

2026

Feb. 2, 2026. Arab and Chaldean History in Detroit. Historian, historic preservationist and Dearborn native Ian Tomashik.

Arab and Chaldean immigrants first arrived in Detroit over 120 years ago. Yet, their stories have not been properly captured by historic preservationists. An ongoing project by the City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board (HDAB) is changing this.

For the past three years, HDAB partnered with Detroit residents and community members to document the rich histories of its Arab and Chaldean communities. They published a context report on Detroit's Middle Eastern history and are now nominating the Sacred Heart Chaldean Catholic Church to the National Register of Historic Places. HDAB will also nominate another site related to Arab or Muslim history.

This presentation will share some incredible stories from the past century of Middle Eastern history in Detroit. It will also honor some of the generous individuals who volunteered their time to help HDAB preserve and share their stories.

2025

Nov., 3. 2025, 7 p.m. – Heroes From the Neighborhood

Nearly 350 service members from Dearborn have given their lives in service to our country.

Author, historian and Dearborn native Lisa Lark will share details about these heroes and discuss the neighborhoods they came from. This event is free.

Lisa Lark is the author of three books that tell the stories of the men and women who have given their lives in service to the United States. Her first book, *All They Left Behind: Legacies of the Men and Women on The Wall* was published in 2012 in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of Vietnam Veterans Memorial and is included in the Library of Congress catalog. She is also the author of *There and Back: The Vietnam War Through the Eyes of Those Who Lived It* and *Gone Too Soon: Dearborn Remembers Its Fallen Heroes*.

October 2, 6:30 p.m. – Building a New Social Contract. Modern Worker's Houses in 20th Century Detroit. Michael McCulloch.

The dream of the modern worker's house emerged in early twentieth-century America as wage earners gained access to new, larger, and better-equipped dwellings. In the Detroit area -- more than any other place in the U.S.-- that dream became reality.

McCulloch will explain how the efforts of employers, government agencies, and the building industry who, along with workers themselves, produced an unprecedented boom in housing construction that peaked in the mid-1920s. Through oral histories, letters, photographs, and period fiction, McCulloch traces wage earners' agency in negotiating a new implicit social contract, one that rewarded hard work

with upward mobility in modern houses. This promise reflected workers' increased bargaining power but, at the same time, left them increasingly vulnerable to layoffs.

His work focuses on Detroit, the quintessential city of the era, where migrant workers came and were Americanized, and real estate agents and the speculative housebuilding industry thrived. The Motor City epitomized the struggle of Black workers in this period, who sought better lives through industrial labor but struggled to translate their wages into housing security amid racist segregation and violence. When Depression-era unemployment created an eviction crisis, the social contract unraveled, and workers rose up—at the polls and in the streets—to create a labor movement that reshaped American capitalism for decades.

May 5, 7 p.m. -- Dearborn's Houses of Worship

Glenn O'Kray shared historical and architectural highlights from some of Dearborn's iconic houses of worship.

In his talk, Glenn highlighted Cherry Hill Presbyterian, First Presbyterian, American Moslem Society, First United Methodist, St. Mary's Romanian Byzantine Catholic, St. Alphonsus-St. Clement, Sacred Heart, St. Paul's Lutheran, Emmanuel Lutheran and Christ Episcopal, as well as two closed churches: Littlefield Presbyterian and First Church of Christ Scientist. This is the first in a series of church profiles now being researched by Preservation Dearborn.

April 7, 7 p.m. -- Introduction to Art Deco in Detroit

Since the 1920s, Art Deco has delighted people with its innovative use of materials and designs that capture the spirit of optimism to create the style of the future.

Make plans to attend our April 7 meeting to hear author Rebecca Binno Savage as she shares examples of Detroit's Art Deco structures. Although the Detroit metro area is primarily known as an industrial region, it boasts some of the finest examples of Art Deco in the country. Structures like the Fisher and Penobscot Buildings are premier examples. The lecture includes metro-Detroit area theaters, homes, factories and churches. This presentation will include both new and vintage images of Detroit area skyscrapers, movie theaters, houses, apartment buildings and even factories.

