

By Hayward Babineaux, Assoc. AIA, Chair

It is not too early to think about NOMA and Project Pipeline! Project Pipeline, the summer architecture camp for kids, an initiative of NOMA, will be held again this summer at Western Michigan University’s Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation. Save the dates July 23-25, 2025. 📍



Membership Committee

By Beth Gibson, AIA, AIASWM Secretary

Calling all AIA Southwest Michigan members! Please notify us directly of your career changes, new position or promotion, new place of employment, licensing changes. National takes some time to find its way to the State and then to the Local level.



Shawn Cencer, AIA reports that he has reviewed the latest membership reports and noted many changes. By keeping updated with the Chapter helps our efforts in improving communications with you.

Tonya Willis, AIA, Paul Van Der Kolk, AIA and **Mike Galovan, AIA**, are planning the Golf Outing at this time. A venue has been reserved. More details to follow. 📍

Board Member Spotlights and Faces:

Meet some of the 2025 Officers and Directors. In March, *The Engaged Column* will spotlight the others.

Melissa Morse, AIA

President

Melissa's spotlight may be seen on page 6.



Bethany Gibson, AIA, LFA, WELL AP

Secretary

"Beth" is a project architect at TowerPinkster with certifications in WELL and LFA. She held prior positions with Burns & McDonnell and also Straub, Pettitt, Yaste Architect. Originally from Oxford, MI on the east side of the state, **Beth** attended Baker College of Flint on scholarship where she was elected Secretary and subsequently President of the school's AIAS chapter, while earning her Bachelor of Science in Architectural Technology. She earned her Master of Architecture in 2019 from the University of Detroit Mercy where she wrote her thesis on urban design with a focus of redesigning Jefferson Ave in Detroit to reconnect the riverfront to the downtown. It was a topic inspired by her time studying abroad in Volterra, Italy. After graduation, **Ms. Gibson** spent time in Norfolk, VA (Hampton Roads) before returning to the wintry north. She has a passion for cultivating plants in her 600 sq ft apartment and her collection shows no sign of slowing down. **Beth** is a supporter of urban design that promotes walkability, cycling, as well as the local artisan scene. She's always up for discussing plants while drinking coffee (or tea) at a local coffee shop. 🌱



Kristopher Nelson, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB

Treasurer

Kris has been a member of the AIA since 1996 when he became an Associate AIA member. In that first year of membership, he also agreed to become the AIA Southwest Michigan's Associate Director. **Kris** remained on the AIA SWM board after his term as Associate Director moving into various other positions. He had been on the board as a director, secretary, vice president, president and past president spanning until 2009. In 2024 **Kris** came back onto the board in his current role of Treasurer. In addition to his AIA role, he is the president of Schley Nelson Architects based in Kalamazoo, he is also the vice chair of the Almena Township planning commission. 🌱



Sara Tripp, AIA, LEED AP

Past President

Sara is a licensed architect with a 20-year career focused on large commercial projects for clients as varied as the Department of Defense, Indian Health Services, Veterans Affairs, State of Michigan, Tribal Governments, and K-12 school districts. Her successes are most notably derived from effective planning, organization, efficiency, personal connection, and a commitment to clear and open communication.

Most recently, **Sara** began teaching at Western Michigan University. As the Hearron Executive Designer in Residence, **Sara** enhanced the educational experience at the Richmond Institute for Design + Innovation. She teaches RID+I's integrated project management course, is developing an online module for architectural project management, and mentors advanced students in IAD. Her teaching reaches all levels of university students, from professional courses to introduction to design.

As a professional, she has focused on eradicating the barriers intrinsic to architecture – to create accessibility in architectural education, the project delivery process, and public awareness.



"Buildings are created for people, by people. Effective architecture is relatable and inclusive. The profession's future is one where architecture will be broadly recognized for bettering the quality of life," says **Sara**.

"This will only happen through continued advocacy of equity in the profession: equity for clients, team members, students, and the public. When architecture reflects the diversity of our society, its innate value will become more responsive and thusly acknowledged for supporting the health, creativity, and productivity of the global community," she added.

Sara has been President of the A.I.A. Southwest Michigan, the local chapter of the country's largest, most influential network of architects and design professionals. With 98,000 members globally, she represented 140 local members who share a passion for design, a desire to change the world, and a commitment to the highest standards of professional practice. She has a Master of Architecture and a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University.

Sara's interests away from the computer vary, from music and traveling to crocheting and reading. She loves working with kids and has been a long-time volunteer for the NOMA Project Pipeline summer camp. A goal of hers has been to see all 50 states before she turned 50. She has 8 remaining—Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota and Rhode Island. 🌱



Board Member Spotlights and Faces:

Matthew Prouty, AIA

Vice President

Matt is a Senior Architect with Eckert Wordell and has lived in Kalamazoo since mid-2023, after seven years in Wichita Falls, Texas as a project architect for BYSP Architects and a planner for the city of Wichita Falls. Prior to Texas, he lived and worked in Fairbanks, Alaska for nine years. **Matt** earned his Master of Architecture in 2008 from the University of Detroit Mercy.



Hayward Babineaux, Assoc. AIA

Chapter Director

Mr. Babineaux is an Architectural Designer with Abonmarche Byce in Kalamazoo and nearing a ten-year anniversary between Byce & Associates and now Abonmarche after the two companies merged in 2024. His project experience includes small-to-medium sized industrial, residential, municipal, and private developments and range from proposal writing all the way through construction administration.



In recent years, **Hayward** has had the opportunity to work with minority developers and communities on a variety of projects, a dream of his since youth. He first became interested in architecture during a science camp in elementary school.

“I wrote a book report about wanting to grow up and design buildings for low-income communities and people that looked like me,” says **Hayward**.

Mr. Babineaux’s passion has been to work with small communities and see reinvestment into neighborhoods within the city come to life. He is an asset for helping those in need of AEC services. This passion has translated into being the Director of Project Pipeline’s Kalamazoo camp the past several years, an initiative of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). Project Pipeline’s goal is introduce more minorities to the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) industry by hosting three-day architecture day camps to students aged 11 to 18. Each year, the number of Kalamazoo participants increases. Students work with volunteer program instructors and mentors, including architects, engineers, interior designers, and related professions, the majority of which are also minorities. These mentors guide the students with a real project program and site and finish the three days presenting their designs to a jury panel.

