



TEM HUBBEL

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TIMBER TO TOURISTS

A HISTORY OF HARRISON, MICHIGAN

In 1857 the original survey of Hayes Township, a portion of which is now the city of Harrison, was made by George E. Adair and his party who covered the area on horseback and pack horses. A committee was formed and authorized in 1878 to locate a new county seat as close to the center of the county as conveniently possible. The most likely place was found surrounded by rolling hills and bluffs with a beautiful lake nearby.

The village in the 1870's and early 1880's, before Harrison became an incorporated city, earned the reputation of being Michigan's toughest town. It was a sprawling metropolis of 2,000 people containing 22 very active saloons, 12 restaurants, five hotels, and many businesses. In addition, armies of lumberjacks and many families comprised some of the hardest and most colorful characters in Michigan's history.

Silver Jack and Mike McGovern, each weighing nearly 300 pounds, claimed and proved that they could fell a horse with one blow of their fist. T. C. Cunyan, "The Man-Eater of Peterborough," was another eccentric character. His favorite amusement was biting chunks out of beer mugs. Drayas Ford, a teamster, could flick the ashes from a cigar with one crack of his "blacksnake" whip.

Jim Carr and his wife Maggie were undoubtedly the most infamous characters to haunt Harrison's past. Together they operated a combination saloon, dance hall and hotel on the top of a hill overlooking Harrison. The hill is now known as "Tank Hill" because at one time the city's water tank was located there. In the early part of the 1900's the hill was named "Dead Man's Hill," because Jim Carr was said to have buried several men in secret graves on the slope below his saloon. Carr, who trafficked in every known vice, is said to have rolled hundreds of lumberjacks. In 1885, he was convicted and sentenced to 15 years in Jackson Prison for beating to death Frankie Osborn, a female employee. Later the Michigan Supreme Court granted him a new trial, and Carr was set free. After that his fortune was said to have dwindled from \$75,000 to \$2. He was said to have later built a saloon on runners so it could be quickly moved across the county line at Meredith. Carr's death marked the all-time famous scandal in Harrison's history. Seven ministers refused to officiate at his funeral, and finally, he was laid to rest with a ceremonial procession of 500 lumberjacks who staged services of their own. Carr's grave is unmarked in the brush just a few rods away from the Meredith Cemetery, because the citizens refused to allow him to be buried in the cemetery.

When the courthouse building burned early in 1879 the county seat was located in Farwell. At that time a committee was searching for a location in Clare County so that the county seat could be moved to the geographical center. Four hundred and thirty-nine people voted to move the county seat to a new location, and 106 people voted against the proposal. On April 9, 1879 a committee consisting of the Board of Supervisors, the Sheriff, the Prosecuting Attorney, the County Treasurer, and the Clerk met at Budd Lake to select a site for the new county buildings. The desired land was owned by the Flint & Pere Marquette Railway Company. Officials of the company met with the committee and agreed that the railway company should plat a nine block town with one block being used for the county buildings. These original nine blocks were bounded by First Street on the east, Beech Street on the north, Fourth Street on the west, and Pine Street on the south. After a block was chosen for the county buildings, the Board of Supervisors ordered a courthouse to be built and occupied on or before November 3, of that same year. On April 25, the following year, the land commissioner of the Flint & Pere Marquette Railway Company agreed to plat 40 acres immediately adjoining the lake and to the west. This land was to be used as the location for a new village and county seat. The new village was named Harrison in honor of the ninth President of the United States, William Henry Harrison, and also for Harrison Carey, one of the first surveyors of the area. It may also have been named to honor the birth of the first child in the village, Harrison Calkins, born on April 9, 1880, less than one year after the town was platted.

A temporary log building was constructed for use as a courthouse until a permanent building could be built. A brick two story courthouse was begun in 1879, and Isaac Hanna was awarded the bid for \$2,125. Harrison felt great pride in the county complex, which consisted of an entire block between Fourth and Broad Streets. A red brick jail, trimmed in white, stood on the northwest corner of the lot, with a steam plant to

heat all the buildings in the back. Behind that building was a small red barn. This was used for the Sheriff's livestock; cows as well as horses. It also served to impound livestock that was caught running loose. A fee system for these boarders helped the barn pay its way. The entire complex was quite impressive and included a round fountain, approximately 12 feet in diameter. It was well designed and landscaped with shrubbery and maple trees for future shade.

Village residents took great pride in the fact that Harrison was the county seat. As a practical matter, it brought money to Harrison. Extra business generated by the courthouse and jail was often the difference between profit and loss for the stores, hotels, saloons, livery stables, and other lines of business. For example printing and legal advertising were important to the existence of the Clare County Cleaver. Elected officials, courthouse employees, and resident lawyers accounted for nearly 20 households in Harrison. When the Board of Supervisors was in session, or Circuit Court was seated, the town was full of people, and tills rang merrily in hotels, stores, restaurants, and saloons.

In 1885, the first Village Council meeting was held. Those in attendance were: S. P. McCall, president; Sam McCarty, J. C. Richmond, John Clore, A. B. Toman, William Wilson, C. C. Bogue, trustees; W. E. Green, clerk; Sam Armstrong, treasurer; and Wallace Weatherman, assessor. The first order of business during April and May of 1885 was to create a water system, build wooden sidewalks and install a fire alarm.

The neighboring village of Clare was incorporated as a city in 1891, and at that time, an attempt was made to make Clare the county seat. That same year Harrison, in order to retain its position as county seat, also incorporated as a city. To do this it was necessary to extend the city limits far beyond the original town and include the homestead population of four additional sections.

As soon as a permanent courthouse was completed, the temporary log structure was utilized as a school house. The first teacher was Anna McCarn. If any records of the early school days were kept, they have long been lost or destroyed. It was said that the building was too small to accommodate all of the pupils so the following spring, due to the overcrowding, arrangements were made to send the smaller children to the home of Reverend and Mrs. Royal Cole, where they were taught by Mrs. Cole. The original log school was situated on or near the site of the present jail. The Cole residence was located across the street which is the site of the present Middle School located at 224 W. Main Street. In the Fall of 1881 the new school building was ready for use. The first pupil, of whom there is any written record, William Murphy, a local grocer, druggist, and mortician, entered school in 1884. Mary Hughes Weatherhead was the first graduate in 1887. Because she was the only graduate there was no ceremony. She participated in the commencement exercises of the class of 1888. In 1928, citizens of the city and Hayes Township voted to construct a new school building. The construction was to take place in 1937 as a W.P.A. project with financial aid from the government. In the spring of 1938, Harrison proudly opened the new school building. Much of the credit for the new school belonged to Charles A. Amble who served as the school district's superintendent from 1927 to 1962.

In 1933, the city of Harrison built a community building with Civilian Works Administration assistance. For many years this building was used as the high school gymnasium as well as a community hall. In 1935, the city deeded the building to the school district which in turn paid off the debt. A new school building was added to the existing community building in 1938. Presently the Harrison Community School District is composed of five schools with a total enrollment of 2,032: Hillside Elementary built in 1953, the Middle School in 1957, Amble Elementary School in 1963, Larson Elementary in 1973 and Harrison Community High School in 1974.

The Harrison Alumni Association was organized by D. D. Pattie during the 1901-02 school year. The Alumni Association has met every year since, for an annual coffee hour, to honor the present graduating class and renew old acquaintances. The first commencement was held in 1888, with eight students graduating.

The first resident of the village of Harrison was businessman John Hatfield, who lived in Frost Township. As soon as the town was platted, he built the first building, a log house known as the Hatfield Hotel. This building, which was destroyed by fire long ago, occupied the corner of Main and Second Streets. A short time later his son Charles was stricken with diphtheria and was buried in the first grave dug in Maple Grove Cemetery.

The first recorded death was that of Eda Bywater, a 6 year old child, who died of measles on April 15, 1881.

The first recorded marriage was that of Frank A. Hunt and Susan Spencer on September 25, 1880, with Otis B. Waers, the local Congregational minister, officiating.

One of the first families to settle in Harrison was the Wilson family. In fact, the Wilsons were lumbering around Harrison when the village consisted of no more than a few shacks. They owned the earliest local business establishment called the "W.H. & F.A. Wilson Lumber Co.," which consisted of two brothers and a cousin, commonly known as "F.A., Stick, and Cousin Will." The company, which formerly operated in Vernon Township in Isabella County, bought a tract of pine on Budd Lake and began Harrison's first industrial enterprise, Wilson's Lumber Mill, on the hill overlooking Budd Lake directly across from the island at the corner of Lake and Maple Streets. A huge sawdust bank continued to mark the site for half a century. The first general store was also built by the Wilson Company. At a later date, F. A. Wilson was elected as a representative in the State Legislature. Cousin Will, the only member of the company to remain in Harrison permanently, died in 1913 in his home located on the corner of Main and Lake Streets and now owned by his granddaughter, Gertrude Meyers Carey.

The Wilsons, who owned vast acreage of timberland, sawmills in Harrison, and lumber camps surrounding the village, were the "timber barons" of the area. In Harrison there were four Wilson additions; subdivisions sold to property owners, and then turned over to the city. Later the brothers deeded 40 acres of beautiful woodland at the north end of the city on the banks of Budd Lake for a city park. This parcel of land was later turned over to the State of Michigan for use as a state park, and is now known as Wilson State Park.

Several large impressive homes stood on the banks of Budd Lake and the nearby streets. One that still stands today on the corner of Second and Pine Streets was erected in 1882 by Willis Green. In 1891 this showplace was purchased by David Taylor, a native of Wayne, New York, and renovated to the tastes of his new bride, Minnie. Taylor served in a Michigan cavalry unit during the Civil War. The house was tax exempt because of his military record. Reputedly, Taylor's bride was much younger than he, and lived several decades after his death. Taylor's daughter, Edith, married William Sly and they resided in the family home until 1972. It was then purchased by Linda and Dean Weldon who live there today.

Another fine home, located at the corner of Pine and First Streets, was owned by druggist Dr. Pierre Witherspoon. Michael Fanning purchased that home in the 1890's and completely remodeled it. He added hardwood floors, woodwork, and installed stained and leaded glass windows. Today his daughter, Winifred, resides there.

Fanning built a grocery store on the corner of Second and Main Streets and according to his daughter, Winifred, "He did not have enough groceries to fill a wheelbarrow." With the success of the grocery store, he added a combined drygoods and drugstore. Sarah Sweeney, Fanning's sister-in-law, operated the drygoods store, and Alma Swanton was the pharmacist. A third store, constructed of cement blocks, was added where the Mutual Savings & Loan Office is located today. Because there was no funeral home in Harrison at that time, Fanning used the additional space to store caskets. In later years Fanning's son, Bryan, bought the Lockwood home on Beech Street which was located east of the Surrey House and renamed it Fanning's Funeral Home. Fanning was the town's undertaker until he sold the business to Frank Coker of Farwell in July, 1965. Fanning also served the community as a city official and a school board member. His sister, Winifred, worked as the postmistress from 1946 to 1976.