FEBRUARY 3, 2025 – Dearborn Country Club's Journey to Historic Preservation

Dearborn Historical Museum volunteer Ian Tomashik shared information on the history of the club and progress on its nomination to National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Club opened in 1925 as a personal entertainment venue for Henry and Clara Ford, who also oversaw its design and construction by architect Albert Kahn and landscape architect Donald Ross. This site, less than a mile from Fair Lane and Greenfield Village, has been a center for sport and culture in Dearborn for 100 years.

2024

DECEMBER 2, 7 P.M. -- PRESERVATION IS SUSTAINABILITY

Architect Alexis Cecil, Senior Associate, Quinn Evans, looked at examples of how the adaptive reuse of existing buildings is serving as an essential strategy for addressing pressing urban challenges in some communities.

OCTOBER 7, 7 P.M. -- ARAB AMERICAN VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE IN DEARBORN

Author and educator Dr. Sally Howell will share her public history project on how Arab Americans have adapted their homes for a growing, changing community. While they may not have invented the idea of creating "third spaces" - semi-public and semi-private living spaces - out of rooms usually related for storage, immigrant families have created a distinctive custom of converting their basements and garages into social spaces. Many have expanded the practice of upgrading their musty basements and spider-filled garages in creative and sometimes confounding ways. It's a custom inspired by the many traditions associated with Arab hospitality, but uniquely Americanized and adapted to housing and living conditions in Michigan.

SEPTEMBER 11, 7 P.M. -- A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN - RESTORATION HIGHLIGHTS

Tony and Karen Cipolla share their expertise gained through the restoration of historic homes in the area.

JUNE 3, 7 P.M. - DEARBORN'S SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE

Author Patricia Montemurri..Since 2017, Patricia has authored four books that showcase the legacy and impact of historic Catholic institutions in Michigan, each illustrated with more than 200 photos. Patricia's work is familiar to many in the Detroit area from her books, as well as her long career as a reporter with the Detroit Free Press.

Montemurri explores how the Catholic church shaped Dearborn's spiritual landscape. The city's oldest Catholic parishes are neighborhood landmarks where thousands of Dearborn residents attended parish schools. Hear about Episcopalian Henry Ford's unique connection with the congregation of Catholic nuns who taught at Dearborn Sacred Heart. Learn about Dearborn's stained glass artisans whose creativity can be seen throughout metropolitan Detroit. Patty explores this legacy, in part, through the stories about her in-laws, who were stained glass designers and contributed to the artistry of St. Alphonsus and Sacred Heart churches.

MONDAY, MAY 6, 7.P.M.

People all over the world know about Dearborn's connection to cars, but fewer understand the city's relationship with another transportation mode – trains!

Matt Anderson, Curator of Transportation, The Henry Ford, is one of the world's leading historical authorities on transportation. He will explain how trains moved people and goods during Dearborn's formative years and helped create the city we know today.

From the pioneering Michigan Central, to the Pere Marquette, to Henry Ford's own Detroit, Toledo & Ironton, Dearborn was – and is – shaped by the railroads that passed through it. Matt will offer an overview of the city's railroad history, including the industrial railroad that served Ford's enormous Rouge plant.

Matt joined The Henry Ford as Curator of Transportation in 2012. From childhood, he's always been fascinated by anything with wheels or wings. His favorite artifacts at the museum include the Wright

Cycle Shop, the 1948 Tucker 48 sedan, and – like everyone else who’s ever visited the museum – the 1941 Allegheny locomotive.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 7 P.M. From 1929 to 1932 Albert Kahn, Inc. oversaw the design and construction of over 500 factories in Soviet Russia. Many of these plants were converted to munitions production during World War II. The Chrysler Tank Arsenal and Willow Run Bomber Plant notwithstanding, without Kahn’s unintended contributions to the Russian war effort, there is arguably no decisive Allied victory over the Third Reich, and no complete liberation of Europe. Adaptive renovations of these are among the most influential to ever be applied to Albert Kahn, Inc. designs.

