



Vicki Honeyman and her dog Lucy sit on the front porch of their house on Murray Avenue. Her house was on the Homes Tour in 1990.

Murray's Vicki Honeyman on haircuts, films, and the jitterbug

Murray Avenue's Vicki Honeyman was featured in the July *Ann Arbor Observer's* "Marketplace Changes" section, detailing some of the changes she's made to her Vicki's Wash & Wear Haircuts shop on E. Ann, particularly new sales items under the "Heavenly Metal" name.

Vicki has run her haircutting shop on E. Ann St., in the southeast corner of the old Peters' Hotel building, for 18 years. She started cutting her brothers' hair back home in Detroit, and after years of cutting friends' hair in Ann Arbor (where she went to college after a year at Oakland University) and then in Harbor Springs in 1978, she "got her doctorate in haircutting" and began her career cutting inside the Saguaro plant store when it was on West Washington (in what is now Sweetwaters). When Saguaro moved to Whitmore Lake five years later, she worked "from my front porch" for a while, and then the space in the old Peters' Hotel became available, 18 years ago. She's been there ever since.

During this time she was living in an apartment west on Ann Street, across from the police station. She loved it there, just down the street from her hair shop. Friends always dropped in, taking advantage of the close proximity to Joe's Star Lounge and other local dance floors. But when her landlord died, the new landlord raised the rent from \$100 a month to \$800. She had been considering buying a house, and found just the right one on Murray in 1986, where she lives today.

She recalls that while she was considering houses, a realtor back in 1982 showed her "a house with a front porch" (one of Vicki's prerequisites) on Murray Avenue. Vicki didn't especially like the place, but pointed across the street and said, "That's the kind of place I'd like."

Vicki bought her house in November, four years later, and after a winter's activity of moving in and cleaning and making the place her own, she stepped out onto the front porch one spring day . . . and realized that she had in fact bought the very house she had pointed to, four years previously!

Vicki's house is a comfortable, artsy house with boldly colored walls and lots of art and nicknacks and books everywhere. The screened-in back porch has become her sunroom, and her extended back porch and patio her "summer room." She has an extensive garden, and a stone walkway that leads to a wooden gateway that opens out onto the UM's Krause lot, which makes for expedient biking and rollerblading to and from downtown. The backyard also has a fish pond designed and built by an artist friend.

She has just finished "the second and last remodeling of the kitchen." The kitchen features poured concrete countertops, and a galvanized steel broom closet (perfect for hanging metal frames with photos). The downstairs bathroom features a vintage door hung on a galvanized metal contraption that uses rollerblade wheels to open and close the door, a modern version of a pocket-door. Upstairs, the master bedroom has had the ceiling above removed, providing a large vertical overhead space, including a loft. When the outside of the house is finished being repainted, she plans to replace some of the plants lost last winter. When those projects are completed, Vicki figures her house will be perfect and she'll just enjoy it lying on her hammock outside in her summer room, in inside playing with her dog, Lucy.

Vicki and her three brothers (John, Peter, and fraternal twin Bob) all went to Detroit

Public Schools, and three of them — Vicki, Peter, and Bob — all went to school at the Residential College at UM, at least for a part of their undergraduate experience. Peter, the youngest, is head of CITI and on the faculty at UM. John, the eldest, is an attorney in West Bloomfield. Bob lives in Miami and works in software. All three brothers have children, giving Vicki lots of nieces and nephews that she thinks of as nearly her own.

This past October, Vicki stepped down from her position with the Ann Arbor Film Festival, after 15 years as its Festival Director and almost 25 years of involvement. Her interest in film began in high school, when her older brother John would take her to the Wayne State Cinema Guild, back in '65 and '66, where she would see classics by Capra, Hitchcock, Orson Welles, and Lang.

Vicki worked on Oakland University's
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Vicki (and Lucy) in front of her haircutting shop.

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cinema scene in 1969 and 1970 (her highlight was having German filmmaker Fritz Lang kiss her on the cheek when Vicki hosted him for a retrospective program at OU), and hitchhiked to Ann Arbor each weekend to attend Cinema II meetings. After a year at Oakland she transferred to UM to further her film studies.

Meanwhile, she became director of campus film groups Cinema II and, later, Cinema Guild, during which time she brought to Ann Arbor notable directors Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog for screenings and speaking engagements. She managed the Matrix Theater in the mid-70s, a small non-profit upstairs from Mark's Coffeehouse on East William (where New York Pizza Depot is today). Matrix also featured live performances, notably Jango Edwards. Matrix lasted about 5 years.

Vicki graduated in 1974 with a degree in Film Studies. She went from the Matrix Theater to working with the newly formed Program in Film and Video Studies at the university. Around that same time, she bought a little flower cart business and was a street vendor at the corner of East and South U. A student Vicki met at the Film and Video office went to a dance party with her. She found him to be such a great dancer, she asked him to be her dance partner. For the next 10 or so years, she and Jim Kruz taught and performed jitterbug in Ann Arbor and Detroit. They were such a hit, they made it into an article in *Life Magazine* in 1983. Vicki and Jim still like to jitterbug together, but ended their teaching and performing career shortly after Jim's daughter Sophia was born 13 years years ago.