Near the turn of the century identical twin brothers, Elmer and Ellis Hughes, short, dark, stocky men with small mustaches, opened the Hughes Brothers' Store. For three decades they enjoyed prosperity only to see things fall apart during the Great Depression. At about the same time their cousin by marriage, a retired school teacher, who had spent most of his adult life in the Philippine Islands, invested some money as well as a suppressed desire to be a business man, into the Hughes Brothers' Store. This man was Johnny Brown.

When Johnny Brown joined the business the store consisted of three ramshackle frame buildings with false fronts, which were joined on the inside by double doors. It was a true general store selling shoes, clothing, sporting goods, hardware, and groceries. The place was known for its distinctive odor, which consisted of a mixture of kerosene, vinegar, leather, peanut butter, horse liniment, fresh ground coffee, the oil on its rolling floors, a leaking furnace, and a thousand other smells, not the least of which came from a crowd of customers who made a habit of hanging around just to keep warm. No other store ever smelled exactly like the Hughes Brothers' Store. Brown instituted some changes to modernize the place. Counters were reshuffled, and there was a great flurry of sweeping, mopping, and painting. But once the improvements were completed, the place could still be described in almost exactly the same terms as before. As far as the smell was concerned nothing changed.

To begin to understand Hughes Bros. & Brown, it is necessary to look beneath the surface and into the times. One must know a little bit about the kind of independence they cherished and were willing to defend. They could laugh at themselves, or one could laugh with them, but never at them. They were superior individuals who survived in a business where the best arithmetic predicted failure.

Brown was a bona fide intellectual; a highly educated teacher, a world traveler, a lonesome widower. He was enthusiastic about the challenge the store presented. Ellis Hughes was the buyer, the collector, and the bookkeeper, Elmer was the salesman; always pleasant, sociable, and positive. Their family has continued to live in Harrison to this day contributing substantially to the stability and heritage of the community.

Religion played an important part in the early development of the city. The first church building in Harrison was the Methodist Episcopal Church located on Oak street. This same structure later housed the United Brethern Church until a new building was constructed on east Main Street in 1953. The Congregational Church was built in 1880 and stood at the corner of Main and Broad Streets until 1965 when a new edifice was built on the south corner of Spruce and Fourth Streets. The Catholic Church, St. Athanasius, was built in 1900, and the second church constructed of brick was built in the late 1950's. This structure was replaced in 1987 with a larger wooden church located on the corner of Spruce and Broad Streets. St. Luke Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, was established in 1973. Worship services were held in an old storefront on US-27 which was the site of the former US Post Office. For a few years prior to that, summer services were held just for vacationers and a handful of local parishioners in a room at the school. A new church building was erected at the end of South Fourth Street in 1978.

An interesting part of Harrison's early history was connected to the banking industry. In 1883, Lemuel Saviers of St. Louis, opened a bank in Harrison which was known as the L. Saviers and Co. Bank. This private bank served the area until December 8, 1906, when the following persons met at the bank in Harrison for the purpose of incorporating under the laws of the State of Michigan: Lemuel Saviers, Andrew S. McIntyre, Nathaniel White, W. Henry Wilson, Fred W. Weatherhead, Ellis G. Hughes, Elmer J. Hughes and Charles R. Giddings. The group adopted bylaws, selected directors, and elected Lemuel Saviers, president; W. Henry Wilson, 1st vice-president; and Fred W. Weatherhead, 2nd vice-president.

This bank was housed in a building, long since destroyed, on the north side of Main Street, between Second and Broad Streets. The reorganized bank was known as the State Savings Bank of Harrison. The second bank building was constructed on the south corner of Main and Second Streets where it stood until the late 1970's. C. R. Giddings was its first cashier and in 1908 Charles Cave was elected cashier. Within a few years a second bank was organized in Harrison known as the People's Bank of M. Fanning & Co. These two banks served the area until January 3, 1918, when the officers of People's Bank: Mike Fanning, president; F. M. Morrissey, vice-president; Joseph E. Ladd, vice-president; and Wallace L. Harper, cashier, submitted a proposal for consolidation with the State Savings Bank of Harrison. This consolidation was approved effective June 1, 1918, and in July Mike Fanning was elected to the Board of Directors and Wallace L. Harper was hired as assistant cashier. The capital stock of the bank was increased from \$20,000 to \$25,000 to accommodate the consolidation. The bank continued to grow and by 1924 deposits were in excess of \$150,000. It was in this year that Harrison recorded its only bank robbery.

One stormy night in May, 1924, a severe electrical storm and heavy rain disrupted the power supply, which at that time was provided by the municipal power plant, so most people were content to spend their evening at home. However, there was a gang of bank robbers, the number of which has never been determined, who during the storm forced open the door of the bank and knocked over a partition. They hooked a team of horses, borrowed from a local livery barn, to the big safe sitting behind the teller area and pulled it out of the bank. The safe was dropped, and it cracked the sidewalk. Once the safe was outside, they loaded it onto a truck, tied the horses nearby, and proceeded to leave town undetected. The robbers were never found, but the safe was discovered a few weeks later in an abandoned gravel pit in the Muskegon area.

The minute book of the bank covering that period of time makes no mention of the robbery; however, the October 1, 1924, Board meeting did cover the following business:

A motion was made to purchase a used safe from the First Farmers State Bank of Roanoke, Indiana for \$500. A motion was also made that the cashier accept the cash settlement from the insurance company for a safe, furniture and fixtures.

Several photographs depicting the safe with holes burned through its walls are the only lasting record of this incident.

The original incorporators remained involved in the management of the bank until their deaths. The last one was Fred W. Weatherhead, who was active as president of the bank until his death late in 1952. At that time he was 92 years old and had been involved in the bank for almost 60 years. He was a community leader who loved to ice skate and skated on the lake well into his late 80's. He also loved to sing, and was a longtime member of The Congregational Church choir. If a soloist was ever requested for a funeral, the funeral director would contact Fred Weatherhead, and he would always agree to perform.

The bank was located on the corner of Second and Main Streets in the 1880's and was completely remodeled in 1944. The second story of the building was removed and a new roof was installed in 1948. By 1960 the bank grew to \$1,800,000 in assets and needed room to expand services. A new building was constructed on the south corner of Beech and First Streets across from the Surrey House. This office opened in October of 1960.

By 1971 the bank grew to over \$10,000,000 in total assets. Businesses in the area also grew and requests for larger commercial loans, retail loans, trust services, and sophisticated electronic processing equipment were noted. The First State Savings Bank of Gladwin experienced the same pressure and it was agreed that a merger of these two banks would be beneficial to both communities. On July 1, 1972 the two banks merged into the Mid-Michigan Bank with assets of over 26 million dollars. On October 1, 1980 the First of America Bank, a holding company of Kalamazoo, purchased 100% of the Mid-Michigan Bank stock, and the Harrison bank became an office of the First of America Bank.

The first Clare County Cleaver was published in 1881 in the back room of a butcher shop owned by John Canfield. The paper was published by John Quinn and a partner, probably the same Canfield who owned the butcher shop. Later Asa Aldrich became the publisher of the Cleaver, and for six or seven years employed Jess Allen. Allen bought the Cleaver in 1909, and published it until he sold it to Charles Roe in 1915. Allen repurchased the Cleaver in 1917 and continued to publish it until 1936. One of the great losses of Harrison history occurred as the result of the fire which destroyed the files of the Cleaver when it burned to the ground on the night of December 26, 1925. The present owner, Glenn Bucholz, began publishing the Cleaver after the death of his father, Emil, who had been the owner and publisher since 1937.

There were many firsts for the new city of Harrison. The first bakery was started by Charles Lewis, and the first barber was Dave Campbell. The first lighting system was installed in 1900 with the city operating its own electric plant until 1936 when the Consumers Power Company took over. Michigan Bell Telephone Company installed the first telephone lines in 1903. Michael Fanning and Fred Weatherhead owned the first telephones in the village. In 1904 the city replaced its wooden sidewalks with cement ones. During that same year electric street lights were installed in the center of each street.

Early social life in the community was extremely simple. In the words of one of the early residents, "Going to church was an important event." The choirs of the Methodist and Congregational churches and the Harrison Cornet Band, directed by Henry Heismann, represented the musical talent of the town.

At first, dancing was the favorite pastime of the settlers. In the early days when people celebrated they danced and danced. Members of one dance orchestra told of playing for a Fourth of July celebration at which people danced continuously from the 3rd until the 5th.

The Odd Fellows was Harrison's first fraternal organization and held its meetings above the Hughes Brothers Store. In 1881 the second floor of the store was also used as a roller skating rink. When the roller skating craze first appeared in Harrison, everyone young and old skated. George Sanford, a Harrison resident, was Michigan's Champion Roller Skater. Skating continued at the Odd Fellows Hall until the Wilson Opera House was built in the fall of 1884.

The original Opera House, located at the corner of First and Main streets, is used today as the local Masonic Hall. It was built as a skating rink and used to accommodate stock entertainment touring companies who passed through the town from time to time. Originally the Opera House was a one story building. Around 1890 the roof was raised, and the building was completely renovated to include a stage, dressing rooms, balcony, ticket office, coat check room and dance floor. Until 1934 local high school basketball games were held in the building as well as games for "city teams" which were comprised of young men who played at the basket to defend the honor of Harrison. These young men competed with local teams from Clare, Farwell and dozens of other nearby towns. Traveling or local talent shows, the famous "Lyceum," and musicals filled the seats. It was also the scene of formal banquets. Ballroom dancing was scheduled once a week, and on some occasions well known bands came from out of town and attracted hundreds of people who occasionally danced all night. During the 1930's the Opera House was again used as a roller skating rink and general recreation center by the local branch of the W.P.A. recreation project.

In 1880 the Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad sold the property on the corner of Beech and Second Streets to some prominent Harrison citizens. A hotel/tavern with a livery stable attached was built and called the Lockwood House. Later it was renamed the Ohio Tavern. Old bills and receipts found in the walls of the original structure indicated that the Lockwood House was not a quiet stopping place and a great deal of glass replacement was necessary. For many years the structure stood empty and neared condemnation. Only one side of it was being utilized, and that was as an outdoor movie screen. In 1945, Edward Groehsl, a Flint businessman, bought the structure and began the process of renovation. The structure was renamed The Colonial House and was managed by Arthur D. Butterfield. In 1949, Omar and Lucille Austin and Lucille's sister, Margaret and her husband Leonard Baker, became the owners. The rambling three story white colonial inn was renamed the Surrey House, and for many years it was a showplace of Harrison with a state-wide reputation for fine dining.

The Harrison Lumber Company was founded in 1912. The original stockholders were:

Orthe Boulton	Clare Co. farmer
Arthur Lang	Clare Co. farmer
Charles Page	Retired owner of Page Fence Co.
Marion Caner	Clare Co. farmer
Joseph Ladd	Clare Co. farmer
F. W. Town	Harrison businessman
John R. Brown	Clare Co. Sheriff
John Quinn	Attorney
Jay Wyman	Clare businessman
W. R. Hilborn	Clare businessman

The business was originally called the Harrison Elevator Co. From origin to the present time, its managers have been Henry Gardner, Bob Burns, William Hileman, Merle Ensz, Mike Marko and Don Haskin.