Dale Carlson, historian, author and photographer explains: “I considered the gravity of Kahn’s bearing on world history and asked myself, ‘What unique and significant adaptive renovations and reuses of Kahn designs might we find here in the Motor City if we went looking? Exactly how far might Kahn’s influence posthumously and unintentionally extend into Detroit’s future? Which reuses might exhibit the greatest degrees of versatility and unintended consequences?’”

2023

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023 Kit houses were an affordable way for many families in Dearborn and throughout the U.S. to have their own homes. The “kits” were packages of full construction drawings, pre-cut lumber, nuts and bolts, paint, and everything else needed to build a house. Leading sellers included Keith’s, Aladdin, Sears, Harris Brothers, Montgomery Ward, and Gordon–Van Tine. From 1908 until 1940, Sears, Roebuck and Co. sold over 70,000 kit houses through their Modern Homes and Honor Bilt catalogs. Designs for 370 different plans ranged from the elaborate to the simple; the ‘Goldenrod’, for example, was a three-room vacation cottage (no bath, out-house separate).

TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023 Firestone Farm is one of the most popular attractions at Greenfield Village. Built in 1828, Benjamin and Catherine Firestone raised their three children in this farmhouse, including tire maker Harvey Firestone. While the farmhouse looks like it always has been on the site, it was moved there from its original location near Columbiana, Ohio, in 1984. The team that moved, restored, and reinterpreted the home uncovered fascinating information about this structure that was only uncovered by dismantling the home. Dr. Nancy Bryk, Professor of Historic Preservation & Director, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, Eastern Michigan University, explained this unique home’s restoration.

MONDAY, FEB. 6, 2023 Cynthia Sohn, Director of Operations, and Austin Eighmey, Senior Project Manager of Preservation and Restoration at the Fair Lane Estate, on "Restoring Clara and Henry's House." Talk featured ongoing work inside the mansion, what has been accomplished to date, and what remains.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 11 “Winter Wonders” meeting. Preservation Dearborn historians research questions submitted by curious residents about the history of houses or buildings in their neighborhood or across town.

2022

MONDAY, NOV. 7, 2022 A Short History of Mosques and Mosque Architecture in Southeastern Michigan. Dr. Sally Howell, author of *Old Islam in Detroit* and University of Michigan assistant professor, provides an informational session on these sites of worship in our community.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022 Rouge River Revived. author and renowned environmentalist Dr. John Hartig details the river's role in the history of southeast Michigan, including Dearborn and how grassroots environmental activism is leading to its revival. Hear John's firsthand account of this and more as documented in his latest book, *Rouge River Revived*.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2022 Photographer and architectural historian Dale A. Carlson is at the Dearborn Historical Museum on the evening of Wednesday, September 7th, 2022 as he recounts details of the life of Detroit-based, Italian-American architectural sculptor Corrado Parducci (1900-1981) and reveals fourteen sites featuring Parducci sculpture within Dearborn's city limits, many commissioned by famed Detroit architect, Albert Kahn. Sites covered in Mr. Carlson's PowerPoint presentation will include the Henry Ford Museum, the Dearborn Inn, the Ford Motor Company's Dearborn Research Laboratories, Fordson High School and St. Barbara Catholic Church, among many others.

MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2022 What Makes a District Historic? -- Cristina Sheppard-Decius, manager, East and West Dearborn DDAs
MONDAY, MAY 2, 2022 The Greenest Building...is the one that is already built. A look at the environmental benefits of historic preservation by Jim Lindberg of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2022 Dearborn City of Immigrants & Their Architectural Traditions -- Mike Kirk: A presentation reviewing the various immigrant groups who have settled in Dearborn, the present mix of architectural styles and how we might explore contextual design to bridge our cultural gaps. Mr. Kirk is a Principal and Lead Historical Architect at Neumann/Smith Architecture where he leads the Detroit office. He is a Certified Historical Architect per the Secretary of Interior and also a LEED accredited professional in sustainable "green design." He is a lifelong Dearborn resident, graduate of Dearborn High and The University of Michigan -- Ann Arbor, with a BS & Master of Architecture degrees.

