

The President's House



A Photographic History
Anne Duderstadt

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The President's House



Sketch by Wilfred Shaw

The President's House of the University of Michigan is the oldest building on the University Campus. It is one of the original four houses constructed to house faculty when the University moved from Detroit to Ann Arbor in 1837.

The four houses, built by Harpin Lum for a total cost of \$26,900, all served the University in one capacity or another through the early years of the twentieth century.

Completed in the summer of 1840, two of the houses fronted on North University and the other two on South University. The two-story plan included a central hall with two rooms opening off each side. The identical arrangement was repeated on the second floor. Emil Lorch, Professor of Architecture at the University, felt these structures "had quiet dignity, good proportion, and excellent detail". He was particularly impressed with the entrance porches and the intricacies of their cornices.

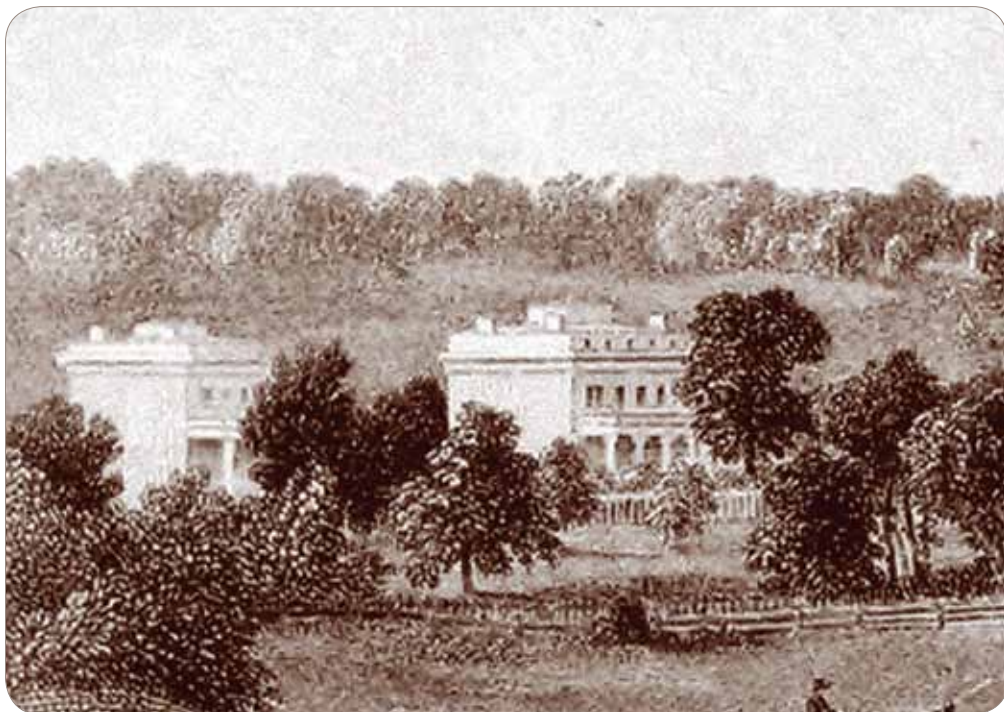
From 1841 to 1851 the University was governed by a faculty committee, and the houses were apportioned among the professors. In 1852 Henry Philip Tappan became the first President of the University of Michigan after it moved to Ann Arbor. (The Catholepistemiad or University of Michigania was founded in 1817 in Detroit. The Reverend John Monteith served as President and Father Gabriel Richard as Vice President.)

In 1852 President Tappan and his family moved into the vacant southwest dwelling, and by his presence, made it what it remains today: The President's House.

The Early University of Michigan Campus



Jasper Cropsey painting of the University of Michigan Campus in 1855



Professors' Houses on south side of campus facing the center of campus
The house on the right would become the President's House.

Henry & Julia Tappan
1852 - 1863

Henry Tappan was elected President in 1852. He, his wife Julia, and their son John and daughter Rebecca, moved into the vacant southwest dwelling on South University Avenue, and by his presence, made it the President's House. The Tappans added gas lighting in 1858, and the third floor was probably added during his tenure.



Henry Tappan



Julia Tappan

A new Board of Regents became unhappy with Tappan's pedagogical philosophy as well as his "overbearing manner", and he was dismissed in 1863. The Tappans left for Europe, and their household was auctioned on September 26, 1863. The auction notice lists items on the third floor. This is the only clue we have that the third floor was added sometime during Tappan's tenure.



