



# MiSITES

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 1 **MICHIGAN** CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY  
OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



The logo for Ironsmith, featuring a stylized 'I' icon followed by the word 'IRONSMITH' in a bold, sans-serif font.

**IRONSMITH**

Specialize in fabricating  
decorative tree grates,  
paver grates @, bollards,  
and trench/drain grates  
for over 30 years.



## Old Town *fiberglass*

Specialize in fabricating  
commercial grade  
fiberglass planters




For more detailed information regarding all IRONSMITH and Old Town Fiberglass  
products contact your local sales representative:

Aaron Chew, PLA, ASLA • 614-354-5605 • streetscapetld@gmail.com

# wildtype<sup>TM</sup>

native plants • ecological services



wildtypeplants.com | 517.244.1140 | mason, michigan | 



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Today we face new and unexpected challenges. While we are concerned for our businesses, our projects, and grant funding, we also realize that our personal life, health, and wellness are paramount. At the Michigan chapter, we have made many changes in our work utilizing technology to connect with colleagues and members, engage with our teams and run operations from our homes. Conservative measures are required by all at a personal and professional level due to the uncertainty of this COVID crisis.

Landscape architects struggle with working from home due to the physicality of our work. It requires client interactions, access to project sites, product samples, plant selections and communications with other professionals. Our spring in-person chapter activities have also been impacted, with cancellations and events rescheduled for fall. We are now utilizing Zoom for meetings and activities; one of which, the Sketch Social, was on April 30. We invite members to suggest future online activities that we could host.

Our landscape architecture students need your help. National ASLA is doing their part by accepting student memberships for free, (they have eliminated the student membership fee) and now it is our turn to support our University of Michigan and Michigan State University students. We are accepting creative solutions for mentorship and job shadowing.

ASLA at the national and state level could not exist without you. We encourage everyone to maintain their membership which supports our advocacy efforts, web presence, student activities, awards, professional development, MiSITES publication, LARE events, administration from KDA, and so much more.

Our chapter has survived other periods of trying times, so we can only look back and say we did it then, we can do it now. It is important that we continue on our mission by showing leadership, delivering education, advocating for our profession, and fighting for our licensure and the health, safety and welfare of those who traverse our landscape sites.

In this vein, we are planning an excellent educational conference on Friday, September 18, in Traverse City. We have a full day of sessions planned, a wine tour sketch crawl, and another legendary LA RIDE. The Michigan ASLA volunteer executive committee values the thoughts and opinions of our members and we hope to hear from you.

**Joane Slusky, PLA, ASLA**  
President, Michigan Chapter of ASLA

*"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make."* Jane Goodall

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 5 Lansing's Rotary Park: Revitalization of Lansing's Urban Waterfront
- 12 Combatting the Urban Heat Island Effect with UAV Thermal Imaging
- 22 CCC Big Bay -- Part I

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit [michiganasla.org](http://michiganasla.org) for more info or to register!

- Sep 18 MiASLA Conference  
Traverse City, Michigan
- Oct 2 - 5 ASLA National Conference  
Miami Beach, Florida

## STUDYING FOR THE LARE?

If you would like to sign up for LARE study groups, please email Dana at [education@michiganasla.org](mailto:education@michiganasla.org).



Michigan Chapter of ASLA



@michiganasla



@michiganasla



Michigan Chapter of ASLA



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





Eco-Mat being installed on a 1.5-acre hospital green roof in San Diego, California

## A REVOLUTION IN GREEN ROOF IRRIGATION

**Hunter's Eco-Mat® is the ultimate subsurface solution.** Eco-Mat combines highly effective drip tubing with special PET\* (polyethylene terephthalate) fleece to move water laterally and provide a reservoir of moisture at the roots. With the ability to hold a half-gallon of water per square yard, it's perfect for use with lightweight growing media.

*\*PET is a type of polyester made from 100% recycled water bottles.*

### For more information:

Eric.Simmons@hunterindustries.com (630) 200-7581

### RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL IRRIGATION

*Built on Innovation®*

Learn more. Visit [hunterindustries.com](http://hunterindustries.com)

# Hunter®



REIMAGINE  
THE ROOF

Contact your Unilock Representative for samples, product information and to arrange a Lunch & Learn for your team.

[UNILOCK.COM](http://UNILOCK.COM) | 1-800-UNILOCK

**UNILOCK®**  
DESIGNED TO CONNECT.





source: LAP Inc.

## LANSING'S ROTARY PARK: REVITALIZATION OF LANSING'S URBAN WATERFRONT

Bob Ford | LAP INC.

Landscape Architects & Planners, Inc. (LAP) is pleased to be celebrating its 30th year in business. Over those 30 years the firm has produced many projects that it is proud of, including a few that could be considered legacy projects. One of those legacy projects is "Rotary Park," located in downtown Lansing along the southern bank of the Grand River, completed in Fall 2019. Rotary Park is within two blocks of the State Capitol and is immediately west of the Lansing Center, which is prominently positioned on Michigan Avenue and the river.

This project suggests the beginning of a renaissance for Lansing's downtown waterfront and nearby parks, and was overdue, since there have not been any significant park upgrades or renovations along the river in many years.

A unique aspect of this park is that it was funded almost exclusively using private donations. "Brownfield money" was utilized through the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), but the predominate funding came from corporate and organizational groups, facilitated by the Capital Region Community Foundation (CRCF). Donors included:

- Rotary Club of Lansing Foundation
- Delta Dental of Michigan
- Dewpoint Inc.
- Auto-Owners Insurance
- Red Cedar Investment Management
- Gillespie Group
- Landscape Architects & Planners
- Team Lansing Foundation
- Wieland Construction
- Lansing Board of Water and Light
- City of Lansing
- Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Four anonymous donors







Patrick Gillespie, President of the Gillespie Group, which developed Marketplace Apartments immediately east of Rotary Park, wanted to have an enjoyable waterfront experience adjacent to the development that reflected the lifestyle and culture of the next generation. Mayor Andy Schor and Lansing City Council pledged their support for the project as well.

Gillespie Group retained LAP (Bob Ford, Landscape Architect and Nick Wallace, designer) to facilitate a forum that created a new vision for this section of waterfront. LAP was then retained by the Capital Region Community Foundation (CRCF) to develop the area's master plan and construction documents. Laurie Baumer, Executive VP, was the coordinator and liaison for CRF. LAP retained Matrix Consulting Engineers, a MEP engineering firm based in Lansing, and Comprehensive Engineering, a structural engineering firm out of Grand Rapids, to support development of the construction documents and assist LAP in overseeing construction. Wieland Construction was the construction manager.

Rotary Park includes a blend of urban amenities unique to Lansing.

**RIVERFRONT ROW SEATING** includes bar-height and dining tables with colorful umbrellas, where one can grab a bite from a local food truck or bring food to picnic comfortably. Perched seven feet above Grand River and running 190 feet along the river's edge, Riverfront Row overlooks a stretch of the middle river.