Perhaps no one is more sensitive to the racial disparity in the architectural profession than **Hayward**. Only 2% of all licensed architects in the United States are African American and a college professor once told him he would never become an architect. It fueled **Hayward** to earn his Associates in Architecture from Ferris State University, and both his Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degrees from Andrews University. Collectively, he cites this as his proudest achievement. He currently is pursuing his licensure.

Hayward’s faith is further demonstrated for his past 14 years work for STG Musiq Ministry, currently serving as Vice President. Spreading The Gospel, or STG, is a group of talented individuals who are from different cities and churches who all love Jesus Christ and share one common goal which is to promote His grace and love through music.



Michael Flynn, AIA, ALA

AIA Michigan Director

Michael is currently Director of Architecture for Abonmarche Byce in their Kalamazoo office. Between Byce & Associates and Abonmarche, **Michael** has 14 years as a Senior Architect, Director of Business Development and Director of Architecture. His decades of professional experience in these leadership roles in architecture and engineering firms, along with design-build and construction management companies have involved business development and attraction, early project formulation, planning and design leading multidisciplinary team for a wide array of complex projects from their inception to their completion.



Project experience extends from large-scale mixed-use development, multi-family housing complexes, higher education including housing, academic halls and athletic facilities, as well as, healthcare clinics and surgical centers, civic and community centers, corporate headquarters and manufacturing facilities. Prior to joining Byce & Associates, **Mr. Flynn** had nearly four years as a Senior Architect in healthcare and higher education projects at Performa, Inc., and Eckert Wordell Architects.

Mr. Flynn holds high value for every project, no matter the scale or complexity, that the overarching principles are service to others, making the world a better place, and creating spaces that foster community and enhance the human experience. These are constant drivers and touchstones for **Michael**. These principles guide Michael as a volunteer working towards efforts in disaster and humanitarian relief, human rights, alleviation of poverty, education, arts and culture and the environment. He has served on the board for AIA Southwest Michigan in varying capacities for 12 years, and Community Home Works for 12 years. In addition, he has been a speaker, volunteer, and board member for Habitat for Humanity. **Michael** earned his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and his Master of Architecture from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.



Bird's Mouth Cuts

Calls, chirps, and tweets from our local colleagues.



New Members

We welcome you! If we missed someone, please let us know.

- Assumpta Nyein, Assoc. AIA**—TowerPinkster (assumpta.nyein@gmail.com)
- Debra Contreras, AIA**—no organization listed (debra.contreras@comcast.net)
- Josue Kauffman, Assoc. AIA**—Edward Rose & Sons (jkauff@purdue.edu)
- Madeline Toth, AIA**—Intersect Studio (majtoth@gmail.com)
- Tonya Willis, AIA**—Seven Generations (twillis43560@gmail.com)
- Zayda Steinke, Intl. Assoc. AIA**—Andrews University (zaydasteinke@gmail.com)

Follow and 'Like' AIASWM on:



'Newly' Licensed

Those who gained licensure in the past 12-24 month, we congratulate you! And, if we missed anyone in this list, please inform us; they deserve credit.

- Bethany Gibson, AIA**—TowerPinkster (gibson.beth.m@gmail.com)
- Erin Ueck, AIA**—TowerPinkster (erinmartin517@gmail.com)
- Evan Timm, AIA**—Eckert Wordell (evantimm@umich.edu)
- Hayden Juergens, AIA**—Eckert Wordell (hayden.juergens@gmail.com)
- Joshua Arnold, AIA**—Abonmarche (joshuaarnold22@gmail.com)
- Sarah Munchow, AIA**—Eckert Wordell (sarah.munchow@gmail.com)

Changes

- Marcia Strange, AIA**—left Diekema Hamann and is now Director of Community Development for the City of Marshall, Michigan.
- Norman Hamann, AIA**—retired from Diekema Hamann.
- Sara VanderVeen, AIA**—is now Senior Director of Planning, Design and Construction at Western Michigan University.

Hiring Project Architects



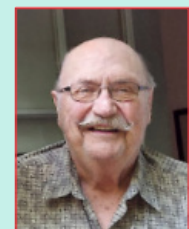
Cornerstone Architects is looking to fill two full time (40 hrs/wk) Project Architect positions. Ideally, Cornerstone is looking to add a teammate to each of their offices: Grand Rapids and Traverse City. For all the details, visit their application instructions on their website: www.cornerstone-arch.com/careers-pm-details

- Steve VandenBussche, AIA**—is now a Senior Architect at Pure Architects in Grand Rapids.
- Zada Harris, Assoc. AIA**—is an Architectural Designer at Krieger Klatt Architects, Royal Oak, Michigan

In Memoriam:

James Nelson McKellin III, AIA Emeritus (1937-2023)

In case it was missed, we regret to inform that **James McKellin, AIA Emeritus** passed away in 2023. **James** was born on July 30, 1937 in Geneva, Ill., the son of the late James and Florence (McDuffie) McKellin. II. On Sept. 27, 1956, he married Carolyn Norby and they shared 66 years together.



James attended Harbert Community Church and was a member of the American Institute of Architects since 1976. He owned and operated **James Nelson McKellin III Architects** in Stillwater, near Minneapolis, Minnesota. **James** was an avid golfer. Survivors include his wife, Carolyn; children: David (Dee) McKellin, Deborah Flood, Deidre McKellin, Darren (Kyoko) McKellin; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and two sisters: Elizabeth (David) Knecht and Carol Gonsky. **James** was also preceded in death by a brother, Bill McKellin.



News Across the AIA

Topics of interest from our fellow AIA chapters, colleagues, and friends of the Chapter.

ANDREWS U. ARCH STUDENTS ASSISTING STEVENSVILLE

Courtesy of the *Herald-Palladium* and Andrews University

Andrews University architecture students presented Stevensville trustees with several visions for the village, including a linear railroad garden walkway along St. Joseph Avenue and angled parking in the downtown area. Read the full story below.

Architecture Students Pitch Plans for Stevensville

As appeared in the *Herald-Palladium* December 7, 2024

By Louise Wrege, *Herald-Palladium* Staff

STEVENSVILLE – Andrews University architecture students presented Stevensville trustees with several visions for the village, including a linear railroad garden walkway along St. Joseph Avenue and angled parking in the downtown area. The proposed linear garden would run along the railroad tracks from the former Anstey Foundry at 2788 Lawrence St. toward Meijer, said Basam Mohamed, a student, during the trustees’ monthly meeting Thursday.

Even though the land near the tracks is owned by the railroad company, Mohamed said the village maintains the grass and creating a garden walkway has been done in other communities and would be a way for the space to be used.

