

HOW TO STREAMLINE YOUR TOUR NOTES!

LOBBY:

- In honor of Anne Wittig (pastel pictured frame)
- Solom Beman - architect
- Frederic Winthrop Ramsdell – painted lunettes

THEATRE:

- Fire burnt down Scandanavian Opera House on corner of 1st street and Greenbush, community cried for a place for entertainment
- T.J. Ramsdell, Solon Beman, Frederick Winthrop Ramsdell - \$100k investment
- Act curtain by Walter Wilcox Burrigge (did the original set of Wizard of Oz in NYC)
- *A Chinese Honeymoon, Sep 4, 1903 (first performance)*
- They averaged 40 shows a year; very popular venue for professional touring groups
- 1917 – T.J. died – lawyers recommended tearing down building
- 1918 - Theatre dark (*cause was WWI*)
- 1923 - Rotary bought it for \$25k. Eventually turned it over to the city
- 1939 – MCP formed and was active until WWII began. They started back up in 1952
- 1950s – Dr. Madge Skelly ran the Manistee Drama Festival (summer)
 - James Earl Jones participated in this program
 - Named tower in honor of Madge Skelly
- Ramsdell Theatre Restoration Project
 - Dome & act curtain restored in 2000
 - Box seats plus 487 other sponsored seats
 - Light fixtures – original

STAGE:

- 60' deep x 38' wide x 80' high with 1 elevated section, 2 trap doors (one off stage left)
- 29 line sets
- Dressing rooms/make-up downstairs
- Pin rail
- Paint rail

THOMAS WALTER HARDY HALL:

- 1916-1985 - Owned Hardy Salt plant in St. Louis
 - Started as Salesman for Morton salt
 - 1930 – bought land to build a salt supplier plant in Manistee
 - Head sculpture in Hardy Hall
 - Original desk belonged to Mr. Hardy
- Over the Hill Gang restored pillars
- Original flooring
- Marion Owczarski (“Ousharski”) was commissioned by local supporter, Sharon Switalski
 - Donated in 1997

HARDY HALL LOBBY:

- Ramsdell and Rotary (etched Rs)
- Portrait of James Earl Jones (“Todd Jones”)
- Recently installed carpet like original
- Bill Hattendorf and John Bell restored the sculptures in the Hardy Hall, which were originally donated by the Picardat family

BALLROOM:

- For after drama galas (show secret door)
- Ballet, with orchestra in the top balcony
- Then used as Armory, MRA (basketball, roller skating, dances), Now proms, receptions...
- No elevator or kitchen facilities originally

BEFORE RETURNING TO LOBBY:

- Basement is storage, restrooms, rehearsal space, mechanicals, classrooms
- Dominic Naffie – played Fiddler on the Roof for three decades
- Donor plaques near elevator

If they wish to make a donation, or pay their tour with a check
write it out to **Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts**