

# New tin ceiling at Ray Township library not what RTHS ordered

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Next time you go to the Ray Township Library, look up and you will spot different colors on the ceiling.

Residents let the Ray Township Board of Trustees know they were dissatisfied with the tin ceiling project at its meeting Nov. 19.

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the building of the "Mill School House," which houses the Ray Township Library, the library and the Ray Township Historical Soci-

ety (RTHS) decided to refurbish the building with a tin ceiling.

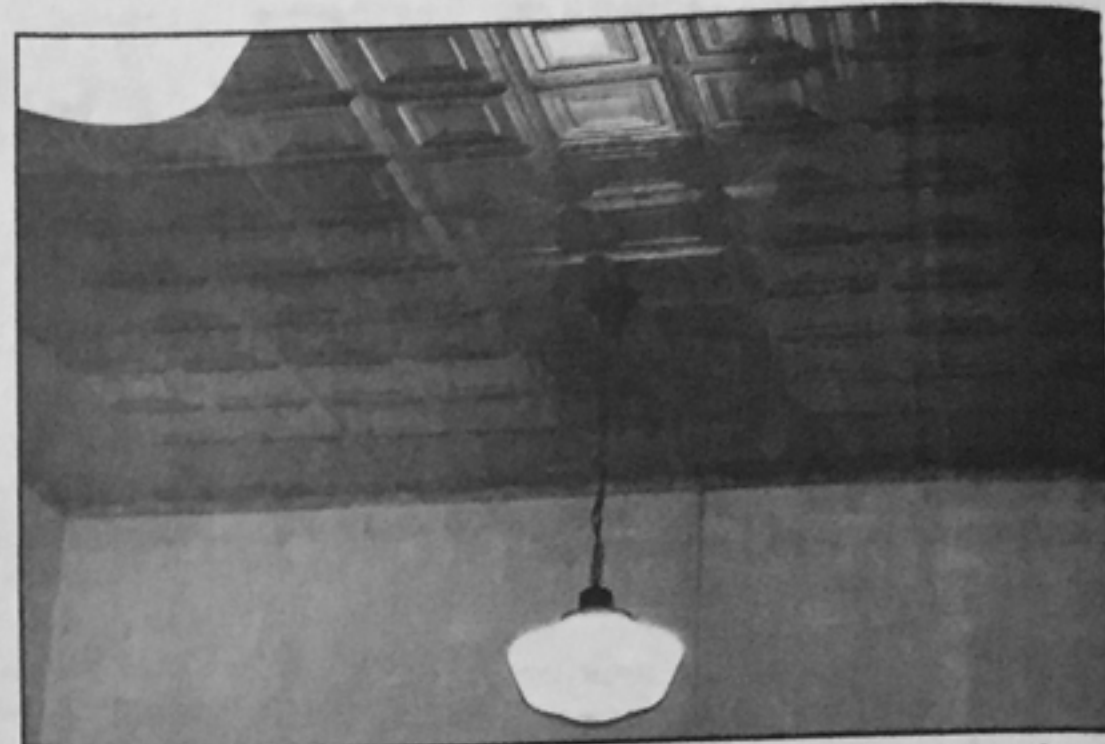
"After four years of fundraising through the sales of the society's annual calendars, T-shirts, and cookbooks along with special events and the Kroger Rewards Program, the society was able to dedicate \$6,877 for the tin ceiling installation," said RTHS President Terry Goike. "The society researched the costs for the materials and labor. Three quotes from contractors were secured with the lowest being

around \$8,000 from a local contractor who had installed tin ceilings in the area. The township and library boards were then asked if they would contribute \$640 each to the project to cover the cost of the installation so the work could be completed in 2013 for the 150th anniversary of the building's construction and the 30th anniversary of the library."

The township board served as the entity to secure the project. It modified the specifications and advertised for sealed

bids. Only one bid came in and the projected cost was \$11,000.

To complete the project within the allotted \$8,000 budget, the board suggested having the township's maintenance supervisor complete the work. Both the library board and the historical society were concerned about the quality of the work and what would happen if something unforeseen happened and there were cost overages. The township board said that they would guarantee the quality of the work and any cost overages.



Residents complained that there were different colors when the ceiling was completed. It was found that the tile manufacturer had sent two different finishes.  
(Observer photo by Stacy Sobotka)

The township approved the tin ceiling installation with a budget of \$8,200 with \$6,877 from the RTHS, \$640 from the

Ray Township Library, and \$700 from the township.

Not long after the project began in September of this year, library staff noticed a significant difference in the tile colors. Not until the project was near completion was the matter investigated, and it was found that the tile manufacturer sent two different finishes. One was dull, the other glossy.

"The township contacted the manufacturer who sent replacement tiles in a glossy finish but only enough to change out the ones with a dull finish," said Goike. "The township started to install the replacement tiles over the dull finish tiles. Comments from the public stated that the new tiles did not match the original shiny tiles."

Ray Township resident Kevin Brown went to the library on Nov. 18, and reported to the board that there was a visible difference in the tiling.

"I looked at it objectively," he said. "There's definitely three different colored tiles there. I went there in the daytime to look and see if there's a difference in the daytime. You can't quite notice as much in the daytime but if you stare at it you can. There's definitely two in the day but at night you can see three different colors."

Goike and the RTHS are working to fix the problem. She offered the board a proposal by Jason Amott of the Romeo-based design firm Earth Environments.

"The society feels strongly that this proposal is the best solution to the present situation, and to that end, the society has pledged an additional \$1,500 to the project if the proposal is agreed upon," she said.

A survey about the tin ceiling is available in the library for those who wish to comment.

If the proposal is approved, the society will have raised \$8,377 for the project. Both the RTHS and the township library will continue to ask for donations of materials, and hope the project will be completed by January 2014.

Though Amott has never installed a tin ceiling, he has plenty of experience in ceiling replacement and historic preservation. He recommended furring the ceiling, which is preparing a frame to hold ceiling panels in place.

"We would be furring the ceiling down based on existing conditions of what's here," he said.

Amott would use a suspended ceiling as a backup plan.

"I'm open to either suspended or fur down right from existing conditions, so either one is how we look at it. Whichever one everyone would like to settle on, I'm fine with," he said.

The township plans to discuss the matter at a meeting with Amott and two representatives each from the Township Board, Library Board, and the RTHS. The RTHS is working on arranging this meeting.

"Before I go forward with this project any further, I want something in concrete," said Township Supervisor Charlie Bohm. "I don't want to end up with a situation that we currently have."

In other business, the Board of Trustees:

- Announced the annual Christmas Tree Lighting will take place Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m.

- Approved a motion to advise the Macomb County Department of Roads to apply crushed limestone to Hartway Road from 29 Mile Road to 30 Mile Road, and surplus material to be used for the western portion of 31 Mile Road until supply is exhausted.