“Not only am I thinking it would be a good idea for walking, for biking, for people to be outside ... but it would also be a statement of the town. It would be Stevensville, the town where they have that long, beautiful garden walkway,” Mohamed said.

Mohamed said the walkway would be 11 feet wide and would have ramps for people with limited accessibility. He said lights and emergency phones would be added to the wall separating the path from the railroad tracks for safety.

Village Manager Kacey Dominguez said an easement can be obtained from the railroad company for the proposed walkway. Village President Bert Peters said he’s a fan of the idea.

“It seems like biking and walking is a function of the future,” Peters said. “For us to embrace that as a village just makes sense.”

President Pro-Tem Chris Mason said he likes the idea.

“As somebody who pushes a stroller down St. Joseph Avenue on the one sidewalk on the other side, bobbing and weaving through people mowing or raking their leaves, I’ve always thought that was a huge opportunity for our community,” Mason said.

Student Jasmine Stallard said angled parking on one side of the street along St. Joseph Avenue in the downtown area would add 30 percent more parking spaces. Trustee Carl Steinberger said downtown parking used to be angled.

“I like the angled parking better, myself,” Steinberger said. “... When they went to parallel parking, I don’t know why that happened.”

Mason said it would slow drivers down because they would have a thinner area to drive in. Another proposed change to the downtown included closing off Kimmel Street between St. Joseph Avenue and Park Street.

“It creates a space where people will want to linger which, in the future, will actually bring in more business,” Stallard said. “The small businesses that you have in this area, you want them to grow. You want them to bring in more money. You want to increase the thriving village. By having spaces that are hubs for people to gather, it allows for that.”

Student Finn Larson said many of the ideas proposed by the students are to encourage the return to a walkable city – without sacrificing parking spaces.

“Not only adding parking to the downtown, but talking about how we can change parking habits and then change how people view places like the Village Square.” He said the atmosphere can be created so a day for a tourist starts at the Village Square before they meander onto St. Joseph Avenue.

Other ideas included creating a restaurant and market that would serve as an incubator for small businesses and creating facades to give downtown businesses a more unified look.

The architecture students have been meeting with Stevensville residents and officials for months under the direction of Associate Professor Enrique Bernal.

Dominguez said she reached out to the university’s architecture department after she saw the work a previous cohort of students did for the city of Buchanan.

She said it’s important to have projects ready to go so the village can take advantage of grant opportunities when they come up.



Recent Construction Law Changes, What Contractors Need to Know

Courtesy of Design Ohio–Akron Canton

The construction industry is at a crossroads, influenced by shifting economic landscapes, technological advancements, and evolving workforce dynamics.

As appeared in the *The National Law Review* January 27, 2025

By Steven J. Reed

Job Market

According to the Michael Bellaman, President and CEO of Associated Builders and Contractors (“ABC”) trade organization, the U.S. construction industry will need to “attract about a half million new works in 2024 to balance supply and demand.” This estimate considers the 4.6% unemployment rate, which is the second lowest rate on record, and the nearly 400k average job openings per month. A primary concern as we enter 2025 is to grow the younger employee pool, as 1 in 5 construction workers are 55 or older and nearing retirement.

While commercial construction has not yet been as heavily impacted as residential construction by the lack of workers, the demand for commercial will increase as more industries are anchored on U.S. soil. Think of bills such as the CHIPS and Science Act that allocated billions in tax benefits, loan guarantees, and grants to build chip manufacturing plants here. This is true regardless of political party; investing in American goods and manufacturing seems to be a bipartisan opinion. She said it’s important to have projects ready to go so the village can take advantage of grant opportunities when they come up.

AI and Robotics

At the end of 2024, PCL Construction noted that AI will be an integral part of the construction industry. Demand for control centers will drive up commercial production, though the workforce lack may present some challenges when it comes to a construction company’s productivity and workload capacity.

AI will not just change the supply and demand market, but also will be integrated in the day-to-day mechanics and sensors for safety measures within a construction zone. On top of the demand for microchips catalyzed by the CHIPS and Sciences Act, AI is used to “monitor real-time activities to identify safety hazards.” AI-assisted robotics can take on meticulous work such as “bricklaying, concrete pouring, and demolition while drones assist in surveying large areas.” We will start to see where the line is drawn between which jobs require a skilled worker and which can be handled by AI without disrupting the workforce.

Economic Factors

The theme of the years following COVID-19 has been to return the economy to what it was pre-pandemic, including slashing interest rates and controlling inflation. With this favorable economic outlook for 2025, construction companies can look to increasing their projects. On the residential side, the economic boom may drive housing construction to meet demand. On the commercial

side, less inflation and lower interest rates for the business can lead to more developmental projects such as megaprojects and major public works. Economist Anirban Basu believes that construction companies may not reap these benefits until 2026 due to the financing and planning required.

Bringing production supply chains back to U.S. soil can help alleviate some of the global concerns such as the crisis in the Red Sea, international wars, and the high tariffs proposed by the Trump Administration. Again, economists are predicting this bountiful harvest in a few years rather than immediately.

Environmental Construction

Trends toward sustainability are leading the construction industry toward greener initiatives such as modular and prefab structures. Both options find the construction agency developing their structures outside of the building sites.

AI can also play a hand in developing Building Information Modeling (“BIM”) to better understand the nuances, possible pitfalls, and visualization of the project before construction begins. Tech-savvy construction agencies are already using programs such as The Metaverse or Unreal Engine for BIM and can significantly reduce project time, resources, and operational costs.

Employee Safety and PPE: Emphasis on employee safety – smart PPE and “advanced monitoring systems”

PPE requirements will far surpass the traditional protective gear (such as helmets, masks, and gloves). Construction sites may soon be required to supply smart PPE products that can scan a worker’s biometrics and environment to prevent medical anomalies or hazardous environmental conditions. Smart PPE devices will be enabled with Internet of Things (“IoT”) to ensure real-time data.

Conclusion


The construction industry’s future hinges on adaptability and innovation. By addressing workforce shortages, integrating AI-driven solutions, and adopting sustainable practices, companies can position themselves for success in a dynamic market. Whether it’s preparing for the long-term economic upswing or enhancing employee safety through smart PPE, proactive measures today can lead to stronger, more resilient operations tomorrow. Staying informed and prepared will be crucial for navigating the challenges and seizing the opportunities ahead. transmission and to use data analytics to track patterns or predict risks.

Did you know? A resource for you

Courtesy of AIA-Cincinnati

As appeared in the *Architext* issue February 4, 2025

Get legal help when you need it. The [AIA Trust Legal Network](#) is a free database where AIA members can find experienced A/E construction lawyers by state.