*"I love spending time here eating our lunch. It gets me and my friends outside and gives us a really nice break from the daily office routine."*

**THE SAND BEACH** is composed of approximately 6,100 square feet of pure, Lake Michigan sand, imported from the west side of the state. The sand beach is separated from the Grand River by a native landscape buffer. Many local groups use the sand beach for martial arts classes, yoga, sand volleyball, sunbathing, and lounging in free Adirondack chairs provided by the City. Families can be found playing in the sand on any given day or evening. The sand beach serves a secondary purpose of filtering and polishing channelized rain and surface water before it re-enters the river.

*"It is a wonderful place to relax and enjoy the downtown away from the hustle and bustle, next to the river and still in the center of the city."*

**"THE GRAND STAIRCASE"** is a series of concrete stairs and seat ledges descending to the edge of the Grand River providing 165 linear feet of riverbank to enjoy. At night, the stairs cast a glow from hidden LED lights that reflect off the water making a beautiful focal point. The lights also make the stairways easy to navigate. Docked along the staircase is the "Grand Princess," a miniature paddle wheel riverboat whose captain offers guided boat rides along the Grand River during the afternoon and/or evening.

*"How cool to have a riverboat giving tours of our downtown from the river."*

**THE DELTA DENTAL PLAZA** is a concrete plaza of about 6,500 square feet surrounding a 15-foot high brick fireplace (courtesy Auto-Owners Insurance) with an open hearth on two sides. This area is also partially covered by coordinated blue and gray shade sails and string lights. There are 20 tables with moveable chairs that allow flexible seating arrangements. This space can be leased by the public for outdoor, catered events such as employee appreciation dinners, family reunions, weddings, and organizational gatherings, that can last into the night. Toward evening the string lights above the plaza start to glow, creating a relaxed mood, while the amber glow from the fireplace reinforces the casual rivers-side setting.

*"We had an employee appreciation dinner last fall in this wonderful space. The catered banquet was really special, with hors d'oeuvres and an open bar that added a special touch."*

**THE LIGHTED FOREST:** Hanging 16 feet above the ground are custom designed, encased, LED tube lights. The drooping lights hang from cables in the mature honey locust canopy, giving the illusion that they are hanging from the trees. These multi-color lights gradually revolve through the colors of the rainbow, creating a wash of colors that make the area feel magical.

*"We love the magical glow of the lighted forest. I haven't experienced anything like this before and enjoy just being surrounded by the lights."*



source: LAP Inc.

**THE KAYAK LAUNCH** is an ADA-accessible, floating launch operated by River Town Adventures, a local vendor and watercraft retail store located in close proximity to the park. River Town Adventures provides kayaks and gear that the public can rent to go out and float the river.

*"It is so cool to just come down here and get on a kayak and go for a ride on the river in the middle of downtown during the day or night."*

**FOOD TRUCK STATIONS** are located in a couple parking spaces in the small parking lot next to the Delta Dental Plaza and offer a variety of different tastes.

*"I love smelling and tasting the different foods cooking along the river."*

**HAPPENING UNDER THE BRIDGE (THE HUB)** is discreetly located under the Shiawassee Street Bridge, which crosses the Grand River, next to the Lighted Forest. Each abutment of the bridge has a mural composed by local artists. Long-throw, color-changing LED lights hang from the bridge supports and illuminate both murals. The east mural features florescent paint. At night, when the LEDs illuminate the mural, the light reacts with the paint and the 10-foot high and 65-foot wide mural glows and takes on a three dimensional form. The HUB is designed to be a "flexible, programmable entertainment space." With a simple plug-and-play system, the color-changing lights can be synced with any performance and the lights change colors along with the beat of the music.

*"This area has been transformed from an unused space into a vibrant concert venue that just blows me away."*



source: LAP Inc.

**THE LANSING RIVER TRAIL** connects East Lansing, Michigan State University, Meridian Township and soon Mason, Michigan. This trail, which originated at Michigan Avenue and the Grand River in 1976, extends right through the middle of Rotary Park. The exposure is wonderful and the interaction between trail and park users is very cool. The people who use the River Trail will stop at Rotary Park for lunch breaks, rest stops, or to socialize with people they know. During events on Delta Dental Plaza, people will stop to enjoy the music and performances.

*"I now plan my jogging route, so I can stop at Rotary Park just to see what's"*



happening.”

These diverse features work together to create a park environment during the day and a creative, hip venue at night. When there isn't an event at night, the lighted forest and the string lights make for memorable walks along the river. This dichotomy allows for “convertible programmable spaces” to happen. There are plenty of places for people to hang out, listen to music. or simply watch people enjoy Rotary Park and the Lansing waterfront.

Rotary Park has the potential to be the catalyst to stimulate future make-overs along the waterfront. Lansing has put out the welcome mat for people to come, discover, relax, and enjoy Rotary Park day or night. Please take some time to stop by and see the uniqueness Rotary Park has to offer. You will be glad you made some time for yourself or your family to enjoy a stroll along the river. •

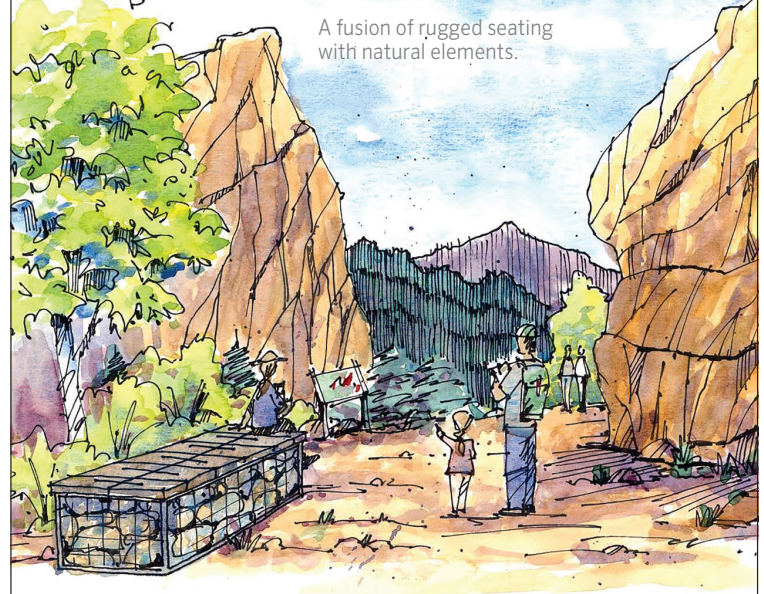


source: LAP Inc.

INTRODUCING

## Canyon Gabion-Style Seating

A fusion of rugged seating  
with natural elements.



Business Development United States: Bob Evans  
314.495.8357 cell | [bob@anovafurnishings.com](mailto:bob@anovafurnishings.com) | [www.anovafurnishings.com](http://www.anovafurnishings.com)

# ASL STONE



DBB Certified

Design Center @ 1250 Library Street, Detroit

[www.aslstone.com](http://www.aslstone.com)





50  
YEARS

landscapeforms®

**Kyle Verseman, ASLA, PLA**  
Eastern/Northern Michigan  
800.430.6206 x1318  
kylev@landscapeforms.com

**LINE:** Design by  
Shane Coen | Coen+Partners

**Amanda Nawara**  
Western Michigan  
800.430.6206 x1320  
amandan@landscapeforms.com

DESIGN. CULTURE. CRAFT.