The Lumber Company was and still is located on the corner of Beech and First Streets. One of the products for sale was ice, cut by hand each winter on Budd Lake and stored in the ice house. In 1944 the Pere Marquette Railroad Company decided to abandon service to Harrison. The Lumber Company purchased the right-of-way from Birch Street to Beech Street for \$750. Charles Ashcraft in 1964 purchased from the Lumber Company, the property where the old depot stood and constructed a new supermarket. The old elevator was torn down in 1968 and a new office building was built. A short time later burglars broke into the office making a shambles of the antique safe which dated from 1807 and was originally owned by the Wilson Brothers. In 1970 a large lumber storage building, located to the north of the main building, was constructed. In 1990 the main building was again renovated and expanded.

After the turn of the century Harrison shifted from a noisy, bustling town of 1500 to a quiet, sparsely populated village that became the trading center of an indifferent agricultural population. In 1920 the population reached its lowest ebb, 399. Soon after World War I lumbering, once a big industry, that provided employment for several hundred people, saw its last mill disappear. Farmers in the surrounding countryside only prospered for a few more years. Then many of the neighboring farms ceased to exist, and people drifted away because their means of livelihood ended.

The fabulous "Roaring 20's" with its paper prosperity did little for the struggling people of Harrison. The town had no economic base, and there was no adequate wage structure to support the current cost of living. The only influx of money came from residents who worked out of town and maintained their homes in Harrison. In those days that meant punishing drives by flivver from Detroit, Lansing, or Flint just to see their families. The only other means of earning a living in the community was the distilling of bootleg whiskey, a little tourist trade, and a few state and federal jobs.

Most of the buildings in town were in need of paint and repairs. Main Street was a dusty, gravel road, and neighboring streets were overgrown with high grass. Two livery barns and two blacksmith shops were still in operation between 1920 and 1925, and two of those continued in operation until 1930. The transition from the horse and buggy days to the automobile age was well on its way, but by no means complete.

One of Harrison's most colorful characters was John "Spikehorn" Meyers, known to thousands of Michigan residents simply as Spikehorn. He was a showman, naturalist, politician, coal miner, tile manufacturer, furniture builder, inventor, realtor, bear hunter, lumberjack, and above all an individualist. It was said that, "He carried more plans and ideas in the folds of his buckskin jacket than can be heard in five days time."

As a farm youth near Shepherd, Spike turned out what he claimed to have been the "first big tractor." He also developed a threshing machine, a logging tractor and a sugar beet lifter, and formed companies to manufacture the tractor and thresher. These claims have been substantiated by older residents. The old gentleman was said to have a fertile imagination under his white thatch of hair and full white beard. In addition to forming companies to manufacture his inventions "which somehow never quite came off," Spikehorn operated a cement tile plant near Shepherd and later operated a factory that manufactured resort furniture. At one time he was also involved in a coal mining venture near Williamston in Ingham County. Spike also claimed to have developed the engineering principle that made the Detroit-Windsor tunnel possible. He was in litigation over that claim for many years. Spike also operated a toboggan slide just south of the Wilson State Park during the winters of 1930-31.

Spikehorn moved to Harrison in 1933 after waging a vigorous campaign against the relocation of US-27. After failing to succeed with his campaign he simply moved his establishment to another spot on his 1,000 acres and settled at the corner of US-27 and M-61.

According to neighbors in Shepherd, Meyers' interest in the woods and buckskins developed sometime around 1930, when he first opened his bear pits. The Harrison bearman, who packed a lot of wit, drew tourists from all over the state to his roadside zoo. He delighted in feeding his pets sweets, popcorn and soda pop, and also enjoyed posing with the bears for tourists' cameras.

Spike's traditional enemies were always the conservation officers. For a long time he posted a sign in front of his business which read "Feed Conservation Officers to the bear." He became involved in a long court wrangle because he would not obtain a permit required to pen wildlife.

Spikehorn died in 1959, at the age of 89, and is buried in the Salt River Cemetery near Shepherd.

James A. D'Arcy, president and sole owner of the Texas Realty Company, arrived in Harrison around 1943. Jim, as everyone called him, owned property on Torch Lake near Alden, Michigan, which he planned to develop. However, after residing a few months in Harrison, he was attracted by all the lakes and undeveloped land in the area. A prime piece of property located on the east side of Budd Lake which was owned by the president of the bank, Fred W. Weatherhead, appealed to him. Weatherhead owned property on the south end of Budd Lake as well as on the east side of the lake, west of Grant Avenue and north to Matilda Drive. Weatherhead declined D'Arcy's offer to buy the property just as he had declined the offers of several other down state developers. D'Arcy, always smoking a R. G. Dunn cigar, was a distinguished looking gentleman. He was just under six feet tall with a portly midsection and a white mustache. D'Arcy was not deterred by Weatherhead's refusal. He just continued to look at other property.

As time passed D'Arcy felt more comfortable in the area. He rented a log cabin on the west side of Lake Street next to Wilson State Park and lived there for the duration of his stay in Harrison. He made friends with other realtors and several businessmen such as Carl Burkhalter, owner of the Budd Lake Bar, where he enjoyed a few cups of coffee each day. By April 7, 1944, D'Arcy had purchased 80 acres between Stockwell and Fir Roads, east of US-27, and had all the approvals necessary to subdivide this property into the Airport Forest Subdivision, which is part of Section 9 in Hayes Township. This subdivision consisted of two streets each 1/2 mile long; Filter Road and Williams Road. The lots in the subdivision measured 100 feet by 200 feet. The original streets were built by cutting down trees, leveling the ground, and putting up street signs.

D'Arcy developed the unique idea of selling a lot and a cabin as a package deal. He contacted Carey Peters, a leader in the Mennonite settlement, who owned and operated Peters' Crateworks, located east of Harrison. The Mennonites sawed their own logs for crates, packing boxes, pallets and an assortment of other wood products. Peters and D'Arcy agreed on a plan whereby D'Arcy would buy pine logs (mostly Jackpine) and have them delivered to Peters' sawmill, where they were sized, grooved, and planed. The cabin logs, along with roof boards, floor boards, four windows, a hand made door, and roofing materials were delivered to the building site to be erected by the building crew. Laurence Holdeman, a local Mennonite builder, was contracted to lay the foundations. Within three days the first cabin measuring 14 feet by 18 feet was completed. D'Arcy priced these units at \$695 with \$100 down and \$35 per month. He advertised the sale of these cabins in the Lansing, Saginaw, Bay City, Midland, Flint and Pontiac newspapers.

At the same time, factories producing war materials in those cities were operating at capacity and employees were working seven days a week earning a great deal of overtime pay. By the time Japan surrendered, in the fall of 1945, factory workers were excellent prospects to own a cabin in the north woods.

D'Arcy's package deal of buying a lot and a cabin hit the market at the right time. It was not unusual for four salesmen to sell ten or 12 cabins on a weekend. Bob Burns, Sr. was the full-time office manager, and Sally Woodward was the secretary. Bobby Burns, Jr. attended college in the winter and sold cabins all summer. Elmer Green, construction foreman, was responsible for the materials needed to keep six or seven construction crews busy building cabins.

Because this development was so successful, D'Arcy platted three more subdivisions: Supervisors Plat of Airport Forest Subdivision #1, #2, and #3 consisting of 380 acres in Hayes and Frost Townships.

At the same time D'Arcy, a regular customer of the State Savings Bank, became better acquainted with Weatherhead. He had not forgotten about Weatherhead's property on Budd Lake, and in 1944 he convinced him to sell it. This property was platted into the Weatherhead-Hughes subdivision and included all the lake lots north and south from Hughes Point. These lots ranged in price from \$495 to \$795. Today, lovely homes occupy these properties and help increase the valuation of the city.

In 1940, D'Arcy owned a green Lincoln-Zepher Coupe which he preferred to have someone else drive so he could sleep. He loved young people and a group which included Bill and Max Skinner, Dave Murton, Ben Burns and Larry Snively, just to mention a few, traveled everywhere with him. He took them to the movies in Clare and Houghton Lake, and to Grayling to ski.

To provide lumber to build his cabins D'Arcy purchased sixteen 40 acre tracts of land located in the Upper Peninsula between Hulbert and Newberry. He hired Mr. & Mrs. Howard Bates and Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Brand to set up a sawmill to process lumber and then transport it by rail to Harrison.

D'Arcy liked the winter and winter sports, and with the land development business under control his thoughts turned to other endeavors. At one time he looked at some property west of US-27 and north of Mannsiding Road, and envisioned those hills being turned into ski slopes. Later, when he had some leisure time and money, he bought that property and began developing a ski resort. By the summer of 1951 D'Arcy's crew cleared the hills and bulldozers leveled the trails. A tow rope of sorts was installed by using large poles with old wheels attached. He built one of his cabins to be used as a warming house. Legend has it that he contracted with a friend from Leota to trap a "snowsnake" that could be used as the mascot for his ski resort. The creature was caught, mounted and displayed in the warming house of Snowsnake Mountain Ski Resort. Years later Dale and Carolyn Brockway bought the resort and developed it into one of Mid-Michigan's best ski areas.

A large amount of real estate was developed during the 1950's and 1960's in the townships surrounding the city of Harrison. Most of these structures were small cabins built to entice urban residents to this area noted for its many recreational opportunities. In past years many other developers have followed D'Arcy's example, and have all contributed to the development of the Harrison area as a major resort center. D'Arcy was the first with his "cabin in the woods" development, referred to by Col. Dale Sharp, a local humorist and barber, in his book At Ease With Col. Sharp as the "wooden tent." Over the years these starter cabins have been enlarged, improved and developed into year long residencies. The summer population of Harrison has swelled by thousands as vacationers from the city flock to the area to enjoy the climate and beauty of the north.

Later D'Arcy was diagnosed with cancer of the lip, and he entered Ford Hospital for an operation and treatment. After his recovery he returned to Harrison where he continued to live for many years.

When D'Arcy was about 67 years old he sold his property on Torch Lake and bought property in Colorado. He walked into town and said, "I am Jim D'Arcy, president of Texas Realty Company and I want to develop some property." He did just that, and lived there the rest of his life.

If one researches the past official minutes of the village of Harrison, and the City of Harrison after its incorporation in 1891, it is easy to see that city officials have always been responsible in maintaining basic services such as water, lights and streets. Much of the early business of the city has remained the same into the 1990's.

The city hired its first city policeman in 1948; Lester Beavers, who was allowed two blue uniforms with boots and a raincoat. Up until the mid 1970's there was only one policeman to patrol the city. When Howard Haskin was appointed police chief in 1973, he expanded the department and conducted classes for high school students who were interested in law enforcement as a career. Haskin's innovations helped modernize the department. In 1986 the local police department was discontinued, and since then the city has contracted with the Clare County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services.