The purpose of the AIA Trust is to develop and offer insurance and benefit programs of the greatest possible value and to serve as a risk management resource for members and components of The American Institute of Architects. 

Office-to-residential conversions expected to reach new highs in '25

Courtesy of *Archinect Daily*

As appeared in the *Archinect News* February 3, 2025

By Josh Niland


This year is shaping up to be a record-setting one in the market for office-to-residential conversions across the country.

New data released in a report from RentCafe confirms the growth of the conversion market, which expanded again by 28% last year and has more than tripled since 2022. Conversions have now accounted for 70,770 new units brought increasingly onto markets in the largest U.S. metro areas.

New York (8,310 units) was followed by last year's leader Washington, D.C. (6,533 units). Los Angeles finished in third place (4,388 units), followed by Chicago (3,606 units); and Dallas (2,752 units). Overall, conversions represent 42% of all the 169,000 apartments emerging from future adaptive reuse projects – up from 38% in 2024. Newer office buildings are also seeing an increased share of the market, which RentCafe says will grow by 7% within the next year.

Four cities have more than doubled their pipelines since last year, led by Boston (160%) and followed by Jacksonville (150%), Omaha (141%), and Charlotte (107%).

The data include the cities where conversions represent more than 50% of all adaptive reuse projects, led by Omaha (85%), Dallas (79%), Minneapolis (78%), and Phoenix (71%).

Last year also saw hotels surmount offices for residential conversion projects in the U.S. for the first time. 

Should you get licensed?

Courtesy of AIA-Utah's "Dear Architect" column

As appeared January 28, 2025

DEAR ARCHITECT: Should I get licensed?


AIA-Utah architect panel: AIA and the profession certainly hope so. We have an ethical duty to the public to provide spaces that are safe, meet current codes and contribute to the betterment of this planet. DOPL, NCARB, NAAB, IBC and other organizations provide foundations to ensure that the responsibility of architects is vetted and confirmed. Becoming licensed requires rigorous schooling, hours of practice prior to licensure and a series of exams to vet competency in the profession. The importance of this type of verification is critical for the credibility of our profession.

This is not to say that an unlicensed professional cannot do the same. There are plenty of very competent unlicensed professionals that contribute mightily to our industry. However, for many, that lack of a license will become a glass ceiling. Fortunately, there are routes for those that do not have a higher education degree but have been working for at least a decade in an office and understand the standard of care that is required of us.

We [understand] many reasons may delay or keep you from getting licensed:

The exams are expensive. There are many organizations that help sponsor exams (WIA, NOMA for example). Many firms will reimburse/sponsor exams.

The exams are time consuming and laborious, and failing exams is not uncommon. It may be helpful to take the exams alongside a colleague to keep you motivated. Exam materials are expensive: WIA offers access to black spectacles, and YouTube is a good resource. AIA Utah and other organizations announce study groups offered by partners. Of course, we all have commitments in our lives: families, boards, church, exercise, travel. It may feel hard to carve out time to study, try putting study time in your schedule to force you to see it as part of your job.

Beyond having to maintain professional liability insurance (as you stamp drawings) there is really no downside to being a licensed professional. There are many upsides: you have increased salary potential, you have standing with clients, consultants and contractors, you have more leadership opportunities, you provide better marketing collateral and perhaps, most importantly, you can call yourself an architect. 

Events of Interest

For SW Michigan Chapter events and meetings, click



Chapter Calendar

<p>February 7, 2025 through January 9, 2026</p>	<p>USGBC First Friday Webinar Series 2025 (virtual) Home - First Friday Webinar Series 2025</p>	<p>Our First Friday series is back by popular demand, but this year – with a twist! We'll still gather online over midday on the First Friday of each month for leading-edge education, but in 2025, we'll alternate live education sessions with highly rated, previously recorded sessions from past USGBC programming. Don't miss out on this opportunity to earn education hours and keep up with the latest at USGBC and in green building.</p>
<p>March 6, 2025</p>	<p>Masonry Institute of Michigan Generic Wall Design Committee Meeting (in person or virtual), Holt, MI Generic Wall design committee - Masonry Institute of Michigan</p>	<p>As Generic Wall Design Committee 'GWDC', our mission is to develop and promote the highest performing/most economical "generic" masonry wall system details and specifications available, and to develop resources to assist the design and construction community with designing the most efficient masonry wall systems. GWDC meets in person (zoom available) once a month. Locations vary, please see dates below. All are welcome.</p> <p>If interested in attending a meeting, please contact: Chairman, Todd Dailey – todddaily@me.com</p>
<p>March 7-9, 2025</p>	<p>Home & Garden Expo, Kalamazoo County Expo Center, Kalamazoo, MI Kalamazoo Home Expo</p>	<p>From outdoor living, landscaping, home automation, security, remodeling, design and more – you won't want to miss what's new in home improvement! Own a business in the home, garden, outdoor living or similar industry? Meet face-to-face with thousands of local consumers that are in the market for your products and services!</p>
<p>March 20-21, 2025</p>	<p>57th Annual Health Facilities Planning Seminar, Amway Grand Center, Grand Rapids, MI AIA Michigan - Health Facilities Planning Seminar</p>	<p>The Health Facilities Planning Seminar is held each year to provide architects, engineers, healthcare executives and other interested professionals with the latest available information which will assist them in planning, designing, constructing and maintaining health facilities. The seminar is ideal for all who are concerned with the implications of evolving healthcare technology upon facilities as they plan, design, construct, administer or maintain.</p>
<p>March 26-28, 2025</p>	<p>2025 CSI North Central Region Conference, Omaha, NE 2025 CSI North Central Region Conference - chicagochapter</p>	<p>Join industry leaders, professionals, and innovators at the 2025 CSI North Central Region Conference, taking place March 26-28, 2025, in Omaha, Nebraska! The 2025 theme is The Art of Construction: Crafting Excellence in Project Delivery and the event promises a perfect blend of professional growth, networking, and celebration.</p>
<p>April 15, 2025 8:00 am - 5:00 pm ET</p>	<p>30th Annual AESLC Legislative Day Heritage Hall - Capitol Visitor's Center, 323 W. Ottawa St., Lansing AESLC Legislative Day</p>	<p>ACEC, AIA, MSPE and MSPS are collaborating to bring their members together virtually to meet with legislators and educate them on issues that are important to the professions. Past Lobby Days have been extremely successful by helping legislators understand the importance of properly funding infrastructure improvements and creating a business friendly environment in Michigan for practicing engineers, architects and surveyors.</p>
<p>May 14-15, 2025</p>	<p>Building Michigan Communities Conference, Lansing, MI Home - Building Michigan Communities Conference</p>	<p>The BMCC is where industry leaders, innovators, and changemakers come together to shape the future of affordable housing and community development in Michigan. Get ready to experience this year's theme, Partners in Progress, and join 1,200+ housing financiers, developers, public officials, asset managers, policymakers, and advocates for two days of powerful networking, cutting-edge insights, and game-changing ideas.</p>
<p>May 15-17, 2025</p>	<p>Michigan Historic Preservation Conference, Lake Superior State University, Sault Ste. Marie, MI Conference - Michigan Historic Preservation Network</p>	<p>Theme: Michiganders involved in historic preservation are used to hearing variations of "you want to do <i>what</i> with that old place?" or "that eyesore is too far gone to be saved." Fortunately, we have decades of successes that prove otherwise. Interested individuals are now joined by trained practitioners in the field – historians and preservationists, architects and engineers, anthropologists and archaeologists. Craftspeople and tradespeople with traditional skills make the work possible. Adjacent expertise has grown up among attorneys, accountants, realtors, and others. There's hardly a community in Michigan that doesn't have a preservation success story to support what we know is true – that preservation is a powerful revitalization engine that simultaneously highlights what's unique about Michigan.</p>