South Coast Botanic Garden, Palos Verdes Peninsula, California  
Design by: Richie-Bray, Inc. Landscape Architecture,  
Palos Verdes Estates, California

Fine planters and garden ornaments for legendary gardens.

**LONGSHADOW®**.COM

**Oxmoor 24 Planter, LS 9573**



Hand Crafted in Southern Illinois  
by Classic Garden Ornaments, Ltd.®



# COMBATTING THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT WITH UAV THERMAL IMAGING

Keenan Gibbons | SMITHGROUP

## UNDERSTANDING THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

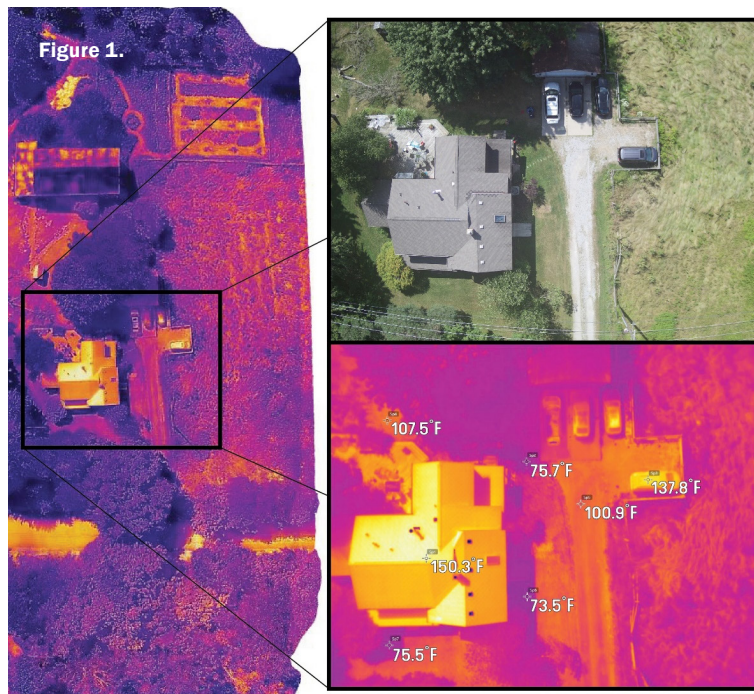
The urban heat island effect gained notoriety after 30,000 deaths were attributed to the 2003 European heat wave – 14,000 of which occurred in France, putting the international research spotlight on Paris. Parisian temperatures appeared to average upwards of 10°F warmer in heavily built areas versus immediately adjacent green space. The trend led to an ongoing revolution of how contemporary designers can better integrate natural systems within the urban environment to holistically address a number of sustainability issues, including mitigating the urban heat island effect.

## UAVs HELP US COMBAT THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

Last year SmithGroup invested in two state-of-the-art unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or drones, one equipped with a hi-res thermal camera. This equipment delivers stunning hi-res thermal imagery as it simultaneously captures hi-res 3D photogrammetry, and does so on UAVs capable of replicating saved flightpaths within 1cm.

The thermal camera was acquired for building inspections, but I saw opportunity to visually demonstrate how our design solutions directly mitigate the urban heat island effect by scanning a project pre-installation, then scanning the same project identically post-installation, to see the difference we made. In Spring of 2019 SmithGroup announced their latest round of Exploration Grants, a self-starter program geared towards helping employees pursue big idea. I applied and was fortunate to secure resources to explore this nascent endeavor.

The pilot project for this study was an active urban streetscape revitalization in downtown Ann Arbor, Michigan, and a project I recently helped design. The





existing corridor was exposed and barren, but will become a welcoming streetscape. Improvements include traffic-calming measures, pedestrian amenities, and 140 large new shade trees.

SmithGroup pilots undertook professional UAV training in early 2019. Following that, I began training independently at a relative's farm. During a training scan (see Figure 1) the air temperature measured 81 °F. Notice the shingle rooftop's temperature measured over 150 °F. Meanwhile surface temperatures measured nearly 80 °F lower under existing shade trees about 10 feet away.

#### HOW TO FLY UAVs IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Extensive agency coordination was required to fly the corridor. The project was technically a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) right-of-way, while Ann Arbor is situated under FAA-controlled airspace. Making the situation more complex, the ideal centrally-located launch location appeared to be from the greenroof of Ann Arbor's City Hall.

Working with the City of Ann Arbor, leadership and staff coordinated their municipal departments to work with me over weeks of weather-dependent UAV scans. FAA clearance was obtained for each flight and MDOT's UAV unit was responsive about any concerns.

#### PROCESSING UAV THERMAL IMAGING AND PHOTOGRAMMETRY

A variety of software was used to breakdown raw flight data. FLIR Tools brought the data to life at the micro scale (see Figures 2 and 3). While FLIR Tools can immediately analyze thermal images with great accuracy, it also allows users to toggle for material emissivity and further magnify accuracy.

Thermal imaging was processed in Pix4D (see Figure 4). Pix4D generated point clouds and georeferenced orthomosaics to analyze the entire corridor at the macro scale. Its toggleable data classification and visualization capabilities allow for takeoffs in terms of temperature by surface area.

I benchmarked Pix4D temperature classes uniformly, with a standard minimum

and maximum temperature range for consistency. Thermal colors span approximately 50 °F to 150 °F as shown in Figure 5. It is worth noting surface temperatures measured >150 °F, and some of these spots have been identified.

#### SHAPING A DAY IN THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND

A personal goal of this study was to understand the 'shape' of a day in the urban heat island. That equated to scanning the corridor before sunrise, at peak sun, and after sunset.

Figure 6 demonstrates what a day in the urban heat island looks like. The findings are what you might expect, but instead of a qualitative assessment we see a quantitative glimpse of what is happening. The interesting trends:

- The urban heat island effect is considerably worse on 'hot' days vs 'warm' days. On a sunny 84 °F day with low wind, disparities of nearly 80 °F occurred between ambient air temperature and asphaltic surfaces. But that disparity reduced to 55 °F on a sunny 74 °F day with low wind. That's nearly 30 °F change in surface temperature from only 10 °F change in air temperature.
- Materials retain heat after the sun goes down. Average evening surface temperatures measured over 10 °F warmer than pre-dawn surfaces.
- Canopy and shade matter. Areas of building and tree shade typically measured within a few degrees of the air temperature, while areas directly or partially exposed to solar gain measured 20 °F warmer (some areas upwards of 80 °F warmer).

#### QUANTIFYING THERMAL SURFACE AREA WITHIN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

An added benefit of the streetscape project was that a professionally-prepared topographic survey was available. This allowed me to bridge survey vectors with the thermal scan inside AutoCAD Civil3D model space in the world coordinate system.