In 1948, the Harrison Women's Club requested that the city council give 1/2 mill of assessed valuation to fund a library. The Harrison Community Library was first housed in the city hall and Betty Wells was the first librarian. In 1967 a new city hall and city garage were constructed on Beech Street behind the Lumber Company. Ethel Hagen was the librarian at that time. During 1968 and until the fall of 1969 the library shared space with the newly formed Mid Michigan Community College's library, while its campus facilities were being constructed. Laurine Wright was employed as librarian at that time followed by Anne Smith who serves in that capacity today. In 1980, John Collins, a local businessman, donated a building located on the corner of West Main and Second Streets to be used by the city as a library for 30 years.

The first Library Board consisted of the following people:

Marion Amble
Iva Bartow
Sam Morrison

Roberta Roth
Lewis Hole

Today the Harrison Community Library consists of 25,000 volumes, and receives 33,000 visitors per year. It is financially supported by the city and seven surrounding townships.

Over the years the city donated generously to little league and city softball organizations. In 1971, as a result of this continued interest, the city in conjunction with the Harrison Lions Club, planned the development of a city park. It was soon built on W. Spruce Street complete with ball fields, picnic areas, pavilions, bathrooms, tennis courts, horseshoe pits and other recreational areas.

The 1970's were busy years for the city. A sewer system was installed, and most of the city streets were blacktopped. A zoning ordinance was also adopted at this time. The United Rescue Ambulance Service was established as well as a City Housing Commission. An industrial park on West Spruce Street next to the City Park was built in 1978.

Harrison participated in the United States Bicentennial Celebration of 1976 by conducting many events. A time capsule, with artifacts from local citizens, businesses and city offices was buried at the city park, to be opened in the year 2076.

During the 1980's cable television was installed throughout the city. Low cost housing for the elderly was constructed in the form of an apartment complex on the corner of Fifth and Main Streets and was named the Croze Manor after city councilman Harvey Croze.

In many ways the business of the city in the 1990's remains the same as it was in the early days when Harrison was just a village. Harrison has had its difficulties, but the people of the community have always handled them responsibly and with vision. As the next century approaches, it is hoped that the city continues to improve and develop, thereby, ensuring a healthy and happy environment for future generations who will read these histories and know the city was appreciated.



Early lumber camps were the Hackley Hume's camp to the north... Cole's Old Camp, east of town... Warson's camp to the south...and Prestle (where the big brass penny became famous) to the west.





Lumberjacks are at work near Harrison, circa 1880.

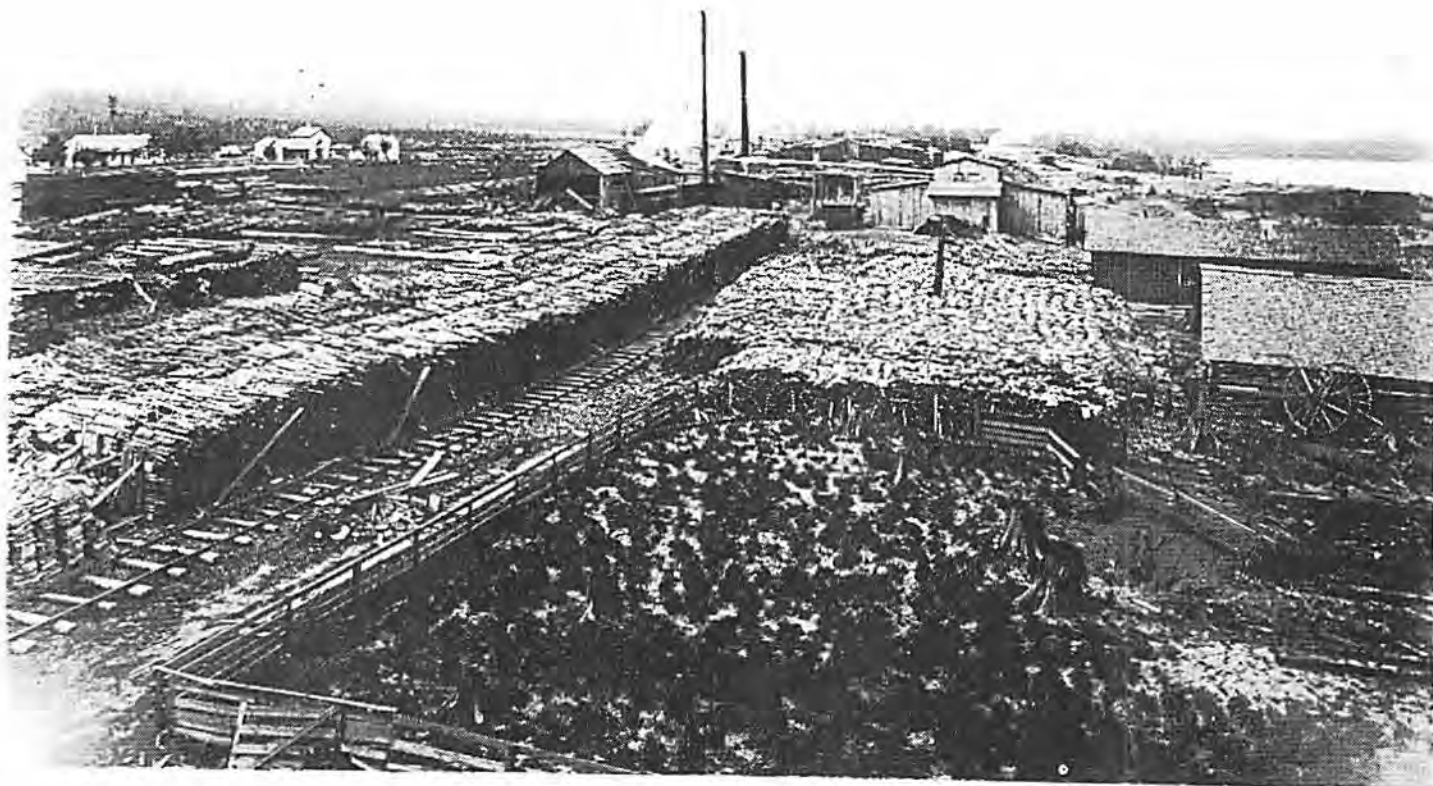




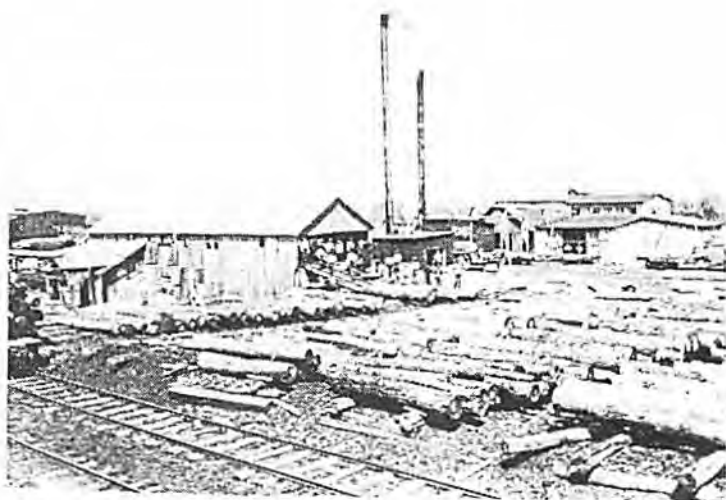
Logs are floating along the west shore of Budd Lake.



The same view pictured May, 1991.



Wilson's lumberyard located on the west shore of Budd Lake.



A sawmill located on Budd Lake.



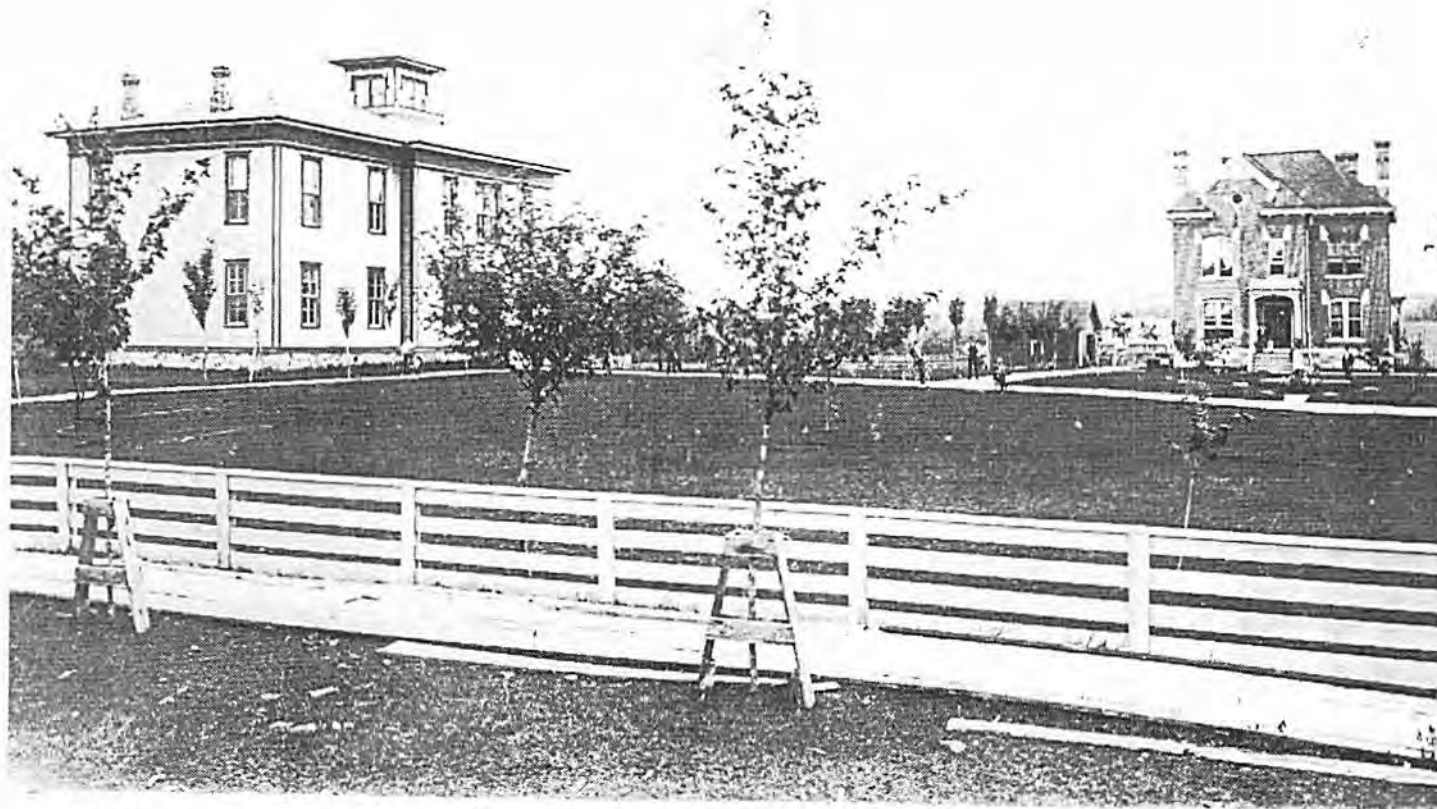
The mighty Iron Horse comes to Harrison.