The Peters' Hotel building recently

underwent a major historical renovation. What began as a three-month inconvenience for Vicki's business stretched to nearly two years, as two of the building's external walls needed to be completely replaced. Vicki moved her haircutting chair into the film festival's office next door for the duration.

When she was able to move back into her renovated space a year and a half later, she decided it was time for some changes to go along with her decision to retire from the Ann Arbor Film Festival and to enjoy life at a more relaxed pace. She replaced the '50s décor with a primitive, cottagey look and gave birth to a little arts and crafts gallery/shop inside her haircutting shop. She named the gallery "Heavenly Metal" because she started out carrying artwork created from recycled metals, such as old maple syrup sap buckets and old tin ceilings.

Vicki is always adding to her own art collection at home so it only makes sense that Heavenly Metal has expanded into carrying an ever-changing variety of things. Her most popular items are the dried/silk floral pieces. They're dried roses and lavender in silk, wood, and moss arrangements that range in price from \$10-\$50. She carries earrings, necklaces, and bracelets by local jewelry artists along with the work of artists she's picked up at the art fair and gift markets. She also sells plastic Mexican shopping bags, funky handmade purses from vintage fabrics and felted boiled wool, along with friend Phil Wilson's ceramic vases and candleholders. Always on the lookout for new goodies, the stock changes constantly.

Lucy, Vicki's eight-pound Papillon dog, came into her life on August 17, 2001 and has been her nearly constant companion.

She found Lucy through the Internet, after being smitten by a friend's Papillon, and flew to Nebraska to retrieve her. Lucy is small enough to ride in her own basket on Vicki's bike, and likes to lay on a pillow at the front door of Vicki's shop while "her mom" is at work. "We're well suited to each other," Vicki laughs. "We're both on the small side. We both have a good sense of humor. We both like to run uphill at the Arb and to take naps."

Vicki's Wash & Wear Haircuts is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 to 6, and Saturdays, 10 to 1. Walk-ins are welcome, or call or Email to set up appointments (663-HAIR or vicki@honeymen.org). She says, "I use a common-sense approach to people's hair. Many people don't want to spend more than a minute with their hair, so I cut it to do what it inherently does, rather than trying to change it or cutting it to be blown or fussed with. I cut the hair dry (I mist it slightly) so I can see what the hair is doing while I'm working with it. My clients appreciate that I work fairly quickly and that my prices have remained reasonable (I charge \$28 for adults/\$20 for kids.)"

Among her personal and professional changes, Vicki says the best is having Chenille Sister Grace Morand cutting hair in the back room of her shop (where the film festival office used to reside). "Grace is delightful company as well as a good haircutter. She's become my dog Lucy's dear friend and is a great addition to my business. But she doesn't sing on the job!"

Vicki is content with her re-defined life. She loved her work over the years with the film festival, but is thoroughly making the most of life as a small business and homeowner on the Old West Side.

— Daniel Madaj

Relevant Historic District Commission activity

Unofficial notes from the June 10 and July 9 meetings:

New commissioner

Gary Cooper joined the HDC at the July meeting. Gary is a landscape architect and heads his own firm, Gary Cooper Design. He began his career working with Mike Quinn and the late David Evans at Quinn/Evans Architects. Gary describes his practice as about 1/3 preservation work, 1/3 rehabilitation work, and 1/3 new design.

112 West Liberty

Unanimously approved the request to add a full third story to the rear of the two-story portion of the commercial building at 112 West Liberty (see photo), and the addition of star-shaped tension rods to

occur at the second and third floors (and possibly the roof) at the front façade.

Ann Arbor Historical Foundation Board

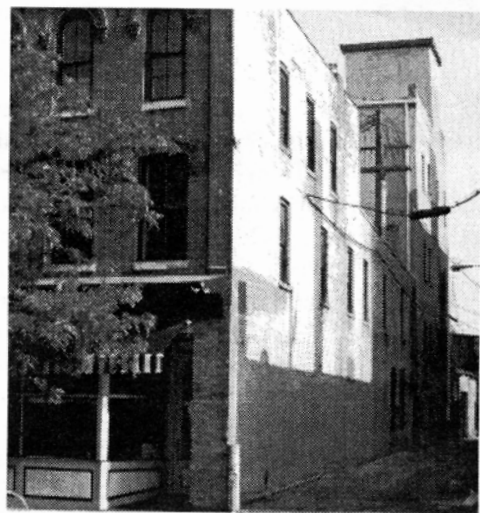
Michele Derr and Susan Wineberg agreed to serve on the AAHF.

Window committee

Scott Diels reported that the HDC Window Committee is in the final draft of window evaluation guidelines and handout, and moving into the final phase of gathering resources for an accompanying list..

Historic District Commission:

Michael Bruner, Gary L. Cooper, Michele Derr, H. Scott Diels, H. Mark Hildebrandt, Sonia Schmerl, and Susan Wineberg. Heather R. Edwards, Historic District Coordinator.



The HDC voted unanimously to permit the construction of a 3rd floor at the back of the building at 112 West Liberty.