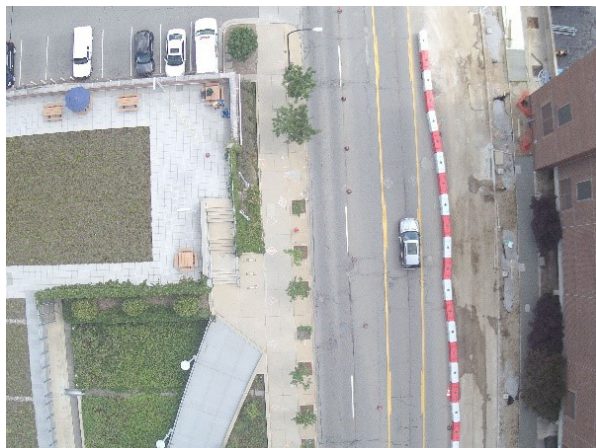


Figure 2 (top left).  
Figure 3 (top right).  
Figure 4 (below).

**SMITHGROUP**

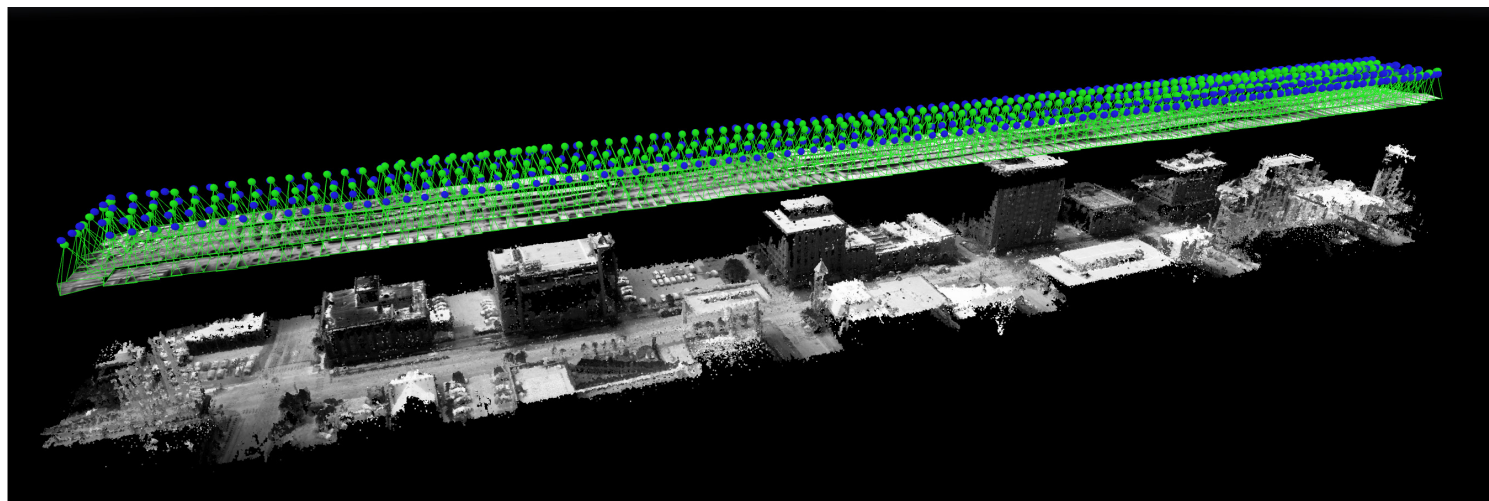




Figure 5.

# HURON STREETSCAPE PROJECT - ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Wednesday, August 21, 2019

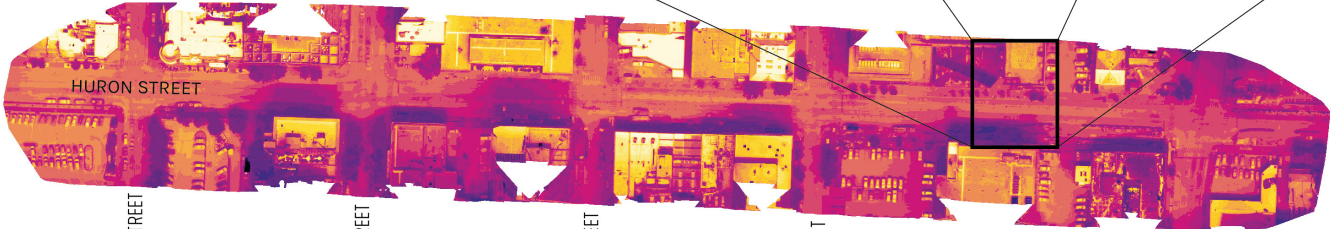
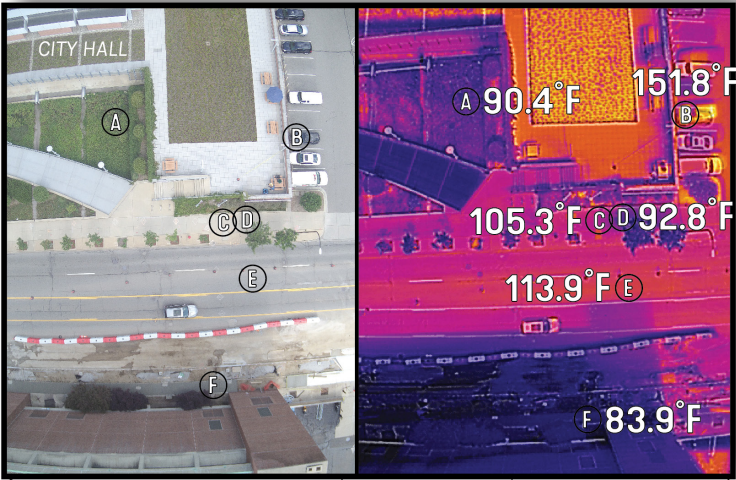
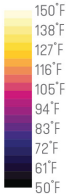
## MATERIAL

- (A) GREENROOF
- (B) BLACK CAR
- (C) N. SIDEWALK - EXPOSED
- (D) N. SIDEWALK - TREE SHADE
- (E) ASPHALT
- (F) S. SIDEWALK - BUILDING SHADE



## 1:24PM FLIGHT

AIR TEMP: 84°F [28.9°C]  
MAX TEMP: 152°F [66.6°C]  
MIN TEMP: 65°F [18.2°C]  
Δ MAX-MIN TEMP: 87°F [48.4°C]  
Δ MAX-AIR TEMP: 68°F [37.7°C]



# A DAY IN THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND

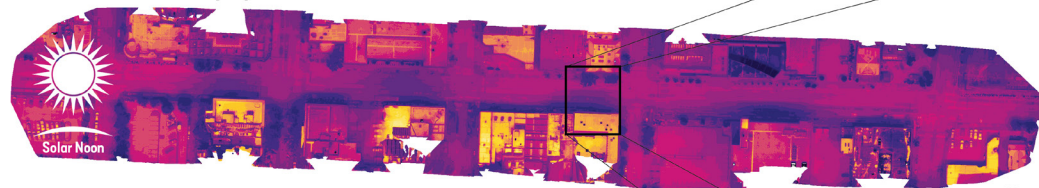
Huron Streetscape Project, Existing Conditions • Ann Arbor, Michigan • Sunday, August 25, 2019

Figure 6.