Events of Interest

For SW Michigan Chapter events and meetings, click



Chapter Calendar

<p>May 29-31, 2025</p>	<p>CSI Grand Rapids Chapter Product Show and CSI Great Lakes region Leadership Conference, Grand Rapids, MI</p> <p>CSI Great Lakes Region Conference - Great Lakes Region</p>	<p>Our product expo will be held on Thursday May 29th and will include a full day of vendor tabletops and CEU sessions concluding with the CSI GR Chapter Meeting for all expo and conference attendees.</p> <p>The 2025 CSI Great Lakes Region Leadership Conference will be held on Friday May 30th & Saturday May 31st. Join us and CSI members from Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky for an opportunity for networking, education, vendor tabletops, and leadership development.</p>
<p>June 4-7, 2025</p>	<p>AIA National Conference, Boston, MA</p> <p>AIA 25 - AIA National Conference</p>	<p>The premier AEC event provides the ultimate platform to network with peers, industry experts, suppliers, and potential clients in one location. Meet the AIA community and the greater AEC industry—and build professional relationships for future collaborations, job opportunities, and partnerships.</p>
<p>June 9-11, 2025</p>	<p>NeoCon, The Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL</p> <p>NeoCon</p>	<p>NeoCon has served as the world's leading platform and most important event of the year for the commercial interior design industry since 1969. Explore 400 leading and emerging companies launching thousands of cutting-edge new products.</p>
<p>June 9-11, 2025</p>	<p>Design Days 2025 at Fulton Market, Chicago, IL</p> <p>Fulton Market Design Days Home</p>	<p>More than 40 iconic design brands bring the Fulton Market District to life. Over 40,000 people from across the global design community gather in Chicago to celebrate the latest in design and architecture, sharing product news and participating in a variety of events across the Windy City. The Fulton Market District will welcome top design professionals and enthusiasts to enjoy product launches, exhibits and events.</p>
<p>August 7-10, 2025</p>	<p>AIA Michigan Mid-Summer Conference, Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, MI</p> <p>AIA Michigan - Mid Summer Conference</p>	<p>Mid-Summer Conference Committee coordinates presentations on trends and opportunities in the design and construction industry for attending architects, designers, constructors, and firm leaders. AIA Michigan partners with the AGC of Michigan to put on this conference. The committee plans valuable educational and networking opportunities for firm leaders and emerging leaders and also coordinates activities for the whole family to enjoy. There are special activities designed just for children, youth, teens, and adults, and there is plenty of time to be all together as a family.</p>
<p>September 16-18, 2025</p>	<p>16th Annual Midwest Building Energy Codes Conference, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA), Milwaukee, WI</p> <p>Midwest Building Energy Codes Conference</p>	<p>The Midwest Building Energy Codes Conference brings together stakeholders from across the Midwest to discuss the advancement of energy codes and building energy policies in the region. This annual conference provides an opportunity to network, engage in building science and policy discussions and learn from leading experts about current and future trends.</p>
<p>October 15-17, 2025</p>	<p>CSI National Conference - SAVE THE DATES</p> <p>The link is to 2024's Conference:</p> <p>CSI National Conference</p>	<p>Gain new skills and grow your network. Join more than 400 of your peers as we discover the trends shaping our industry and share strategies for helping you navigate the changes ahead.</p>
<p>October 19-22, 2025</p>	<p>2025 International Code Council Expo and Annual Conference, Huntington Convention Center, Cleveland, OH</p> <p>Conference - Michigan Historic Preservation Network</p>	<p>The Expo provides a platform for exhibitors to reach building safety and design professionals, including decision makers from local, state, and national levels, who are dedicated to learning the latest industry technologies. Whether you are a code official, architect, engineer, contractor, PMG or fire safety professional, your participation is vital in helping to develop model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures.</p>
<p>October 25-28, 2025</p>	<p>Healthcare Design Conference + Expo, Kansas City MO</p> <p>Healthcare Design Conference + Expo</p>	<p>The Healthcare Design Conference + Expo is the ultimate networking, education, and product-sourcing event. Join us for expert insights on the latest trends, best practices, and leading-edge approaches in the planning, design, construction, and ongoing operation of healthcare spaces. Leave with new connections, new ideas for current and future projects, and earn AIA, IDCEC, EDAC, and nursing LUs to meet your continuing education goals.</p>



Explore SW Michigan Architecture: Map for the App

In 2023, the Chapter launched a mobile application for users to locate significant architecture in Southwest Michigan. *The Engaged Column* will feature projects and categorize them broadly: Historic architecture built prior to 1930, Modern architecture built after 1930, and Lost architecture for structures demolished.