The Wilson Brothers' Ice Company depicting the workmen cutting the ice and the ice slide on the west bank of Budd Lake.



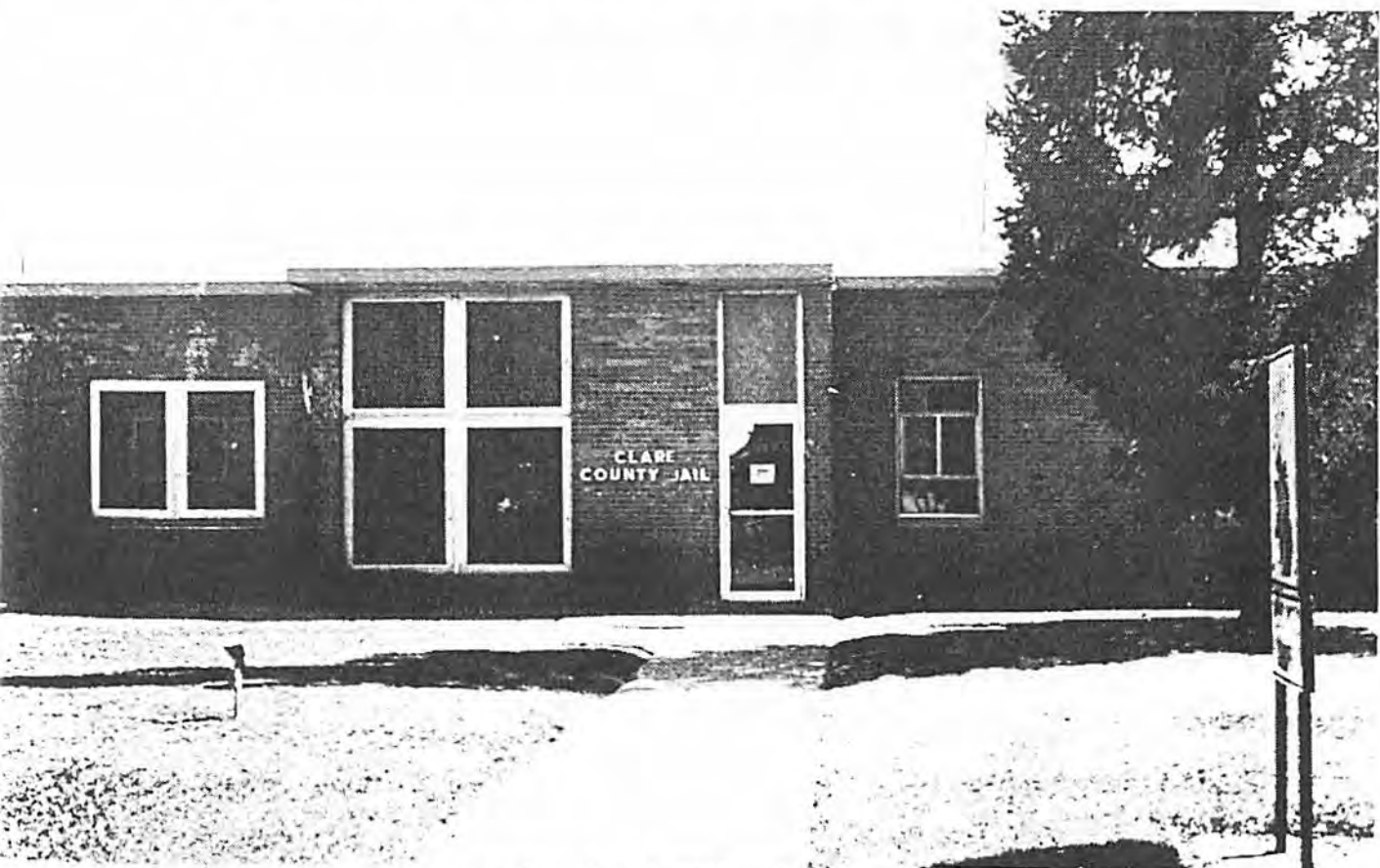
Wilson's Lumber office situated on Budd Lake.



The county complex was built in 1879 on the block between Fourth and Broad Streets. The red brick jail trimmed in white sits to the right and a steam plant to heat all the buildings is located in back. To the left stood the courthouse, a two-story structure overlooking a spacious and well-kept lawn. A round fountain, 12 feet in diameter, with shrubbery and maple trees for future shade made the complex impressive.



The present courthouse was built in 1966 on the same site as the original building.



The present jail was built in 1957 on the original jail site.



A view of the village of Harrison when one looks east toward Budd Lake from Tank Hill.



Giant tree stumps are being removed from Main Street circa 1880.



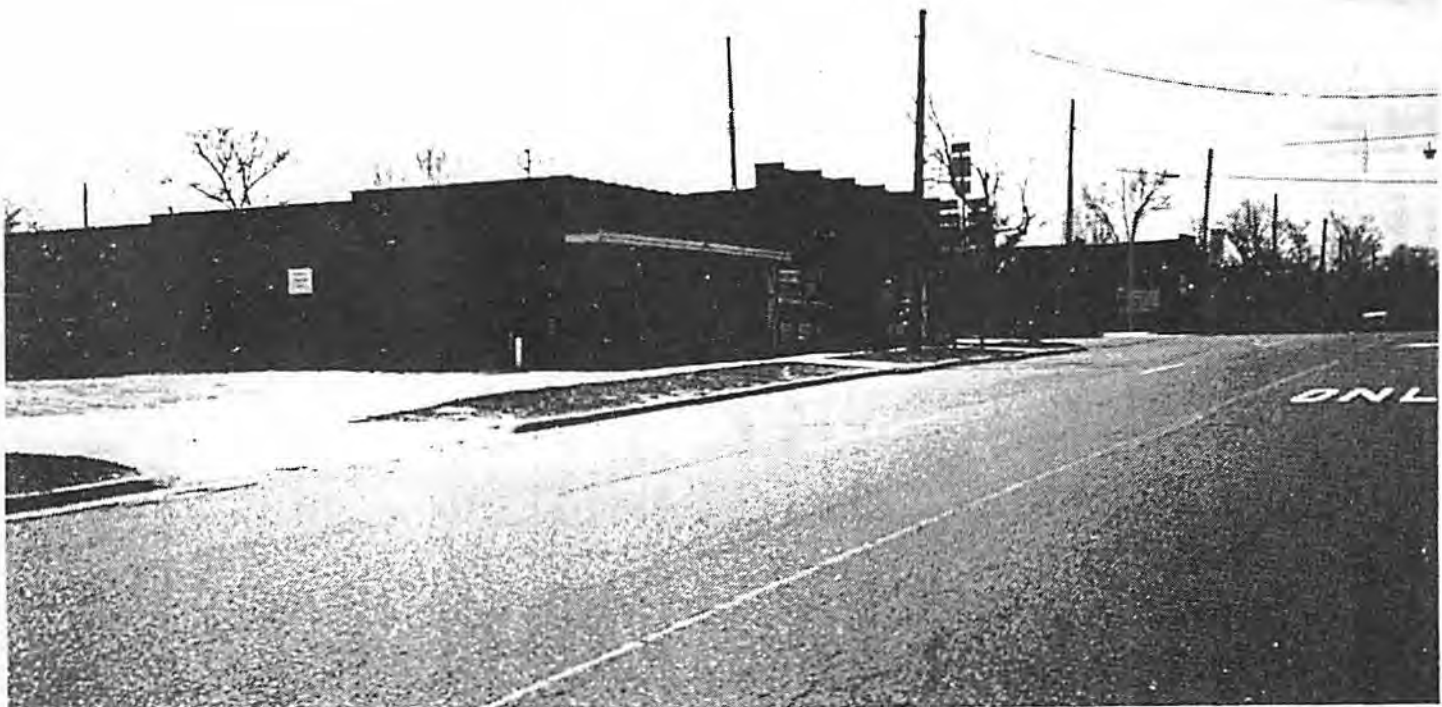
This view looks north from the corner of Second and Main Streets with Fanning's Groceries on the left.



The same view in 1991 with the Mutual Savings & Loan Office sitting to the left (in the original Fanning building) and the Harrison Community Library situated to the right.



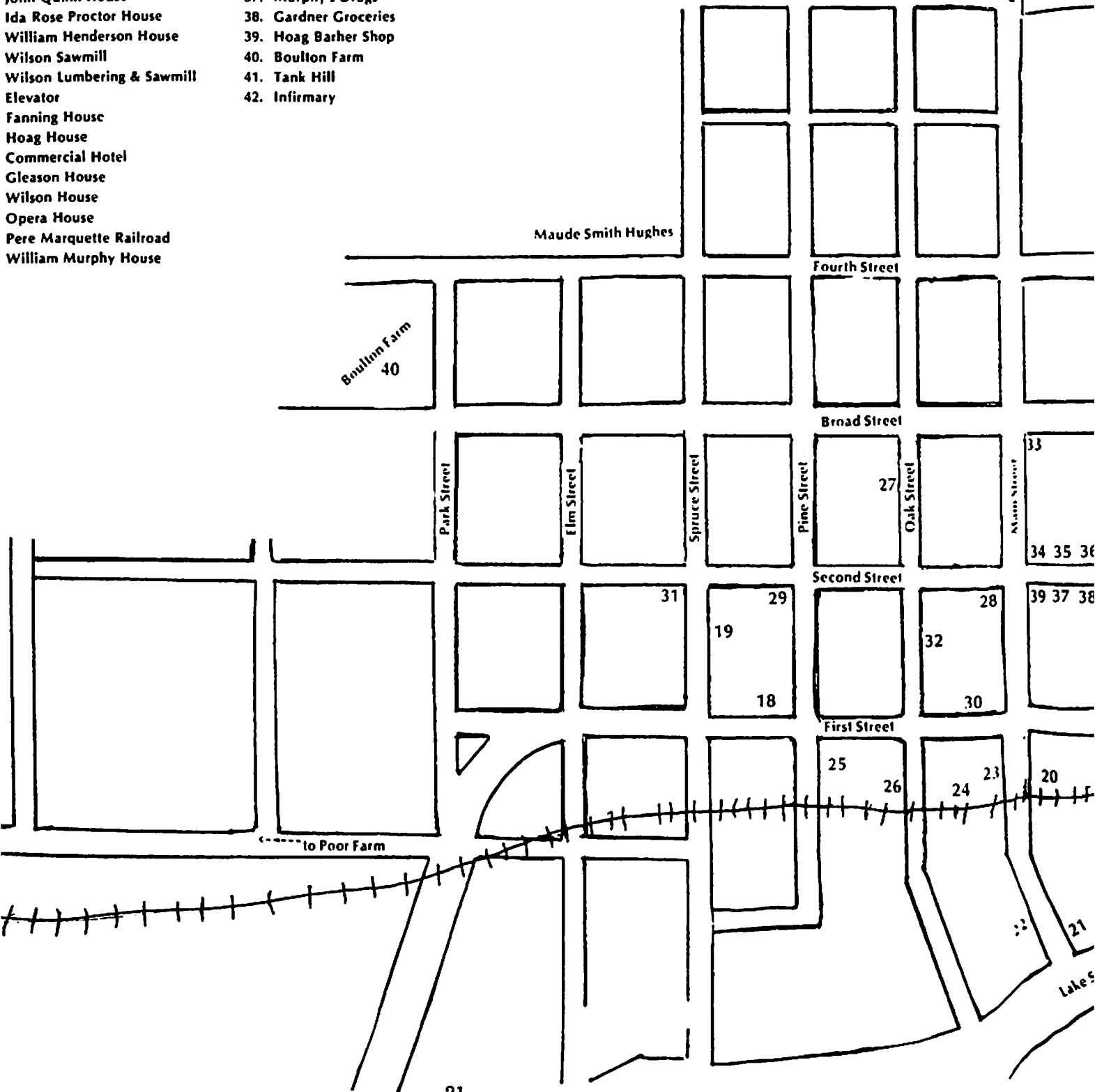
This picture looks west on Main Street with the Hughes Brothers stores in the foreground. The arrow indicates Harrison's first gas pump.