## 6:34AM FLIGHT

AIR TEMP:	61°F	[16.1°C]
MAX TEMP:	76°F	[24.2°C]
MIN TEMP:	36°F	[2.2°C]
Δ MAX-MIN TEMP:	40°F	[16.1°C]
Δ MAX-AIR TEMP:	15°F	[8.1°C]



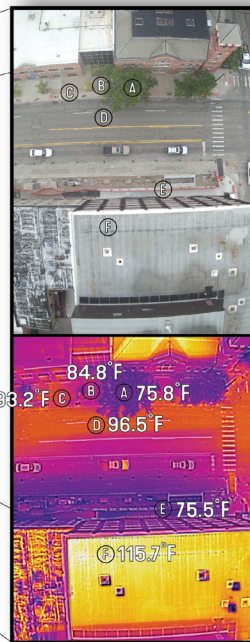
## 1:23PM FLIGHT

AIR TEMP:	74°F	[23.3°C]
MAX TEMP:	127°F	[52.5°C]
MIN TEMP:	62°F	[16.5°C]
Δ MAX-MIN TEMP:	65°F	[36.0°C]
Δ MAX-AIR TEMP:	53°F	[29.2°C]



## 8:11PM FLIGHT

AIR TEMP:	70°F	[21.1°C]
MAX TEMP:	96°F	[35.8°C]
MIN TEMP:	42°F	[5.8°C]
Δ MAX-MIN TEMP:	54°F	[30.0°C]
Δ MAX-AIR TEMP:	26°F	[14.7°C]



SMITHGROUP



# SOLAR NOON IN THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND

Huron Streetscape Project, Existing Conditions • Ann Arbor, Michigan • Wednesday, August 21, 2019



**1:24PM FLIGHT**

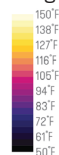
**84°F AIR TEMP**

SURFACE TYPE:

BUILDING	4.04 AC [35% AREA]
SIDEWALK	2.14 AC [19% AREA]
ASPHALT	4.69 AC [40% AREA]
VEGETATION	.64 AC [6% AREA]
	11.51 AC [100% AREA]

AREA:

Figure 7.



## BREAKDOWN



**COOL SPOTS**

**80°F - 104°F [Δ 24°F]**

SURFACE TYPE:

AREA:

**42% SURFACE AREA**

**UP TO 20°F > AIR TEMP**

VEGETATION, SHADED CONCRETE  
SIDEWALK & ASPHALT

4.48 AC [42.4% AREA]



**WARM SPOTS**

**104°F - 118°F [Δ 14°F]**

SURFACE TYPE:

AREA:

**42% SURFACE AREA**

**UP TO 34°F > AIR TEMP**

PASSIVELY EXPOSED CONCRETE &  
ASPHALT

4.84 AC [41.9% AREA]



**HOT SPOTS**

**118°F - +160°F [Δ 32°F]**

SURFACE TYPE:

AREA:

**16% SURFACE AREA**

**UP TO +66°F > AIR TEMP**

CONTINUOUSLY EXPOSED HIGH  
EMISSIVITY ROOFTOPS

1.80 AC [15.6% AREA]



Figure 7 is a vivid breakdown of the urban environment at its most exposed: solar noon. The corridor's existing conditions are relatively common across many American cities, drawing broader implications. The biggest takeaways:

- Nearly 60% of the city is >20°F warmer than the 84°F air temperature. Nearly 60% of this typical urban corridor measured >104°F despite a measured air temperature of 84°F. Nearly 3% of that surface area measured 150°F – that's sous vide!
- Bitumen rooftops are kind of terrible. Roughly two acres, or about 16% of the corridor surface area, measured between 118°F and upwards of 150°F. Most surface area within this temperature range was building rooftops.
- Los Angeles painted their streets white for a reason. Approximately 42% of the Ann Arbor streetscape measured 20°F to 34°F warmer than the air temperature. Nearly all surface area within this temperature range was comprised of asphalt road and concrete sidewalk. Imagine dropping temperatures 30°F across half a city. Los Angeles did exactly that to much media speculation, but it feels pragmatic under a thermal lens.

## HOW MATERIALS IMPACT THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

People often overlook the materiality of their sidewalks, buildings, and roads. Infrastructure falls into the background, but infrastructure materials both cause- and mitigate the urban heat island effect. To explore further I focused on a human-scale aerial to capture the representative breadth of the urban material palette.

Figure 8 functions as a thermal material palette of the urban environment and, essentially, of the urban heat island effect. There are certainly additional items to be explored, but in its barest form we can thermally glimpse much of what is happening and where it is occurring. Biggest takeaways:

- Shaded concrete measured within 5°F of the air temperature while

exposed concrete averaged 20°F warmer. Shaded concrete was shaded by existing deciduous trees, with exposed concrete measuring upwards of 20°F warmer just a few feet away.

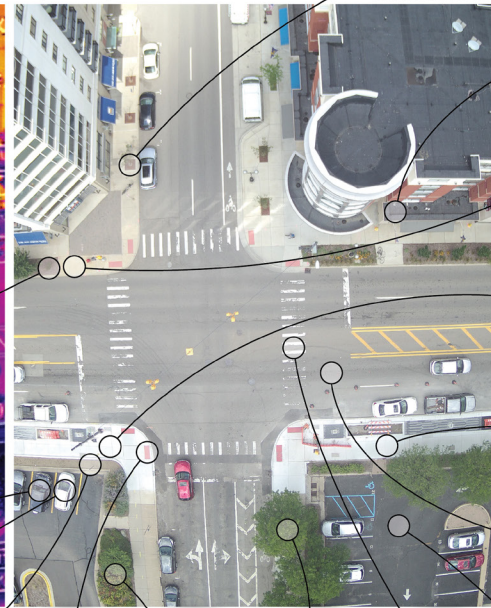
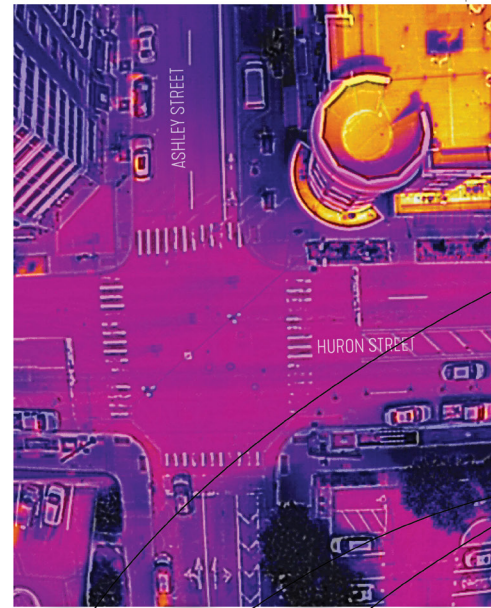
- Cars lighter in color measured >20°F cooler than black cars. I like black cars. I have owned black cars with dark interior. With a relatively small and ephemeral urban footprint I am not sure how much they truly contribute to the urban heat island, but it was an interesting finding.
- Black bitumen rooftops measured >150°F. Steak is cooked 'rare' at 120°F, 'medium' at 140°F, and 'well done' at 160°F. In the culinary world, much of our cities would be cooked 'medium well' all summer.

