

Eastern Michigan University

Markers and Statues

Welcome to our downloadable program covering historical markers and statues at Eastern Michigan University.

*This program was developed by Caleb Caley.
Additions and photos by Becca Murphy.*

Eagles Rising

(Front of University Student Center on Oakwood Street)

Outside the Student Center's west entrance in the middle of its circle drive is "Eagles Rising." This sculpture captures the image of two majestic eagles engaging each other in the air. The eagle has been Eastern Michigan University's logo and mascot since 1991. This monument dedicated to the mighty eagle was created by artist Mier Naghi in 2009. It sat in Naghi's shop in New Orleans until a Graduate Assistant from Eastern Michigan University saw it during a conference that was held there. The Graduate Assistant told the rest of the administrative staff who also attended the conference about it and they loved the sculpture too. Using a percentage of the Student Center's operating budget, they purchased it, and since that time "Eagles Rising" has soared over all those who enter the Student Center. If you are looking for a nice place to sit on the campus of Eastern Michigan University, don't forget that "Eagles Rising" presents one of the schools most unique views.



The Sesquicentennial Sundial

(In front of Sherzer Hall)

In front of Sherzer Hall sits one of Eastern Michigan's oldest and most fascinating landmarks, the Sesquicentennial Sundial. The Sundial was first erected by the class of 1908, as it was a tradition for the graduating classes of then, the Michigan State Normal School, to leave behind a gift for future classes to enjoy. The sundial was characterized by its Marble pedestal and brass dial, while its famous face features the cities of Montreal, Detroit, Boston, New York, Whittington DC, Toledo, New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago, Kalamazoo, GD Rapids, Lansing, MT Pleasant, and the 800. During the 1950s the sundial stopped functioning and was removed temporarily to a physics classroom. At about that time the sundial went missing. It turned up years later in EMU Lapeer. In 1999, during the sesquicentennial celebration, EMU had the sundial restored by Arnets Becker Burrell Monuments of Ann Arbor. They also had the sesquicentennial logo added to further celebrate the occasion. This was all made possible by the Sherzer family, at a total cost of \$2,115. At the rededication ceremony, Dr. Jeremy Lamb recalled one of his favorite moments with his grandfather, William H. Sherzer. They would have lunch together at the EMU employee cafeteria, which at the time was in the basement of Roosevelt Hall. So, if you find yourself in front of Sherzer Hall on a sunny day, take a look at the sundial, and marvel at one of Eastern Michigan's oldest timepieces. Just remember not to set your watch by it.



Diane

(Southeast corner outside Ford Hall)

In 1986 a ransom note was delivered to Eastern Michigan University demanding that men's basketball coach Jim Boyce be fired or "Diane" would be destroyed. "Diane" is a bronze statue of the nude female form and this first kidnapping is just part of her colorful history at Eastern Michigan University.

In 1982 Darryl Miller's statue "Diane" was created. Following its creation, it was dedicated on the west side of Ford Hall, and since then it has been a part of EMU's history, unlike any other piece of art. For years, members of fraternities and sororities have been dressing up the statue when the first snow falls, just to make sure she's warm. She was returned to her pedestal after the 1986 kidnapping, only to be taken again in the fall of 1994. Her return that time was much more detrimental, as she was found a few weeks later badly damaged, from being ripped from her pedestal and covered in red paint. "Diane" had to be refurbished, and it wasn't until 1998 that she was returned to her location standing tall.

In 2010 again "Diane" was moved, as Ford Hall went through renovation, and she went into storage. Out of storage, this well-traveled statue now resides underneath the trees in the southeast corner outside of Ford Hall for all to see and admire



9/11 Memorial

(Corner of Cross and Perrin Streets)

Located behind Pease Auditorium, at the corner of Cross and Perrin streets, at the southeast end of Eastern Michigan University's Campus, is EMU's 9/11 Memorial. The Memorial is made up of a 14-foot support beam from the South Tower of the World Trade Center, and it weighs about 6,800 pounds. The beam reads "south" and has the number "74" written on it. It is assumed that this means the beam came from the 74th floor of the South Tower. The beam appears singed by the molten metal that rained down upon it from the 78th floor, where the second plane crashed into the tower on that fateful morning. Below the beam are the two six-inch concrete supports, which stand upon the four concrete steps. The steps read: IN HONOR OF THE MANY LIVES LOST IN THE ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AND TO RECALL/ THE COURAGE SHOWN BY SO MANY ON THAT DAY, WE SOLEMNLY PLACE THIS MEMORIAL HERE. MAY WE FOREVER REMEMBER THEIR LIVES AND THEIR COURAGE. —EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2011. The wording for the Memorial was proposed by professor of American History at EMU, Mark Higbee. The location for the memorial came out of many discussions by committees of faculty, students, and administrators. Early reports were that the Memorial was to be built outside of Halle Library, where it would be easily visible to all campus members. Committee members finally agreed upon its current location, where they felt its display is more "reserved and respectful and not directly accessible to passersby," said Colin Blakely, head of the EMU art department. The project cost \$25,000 and was primarily paid for by donations and in-kind contributions. The lettering alone cost \$1,900. EMU president Susan Martin requested the artifact from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and it was delivered by members of EMU's Physical Plant all the way from New York's John F. Kennedy

International Airport. On the return trip to Ypsilanti, the Head of Physical Plant Operations, John Donegan, reported that people who saw the beam were, "very emotional when they see it...we've had people cry over it, we've had people pray over it, we've had people get mad when they see it." Donegan himself said when he described the Memorial as a whole, "It's really a community piece."