This is the same view in 1991 with the Harrison Community Schools' Early Childhood Center and Mavis' vacant store in the foreground.

- Surrey House
- City Hall & Fire Station
- Post Office
- Jake Ringle House
- Harper House
- Bungalow Beauty Shop
- Darling House
- Bailey House
- United Brethren Church
- J.R. Brown Farm
- Alice Brown House
- John Quinn House
- Ida Rose Proctor House
- William Henderson House
- Wilson Sawmill
- Wilson Lumbering & Sawmill Elevator
- Fanning House
- Hoag House
- Commercial Hotel
- Gleason House
- Wilson House
- Opera House
- Pere Marquette Railroad
- William Murphy House

- 26. Hiram Hughes House
- 27. Old Methodist Church
- 28. Hughes Brothers Store
- 29. Hughes Homestead
- 30. Taylor/Sly Home
- 31. Pifer House
- 32. Jess Allen House
- 33. Congregational Church
- 34. General Store
- 35. Filling Station
- 36. Hardware
- 37. Murphy's Drugs
- 38. Gardner Groceries
- 39. Hoag Barber Shop
- 40. Boulton Farm
- 41. Tank Hill
- 42. Infirmary

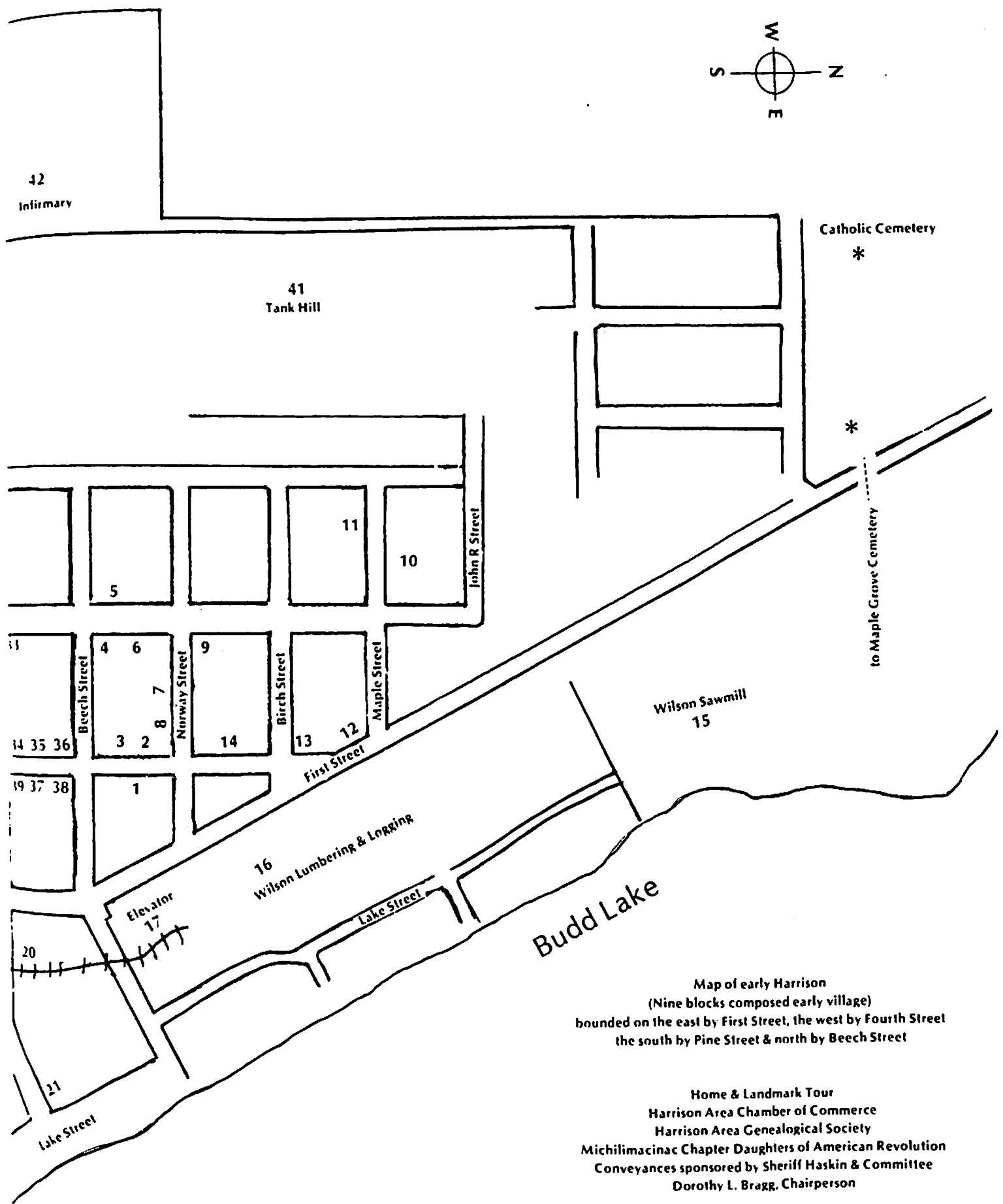
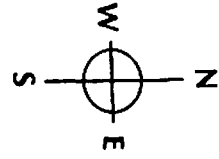


for correspondence & orders

42
Infirma

Adams Street

Lake S

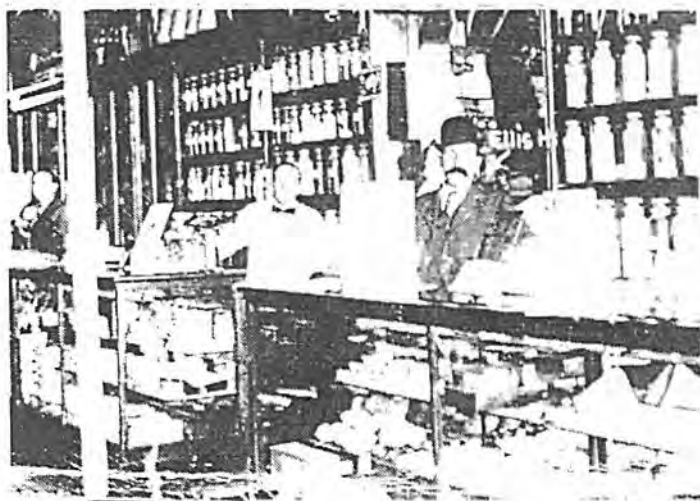


Map of early Harrison
 (Nine blocks composed early village)
 bounded on the east by First Street, the west by Fourth Street
 the south by Pine Street & north by Beech Street

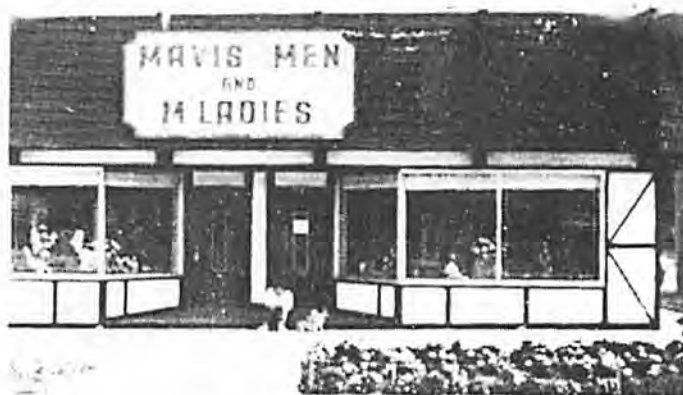
Home & Landmark Tour
 Harrison Area Chamber of Commerce
 Harrison Area Genealogical Society
 Michilimacinac Chapter Daughters of American Revolution
 Conveyances sponsored by Sheriff Haskin & Committee
 Dorothy L. Bragg, Chairperson



The Hughes Brothers general store and meat market located on west Main Street.



Left to right are Will Murphy, clerk; Harry Campbell, clerk; and Ellis Hughes, owner.



Mavis Men & M'Ladies store pictured circa 1980.



The Lockwood Hotel as it was circa 1930.



The Surrey House depicted in 1991.

The Comedy Drama **HER STEP-HUSBAND**

To be presented by local talent at

OPERA HOUSE

Harrison, Mich.

Thursday, March 7

Under the personal direction of
A. D. MATTESON

CAST OF CHARACTERS, IN SEQUENCE

Stella	- - - -	Bernadine Hughes
Sylvia Allen	- - - -	Alyce Bruce
Mary Marshall	- - - -	Esther Johnson-Matteson
Harvey P. Marshall	- - - -	Ad. Matteson
Limpy Lannigan	- - - -	Maynard Maybee
Aunt Emma Paisley	- - - -	Mrs. Pearl Clute
Florence Ainslee	- - - -	Leona Hallett
Dr. Gerald Niles	- - - -	Howard Stimpson
Officer Shea	- - - -	Arnold Hughes
Willie Marshall	- - - -	Bruce Lowell Matteson

Vaudeville Between Acts, by Esther and Ad.

Admission: Adults 35c

Kiddies 20c

Reserved Seats 10c extra---on sale at Hallett's Restaurant.

CURTAIN RISES AT 8:15

This is a copy of a handbill for a local drama production at the Opera House circa 1928.



The Wilson Opera House built in 1884. The building was originally built for a skating rink and entertainment touring companies. It has a stage, dressing rooms, balcony, ticket office, coat check room and dance floor. It featured formal banquets, ballroom dancing and general recreation until 1933.



The home of the Masons and Eastern Stars, 1991.