At SmithGroup we are actively scanning the urban realm and our projects to see how they can better perform to help cities holistically mitigate the urban heat island effect. We have applied this data and are recalibrating contemporary urban design for a more habitable, more sustainable future. This is just the beginning. •



# THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT MATERIAL PALETTE

Wednesday, August 21, 2019 • Ann Arbor, Michigan



MULCH  
124°F



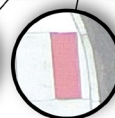
BLACK CAR  
126°F



WHITE CAR  
102°F



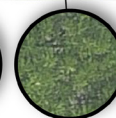
SOIL  
106°F



WARNING STRIP  
109°F



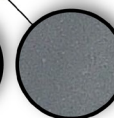
SHRUBS  
87°F



TREE  
86°F



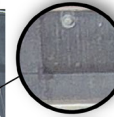
WHITE STRIPING  
106°F



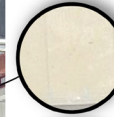
NEW ASPHALT  
116°F



IRON TREE GRATE  
116°F



BITUMEN ROOFTOP  
153°F



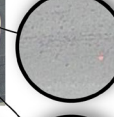
WEATHERED CONCRETE  
110°F



NEW CONCRETE  
100°F



SHADED CONCRETE  
89°F



WEATHERED ASPHALT  
112°F

SMITHGROUP

SMITHGROUP

Figure 8.

# Go Extreme

landscape  
structures®



Sycamore Creek Park  
Pickerington, Ohio

Deliver the rewards of an exciting fitness challenge to your community park, school or neighborhood gathering area. FitCore™ Extreme lets you create a course for teens and adults, or one sized just right for kids ages 5 to 12. Ready to challenge your fitness warriors? Learn more at [playlsi.com/fitcore-extreme](https://playlsi.com/fitcore-extreme).

©2019 Landscape Structures Inc.

Contact your local  
playground consultant



## INTRODUCING THE Kontur Chair

Energize your outdoor space with the Kontur Collection from Maglin. Featuring the iconic chair design found at The Vessel | Hudson Yards, in New York City.

800.716.5506 | [maglin.com](https://maglin.com)







Patent Pending

*Connecting since 1962.*

INTRODUCING THE  
STELLA OF SUNNE™ COLLECTION.

*Victor Stanley designs, engineers and manufactures  
timeless site furnishings that bring communities to life.  
Stella of Sunne™ features a classic, minimalist look  
inspired by Scandinavian design.*

*Contact Charlene Vera at [charlenev@victorstanley.com](mailto:charlenev@victorstanley.com)*

VICTOR  STANLEY®

*Create a timeless moment.®*

VICTORSTANLEY.COM

# CCC BIG BAY — PART I

Recollections of Life in the Big Bay, Michigan Camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps (1935-1936) | JOHN O. SIMONDS

It is commonly known that early visionary landscape architects have left their mark around Marquette, Michigan. Warren Manning designed many projects in the Upper Peninsula, and even Frederick Law Olmsted visited Marquette's iconic Presque Isle Park. But I know of no one that has mentioned the connection John Ormsbee Simonds, another visionary landscape architect, had to the northern reaches of Marquette County. His influence to the field is certainly far reaching across America and the world, and Michigan can proudly lay claim to being his early home. However, the lack of local familiarity is understandable as his memoir was self-published in 2003, only two years prior to his death.

John Ormsbee Simonds (1913-2005) attended the Harvard Graduate School of Design, graduating in 1939. He, along with his brother Philip, established the firm of Simonds & Simonds in Pittsburgh in 1940 which flourished throughout the 1960's. He continued to practice at the firm and its later incarnations into the 1980's. Just a few of Simonds' noteworthy accomplishments include: publishing in 1961, "Landscape Architecture: The Shaping of Man's Natural Environment;" serving as president of ASLA from 1963-1965; receiving the ASLA Medal in 1973; publishing "Earthscape: A Manual of Environmental Planning" in 1978; publishing the second and third editions of "Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Site Planning and Design" in 1983 and 1998 respectively; and receiving the ASLA President's Centennial Medal in 1999. On May 6, 2005 he died at his home in Pittsburgh at the age of 92.

Yet while I was browsing the historical reference shelves at the Peter White Library in Marquette, I came across Simonds' memoir. The memoir didn't document his career or years in practice, but instead his days with the Civilian

Conservation Corps (CCC) in Big Bay, Michigan. Big Bay was his first job, so to speak, after graduating from Michigan State University. It may not have been the job he envisioned when he began his education in landscape architecture, but he certainly got quite an education with the Big Bay CCC! His fondness for the area is clear in his writing and anyone familiar with the allure of Big Bay and its fascinating history will truly enjoy his stories.

Bill Sanders, ASLA  
Green Garden, Michigan

.....  
*This excerpt was published with permission from the John Ormsbee Simonds Collection, University of Florida. We look forward to bringing you more chapters from this memoir in the next two issues of MiSITES.*  
.....

## DEPRESSION

To understand the narrative which follows it is helpful to know something of the Great Depression of the 1930's. It was a real bummer.

A depression, or economic recession, is like a huge grey cloud that envelopes the nations of the world — growing darker and darker until at last it is lighter, and finally fades. Never completely, for it remains forever in the minds of those who have lived in its shadow. It is hard to forget being "laid off", having no work or income. It is hard to forget doctors cutting fireplace wood and selling it house to house from their children's coaster wagons. Or unemployed architects selling vegetables on the street. Hunger pangs are common. Failure to meet mortgage



payments, loss of homes or bankruptcy become more and more frequent as all wait in vain for the cloud to pass. Despair becomes increasingly apparent, edging on fear.

At the depth of the depression, Franklin Roosevelt, as newly elected president, in 1933 launched a massive and highly successful program of relief and regeneration. It was called, The New Deal. Its first step was the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps, an agency designed to engage unemployed young men, give them and their families sustenance and teach them skills. Before the depression was over more than a million men had worked at improving the environment by road, bridge, dam and park construction and by water and forest management. Much of the American landscape was not only preserved but also made available to the public by the CCC, with camps in every state. We have much for which to thank them.

