



# History Explorer

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

www.LansingHistory.org

November-December 2019

## Upcoming Events

### Jim Harrison Exhibit *Friends*

Now – December 30

Monday – Friday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Library of Michigan, 702 W. Kalamazoo

The Library of Michigan and the Historical Society of Greater Lansing is hosting an exhibit on the life and work of celebrated author Jim Harrison, a graduate of Haslett High School and Michigan State University. Harrison is the author of more than 60 poetry collections, novellas, and fiction and non-fiction books. Several of his books have been made into movies, including *Legends of the Fall* starring Brad Pitt.

The exhibit, *Friends*, is built around 35 photographs of Harrison taken in 1969 by his close friend John “Bud” Schulz of St. Johns, Michigan. The photos present an intimate look at a young Harrison with family and friends. Mostly taken at the Harrison farm in Leland, one of the photographs of the writer posed against a hose is cited as helping create the author’s legend. Harrison was noted for writing that revolved around family, love, food, wine, human emotions, the environment, and the classic underdog. *The New Yorker* magazine once labeled him the “Mozart of the Prairie.” In addition to the photographs, the exhibit will showcase his broadsides, writing desk, examples of his early work, letters, artwork from his writing studio, and personal mementos from his life.

### We Hope for Better Things

by Erin Bartels

Tuesday, November 19, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

Library of Michigan, 702 W. Kalamazoo

History isn’t just full of stories, it is stories. Add up all the individual stories of individual lives in individual situations, and you have history. Not just what happened when and where, but to whom and why. The old paintings and the black-and-white photos of our history textbooks come alive when we let ourselves step into the shoes of real people who were there. Or even fictional people who were there! Period TV shows and

movies and historical fiction seem to be having a moment in our culture. Do we simply long to escape to a simpler time with fancier clothes? Or could it be that we are realizing that the past is both a key to understanding the present and a warning as we move into the future?

Join local author Erin Bartels as she explains why her debut novel was steeped in history—a difficult, ugly part of U.S. history—because she was trying to process the present. She’ll talk about how she handled researching a novel that swings between three distinct time periods—the 1860s, the 1960s, and present day—in Detroit, a city that is simultaneously Michigan’s greatest achievement, its biggest disappointment, and hopefully its most exciting comeback story. And she’ll invite discussion about historical fiction as a genre—what authors do right, what they do wrong, and how one person’s interpretation of past events should always be a starting point to understanding history, not the end point.

### History of Michigan Avenue, Sparrow Hospital, and the Eastside

Saturday, November 23 – 10:00 a.m.

Allen Market Place, 1629 E. Kalamazoo St.

(enter through the North doors of the complex)

Learn about the rich history of Michigan Avenue from Bill Castanier, HSGL president, and Jennie Grau, president of Grau Interpersonal Communications and active Eastside Community Member, who will present on how Sparrow Hospital and the Eastside neighborhood have impacted each other over time. Many of you have lived the rich history of this quadrant of the Capital City, so come share your stories. For others of you who are new to the Eastside, don’t miss this opportunity to learn more about this lively neighborhood. All are welcome to this free event. In the months ahead, watch for additional programs in the *Eastside History Series*, which will explore many different aspects of the history of this unique neighborhood.

## A List of Lansing Fire Stations

Sometimes it can be surprisingly hard to figure out exactly when some event took place, or when a particular building was built. This information is critical to understanding and teaching history—but it can be tough to locate. The discovery of a good list can make historical research much easier, and can tell its own compelling story of growth and decline.

Longtime HSGL member Timothy Bowman has dedicated many years of his life to researching and compiling lists of Lansing area institutions, including businesses, theatres, and events. He uses a number of tools to source his facts, including various historical iterations of the Lansing State Journal, Lansing city directories, and other historical sources found in the Capital Area District Library’s Forest Parke Library and Archives.

Timothy publishes his work on his blog, [www.lugnut215.wordpress.com](http://www.lugnut215.wordpress.com). He graciously allowed us to share the following lists with you. If you enjoy perusing these sorts of compilations, we suggest that you head over to his blog to learn more.

### History of Fire Stations in Lansing, Michigan As of June 27, 2019 Compiled by Timothy Bowman

CD = City Directories

LJ = *Lansing Journal* newspaper

SR = *State Republican* newspaper

SJ = *State Journal* newspaper

LSJ = *Lansing State Journal* newspaper

City of Lansing only, does not include Lansing Township stations.

#### Historical Society of Greater Lansing

P.O. Box 12095 ~ Lansing, MI 48901

[www.LansingHistory.org](http://www.LansingHistory.org)

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#### Fire Station No. 1

1857, October 5 – Torrent Engine Co. No. 1 is organized. (SJ 10-16-1911)

1872, June 11 – Regular city fire department organized under the control of the common council. (SJ 10-16-1911)

1895, September – Photo of fire department under city hall quarters at 112 E. Allegan St. (SH 4-28-1955)

1905, February 6 – Moves from Allegan St. across the street to S. Grand Ave. (LJ 2-4-1905)

1915, 1927, 1940 City Directories – 125 S. Grand Ave. at E. Allegan Street. The South Grand Parking Ramp is on the spot today.

1949, November 11 – New Central Station dedication on the site of the old city market. (SJ 11-11-1949 and 11-12-1949)

1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 120 E.

Shiawassee St., at N. Grand Ave.

2006, July 8 – Renovations done on the 1949 art deco style building. (LSJ 7-8-2006)

2019 – Still open.

#### Fire Station No. 2

c. 1859 – Protection Company No. 2 organized. (SJ 8-22-1962)

1866 – Original frame fire house was built. (SJ 8-22-1962)

c. 1890 – Brick structure known as the “fire barn” opened. (SJ 8-22-1962)

1915 City Directory – 1126 N. Washington Ave. (address error)

1927, 1940 City Directories – 1128 N. Washington Ave., just before Grand River Ave. (now Cesar E. Chavez Ave.)

