

# 909-911-915 Ludington Street

**Before**



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**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Escanaba Central Historic District

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windows and a second story entry door. The first two stories of the rear elevation of the building are brick, above which are two additional stories sided in corrugated metal panels lacking fenestration. The interior, including balcony and stage, remains generally intact today, and is used as a night club and entertainment venue.

This building's distinctive cross-gabled façade dominated by the stepped and parapeted Flemish Gable, the use of Flemish bond brick, and combination of wall cladding reveals strong Dutch Renaissance Revival style influences. Such distinctive and "exotic" construction was often employed by theaters to attract attention and patrons, and reached its peak during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Sanborn maps reveal this building was constructed at 905-907 Ludington between 1913 and 1921. The 1921 edition describes the building as Delft Theatre Motion Pictures, Capacity 830, and indicates the building had both a balcony towards the façade and a Stage and Scenery area at the rear behind Asbestos Curtains. The buildings adjacent to the theater, which continue its distinctive architectural style, were built at the same time. The 1929 and 1929-50 update Sanborn maps reveal no revisions except to describe the Delft Theatre as Movies. City directories reveal 907 Ludington is occupied by the Delft Theater by 1924-25 and through 1963.

This theater was designed by the Charleton & Kuenzli architectural firm of Marquette and Milwaukee (Peavy et al. 2012a, 2012b). It was built as the Delft Opera House in 1914. Edwin O. Kuenzli., who headed the Charlton & Kuenzli firm's Milwaukee office, is credited with the design of this theater. The 1,000 seat theater was built by the Semer Land Company and leased to M.W. Jopling, manager of the Marquette Opera House, who then usually booked the same theater companies into the two venues (Brisson 1992; Peavey et al. 2012a; Eckert 1993: 530; Cinema Treasures 2012b).

**909-915. Arcade Recreation Parlor Building (1914)**

**Possibly Charleton & Kuenzli, Marquette and Milwaukee, Architects**

This is a brick, triple two-part commercial block comprised of three, three-bay storefronts. The street-level façade of the eastern unit (909) consists of aluminum-framed fenestration forming a recessed corner entry and two adjacent display windows resting on metal paneled bulkheads. Above these, an infilled transom occurs beneath a storefront cornice. The middle storefront (911) also employs aluminum framing but consists of a center slant-sided entrance between two display windows on metal bulkheads. Its transom is sheathed in a vertical ribbed metal panel and signage. The westernmost unit (915) also has a slant-sided entry with display windows, but these rest on T-111 siding bulkheads and the transom treatment is similar to 909.

The brick piers separating these three storefronts, and in the second story above, alternate sections of Flemish bond brick and masonry courses. (This treatment is identical in composition to the façade of the Delft Theater next door to the east at 907 Ludington Street). A masonry course above the storefront cornice parallels a second sill course for the second story windows, which reveal a symmetrical piercing pattern and consist of nine six-light, double-hung sash windows with transoms. Vertical corbelled brick panels separate these windows into sets of three, and occur above the brick piers below that divide the building into three storefronts. Above these, a masonry sill course supports a series of vertical pyramidal masonry blocks that alternate with basketweave bond brick panels. These occur beneath a pressed metal frieze and cornice. The two-story rear elevation is brick and is punctuated by a series of segmental arched windows and doors, most of which have been infilled. This building repeats faithfully many of the stylistic elements of the Delft Theater next door. As such, although this building is not as pure an example as the Delft, it is definitely influenced by the Dutch Renaissance Revival style.

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While the street level of this building was divided into three distinct storefronts, the entire second floor was a single commercial open venue and served most consistently through the decades as a bowling alley. An unusual facet of this commercial use is that the entry to this second floor recreation parlor occurred through paired entry doors that are actually located in the west corner of the Delft Theater net door at 907 Ludington. Thus, these buildings are linked by more than just identical architectural façade components. We can logically assume that it was built simultaneously with the Delft Theater, which dates to 1914 (and therefore may be attributable to the same architecture firm that designed the theater, Charlton & Kuenzli).

Sanborn maps reveal this three-storefront building was probably built at the same time as the adjacent Delft Theatre, which is well documented as 1914. This building was constructed at the address listed as 909-913 Ludington between 1913 and 1921, when the first floors of 909 and 911 were occupied by Gentleman's Furnishings and a Jeweler, respectively, while the second floor housed a Bowling Alley. A room at the rear of 909 appears to hold a boiler. Meanwhile, 913 housed a Hardware Store on the first floor and an Arcade on the second. All three storefronts are identified only to the level of Stores in the 1929 and 1929-50 Sanborn update editions, although the rear room of 911 is identified as "Heating Plant" and the update edition further describes 913 as containing Oils, Tires and Batteries.

City directories reveal that the second floor of 909-913 was occupied by the Arcade Recreation Parlor Bowling Alleys by 1924-25 through 1929, identified as the Arcade Bowling Alley (or Bowling Lanes) by 1937 and through 1963.