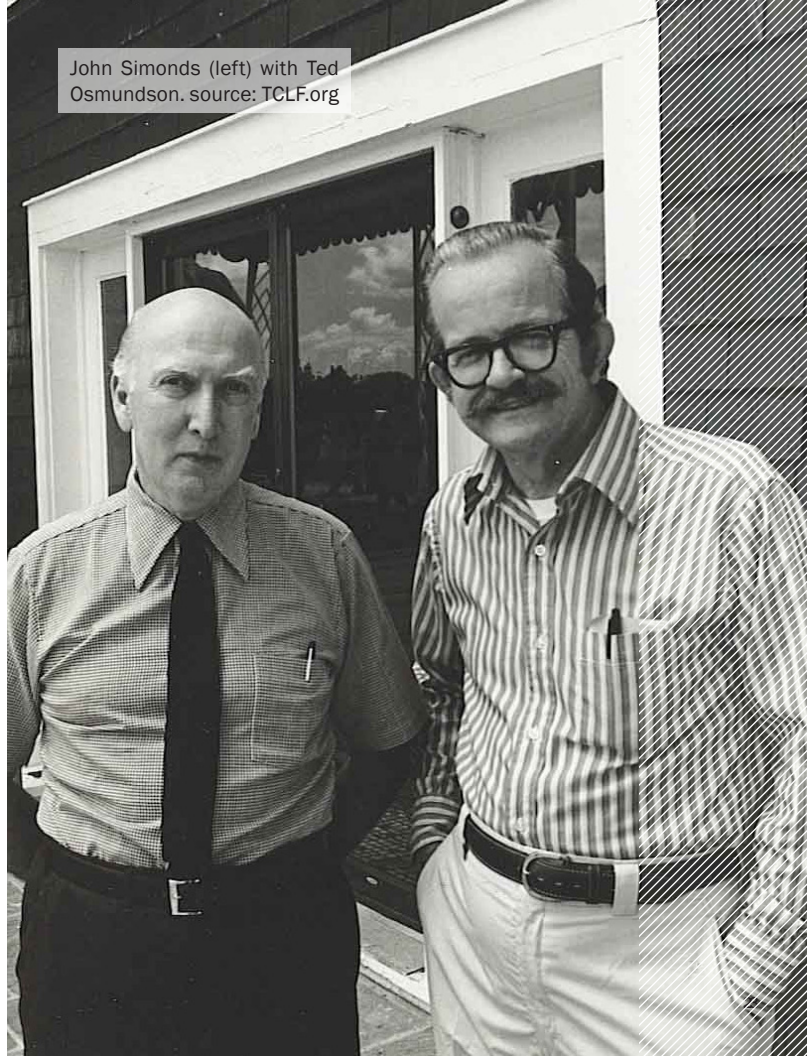
As student landscape architects we had just come from the graduation ceremonies in June of 1935 and were clearing our desks and tables to take off and start our careers. Except that we had no foreseeable careers. Few in the entire school had a job offer or knew what lay ahead.

We were surprised when the Dean came to the classroom door to announce that he'd just had a call from the State Park Director to ask if one of our grads would like a job with the CCC's, building fire trails near Lake Superior. My hand shot up.

Then the Dean went on to say, "When I told the Director I had a whole new batch of graduates, he laughed and said that this wasn't just what he had in mind. He was looking for more experience. He did, though, agree to an interview."

Next morning, in the Director's office he told me that the work would be hard, the salary low, and temperatures below freezing for most of the winter. Further, I'd be living in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp at the top of Michigan's Upper Peninsula with no city anywhere near. If he was trying to discourage me it had the opposite effect. At our family's summer camp I had learned to feel at

John Simonds (left) with Ted Osmundson. source: TCLF.org



home in the woods or on water. There were still shovel calluses on my hands and I'd spent many hours on the end of a cross-cut or bucksaw.

My eagerness must have carried the day, for I left with a map and job agreement. For a beam of sunshine had broken through the recession's gloomy pall.

## TO CAMP

I was due in camp on August 1. This meant that the family could take me from our summer cabin near Boyne City. Much of my time there was spent in packing, unpacking and repacking to prepare for the great adventure. My telescopic fishing rod, single shot .22 rifle, even my favorite slingshot. My mother scouted out any blanket or garment of wool she could find and stuffed it into duffle bags. My three brothers and parents had all wanted to come to see the great northern wilds. But when it was time to leave, our tired Ford sedan was so full there was no place to sit. We all piled in anyhow.

Travel those days in Upper Michigan was not something to be undertaken lightly. Aside from town or city streets there were no road maps. For one thing, there were no roads. There were one-lane sand trails winding from section corner to section corner where the turns were often perpendicular due to surveying errors. Worse, the trails often branched with no signs to tell you where they were going or why. At one such fork we were sitting around waiting for the radiator to cool when a farm boy came riding along on his bicycle with both tires rubbing. We asked which fork led to the nearest town. (We needed gas.) He didn't know, but turned and rode off. Later we were surprised when he reappeared and stopped. "I asked my Pa," he told us, ... "and he don't know neither."

The dearth of rest rooms reminded us of one we knew near a cross-roads settlement named Beulah. There in a fading ad on the side of a barn was painted, "Just Ahead — Sinclair Gas Station. Women's toilet. Drain your crank case and refill with Gafill Oil."

As we had neared Saginaw on the way north to our cabin the farms and

hardwood groves petered out. The whole landscape then became one of fire-blackened stumps and tangled undergrowth. This was the southern edge of the great white pine forest. Within the past 50 or 60 years it had been cut over almost completely — leaving the slashings to burn from lightning strikes or carelessness.

In some places along the trail the charred stumps stood in a sea of low blueberry bushes, which thrive in a sandy, charcoal soil. When stopped near such a patch — to repair a tire or let the engine cool — we would scramble out and into the shrubs for a blueberry (huckleberry) feast.

It took us two days to travel from our cabin to Marquette — a distance of less than three hundred wandering miles. From here the single trail led some 30 miles west to the near- abandoned town of Big Bay on the shore of Lake Superior, at the foot of the rocky, impassable Huron Mountains. The CCC camp lay along the trail about a mile before Big Bay.

When we came to the camp my father said, "This can't be it." But it was it. He parked the car in the middle of the road and we sat in disbelief.

## ARRIVAL

The camp and headquarters of the Big Bay Civilian Conservation Corps had been salvaged from an abandoned army training post. It had never been demolished, mainly because there was nothing worth the effort. Only five dilapidated barracks, a cook house, mess hall, equipment sheds and gatehouse with its peeling sign "Office," all with weathered white siding and sagging corrugated roofs.

The hard packed parade ground was barren, without a sizable tree in sight. No sign of "wilderness" was visible, not even the blue of Lake Superior, although its booming surf could be heard from over the hills.

Somehow we had expected Camp Big Bay to be "in the wilds" with towering pine, lapping water and log cabins. Instead, this was the most dismal, desolate



patch of land that I had ever seen.

There was no one around. The “Office” was open so we carried my gear inside while my father repacked the car for the long trip home. Mother, who was well aware of my great north woods expectations — couldn’t bring herself to say “Goodbye.” She just put her hands in front of her face and twaddled her fingers. My father took both my hands in his, looked in my eyes, then was on his way.

Seeing a curl of smoke in the chimney of what turned out to be the cookhouse I headed toward it. The cook, a pleasant red-faced fellow, asked if I was hungry. Since it was mid-afternoon and I hadn’t eaten since an early breakfast I welcomed the big bowl of meat stew set before me with thick slices of fresh-baked bread.