1962, August 22 – Closes, was then the oldest fire station. (SJ 8-22-1962) Torn down. City Parking Lot #17 is on the spot as of 2019.

1962, August 22 – New station opens at 2114 N. Grand River Ave, at Raymond Drive. (SJ 8-22-1962)

1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – Located at 2114 N. Grand River Ave.

2019 – Still open.



Fig. 1: Postcard of Central Fire Station, ca. 1916.

**Fire Station No. 3**

1906, February 15 – Station put into service at corner of Hillsdale and Sycamore Streets. (SR 2-15-1906)  
 1915 City Directory – 630 W. Hillsdale St. (address error)  
 1927, 1940 City Directories – 629 W. Hillsdale  
 1954, August 4 – New station dedication on site of previous one at Hillsdale and Sycamore streets. (SJ 8-5-1954)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 629 W. Hillsdale St., at S. Sycamore Street (right behind the Fox 47 News TV station building)  
 2010, June 30 – Fire station at 629 W. Hillsdale St. closes due to budget cuts. (LSJ 7-1-2010)  
 2019 – The Michigan Propane Gas Association is now using the building.

**Fire Station No. 4**

1906, February 15 – Station put into service. (SR 2-15-1906)  
 1915, 1927, 1940 City Directories – 230 Bingham St.  
 1962, January 3 – Old station closed at Bingham and Prospect Streets. (SJ 12-29-1962) The building is still there in 2019, has been used as apartments, a fitness center, and a preschool.  
 1965, December 12 – New station dedicated at 5550 S. Pennsylvania Ave. (SJ 12-11-1965)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 5550 S. Pennsylvania Ave. The building is still there in 2019, has been used as a limousine service and a car detailing service.  
 2003, October 25 – New south station opened at 1435 E. Miller Rd. (LSJ 10-26-2003)  
 2019 – Still open.

**Fire Station No. 5**

1913, August 22 – New station opened to public at S. Washington Ave. and Baker St. (SJ 8-23-1913)  
 1915, 1927, 1940 City Directories – 1439 S. Washington Ave. This old fire station was used by the Alano Club from 1959-1972. It was razed on August 30, 1972. (SJ 9-1-1972)  
 1956, February 2 – New Station No. 5 dedicated on Todd Ave. (SJ 2-1-1956 and 2-3-1956)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 1821 Todd Ave.  
 2011, July 1 – Station No. 5 on Todd Ave., near Mt. Hope and S. Washington, closes as part of citywide budget cuts. (LSJ 7-1-2011)  
 2019 – Now being used as a private residence and small business.

**Fire Station No. 6**

1921, January 20 – Put into service at Pennsylvania Ave. and Sheridan St. (SJ 1-19-1921 and 1-20-1921)  
 1927, 1940 City Directories – 839 N. Pennsylvania Ave.  
 1965, January 31 – Sheridan St. changed to Oakland Ave. by city council. (SJ 1-26-1965)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 839 N. Pennsylvania Ave.

1976, August 3 – Voters give city permission to sell Stations 6 and 8. (SJ 8-4-1976)  
 1977, June 15 – Closed when new Station No. 8 is opened. (SJ 6-15-1977 and LSJ 1-7-1982) This property is eventually converted into a private residence.  
 1995-1998 – No. 10 Station at 3708 Pleasant Grove Rd. becomes No. 6. This structure is now being used as the home of the Fire Maintenance Division.  
 2001, June 16 – New Station No. 6 opens at 5135 Pleasant Grove Rd. at Jolly Rd. (LSJ 6-1-2001 and 6-16-2001)  
 2019 – Still open.

**Fire Station No. 7**

1925, October 19 – New station opened at W. Saginaw St. and Drexel Road (near Jenison St.). (SJ 10-19-1925)  
 1927, 1940 City Directories – 629 N. Jenison Ave.  
 1964, December 16 – Closed. (SJ 1-21-1966)  
 1966, January 21 – Reopened by the Police and Fire Board. (SJ 1-21-1966)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 629 N. Jenison Ave.  
 2011, July 1 – Station No. 7 on North Jenison St. closes as part of citywide budget cuts. (LSJ 7-1-2011)  
 2019 – Has been converted into a private residence.

**Fire Station No. 8**

1931, July 2 – Building dedicated at Michigan and Hayford Avenues. (SJ 7-2-1931 and 7-3-1931)  
 1940 City Directory – 2300 E. Michigan Ave.  
 1976, August 3 – Voters give city permission to sell Stations 6 and 8. (SJ 8-4-1976)  
 1977, June 15 – Michigan Ave station already closed and sold to the Civic Players. (SJ 6-15-1977)  
 1977, June 16 – New east side station opens at Marshall and Saginaw. (SJ 6-15-1977).  
 2019 – Still open, address at 815 Marshall Street, actually at Grand River Ave.

**Fire Station No. 9**

1955, March 17 – Building on Glendale Ave. dedicated (one block from S. Cedar St.). (SJ 3-16-1955 and 3-18-1955).  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 520 Glendale Ave.  
 2019 – Still open.

**Fire Station No. 10**

1962, August 24 – New fire station opened at 3708 Pleasant Grove Road. (SJ 8-22-1962)  
 1976 Lansing Fire Department Annual Report – 3708 Pleasant Grove Rd.  
 1995-1998 – No. 10 station at 3708 Pleasant Grove Rd. becomes station No. 6.



Historical Society of Greater Lansing  
P.O. Box 12095  
Lansing, MI 48901

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