EMU Founding Plaque

(Between Boone and Pierce Hall)

The Eastern Michigan College Plaque is nestled under the shade of a large tree between Boone and Peirce Hall, standing as the historical marker celebrating the founding of Eastern Michigan University. It reads:

Founded by legislative action in 1849 as the Michigan State Normal School. It was the first state teacher education school west of Albany. Its aim was to provide instruction "in the art of teaching and in all the various branches that pertain to a good common school education." On this site the first building, old Pierce Hall, opened for classes in 1852. Built by the joint action of the local citizens and the state, it stood here until 1948.

This plaque was put here by the Michigan Historical Commission and is number 94 of their registered sites. Even though the name of the school has changed many times, this marker celebrates the proud tradition that Ypsilanti and Eastern Michigan University has fostered for over 160 years.



The Psychic Armor of Aphrodite

(North side of Ford Hall)

In 1999, Eastern Michigan University was celebrating its 150th anniversary of being an institution of higher learning. As part of this sesquicentennial celebration, the school wanted to add three pieces of outdoor art to its collection. Two of the pieces were the works of Professor John Pappas's Public Works class, the third work chosen by Pappas was the proposal of EMU physical plant foreman John Havranek. John Havranek came from Lansing, Michigan, but he worked at EMU from 1983 to 2004 and had intimate knowledge of the school and the idea it represents. His piece "The Psychic Armor of Aphrodite" is made of Corten steel, and was the final piece completed in the sesquicentennial collection. Tragically, on August 24, 2009, John Havranek passed away at the age of 57. He is remembered by Eastern Michigan University for helping to maintain and keep every building on campus safe, and by every student who walks to classes and glances to the north side of Ford Hall to take in the splendor of his work, "The Psychic Armor of Aphrodite."



Lineage

(Near the EMU Student Center)

Made of powder-coated aluminum this 8" x 5 1/3-foot sculpture speaks to the unbreakable connection humans have to their ancestors and descendants. Standing near EMU's Student Center, it also communicates the kinetic energy of the students coming and going from their classes. *Energy: Charles McGee at Eighty-Five by Julia R. Myers.* On the morning of December 7, 2008, people gathered outside Eastern Michigan University's Student Center to attend the dedication of Artist Charles McGee's sculpture, "Lineage." Charles McGee was a professor of Art at Eastern Michigan University from 1969 to 1987, but he was not always so familiar with the area. McGee moved to Detroit from South Carolina in 1934 at the age of ten. When he arrived in Detroit, he didn't even own a pair of shoes. Now, Charles McGee is 88, and his work is seen in the City of Detroit as well as throughout all of Michigan. Thanks to Charles McGee and his donation of the work "Lineage," Eastern Michigan University has a piece of that legacy, as well as a piece of Michigan history.



Icarus

(In front of the Quirk Building)

There are very few individuals that have had more of an impact on the look of Eastern Michigan University's campus than Artist and Professor Emeritus John Nick Pappas. Professor Emeritus Pappas was the force that decided which artist and their works would be represented on campus for the sequential celebration ("Onna", "Crouching Figure", and "The Psychic Armor of Aphrodite"). His Relief Sculpture "Waiting" hangs on the second story of the student center. Maybe most importantly, his sculpture "Icarus" stands tall in front of the Quirk Building.

The "Icarus" statue stands as a reminder of the ancient Greek tale of Icarus and his father Daedalus, who were imprisoned against their will. To escape, Icarus's father Daedalus sculpted artificial wings made of wax so they could fly to freedom, but the wings were not sturdy. The father warned his son not to fly too high because if he did, the sun would melt the wings. In the end Icarus, elated by the feeling of freedom, flew too close to the sun and then fell into the Aegean Sea.

John Nick Pappas described his feelings on the character, "The mythical image of Icarus has always symbolized freedom, strength, imagination, science, hope, and man's fallibility."

The bronze sculpture was dedicated in the fall of 2003 with the help of the Hellenic Society, PAIDIA, the Pan-Icarian Brotherhood of America, ICAROS, and the Pontian Federation. Generous donations paid for the Greek marble base of the statue, which is the single largest solid piece of Greek marble ever to be shipped and installed in this region of the United States. Whether it was as a teacher, or whether it was as an artist, John Nick Pappas' legacy at Eastern Michigan will be felt for generations to come.