President's House - 1852



President's House with 3rd floor

Erastus & Mary Francis Haven
1863 - 1869

Erastus Otis Haven was elected president in 1863. He had been a faculty member during the Tappan years. Tappan was fired the day of commencement in 1863, and Haven was named president. Haven resigned in 1869 to accept the presidency of Northwestern University



Erastus Haven



Mary Francis Haven

The Havens added a kitchen to the left of the house. A faculty wife loyal to Tappan complained that the kitchen spoiled the lines of the house and certainly would allow unseemly odors to permeate the parlors. She went on to mock Mrs. Haven for describing Mrs. Tappan as lazy because she employed two servant girls. Mrs. Haven's feelings, however, were probably shared by the "just common folk" in Ann Arbor.



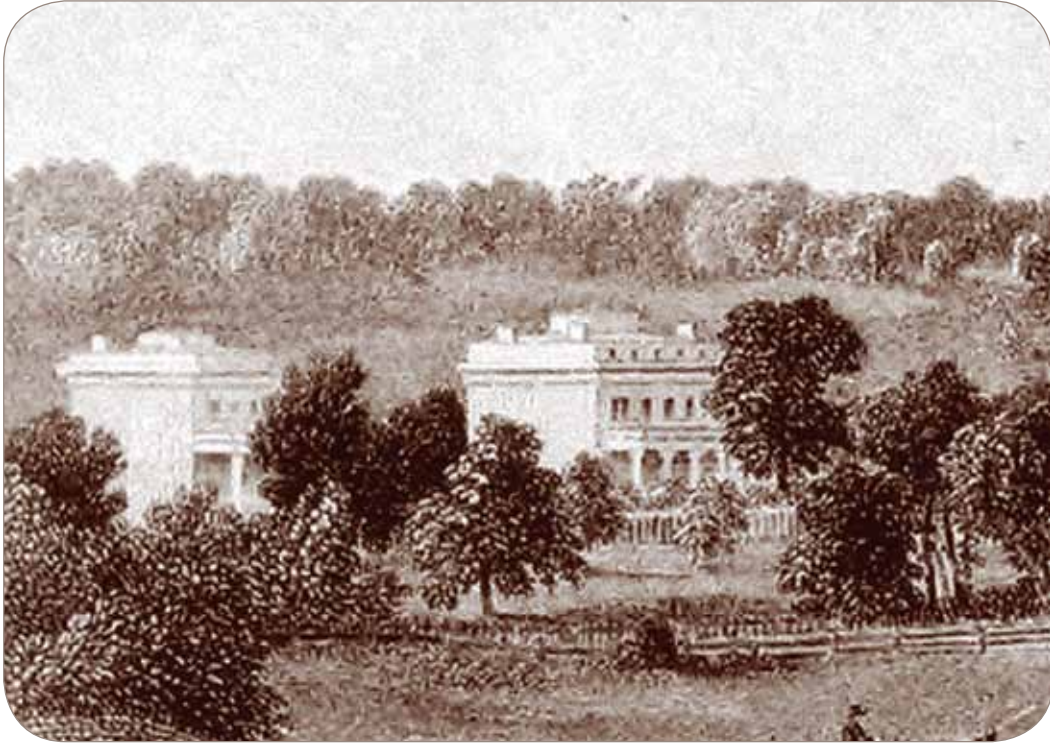
President's House with kitchen at left

Henry & Anna Frieze
1869 - 1871, 1880 - 1882, 1887

Henry Frieze was Professor of Latin Language and Literature from 1854 to 1889. Frieze was born in Boston and educated at Brown. A much beloved teacher, he served as president *pro tempore* from 1869-71 while the Regents searched for a new president. Frieze served as acting president from June 1880 until February 1882, while James Angell was serving as Minister to China. He also served in 1887, when James Angell served on the International Commission of Canadian Fisheries. Frieze did not live in the President's House, as he preferred to emphasize the temporary nature of his position. He sold his home on Washtenaw and moved into the Professor's House next door to the President's House. Among his many lasting services to the University was his active role in founding the University Musical Society and starting the University's Fine Arts collection. He was also credited with admitting women to the University and establishing the "diploma system" by which students who had graduated from a Board of Regents' accredited college preparatory program were admitted to the University. Thus, Frieze has been credited with the development of the high school. We do not have a photograph of Anna Frieze.



Henry Frieze



Professor's Houses facing the center of campus
Henry Frieze lived in the house on the left

Henry and Anna Frieze lived in the East Professors' House on South University from 1858 to 1860 when he was a professor of Latin. He built a home on Washtenaw in 1859. The Friezes lived in the Professors' House again from 1869 to 1877 during his three acting presidencies.