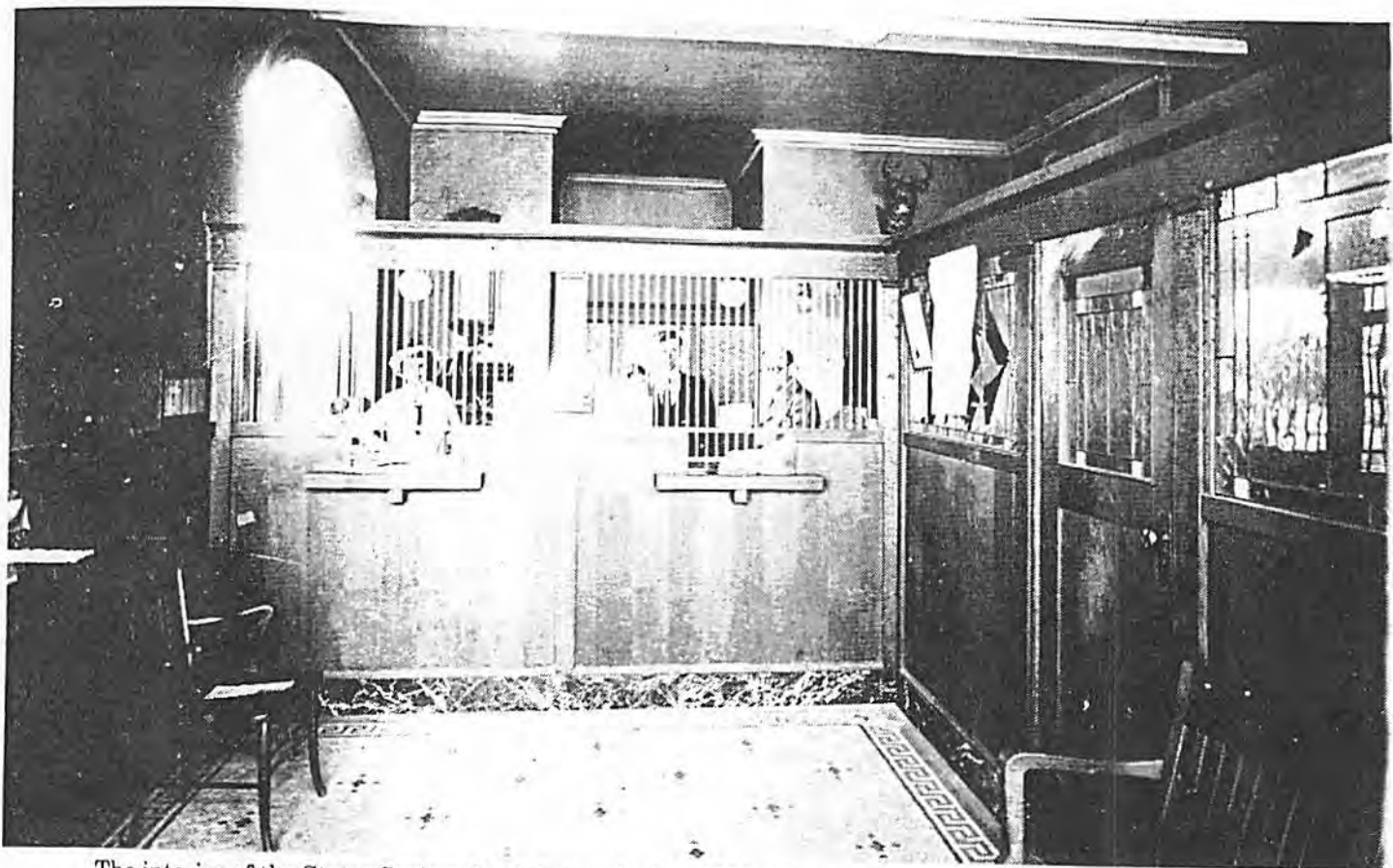
The States Savings Bank of Harrison with Fred Weatherhead pictured on the right, keeping an eye on his bicycle. He was involved with the bank for almost 60 years.



The States Savings Bank's new office located on the south corner of Beech and First Streets, October, 1960.



In 1975, the latest bank building was built on the east corner of First and Oak Streets and renamed Mid-Michigan Bank after it merged with the First States Saving Bank of Gladwin. In 1991, it is the First of America Bank.



The interior of the States Savings Bank depicted, circa 1920. Pictured from left to right are Iva Curtis Moore, Wallace Harper, and Fred Weatherhead.



Al Crigier, Clare County Sheriff on the left, is pictured with bank and FBI officials and flanked by Fred Weatherhead on the right, with the recovered safe found in the woods near Muskegon after Harrison's only bank robbery. The culprits were never apprehended.



Pictured is a view of east Second Street with Gardner's Grocery Store, Murphy's Drug Store and a small piece of the Lockwood Hotel in the far left-hand corner.



This is the same view, 1991.



The Harrison Elevator Company founded in 1912.



The Harrison Lumber Company located on the same site, north corner of First and Beech Streets, 1991.



The Commercial Hotel located on the north side of east Main Street, just off First Street.



Pictured is Hampton's Ford Garage on west Main Street with old snowmobiles of the 1920s.



Jay Wood's Sinclair gas station and Chrysler Plymouth and GMC Truck Sales circa 1945, located at the corner of First and Main Streets.



Harrison's U.S. Post Office in 1991 situated at the corner of First and Oak Streets.



The original Harrison school was built in 1881 and was located on west Main Street.



Harrison Community High School was built in 1974 on south Fifth Street.



The Harrison Community Middle School was built in 1958, as the high school, on the original school site on Main Street. The two-story structure was built in 1938.



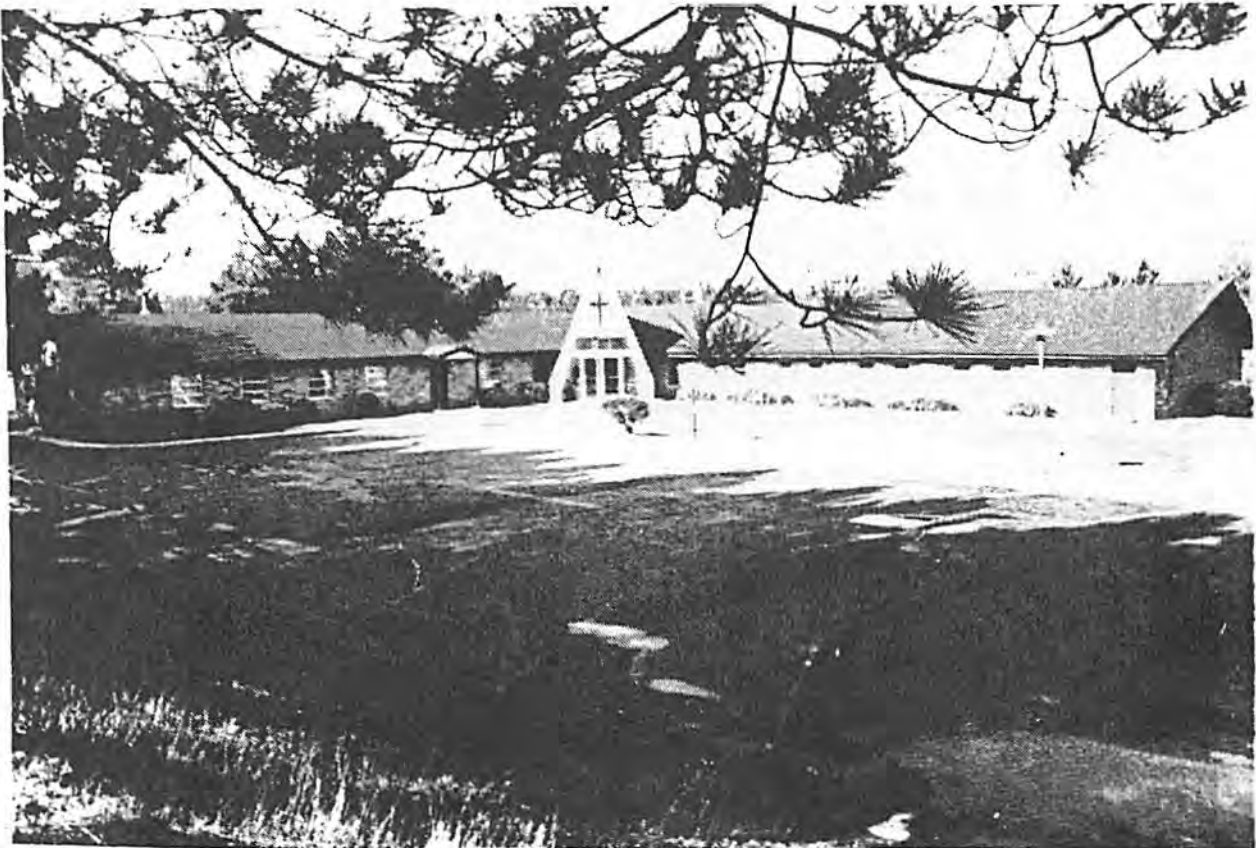
The original St. Athanasius Catholic Church was built in 1900 on west Broad Street.



The new St. Athanasius Catholic Church was built in 1987 on the corners of Spruce, Broad and Fourth Streets.



The Congregational Church was built in 1880 on the corner of Main and Broad Streets.



Today the Congregational Church built in 1965 is located on the corner of Spruce and Fourth Streets.



The Clare County Infirmary, circa 1912, was located on south County Farm Road. The caretaker family lived in the center, with a wing for men situated on the south and one for women on the north. The residents raised their own produce and domestic farm animals. The facility closed about 40 years ago and later burned.



Members of the Board of Supervisors and other county dignitaries posing at the opening of the Clare County Infirmary.



Pictured are Red Eagle and John "Spikehorn" Meyers feeding bear cubs at Spikehorn's Wildlife Park, which is located on the corner of U.S. 27 and M-61.