Historic (pre-1930)

The region is rich with finely crafted architecture from days gone by, including periods of historical styles dating from the 1830's up to when Modernism became popular in the mid 1930's

Amariah T. Prouty house

Built by: Amariah T. Prouty
302 Elm Street, Kalamazoo
Built: 1853 **Style:** Gothic Revival

The Prouty house follows the Gothic Revival style and was built in 1853 by Amariah Prouty who purchased this square block and established this cottage in the center of it. He also developed a northside location which has a street bearing his name. Prouty landscaped the site at 302 Elm Street very elaborately to build the suburban estate idea that was so popular in this period between the 1840's-1860's. The 1860 Census listed Prouty as a horticulturist. A steep-pitched roof dominates the structure. In the gable end hangs a bay window with a miniature balcony. The elements of the tracery style at the gable ends and dormers were endorsed by the romantic movement in England and also in this country, because they seemed to speak to the elements of natural worship that William Cullen Bryant and William Wadsworth found so useful. The elements of nature were seen in the gingerbread ornament of the house. The ornament was intended by its use by the romantics, to symbolize tree foliage and the gable end of the house was the usual location for this kind of ornamentation. The columns are Gothic columns and have the multiple cylinder effect as they rise up. They support a veranda which unifies the two facades. The support beams, which are ornamental, rather than functional, were to symbolize the branching of the trees in the forest groves of this very popular suburban architecture. This "Rural Gothic" style was popular chiefly with the intellectuals, who patterned their lives after they thought was romanticism.

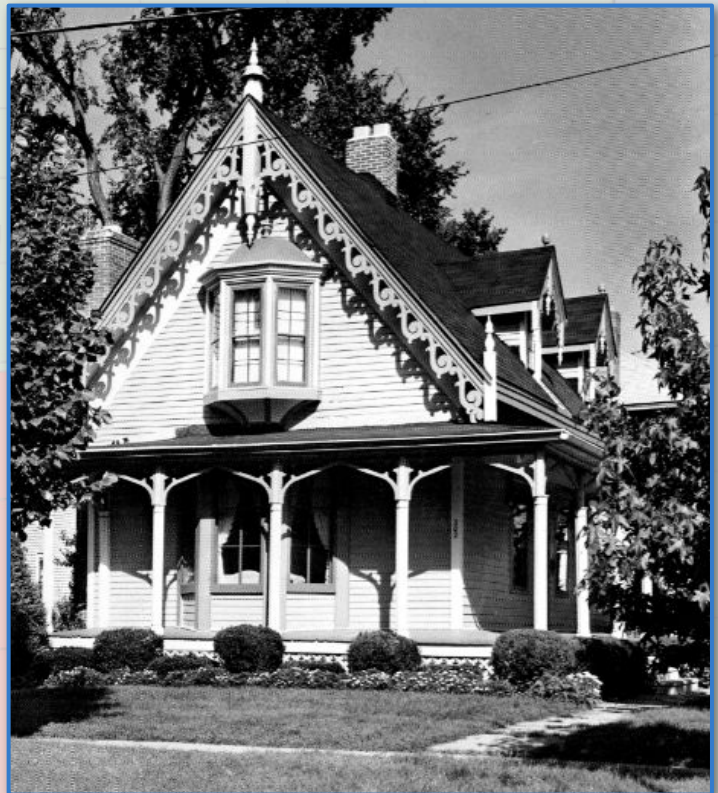


Photo by Balhazar Komba, used courtesy, Kalamazoo City Historical Commission

The romanticised tree foliage trim at the gable end, and the ornamental Gothic Revival supports connecting the columns



Photo by Michael Hewner, Zoetic Arts, LLC

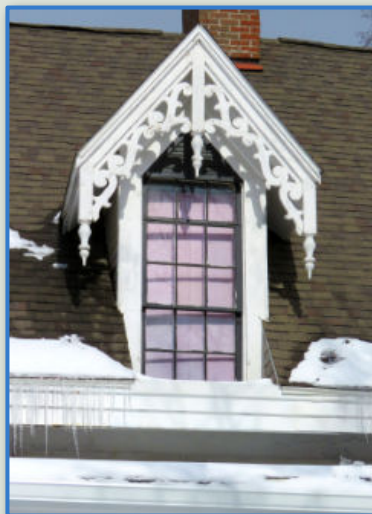


Photo by Michael Hewner, Zoetic Arts, LLC



Photo by Michael Hewner, Zoetic Arts, LLC



Explore SW Michigan Architecture: Map for the App

Modern (1930+)

With proximity to contemporary design “centers” Detroit and Grand Rapids, and with no shortage of modern-thinking clients, southwest Michigan attracted Modernist architects for contemporary designs.

Paul Rood House

1615 Dover Road, Kalamazoo

Architect: Alden B. Dow, FAIA

Built: 1940 Style: Organic Modern

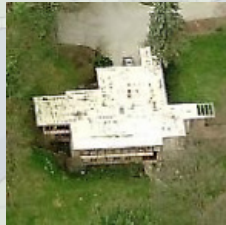


Photo courtesy of Bing

The Winchell neighborhood includes a number of Modern homes inspired by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, this one designed in 1938 by one of Wright’s charter Taliesin Fellowship architects, **Alden B. Dow, FAIA**. Dow based his practice in Midland, Michigan and was well accoladed for his work including the 1960 Gold Medal by the Michigan Society of Architects.

This home for Dr. Paul Rood, a Western Michigan University physics professor, is at the east end of Dover Road, on a gently sloping lot obscure and private with an overlook into Kleinstuck Preserve. To maximize the view to the rear, the living room, dining room, a play room, and porch are on the upper level. Bedrooms, a maid’s room, and an “Owner’s Room”, as indicated on the floor plans, are located on the lower level at grade in the rear.

Built in 1940, the influence of Wright is seen through the broad overhanging and horizontal rooflines that provide a sense repose on the landscape. Similar to many Usonian homes, this has a flat roof and brick masonry masses. Popular in the 1930’s and ‘40’s, homosote panels were used as an exterior material, used here with vertical wood banding. Also, bands of continuous windows project outward between masonry masses to extend the interior outward. On the interior the same windows are transitioned between continous built-in low platform shelving and soffits at the windows’ head. In the living room, in lieu of a vaulted ceiling, interest is provided by a pattern of exposed roof joists, with a row of brass lights evenly spaced between the joists over the fireplace.



Photo: Michael Hawker, Zoetic Arts, LLC



Courtesy: Alden B. Dow Home & Studio



Photo: Michael Hawker, Zoetic Arts, LLC



Courtesy: Alden B. Dow Home & Studio



Photo: Michael Hawker, Zoetic Arts, LLC



Courtesy: Alden B. Dow Home & Studio



Courtesy: USModernist



Explore SW Michigan Architecture: Map for the App

Lost (demolished)

With a history of architecture dating to the mid 1800's, the southwest region of Michigan has its fair share of buildings not surviving, one reason or another. Here we celebrate some.