Frieze home on Washtenaw



Frieze later built this home on Cornwell Place

Negotiations with James Angell

In their search for a permanent successor to Haven, the Regents selected James Angell, then president of the University of Vermont. Extensive negotiations with Angell continued over two years. It was only after the third offer that Angell accepted the position, with the renovation of the President's House being a key factor in his decision. The following excerpts from the letters concerning the long negotiations are revealing:

A letter informing Angell of his election as president of the University of Michigan from E.C. Walker, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Regents (September 3, 1869) states:

"Definite action was not taken on the subject of Salary. It will be \$3500 per annum and a roomy and comfortable house (with a large garden for fruit and vegetables attached) – at least."

Angell's reply (October 4, 1869) requested more attention to the President's House:

"It has occurred to me that I ought to ask you a little more definitely what you think could be done to the house. It seems to me to need absolutely, paper and paint, bath room with hot and cold water, water closet, and some arrangement for a dining room closet, and a furnace. My family has never lived in a house without the above named conveniences, which the house lacks, and composed as it is of persons from very advanced age to infancy, I should not feel willing to ask them to dispense with them, unless there were an absolute necessity. I am well aware that such a change would entail a pretty heavy outlay at first, but once done it would be done for all the future. The attic would hold a tank which could be filled from the roof."

Walker responded for the Regents (January 4, 1871):

"The Board was an unit, without a shadow of a difference of opinion among us. We determined unanimously to offer you \$4000 per annum and exps of removal and to repaint the house as you suggested, your salary to begin Aug 1, 1871."

Angell asked for still more clarification (February 1, 1871):

"I do most sincerely appreciate this renewed token of the favor of the Regents. And I beg you to extend to them my hearty thanks for their invitation. I have bestowed earnest thought upon their proposition during the last three weeks, and I am reluctantly constrained to say that I really cannot afford to undertake the work at Ann Arbor on the salary named. I am sorry that my circumstances in life compel me to give more consideration to the question of salary than I could wish. But so it is."

The long negotiations finally came to a favorable conclusion, the Regents yielded, and a wire was sent to Dr. Angell announcing their action and that the salary was fixed at Angell's figure.

The Western Union Telegraph Company, Ann Arbor M 7th 1870 (1871), Received at Burl. Feby 8th

To Prest J B Angell

YOU WERE UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED PRESIDENT SALARY FORTY FIVE HUNDRED AND HOUSE EXPENSE OF REMOVAL.

E.C. WALKER

But the negotiations continued, as this excerpt from a letter of Walker indicates (April 17, 1871):

"The Ex. Com. reported about the house, and we appropriated \$1,500 to its repair. We are to put in furnace bathroom hot and cold water—and paper and paint throughout etc, etc. Prof. Frieze or Prof. Douglass who is our mechanic will attend to the details and will write you in full. The Regents visited the house when I was not there in March and decided that the addition of the 3rd story, on walls only designed for two rendered the insertion of new windows on the sides unsafe. I regret the decision and do not share in their fears, tho some are far better judges than myself. The fruit, especially the pears, looks very promising. It was forgotten to trim the grapevines, and it is now too late."

Acting President Henry Frieze joined in (April 19, 1871):

"We are about to commence repairs on the President's house. We can manage very nicely in respect to everything excepting the alterations you suggest in the windows. It is the opinion of those who have examined the house, that the walls and stucco will not bear any breaking into--particularly as the addition of the third story to the house a few years ago caused the walls to settle at the corners, and to show some signs of weakness. Though the movement was but slight, it is thought unsafe to tamper with them. I think we shall succeed in making the house in every other way pleasant and comfortable.

Mrs. F. thinks Mrs. A. had better bring with her any good domestics she may already have, or may find.

You will also need a good horse."

In a final letter from Frieze (July 15, 1871):

"Things are going on well at the house. The front windows are already cut down. The change will be a great improvement in the looks and comfort of the house."

James & Sarah Angell
1871- 1909

During Angell's thirty-eight-year tenure, the President's House was substantially altered. In 1891 a west wing was added to give Angell a semi-circular library and more bedrooms. Also, two large rooms were made from the original pair of small rooms on either side of the ground-floor hallway. The house was also wired for electricity. The barn, an orchard, and a vegetable garden remained at the rear of the house. The Regents did not accept President Angell's resignation until 1909, four years after he had originally tendered it. He lived in the President's House until his death in 1916.



James Angell



Sarah Angell



The President's House ca. 1872, with the Angell sons and their dog



Harry & Mary Louise Hutchins
1909 - 1920

Angell's successor was Harry Burns Hutchins, dean of the Law School since 1895, and long-time friend of Angell. Sarah Angell died on December 17, 1903. President Angell continued to live in the President's House (referred to as the "Angell House") until his death on April 1, 1916, at the age of 87. Hutchins remained in his own home on Monroe Street. He was the only Michigan president not to live in the President's House.



