

## ANN ARBOR'S NEW "STREAMLINED" BUS DEPOT

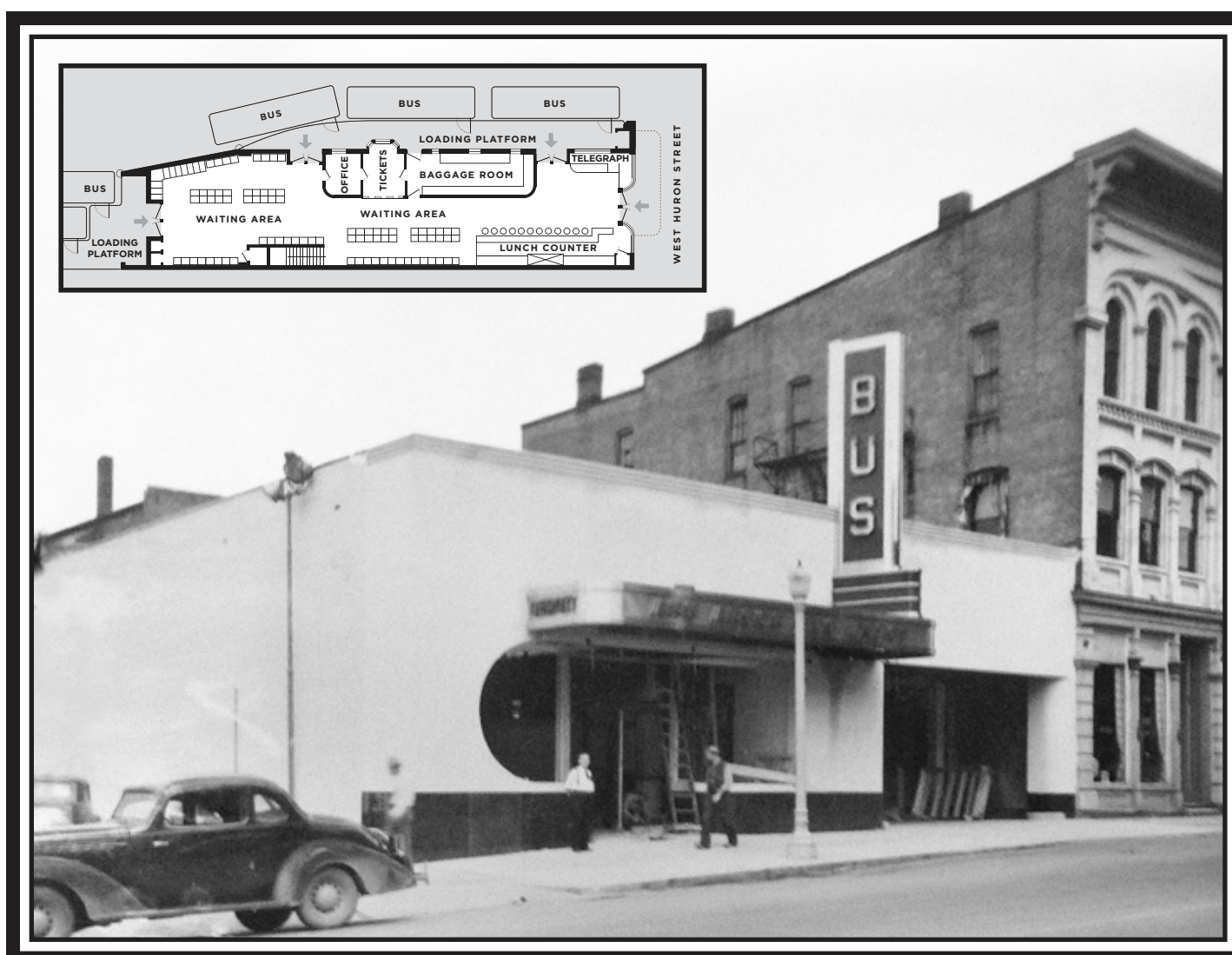
**A**nn Arbor's Art Moderne-style bus depot, touted as one of the most up-to-date in the country, was officially opened in September 1940. A large crowd of dignitaries and admirers assembled as the mayor cut a maize and blue satin ribbon stretched across the glass doors.

The crowd was invited to inspect the station's impressive interior. Modern in all details, it illustrated how popular and important bus travel was in the 1940s. *The Ann Arbor News* reported that the front exterior was of Indiana limestone and polished black marble with stainless steel and aluminum trim. A large

neon sign informed the public that buses of the Blue Goose, Shortway, and Greyhound lines used the station, which included a completely covered passenger loading platform and bus roadway.

The original interior of the depot consisted of a modern waiting room (above right) with terrazzo floor, harmonizing colors, stainless steel trim, and 62 natural birch seats. A telegraph booth, baggage room, and ticket office welcomed those who entered from Huron. A sparkling polished steel lunch counter with 12 seats lined the wall on the left.

Major alterations were made in the decades that followed. The lunch counter was removed in the 1960s. Many of the other decorative elements were lost in a series of Greyhound station remodelings in the 1970s. The interior was later described as having an "industrial plainness"—barren long before the station was demolished in 2014 by First Martin Corporation to make way for a hotel. Although historic elements of the façade and marquee had fallen into disrepair, they have been carefully restored and retained.



(LEFT) THE DEPOT UNDER CONSTRUCTION SHORTLY BEFORE ITS OPENING IN 1940. THE INSET SHOWS THE ORIGINAL FLOOR PLAN WITH LUNCH COUNTER, WAITING AREAS, BAGGAGE ROOM, TICKET OFFICE, TELEGRAPH, AND COVERED LOADING PLATFORMS.



(LEFT) LESS THAN TWO YEARS AFTER IT WAS BUILT, THE BUS DEPOT LOBBY WAS PACKED WITH RECRUITS AND DRAFTEES WAITING TO BE TRANSPORTED TO WWII TRAINING CENTERS.



(RIGHT) BY EARLY 1943, A CONVERTED AUTO HAULER, LABELED "VICTORY COACH," WAS USED TO TRANSPORT MILITARY PERSONNEL AND WORKERS TO WILLOW RUN. THE COACH IS PARKED ON WEST HURON ACROSS FROM THE BUS STATION.

(RIGHT) A GREYHOUND BUS LEAVES THE STATION IN MARCH OF 1970. THE HISTORIC BUILDING TO THE RIGHT HAD ALREADY BEEN COVERED WITH METAL SIDING. IT WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1971. THE LOT SAT VACANT FOR 16 YEARS BEFORE CONSTRUCTION OF A 10-STORY OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDING ON THE CORNER IN 1987.



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