A helper was assigned to show me the foremen’s barracks and my bunk. The inside of the building was bare except for a double oil barrel stove in the center, a toilet and shower at one end and eight bunks — each with a wooden barracks box at the foot for storage. Beside each bunk except mine was a 4-foot long club leaning against the wall. Their purpose, my guide explained, was to chase off the porcupines which climbed through the screen at night “to chaw up anything with salt or sweat on it — which is most everything around.”

When he left I followed him to the cookhouse and woodpile where I took an axe to make me a porcupine club. At the edge of the second growth I found a clump of striped maple from which I cut a length with a knob on the end. With time to kill, I whittled in the green bark a pattern of two intertwined snakes with their heads at the knob. By comparison with the other clubs mine was a stopper.

When my new barracks mates came stomping in from the trucks they said, “You must be the new collitch kid,” and gave me a wave or a handshake. Not until after supper was my club mentioned when one of them asked to see it. “Do they teach you to do this in ‘collitch’?” he asked. Then, “What do you use it for?”

“It’s my porcupine club,” I told them, then looked around. There was no other

club in sight!

“Porcupines?” they asked, as though they’d never seen or heard of one. That’s how the horseplay was to begin. It never ended.

## CAMP

As noted, our barracks held eight so-called “foremen.” There were eight bunks, lined along one wall, the stove in the middle and wooden tables for playing cards. The shower didn’t amount to much — a cold trickle — but few of us were troubled by that.

The crew barracks were longer and wider with twenty-four bunks and a few more tables. The crew had their own mess hall on one side of the cookhouse. The foremen ate in a small square shack with a wooden table in the middle. The benches and wooden table centered on a small raised wagon wheel that could be turned with the tip of a hand and had on it all the condiments that could be wanted. The foremen ate in lumberjack style — sumptuously and in silence. If you needed anything the cooks handed it over your shoulder, or you just turned the wheel.

At breakfast the table sagged with broiled mackerel, bacon, eggs, ham, steaks, potatoes, hotcakes, waffles, fried mush, sausages, breads, fruits and hot pies. Tankards of coffee and milk were always at one’s shoulder.

For supper one could expect fish, fowl and meat in some form. Always with hot breads and pastries. Each night a different pudding and flavor of freshly churned ice cream. Or whatever else you might ask for in advance. It’s doubtful that those in the messhall did as well — but that’s to be expected.

The equipment and storage sheds were a complex in themselves — complete with garaging, lifts, a forge, tool room and carpenter shop. Walt Meskit, a burly Finn, was in charge. With him “in charge” meant being “in charge.” Crew members had to replace every lost tool — a heavy blow — or undergo long interrogation as to how one could have possibly “got busted.” As the trucks

rolled in at night all tools were washed before being racked. Before use next day Meskit would have sharpened all edges – even on shovels and mattocks. His specialty, as a Finn, was the axe. No one ever complained about the cutting edge of a Finn-honed axe.

That was camp. Not much to look at, but it worked surprisingly well once it got going.

### **BIG BAY TOWN**

When the white pine logging was at its peak in the area – in the 1800's – Big Bay was a thriving lumber town. That's not saying too much for a place of human habitation. The main street was often hub-deep in mud. There were no running water, electricity, or sewers.

On the other hand there was a commodious stable and feed store. The main street was lined with wooden walks and these in turn with the general store, harness shop, bank, gun shop, saloons, and whatever. There was even a fair hotel.

The lumberjacks lived in camps. The wealthy lumber barons resided in mansions – some with stained glass windows and doors, marble fireplace mantles and fancy weather vanes. But not for long. As they moved on west with the timber the mansions were left abandoned. Owners took the doors, windows and weathervanes with them and left the shells to the weather.

Before they left, these men of wealth, power and valor funded the construction of all town improvements – including the town hall, school and public pier – with forty year bonds which would fall due long after their departure.

What they left behind was a shambles. Most folks, too unfit or old to follow, lived in shacks. The shanties sagged, patched together by whatever helped keep them standing and the wind from blowing through the cracks. Nothing was ever thrown away – boxes of rubbish, broken tools, rusty engine parts, and everywhere piles of wood for splitting should someone have the strength and

ambition. Whatever junk came to hand was just dumped out front or out back “in the yard.” If there was no lawn mower in Big Bay it was because there was no lawn. The town was desolate.

Vacant buildings collapsed, weeds choked the empty streets. Folks squabbled for whatever salvage they could find and struggled to eke out a living. With seasons too short for gardens and livestock dependent on scraps, hay or grain, people must live off the lake and woods – fish, berries, nuts and game.

Since the folks around were mostly Scandinavian they carried over many of the old homeland traditions including that of sharing when times were hard. If a bear or deer were shot some small bits or part of it might well be frying or stewing in twenty pans or pots that evening. Bear was a favorite meat, its fat the cooking grease in most kitchens if it were to be had.

This was bear country – not vicious unless protecting their cubs. Brownish-black, they could frequently be seen on all fours rumbling around the countryside. Deer were much more common – often grazing at dusk in the lowlands in herds of thirty or more. Other game was less plentiful. Although the log-choked streams and rivers were alive with beaver, mink and muskrat there was little trapping because of the exertion required, and the depressed price of fur. For the locals there was no such thing as a hunting season or regulations.

It was common knowledge that before my arrival a new young game warden who believed in the strict enforcement of game rules came upon two locals who had headlamped a deer for venison out of season. He is often mentioned but was never seen again. Be that as it may, the next warden, Dave Nason, was more understanding. Although relentless in nabbing any out-of-area poachers, any game taken which was to be used for food by the villages was a “mouse” – no matter the length of its ears, the heft of its paw, or spread of its antlers. •





# Design a Better Future

## SMITHGROUP

## 2020 MICHIGAN ASLA OFFICERS AND STAFF

### President

Joane Slusky, ASLA

### Treasurer

Tim Shoemaker, ASLA

### President Elect

Joanne Westphal, ASLA

### Secretary

Wendy Fry, ASLA

### Immediate Past President

Ben Baker, ASLA

### Member at Large

Kyle Verseman, ASLA

### Trustee

Chet Hill, ASLA

### Associate Member at Large

Stephanie Onwenu, Associate ASLA

### VP of Marketing

Lindsay Fercho, ASLA

### Executive Director

Matt Solak

### VP of Education

Dana Hernalsteen, ASLA

### MSU Student Representative

Amanda Wakefield, Student ASLA

### VP of Government Affairs

Adam Fercho, ASLA

### U of M Student Representative

Evan Gill, Student ASLA

### VP of Membership

Scott Black, ASLA

### MiSITES Editorial Board

Meghan Diecchio, ASLA  
Devyn Quick, Associate ASLA

### WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We are currently looking to fill all subcommittees for 2020!  
Please feel free to reach out to the Executive Committee or staff  
members: [manager@michiganasla.org](mailto:manager@michiganasla.org).

Michigan Chapter of the  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
(517) 485-4116

[www.michiganasla.org](http://www.michiganasla.org)  
linkedin | facebook | twitter | instagram



**ASLA**  
MICHIGAN

Michigan ASLA  
629 W. Hillside Street  
Lansing, MI 48933

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

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LANSING, MI  
PERMIT #515