Harry Hutchins



Mary Louise Hutchins



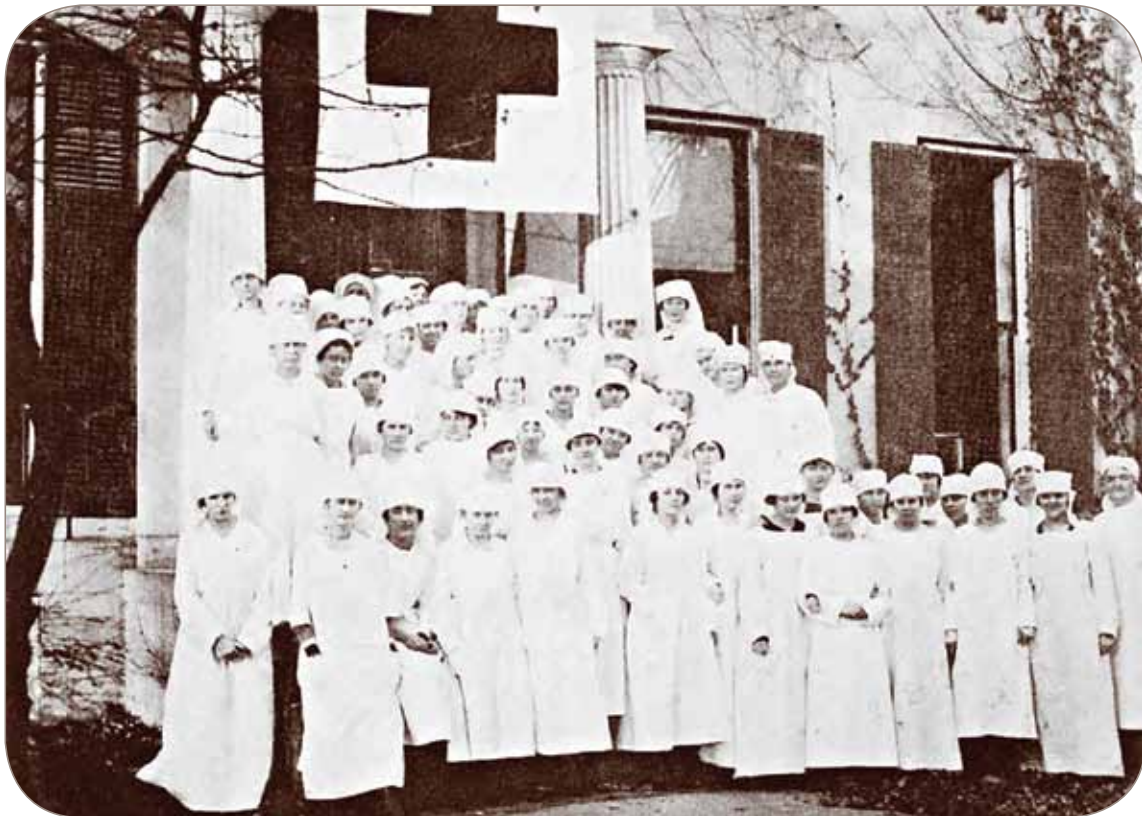
The Hutchins House on Monroe Street at Packard
The dining room in Hutchins House hosting the Regents

The President's House

1916 - 1920

During World War I, the roles of women students on campus were probably best described as cheerleading and service. The cheerleading was certainly compatible with traditional female roles. Student after student recalled the long parades honoring the men sent to Camp Custer, an important military training facility in western Michigan: "Everyone plodded or raced enthusiastically through the dreary autumn streets to send 'the boys' off with all good cheer." Some remembered "the stirring war meetings...the leaving of the Naval men from our own classes, and the many precious hours spent in the Angell House preparing dressing for the Red Cross." President Angell had died in 1916, and since President Harry Hutchins (1909-1920) always preferred his own home on Monroe Street to the university's official presidential residence on South University, Angell House, as it was then called, lay vacant. War saw it put to use as a center for female service activities. In its gracious rooms women students and faculty members' wives met to roll bandages and prepare dressings to be sent to the front.

Women of Michigan: The Dangerous Experiment, 1870s to the Present, by Ruth Bordin, The University of Michigan Press, 1999, page 44



*Marion & Nina Burton**1920 - 1925*

Hutchins retired in 1920 and was succeeded by Marion LeRoy Burton, president of the University of Minnesota. Burton served as President of Smith College from 1910-1917 and the University of Minnesota from 1917-1920. At his request the President's House was thoroughly renovated, and a sun parlor with a sleeping porch above added to the east side. The back porch was made into an enclosed dining area, and a garage with bedrooms overhead was added to the west side. Burton's tenure was cut short by his death in 1925 after a year-long illness.