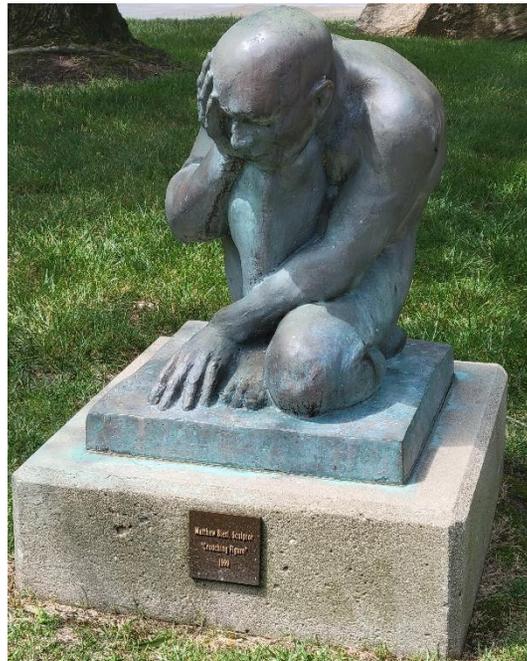


Crouching Figure

(North of main entrance to Ford Hall)

In the year 1999, as the world focused on celebrating the upcoming new millennium, Eastern Michigan University celebrated their sesquicentennial, the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding. Eastern Michigan wanted to add to their celebration by beautifying the campus with some outdoor works of art.

The school asked Professor John Pappas to scour his public works classes' proposals and choose three projects to be immortalized on campus. Student Matthew Bierel and his submission "Crouching Figure" was one of those three. The bronze figure resides just to the north of Ford Hall's main entrance. The placement makes it easily visible to all passersby headed to class. However, for one to really see the features of "Crouching Figure," one has to make the effort to walk to the front of the piece, facing Ford Hall. When asked why he thought Professor John Pappas chose his piece to be among those that would be created for the celebration, Matthew Bierel's response was, "Professor John Pappas just decided that we could accomplish this project." A humble answer from an Eastern Michigan student, whose class assignment would go on to forever be a part of the Ypsilanti and Eastern Michigan University landscape.



Diver

(Near the EMU Intramural Building)

Every day, students and faculty head to school and work, and rarely stop to view the world around them. Sadly, this behavior leads to missing extraordinary artifacts. One extraordinary item that can be missed is John W. Mills' the "Diver."

John W. Mills is an English sculptor, who has had an illustrious career as an artist and teacher. In 1982, he was made Fellow of the Royal British Society of Sculptors and was awarded the Otto Beit medal in 1983 for the sculpture "Curved Neck Grace." He was elected president of the Society in 1986, and again in 1997. He was also made Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1993. He has won numerous awards, and his designs have even graced British currency, but before winning all these accolades, he lived in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

John W. Mills came to Eastern Michigan University as a Visiting Associate Professor in Printmaking and Sculpture from 1970 to 1971. During this time, he also acted as a visiting lecturer at Detroit School of Creative Art. In 1980 he was the visiting Professor and Artist in Residence at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The "Diver" was installed in 1988, and to this day is one of only five pieces of John W. Mills' work in the United States.

Slow down the next time you are walking by the Intramural Building, and marvel at the work of one of England's greatest artists, here on the campus of Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan.



Onna

(Between Starkweather, Ford and Welch Hall)

If one starts a campus tour of Eastern Michigan University, at the old student union McKenny Hall, the first piece of Eastern Michigan's collection of outdoor art they will see is "Onna."

This bronze sculpture, created by former Eastern Michigan Student Hiroto Fukushima in 1999, stands tall between Starkweather, Ford, and Welch Hall. This statue was erected in honor of Eastern Michigan University's Sesquicentennial. It was chosen over dozens of proposals by students in the Art Department's Public Works classes.

The title of the piece, "Onna" translates to "Woman" in Japanese. Hiroto Fukushima's "Onna" was chosen in a celebration of Eastern Michigan University's first one hundred and fifty years and it will continue to represent it for the next hundred and fifty years.



Media Relations. "Eastern Michigan University's Art Walk encourages visitors to stroll through campus while enjoying sculptures by students, instructors and professionals." EMU Today. October 21, 2013. Accessed July 5, 2021.

<https://today.emich.edu/story/news/340>.

Martin Luther King Jr.

(Between Boone and Ford Hall)



César E. Chávez Memorial Fountain

(Between McKenny and Welch Hall)



Circular Couple/Blue Baby

(Between Ford and Starkweather Hall)

1964-1965 by William Barrett



Mass Space

(Behind Mark Jefferson Hall)

by Greg Clayton



Title Unknown

(Between Ford and Pierce Hall)