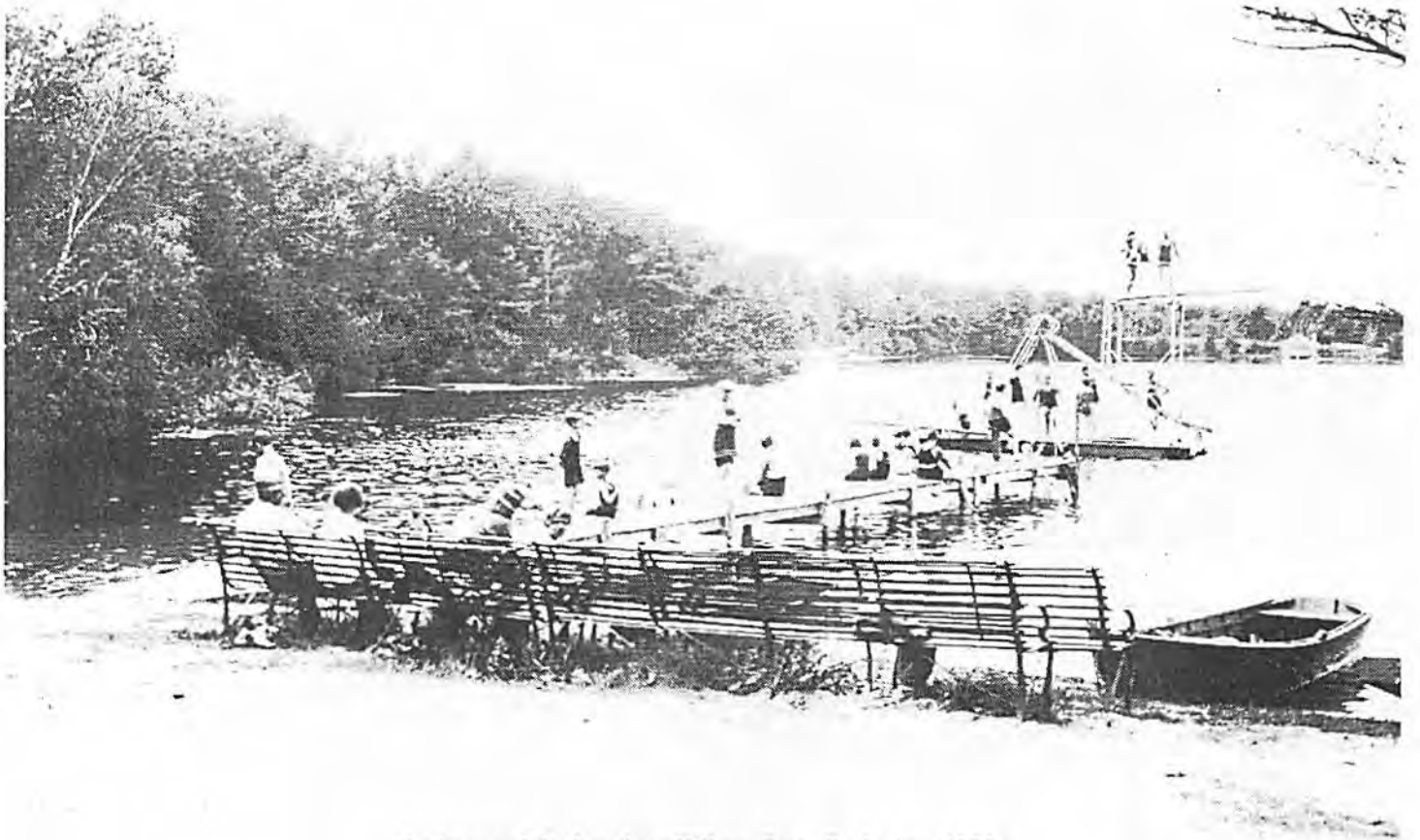
Pictured is a bathhouse and the beach at the Harrison City Park circa 1920.



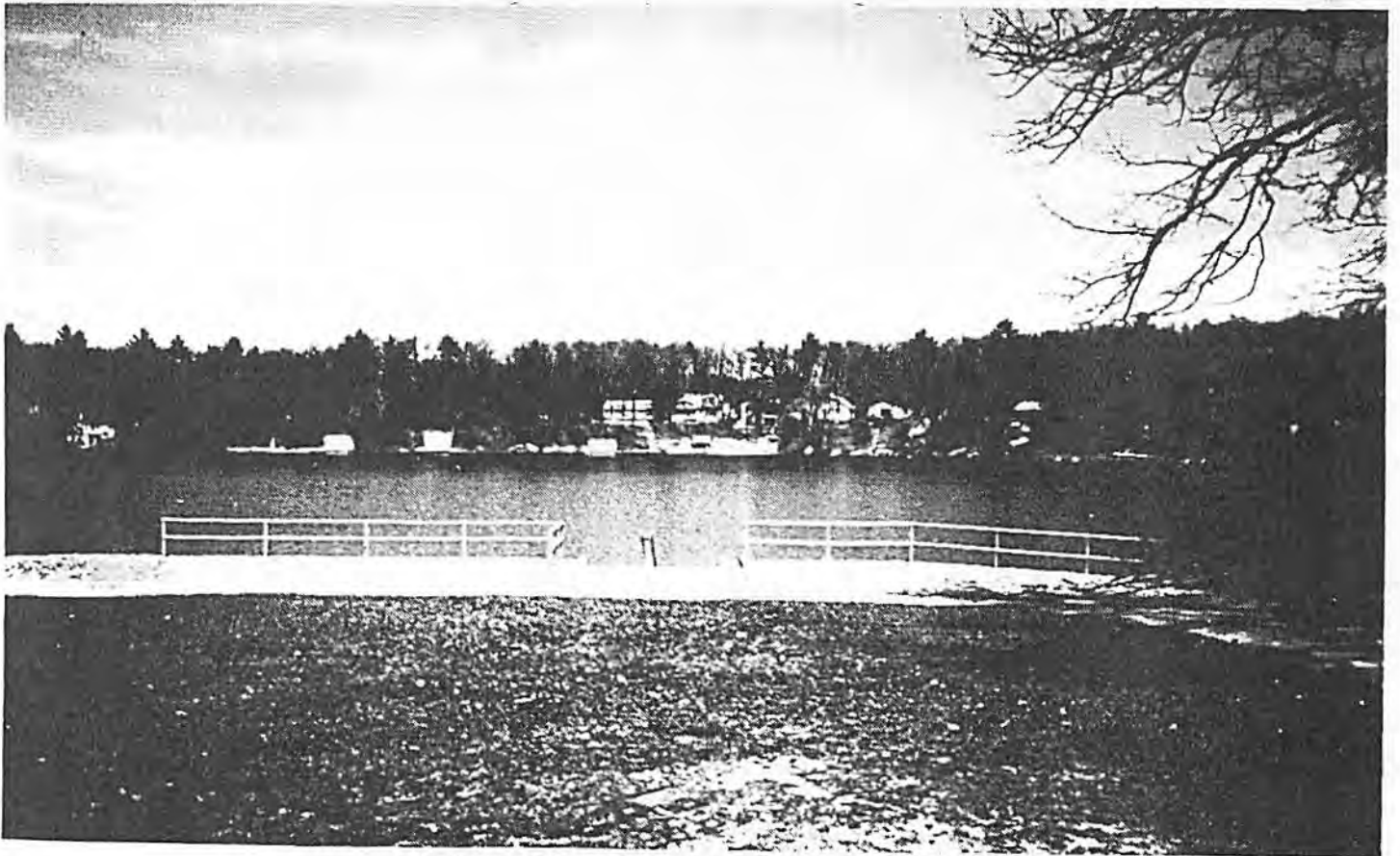
The Pavilion and bandstand which was originally located at the middle of Main and Second Streets with Paul Weatherhead sitting on a bench at the city park.



The Wilson State Park beach house constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corp. in the 1940s. May, 1991.



A picture of the beach at Wilson State Park circa 1930.



A picture of the beach at Wilson State Park, 1991.



Budd Lake, named for Richard Budd, an early settler, looking south from Townline Lake Road.



Townline Lake Road winding along the north end of Budd Lake.



The same view depicted in 1991.



The Clare County Cleaver Office viewed today. The old Cleaver office burned in 1926.

Fire which started Saturday evening in Mrs. H.B. Jones restaurant burned four buildings and destroyed property valued at nearly \$30,000. The blaze was discovered at about eight o'clock, and although the firemen responded promptly, in less than an hour four buildings were destroyed. The Jones restaurant, the Masonic building, the Cleaver block and the county garage were the ones to go down in the flames.

All of the buildings, except the county garage, were of frame construction, and the blaze, having gained considerable headway before discovery swept from one to the other with resistless fury. The west wall of the county garage crumpled under the intense heat and the roof was also burned off. The extreme cold hampered the efforts of the fire fighters, but it is very doubtful if any human agency could have confined the flames to a smaller area.

Every effort was made to carry from the burning buildings everything moveable, but the flames advanced so rapidly that little could be accomplished. Some furniture was removed from the lower floor of the restaurant, but practically everything on the second floor was destroyed. The Masons were able to save their charter and a few small articles of lodge furniture. The Cleaver was able to save some equipment, books, mailing lists, etc., but all the machinery was too heavy to be moved in the limited time available.

The Cleaver building, owned by Asa H. Aldrich, and Jos. Hoag owner of the restaurant building each carried \$1,200 insurance. Mr. Aldrich also lost his office furniture on the second floor. The printing equipment of the Cleaver was insured for \$1,000. The property of the Jones restaurant carried no insurance.


Clare County Cleaver
 Sept. 30, 1954
 "Jack Pine Savages
 Hold 16th Pow-Wow"

The Jack Pine Savages (named so by Prof. Skinner, when as girls in Harrison high school, they rode their bicycles on the old board sidewalks, causing the women teachers to walk in the sand) met at Ida Hamp's, Saturday, then went to the Congregational Church where they were served a delicious chicken lunch by the ladies of Circle I, Women's Fellowship. Mrs. Grace Merchant and Mrs. Carrie Dysinger were hostesses.

Those attending were: Anna Kastens Palmer, Nina Kastens Mariett, and Amelia Kastens, sisters, all of Dayton, Ohio; Sara McCormick Rice, of Portland; Alberta McKeever Roth, Detroit; Mildred Hoag, Muskegon; Ivaletta Newberry Lick, Lewiston; Edith Schaeffer Trumble, Alda Harper Hochstetler, Clare; Grace Richardson Merchant, Saginaw; Carrie Sweet Dysinger of Clare; Ida Harper Hamp, Pearl Toman Clute, Iva Curtis Moore, Clara Mixer Titus, of Harrison.

Old photographs and a big old account book of 1891 from the old Wilson's Store, where now stands the Good Luck Restaurant, caused much fun and laughter. There were the accounts of Kastens, Darlings, Harpers, Mixters, Ricahrdsons and Joos. Coffee 25¢ and 28¢, Eggs, 16¢, even corsets, 50¢.

The hostesses served coffee and cookies late in the afternoon. All departed with happy hearts to meet next year in Lewiston with Ivaletta Newberry Lick with Pearl Clute and Sara Rice as hostesses.



SOUVENIR

Greenwood School
DISTRICT NUMBER 3
CLARE COUNTY MICHIGAN

June 11, 1902

Presented By
John F. Brown, Teacher

SCHOOL OFFICERS
 Mr. S. Bruce Mr. A. Vosberge
 Mr. Lawrence

Pictured is John F. Brown, Greenwood school teacher, later County Superintendent of Schools.



TRIPLE PERFUME
QUEEN BESS
 B. D. BLOWIN & CO.

P. E. WITHERSPOON,
 DRUGGIST,
 HARRISON MICH.



Jerome B. Reed & Co.
SEED GARDENS
 CAMBRIDGE VALLEY

JANUARY, 1893.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	-	-	-	-

CAMBRIDGE N.Y.

Old advertisements from the girlhood collection of Clarabelle Mixer Titus who was born and raised in Harrison.