Marion Burton



Nina Burton





*Clarence & Katherine Little**1925 - 1929*

Michigan's next president, Clarence Cook Little, came from the University of Maine where he had served as president for three years. He paid little attention to the President's House during his four-year stay in Ann Arbor. Embroiled in almost continual controversy, Little resigned from the presidency in 1929.



Clarence Cook Little



Katherine Little



President Little in the dining room with his dog

Alexander & Florence Ruthven

1929 - 1951

Alexander Grant Ruthven had been at Michigan since 1903, first as a graduate student and then as Professor of Zoology and museum director. Florence was also an alumna. The Ruthvens displayed a sense of nostalgia in restoring some of the original furnishings of the President's House. A private study was added in the northeast corner for the president, and Mrs. Ruthven's desire for a glassed-in plant room was accommodated between the new study and the sun parlor added by the Burtons.



Alexander Ruthven



Florence Ruthven



Mrs. Ruthven's Plant Room (right)



President Ruthven's Study (left)

The Inglis Highlands

After a twenty-two year tenure, Alexander Ruthven retired in 1951 and was succeeded by Harlan H. Hatcher. The Inglis Highlands estate had been given to the University to be used as the President's House shortly before the Hatchers arrived, and the Hatchers were invited to live there. However, they chose to live in the President's House on campus. The Inglis Estate was used by the President as an extension of the President's House. The Inglis Highlands has been documented in another publication.



The Inglis family: James, Betty, Jim & Elizabeth (seated)



*Harlan & Anne Hatcher**1951 - 1967*

Harlan H. Hatcher came from Ohio State University where he was vice president for faculty and curriculum. He was also a former dean and professor of English. The twenty-two room house was sufficient for the Hatcher's needs, and they asked only that a glassed-in porch and stone terrace be added at the rear of the house. However, the interior of the house was extensively redecorated during the Hatchers' tenure and furnished with the Hatcher's lovely antiques.



Harlan Hatcher



Anne Hatcher



Glassed-in Dining Porch and Stone Terrace



Robben & Sally Fleming

1967 - 1979, 1987 (interim)

The Flemings came to Michigan from the University of Wisconsin where Robben Fleming had served as chancellor. Sally noted in her oral history that after her husband had been selected as the next president of Michigan, she was visited in Wisconsin by Virginia Denham, the University decorator, to check their furniture and to see what could be used in the President's House and what would be needed.



Robben Fleming



Sally Fleming



During the Fleming Administration, the high-rise library was built behind the President's House.

Harold & Vivian Shapiro

1980 - 1987

Harold Shapiro was named president in 1980. The Shapiros had lived in Ann Arbor for many years where he had served as a Professor of Economics, chair of that department, and vice president for academic affairs. Vivian Shapiro was a professor in the School of Social Work. The Shapiro family moved into the President's House on December 13, 1980, with their four daughters, two living at home. Vivian recalled in her oral history "The children were not very happy about the move. They simply did not want to deal with it, so I packed up their stuff, and each of their bedrooms got the boxes of their things".



Harold Shapiro



Vivian Shapiro



The Shapiro Family in the President's House Library

James & Anne Duderstadt
1988 - 1996



James Duderstadt



Anne Duderstadt



Anne, Katharine, Susan and Jim Duderstadt

Our Personal Odyssey in the President's House

Jim's election as president of the University of Michigan was announced in June of 1988. Like the Shapiros, our family had lived in Ann Arbor for many years. Jim and I moved to Ann Arbor with our two daughters from Pasadena, California in December of 1968. Ann Arbor was very, very cold. We knew no one. In January I received a call from the Faculty Women's Club inviting me to a coffee for newcomers. I became very involved with the Club and became chair of FWC Newcomers the following year. The first time I visited the Michigan President's House was for the FWC Holiday Reception given by Sally Fleming. I thought the President's House was "magnificent".

Ironically, when Jim was named President in June of 1988, it so happened that Bob and Sally Fleming were back once again serving in the interim role during the presidential search. After the Regent's interview and the press conference announcing Jim's appointment, President Fleming asked us both to come over to see the house. Even though Jim had been on the faculty for over twenty years, serving as professor, Dean of Engineering, and most recently as Provost, he had only visited the house on a few occasions, and then only for brief receptions in the public rooms. Our daughters, Susan and Kathy came along, since they also had never seen the house.

The Flemings moved back to their home on Vinewood early in the summer. An extensive renovation project had been scheduled during the last months of the Shapiro administration, and work began immediately.