Upjohn Executive Offices “Building 88”

7000 Portage Road (SW corner of Romence Rd Pkwy & Portage), Portage

Architect: Skidmore Owings Merrill (Bruce Graham, FAIA)

Landscape: Sasaki Associates (Hideo Sasaki, awardee AIA Allied Professions Medal, 1973)

Built: 1959 **Style:** Modern

Demolished: 2007

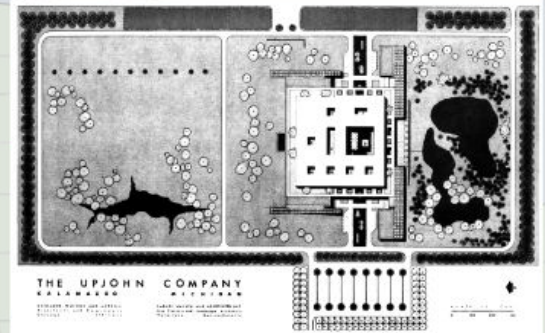
Inspired by the courtyard layout of architect **Gordon Bunshaft, FAIA** (winner of the **AIA 25-year Award**) for Connecticut General Life Insurance Headquarters, architect **Bruce Graham, FAIA**, designed the Upjohn building with a series of seven interior gardens landscaped with trees, pools, stones, and sculptures. Graham was also influenced by the architecture of his native Colombia, where homes contained central, open-air courtyards that flooded interior spaces with natural light.

The office building was sited on 7 acres of a broad knoll overlooking the countryside with groves of pine trees defining the limits of the site and panoramic views of adjacent suburban residences. A reflecting pool defined the main entrance, while a man-made pond—visible from the cafeteria and dining room—provided a drainage basin for the site. Informal groups of willows lined the edge of the pond and pine and maple constituted the planting of the uplands. From a distance, it resembled a mature English landscape garden, but adjacent to the building, groves of trees distinguished the seemingly natural from the clearly man-made. Despite the influence of traditional English, French, and Japanese garden elements, the landscape and courtyards at the Upjohn campus were among the clearest expressions of the serenity and timelessness of modernism. Raised on a stone plinth, the corporate villa overlooked a countryside of naturally formed lakes and hills and quickly became affectionately known as the “Taj Mahal.” To many, the building was simply “Building 88.”

The low-profile structure covered 286,000 gross square feet, rising just one and a half stories. The lower level—built into the sloped ground—comprised service, garage, mechanical, cafeteria, recreation, and reception areas. The upper level housed clerical and executive offices, each with a view of the interior gardens or landscaped surroundings. The building and site plan landscaping which cost \$17 million was both art—adorned with the finest of fabrics, leather, and modern art—and state-of-the-art including mail delivery robots.

Upjohn’s finishes were uniquely detailed, from its beltline of precast panels made of Colorado quartz chips embedded in white matrix to its porcelainized white aluminum frieze of pyramidal patterns with black neoprene accents that defined the roof edges and echoed in the pyramid-coffered ceiling design. The main exterior material was specially finished gray aluminum. Walkways were paved with Italian marble pebbles in white, gray, and black. Setting off one large area was a cobblestone wall of Michigan fieldstone. The offices were divided by moveable steel and glass screens. Other modular components included portable steel storage units and sculptural plaster ceiling tiles were fitted with recessed lighting. Graham’s wife, Jane Abend, planned the interior spaces and created several original designs for the office furniture.

The Upjohn Co. merged with Pharmacia in 1995 to form Pharmacia & Upjohn, and the company’s headquarters moved to London. Pfizer took over Pharmacia in 2002. From 2005 to 2007, the company consolidated its offices and demolished five Upjohn buildings, including this one. Some of the building’s marble can be found in use at Western Michigan University, the former headquarters site is currently a construction parking lot.



Courtesy Sasaki Associates



Photo by Ezra Stoller, courtesy Hamlyn Publishing Group



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Explore SW Michigan Architecture: Map for App

Lost (demolished)

Frank and Dorothy Ward House

257 Lakeshore Dr., Lake Goguac, Battle Creek
Architect: Yuzuru Kawahara
Built: 1959 Demolished: 2017 Style: Modern



Photo courtesy by: Zig



Photo courtesy Tim Hills

Yuzuru “LeRoy” Kawahara, a former Frank Lloyd Wright apprentice in the late 1940’s, who later assisted Battle Creek architect Francis “Will” Willsey, became well-known for commercial work around San Jose, California. It is believed Kawahara designed only two residences, both in Battle Creek; this one he acted as general contractor.

This was a masterful example of Organic principles. A reposeful roof sheltering 3:12 on the front—remindful of the best work of **William Bernoudy, FAIA** (St. Louis)—that opened up to dynamic 9:12 vaulted lines and spaces at the lake-facing rear—cleverly like a traditional Kyoto Japanese house. Designated a National Register of Historic Place in 2014, this unique ‘Usonian’ met a tragic fate of being demolished in 2017 in favor of a new house of far lesser character.



Photo courtesy Tim Hills

The fireplace was part of the masonry core, with the living and dining areas flanking it in open concept. Casement window bands wrapped corners to open outward and sat atop brick walls extending to grade.

A rear patio stepped down five risers made of Tennessee Crab Orchard flagstone. Details abounded: cypress board and batten walls inside and out, custom designed light fixture trim, interior screens, built-in seating, and cabinetry. The home had a bomb shelter, as Mr. Ward was Civil Defense minister for Battle Creek. The basement concrete floor was topped in terrazzo and edged with the flagstone, which also ran from the entry and down the hall to the bedrooms. There were water systems intended for conservation,



Photo courtesy Jim Roberts



Photo courtesy Tim Hills

including perimeter radiant in-floor heat, which also heated the ducted and filtered conditioned air. A butterfly valve balanced the intake of outside air. The house was also wired with a full lighting control switch at the master bedroom.



Photo courtesy Pearce Realty Inc.



Photo courtesy Pearce Realty Inc.

The craftsmanship and materials of this house was bar none and with the related provenance to Frank Lloyd Wright, this home should never have been demolished

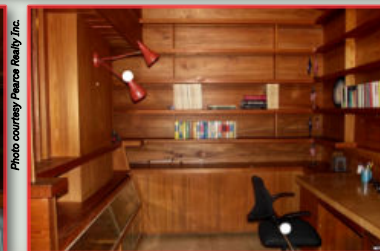


Photo courtesy Pearce Realty Inc.

Photo courtesy Pearce Realty Inc.