For 909 Ludington, the 1924-25 edition reveals occupation by Mackillican Clothing in 1924-25 and Anderson-Bloom Co. men's furnishings in 1929. Although there is no entry for this address in 1937, a photograph taken during this period indicates the storefront is occupied by C. Jackson Tailor Shop and Lorette's Women's Clothes, who are listed here in the 1941 edition. By 1948 Kiddie Kloz children's clothing was here, and by 1953 through 1963 this storefront was occupied by a Sherwin Williams Paint store. For 911 Ludington, Blomstein & Peterson jewelers was here in 1924-25 and apparently continues at this address through 1963, although all subsequent listing identify the business as Blomstrom & Peterson. For 915 Ludington, Carl Johnson Hardware was located here in 1924-25 through 1929, followed by the Firestone Auto Supply & Service Store by 1937 through 1948, and identified as Firestone Stores in the 1953 and 1959 editions. By 1963 edition indicates no individual address for 913, but rather appears as a component of the address 913-915-917 Ludington, occupied by the Bonefeld Furniture Store. Bonefeld had occupied the building next door, at 915-917 Ludington, for years. Thus, this building had several long-term tenants, including Blomstrom and Peterson Jewelers, who were located in 911 for at least a half century, the Arcade Bowling Alley, that occupied the building's second floor for at least five decades.

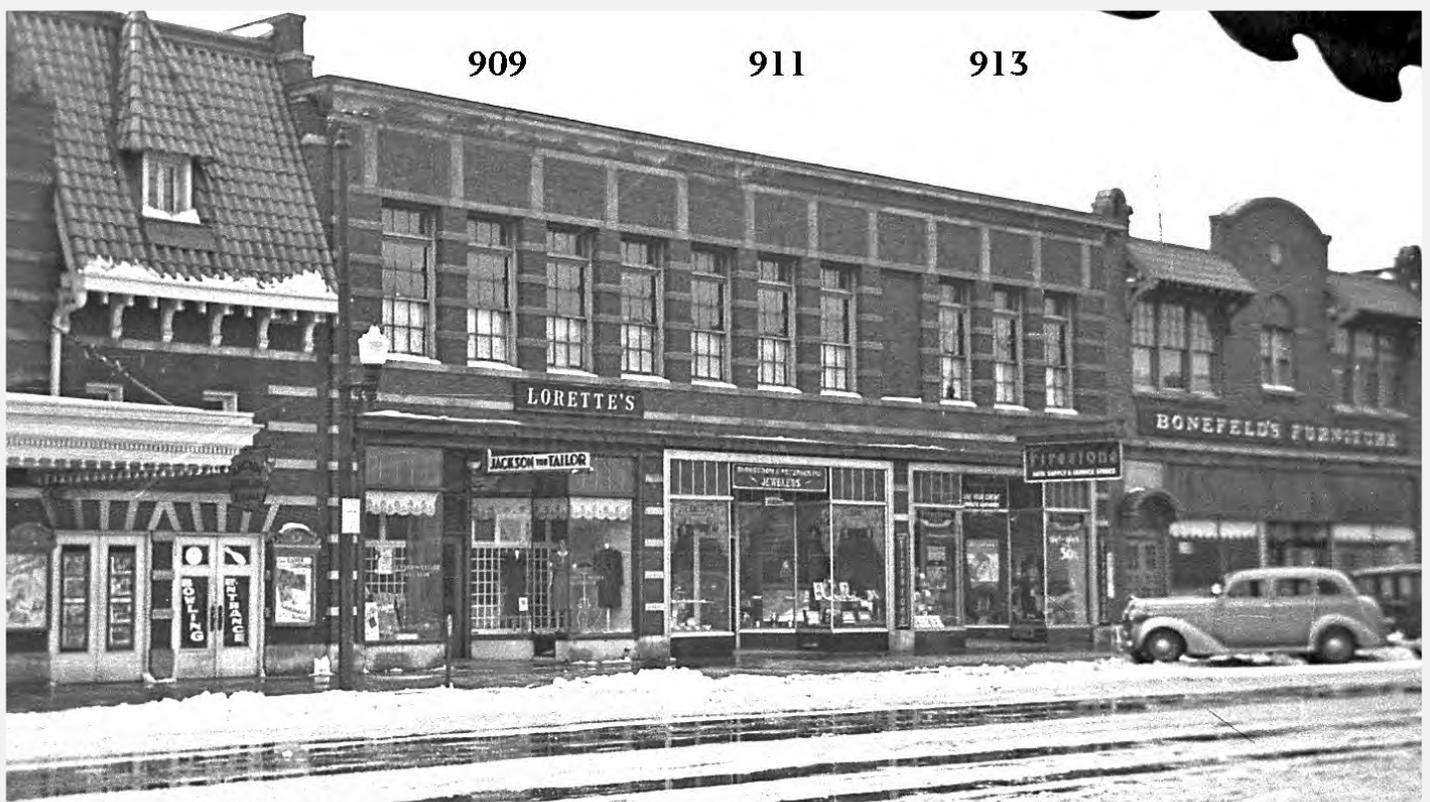
Advertisements in the Escanaba High School year book for 1919 reveal that this address was apparently known as the Delft Building and that the Delft Club, "A Public Club for Ladies and Gentlemen, Bowling and Billiards" was also located here (Cotton 1919: XXVIII).

**917. Building (1913-21)**

This is a brick, two-story two-part commercial block. Its street level is comprised of a slant-sided entry centered between sets of three fixed-pane display windows that rest on masonry-coped brick bulkheads, and a corner entry door shielded by a shallow arched stoop hood. The façade's corner piers are stack bond brick that rise to a course of soldier bond brick above the storefront transom, which is sheathed in wood panels, and above the

# Historic Photo

## 909-911-915 Ludington Street



C. Jackson Tailor Shop & Lorette's Women Clothes 909 Ludington Street

Bloomstrom & Peterson Jewelers 911 Ludington Street

Firestone Auto Supply & Service 913 Ludington Street

Arcade Bowling Lanes (2nd floor) 909-913 Ludington Street