We were in limbo during the summer months. We had to plan events for the coming year, and yet we were not officially the first family until September 1. Most new presidents wait a few months into the job before their inauguration. However, since we had been at Michigan for 20 years and had much work to do, we did not see any need to wait, and so Jim's inauguration was scheduled for October 6, 1988. This was the weekend of the Michigan State Game, the State of the University Address, a 50th year celebration for the Graduate School, and a big gala for the performing arts at Michigan. So there was much planning to be done during the summer.

The President's House was also in a state of disuse. Renovations of President's Houses usually occur between presidents (at least at Michigan) because of the political pressures that come into play with spending money on such projects. During the summer a new heating and cooling system was installed throughout the house. In addition, a complex sprinkling system and fire detection system was installed on the second and third floors and in the basement. A handicapped bathroom and handicapped ramp to the house were added. Funds were also available to repair all the damage done by this work. The understanding was that any funds left over from these projects could be used for interior renovation.

Our first visit to the house after the project had begun was a real eye opener. The toilet from the first floor bathroom (to be the handicapped bathroom) was on the dining porch. The front yard was totally dug up, and the side porch was gone. Cigarette butts were scattered throughout the house by the workmen. And, the University decorators were walking through the house with carpet salesman deciding what THEY were going to do with the house, totally ignoring my presence. Suddenly, the house was not as “magnificent” as that young faculty wife had remembered.

There were also transition problems with staffing. There was still a housekeeper who had worked for the Shapiros and Flemings, but the cooking was being done by an assortment of staff from Student Housing. In fact, I walked in several mornings to find the staff catering some other events on campus out of the President’s House kitchen.

After the mechanical work and handicap access work was completed and the costs were totaled, we learned that there was roughly \$100,000 remaining that could be used for modest refurbishing of the interior. That probably sounds like quite a bit for a normal home, but for a 150-year-old, 14,000 square foot house, this amount would not go far. In fact, the University’s interior design staff were already planning to spend \$70,000 of this amount just to replace the turquoise carpet throughout the house. Since Jim had many years of experience in coping with inadequate budgets as dean and provost, we both knew how valuable even this relatively small amount of funds could be. We were determined to do as much as we could within this budget, because we knew that it was unlikely that any more could be allocated to the renovation of the President’s House. So, we halted the remainder of project until we had lived in the house for a year to see what really needed to be done. We intended to return to renovate the interior of the house the following summer.

We kept our house on Delaware Drive in Ann Arbor completely furnished, and in May we moved back into it so that we could begin the renovation on our limited budget.

We began by removing the carpets on the first and second floors. The floors were hardwood. The library and the dining room were the original quarter-sawn oak and were in beautiful condition. Of course there was some damage done when removing the old radiators along with some water damage, but this could easily be repaired. The living room was not quarter-sawn oak, but was beautiful none the less. The president’s study was a wide board pegged wood with a little water damage, but repairable. The second floor wood was not as grand but in satisfactory condition for refinishing. The carpet on the third floor was in good condition, and we decided to leave it in place.

The beige silk wallpaper in the dining room was very elegant at one time, but it suffered from water damage along the outer walls. In places it was taped to the wall to keep it in place. There was also water damage to the wallpaper in the library. Hence we made the decision to strip the wallpaper throughout the house. Here I should confess that I was not a fan of wallpaper. I had made some REAL wallpaper mistakes in my own home. Since such mistakes can be expensive, our limited budget dictated that we replace the damaged wallpaper with paint.

The drapes had been in place for many years. They were also water and sun damaged and needed to be replaced, again within budget. The renovation was completed during the summer, but it took several months before the drapes, furniture and rugs arrived. Through careful budget control and considerable effort, we were able to refurbish the entire house with the money that was going to be spent to replace the turquoise carpet.

It had always been customary for the President's family to furnish their own private living quarters. This, of course we did as well, although since we intended to keep our original home in Ann Arbor furnished as an occasional retreat, this led to some duplication.

It was a unique experience living in a house characterized by such an extraordinary history. It is quite a challenge to make such a landmark a home for your family, especially since you know that you are only visiting for the brief time that you are in the presidency.

As we were doing the renovation, I became very interested in the families that occupied the house before us. With the help of the staff at the Bentley Library, we collected photographs of the Presidents and their families as well as the various stages of the evolution of the President's house and had these mounted in prominent places throughout the public spaces of the house. These photographs constantly reminded us of the many contributions that earlier presidents and their families had made both to the house and to the University, and the privilege we enjoyed by living and serving in such a special place.



The President's House in summer of 1988



Innaugural Reception



Family Dinner after Innauguration



Annual Faculty Women's Club Luncheon



In the Kitchen with Caterers



Reception after Winter Commencement



Student Carolers at Winter Reception

Some Events in the President's House 1988-89



After a Concert, a Reception for Conductor Kurt Masur
A big Michigan basketball fan, he was given a Michigan 1989 Final Four Championship basketball.