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022 Update on Dearborn's Historic District Ordinance Status / Outreach by Arsenal Riverbend Historic Research Group
Tips for Researching Your Old House -- Paul Snyder, archivist at Mill Race Village, Northville Historical Society,

MONDAY, FEB 7, 2022 Overview Michigan Historic Tax Credit - A Tax Break for Owners of Old Homes? Robb McKay, historical architect, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, spoke. Last year, the state passed a law that provides a state tax credit for owners of historic residential and commercial properties. Robb McKay explained what Dearborn and its residents must do in order to be eligible for this credit.

MONDAY, JAN. 10, 2022 Update on Dearborn's Historic District Ordinance Status / Outreach by Arsenal Riverbend Historic Research Group
Overview Michigan Historic Tax Credit - Ian Tomashik "Reveal" Springwells Park 2021

November 15, 2021 at the Dearborn Historical Museum "Stories from the Sidewalk" Highlights from a selection of houses in Arsenal Riverbend neighborhoods that will appear in our upcoming book -- Arsenal Riverbend Historians
September 20, 2021 An Evening with Cristina Sheppard-Decius -- Cristina Sheppard-Decius, Manager of the East and West Dearborn DDAs, will outline her work. She will highlight the need for historic preservation as part of the big picture and the need for an updated Historic District

Ordinance in order to participate fully in the Michigan Main Street initiative and get a Certified Local Government status to enable grants flowing into our city . "Reveal" 22750 and 22740 Alexandrine

August 2, 2021 "Historic Preservation Projects and Challenges in Metro Detroit" Devan Anderson, President of Preservation Detroit's Board of Directors, a Michigan Historic Preservation Network board member and a member of the State Historic Preservation Review Board presented. He shared a fascinating journey through his stories and experiences for an inside look at various projects and challenges throughout the metro Detroit area. Home Reveal 22301 Cherry Hill (243 Northview)

JUNE 7, 2021 Home Reveal -- 830 S. Brady "How Being A Certified Local Government Could Benefit Dearborn" -- S. Alan Higgins, Certified Local Government Coordinator, Michigan Historic Preservation Network, spoke about "What a Certified Local Government Status could mean for Dearborn." The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a preservation partnership between local, state, and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the local level. Obtaining status as a CLG can help a local government encourage, develop, and maintain its local preservation efforts in coordination with its development plans. Certified Local Governments are also eligible to apply for specially earmarked grants from the SHPO. In summary, a CLG could help our city could benefit and qualify for funding and ongoing downtown enrichment.

MAY 3, 2021 Modifications and Additions -- How Ann Arbor's Historic Districts Keep Historic Homes While Allowing Changes to Suit the Needs of Today's Homeowners -- Jill Thacher, Ann Arbor City Planner Additions in West Dearborn -- Would These Changes be Allowed Under a Revised Historic District Ordinance? -- Ian Tomashik • "Reveal": A Surprising History of Two Historic Neighborhood Houses -- 22042 Morley/500 Wagner Court

APRIL 5, 2021 A look at Northville's grassroots work to create Mill Race Historic Village and recent historical survey work. -- Leanie Bayly, Executive Director of the Northville Historical Society Dearborn Brickmaking History. Could your house be constructed from local bricks made of Dearborn clay? -- Ian Tomashik "Reveal": A surprising history of one historic neighborhood house --22184 Long Boulevard

MARCH 1, 2021 Q&A with Patrick McCauley, Realtor/Co-Author, Historic Ann Arbor: An Architectural Guide Ordinance Could Benefit Several Neighborhoods -- Mason Christensen, Dearborn Historical Museum archivist, on Dearborn's South End (traditional area for immigrants enriching our city's history, past and present) Home Reveal -- 222 River Lane FEBRUARY 1, 2021 Overview of Arsenal Riverbend Historic Research Group Update on Dearborn's Historic District Ordinance Status A Look at Upcoming Book: "Stories from the Sidewalk" Home Reveal -