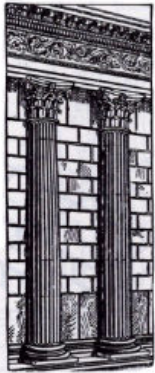
Photo courtesy Tim Hills

The Design Dictionary

Knowing your architectural terms makes for a cultured and articulate architect.

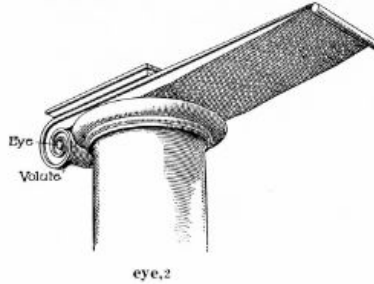
engaged 1. Attached, or apparently attached, to a wall by being partly embedded or bonded to it, as an **engaged column**. 2. Framed into or fitting upon or within.

engaged column, attached column A column partially built into a wall, not freestanding.

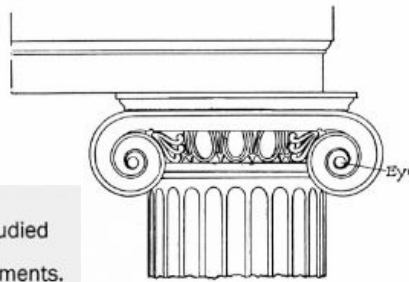


engaged columns

eye 1. The central roundel of a pattern or ornament. 2. The circular (or nearly circular) central part of a volute, as in an Ionic capital. 3. One of the smaller, more or less triangular, openings between the bars of Gothic tracery. 4. An **oculus**, esp. one at the summit of a dome.

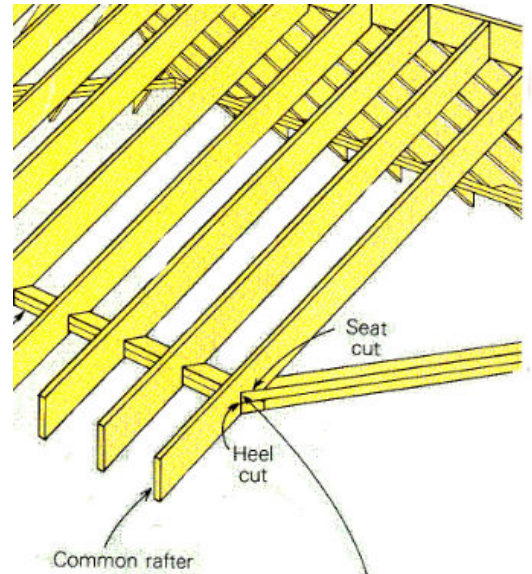


eye,2



eye,2

Eye look at or watch closely or with interest



Common rafter

Bird's mouth—also called a **rafter seat**. It is the notch cut in a rafter that lets it sit on the double plate. It is formed by the plumb heel cut and the seat cut, which is a level line.

straight from the bird's mouth

a lesser, if not rare, idiom suggesting hearing direct from the source; the more common being "straight from the horse's mouth"

Engage participate or become involved in

Renaissance Revival style

A revival style (1840–1890) characterized by a studied formalism, their symmetrical compositions are reminiscent of early sixteenth-century Italian elements. Ashlar masonry is accented with rusticated quoins, architrave framed windows, and doors supporting entablatures or pediments. A belt or string course often divides the ground or first floor from the upper story, and small square windows were used on the top story.

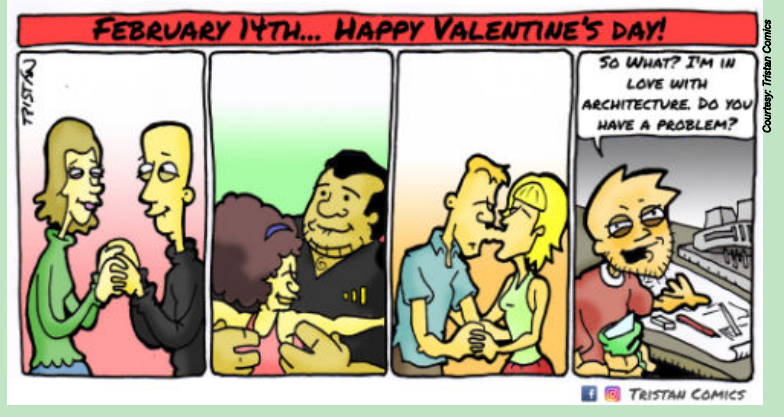


Gothic Revival cottage

Gothic Revival A movement originating in the 18th and culminating in the 19th cent., flourishing throughout Europe and the U.S.A., which aimed at reviving the spirit and forms of Gothic architecture.

Humor

Because it seems *everyone* takes *everything* too damn serious

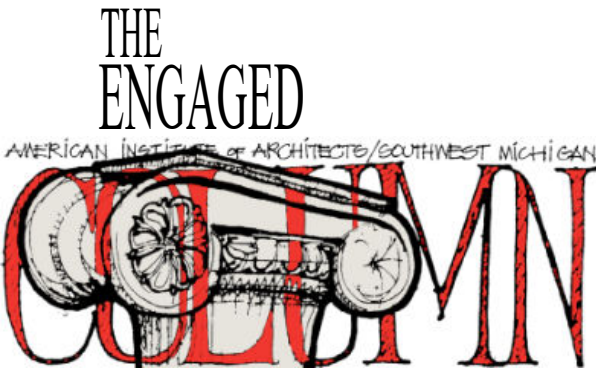


Who has the eye for detail?

Eye of Engagement Honor

Rules of Engagement: Email correct answers by March 15; each is worth 1 full point. You earn next newsletter's 'Honorable Mention.' Points accumulate each month toward a special recognition and certificate, the annual: the '**Eye of Engagement Honor.**' (current AIASWM Board Members are *excluded*, but may participate for monthly honors). Answers are *only* found in this newsletter. Send answers to Editor: zoeticarchitecture@yahoo.com.

1. One of the buildings profiled features flagstone from Tennessee; which building?
2. True or false: the support beams of the Prouty House are "Renaissance Revival" style.
3. One of the AIASWM Board Members claims a special affinity for plants—who is it?
4. Who designed the black & white logo for *The Engaged Column* headmast and when?



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Announcements, comments, news and photos are welcome. Please send to the Editor at: mchawker@yahoo.com.

The headmast logo was designed by Nelson B. Nave, 1984. Color added by Michael Hawker, 2025.

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