Reception for Conducting Students Celebrating Leonard Bernstein 70th Birthday



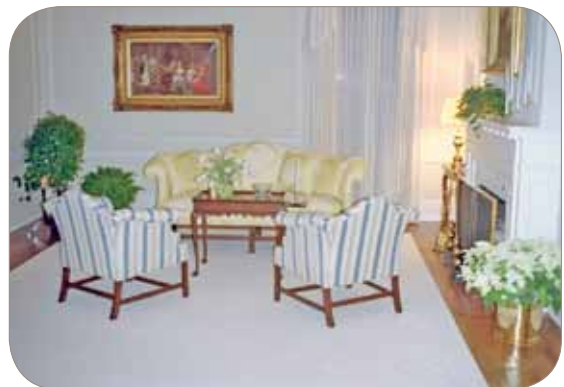
Live Broadcast from the President's House to Alumni Around the World



Events in the President's House 1988-89



Events in the President's House 1988-89



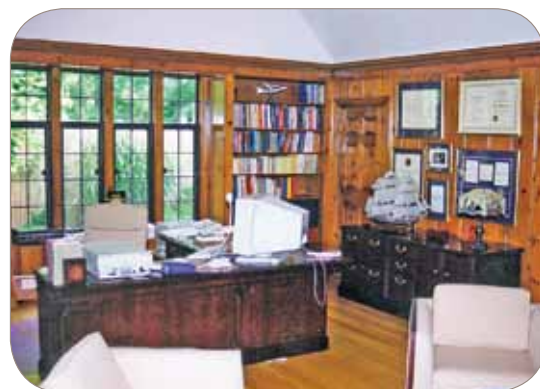
After the Renovation of the President's House 1990



After the Renovation of the President's House 1990



After the Renovation of the President's House 1990



After the Renovation of the President's House 1990



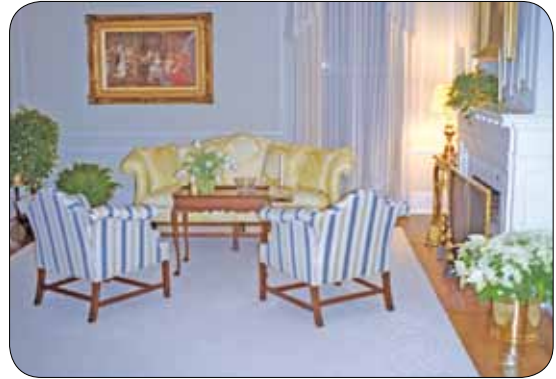
The back door of the four Professors' Houses, completed in 1840, faced the center of campus (later known as the Diag). "The President's House was the center of social life in Ann Arbor; only strangers and guests at formal affairs entered it by the front door; all the rest of us used the campus entrance, and President Angell himself frequently answered the door." (Mortimer Cooley, *Scientific Blacksmith*, p 61)



The back yard after the Burton additions (above), Ruthven's study, trellis and garden gate (below)



The President's House through the back door.



The President's House - Before and After the Renovation



The President's House - Before and After the Renovation



The President's House - Before and After the Renovation



The President's House - Before and After the Renovation



The President's House - Before and After the Renovation



Setting Up for Events



Setting Up for Events



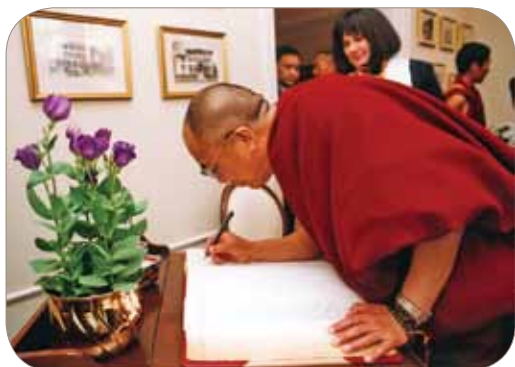
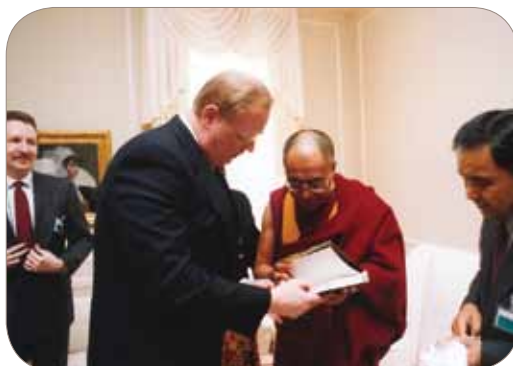
1994 Reception for Guests before His Holiness The Dalai Lama Arrives



Reception for Guests and Greeting His Holiness The Dalai Lama



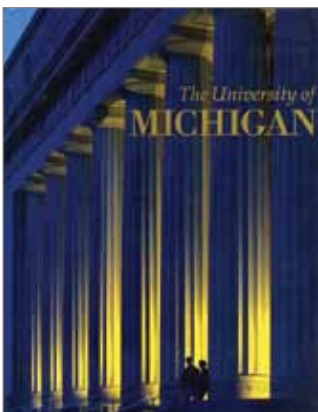
Tea with His Holiness The Dalai Lama



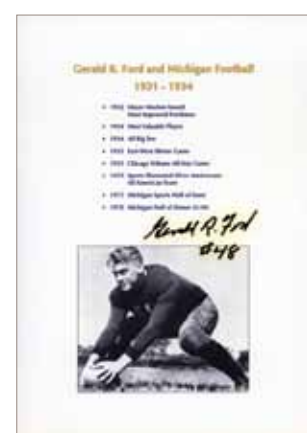
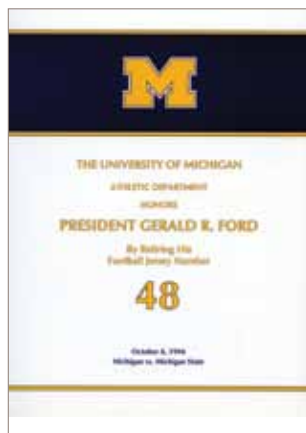
His Holiness The Dalai Lama Exchanges Gifts, Signs the Guest Book and Greetes Guests



Dinner the Night Before Retiring President Gerald Ford's Football Jersey



An informal dinner was held at the President's House the night before the University retired President Gerald R. Ford's football jersey. The guests included, President Gerald R. Ford, Betty Ford, Governor John Engler, Marty and Sue Allen, Peter and Eva Pocklington, Bo and Cathy Schembechler, Steve and Angie Fisher, Joe and Carolyn Black Roberson, Ann Moeller (Coach Gary Moeller was with the team), Jim and Anne Duderstadt. No official photographer was present. The guests took turns taking the photographs. The photo above (middle) shows us signing University of Michigan Photo Books - autographs shown at right.



Retiring President Gerald Ford's Football Jersey #48



Getting Together with the University of Michigan Former Presidents
Harlan & Anne Hatcher, Bob & Sally Fleming, Allen & Alene Smith, and Harold & Vivian Shapiro



Getting Together with the University of Michigan Former Presidents
We always enjoyed inviting the former presidents and first ladies back to their former home.



Holiday Events Including the Annual Faculty Women's Club Tea
Staff Holiday Receptions



Regents Dinners with an Occasional Retirement of a Regent with Gifts and a Skit
A Dinner for the Executive Officers to Celebrate the End of the Fall Term - with an appearance by Santa



The University of Michigan President's House is foremost a family home!



With all of the usual events and celebrations with family and friends.





Acknowledgements

Photographs:

Historical Photographs: Bentley Historical Library

Inglis Family and the Inglis Highlands: Douglas Inglis and the Inglis Family

Contemporary President's House, Events and Gardens: James Duderstadt

Cover Drawing: Doris Foss

This photographic essay is intended as a pictorial history of the President's House, its presidents and their families, for the University archives. We are indebted to the many talented and dedicated University staff who worked so hard to maintain such a remarkable and special place. They deserve our sincere appreciation and gratitude.

The President's House and Inglis House Staff

Barbara Johnson, Coordinator of Presidential Facilities and Events
 Inge Roncoli, Housekeeper
 Kurt Szalay, House Assistant
 Charles Jenkins, Horticultist
 Joan Kobrinski, Horticultist
 Rose Abercrombie, Gardener
 Judi Dinesen, Events Consultant

The Plant Department Team

Farris Womack, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
 Jack Weidenbach, Associate Vice President
 Bill Krumm, Associate Vice President
 Paul Spradlin, Director of Plant Extension
 Jack Janveja, Director of Facilities
 Fred Mayer, University Planner
 Tom Schlaff, Facilities Projects
 David Stockson, University Architect
 Brian Harcourt, Architectural Assistant
 Norma Monsma, University Interior Design
 Jim Christenson, Director of the Plant Department
 Bob Hall, Painter
 Bill Robinson, Plumber
 Brian Baughn, Carpenter
 Jerry Berry, Electrician
 Mark Ventimiglia, HVAC technician
 Craig Butcher, HVAC technician
 Rosemary Kuderick, Pest Control
 Leo Heatley and the Campus Safety Team

Computer Support Team

Steve Beebe
 Dan Fessahazion
 John Chang

