

HIGHLIGHTS FROM
THE HARRISON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION'S
SECOND EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION:
THE LOST VILLAGES OF HARRISON
MAY 10, 1995

The speakers for this presentation were commissioners Tom Gregor, Peggy Kennard, Linda Karczewski, and Marie McDougal.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE: Since much of this presentation is in the words of local historians, writers and columnists we would like to give them all credit now. We owe most of our words to historians Robert Eldredge, Michael Leeson, and John Sturm. We have also taken information from newspaper columns and articles by Rodney Waterbury, Robert Selwa, Richard Gonyeau, and Marie McDougal. We thank them all.

BELVIDERE

You have, no doubt, heard the phrase "Location, Location, Location". Well, in 1835 James Conger had no problem finding the perfect location for his dream city. His problem was "timing, timing, timing."

When Conger spotted the land at the mouth of the Clinton River, he knew that he had the right location. All he needed was a little financial help. His efforts to raise money have been described this way: "All the beauties and some of the possibilities were placed (before the investors-to-be)... predicting a bright, prosperous future for investors. His description seems one of a utopian land, a Venetian water-side town that might soon eclipse Mt. Clemens in ways, at least, aesthetic."

Conger described his new town as "25 miles above Detroit at the mouth of the Clinton River, being directly on the 'great and only route of water communication' with the upper lake region and whole western country."

He went on to say that, "The location is, beyond all question, one of the most healthy in Michigan, and the surrounding countryside is well timbered with the finest oak, maple, black walnut, whitewood and other trees to be found in America."

"In fertility, richness, and depth of soil it is not surpassed by any other in the Western states. Along the margins of the St. Clair and various rivers, this country has been settled and well improved for from thirty to sixty years, and

exhibits some of the finest farms in the world. And within the last two or three years, a flood of emigrants from New York and the Eastern states, possessing both enterprise and wealth, have purchased and settled upon nearly all the lands in the section...(and) a railroad company with banking privileges, has been recently chartered by the Legislature of Michigan, to construct a railroad from Saginaw to the Clinton River; and another railroad is contemplated to connect Pontiac, Utica and other villages, with Belvidere."

"The Clinton River, at whose mouth this place is located, is among the finest rivers that empty into the Western lakes, being wider and deeper than the Cuyahoga at Cleveland, Ohio. And its waters; beautifully clear, pure...and limpid - - in this respect, like the waters of Lake St. Clair, Huron, etc. This river is navigable to a considerable distance into the interior, for vessels of any size, after passing the bar at the mouth, which has now about six and one half feet of water. At the last session of Congress an appropriation of \$5,000 was made to remove the bar...and, no doubt (it) is entertained of obtaining at the next session such further improvements as will render this harbor the equal of any in the Western lakes."

Sound familiar? Truthfully, it doesn't sound all that familiar to me, either, and I live on the remains of the old city. Somehow I never think of the water in the canal behind my house in Venice Shores Subdivision as clear, pure, and "limpid."

James Conger, however, was a man of vision, and he often saw possibilities where others did not. Unfortunately, his visions rested on the actions of other men, the economy, and nature. If only, when Conger spoke of the flood of emigrants, he had given consideration to a different kind of flooding, perhaps this would not be such a tragic tale.

JAMES CONGER, THE MAN

James Conger was described as a man of fine appearance and engaging manners. He was full of enthusiasm, (which unfortunately tended to get him in trouble from time to time). He had more than ordinary intelligence and ability. He was a born politician and an effective orator. He was, however, also a reckless man in what has been described as a "go-ahead age." It has been said that, "During his lifetime, James had no trouble meeting families of power and position. It was his personal knack." All of these qualities made him the perfect person for the jobs he chose.

He seems to have chosen the perfect mate to help him in his enterprises, as well. In December of 1824 he married Paulina Belvidere Clark. She has been described as a very bright woman and quite a society lady. These would be important qualities for the "first lady" of the new city which would be named in her honor.

The job which probably brought Conger to this area was his position as

the original government surveyor of Lake St. Clair. Before that, however, he studied law in Lancaster, Ohio and was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1825. He later built a lucrative law practice in Cleveland and was considered one of north Ohio's foremost attorneys.

We don't know what possessed him to leave all that and go in search of a dream, but his move to Michigan did not detract from his status. He would become one of the most prominent, influential men in Macomb County. In 1837 he was admitted to practice law before the U.S. Supreme Court. It is not certain, however, whether he practiced law at Belvidere, but he did teach individual students and dabbled in religious and philosophical articles. He was even sent to the House of Representatives from his region on the Whig Free-Soiler slate. He served in the 32nd Congress (1851-53). He did not, however, run for a second term.

His real claim to fame in Belvidere, however, was his cure-all known as "Magic Regulator" or "Conger's Regulator and Tonic Liver Pills." This remedy was advertised as a "colonic stabilizer" and was a sell-out during the cholera epidemics of 1840 and 1849.

He was a man of means for most of his life, but it is said that he died in St. Clair County, a poor man. His tonic and "Regulator" provided his only income. He was, thankfully, granted his last wish. He was buried amid the remains of his beloved Belvidere with a large stone monument.

When the waters rose again, however, his body was moved to Greenlawn Cemetery in Columbus, Ohio. Some of his family are buried at Clinton Grove Cemetery. One stone of the tomb was used for many years as the front step and support for the home of Clarence Cottrell, on North River, directly opposite the location of Steamboat landing which you will hear about soon. Steamboat Landing was behind what those of us who know the area would recognize as Mrs. Bryer's house. The city is gone, the tomb is gone, but the name remains -- on the bay and on the road.

THE BEGINNINGS

We've said that James Conger had a dream. That dream was to build a city that would "one day become the queen city of the lower lakes, head of navigation to the Clinton and Kalamazoo Canal. He saw it outclassing Christian Clemens' 'saw-buzzy' town and later even challenging Detroit."

This was a time of wild land speculation and grandiose thinking. As we've mentioned, James Conger was perfectly capable of grandiose thinking. He was one of the men willing to serve as brokers and intermediaries, to purchase tracts of land, confident of passing them off immediately at a good profit. He organized a group of men who were willing to finance the purchase of land to be resold.

One source put it this way, "Conger came from Ohio and with a syndicate or association organized in Cleveland, purchased land."

To be more specific, in 1835 James and his brother, David, purchased the land on the Clinton River belonging to Alex Peltier, Joseph Robertjean, and Ignace Moross. These men had long lived on the land, farming, hunting, fishing, and trapping. The Belvidere Company's shareholders were Conger, Thomas L. Peck, Richard Hussey, James Tallman, Abram D. Smith, Elizabeth Smith, Timothy Ingraham, Thomas Balten and Nelson Oviatt.

David Conger soon sold his holdings to James and others, but James went on to name his new city Belvidere, assumedly after his' wife's family although historically there have been other speculations. He had circulars and advertisements printed and distributed in major Ohio cities. Much of our introduction was taken from those circulars.

No doubt Conger's investors and those who chose to settle in the new city believed in Conger's dream. It made sense. "New settlements tended to occur, in this part of the country, along water routes. Not without reason, for the journey in the 1820's from Detroit to Mt. Clemens required two days or more, a journey to try anyone's endurance, not to say, bone structure, with slough holes, pit-falls, swails and mudflats. Water travel was preferable."

"It was, in part, the terrible conditions of the roads that made this idea so appealing. With roads veritable quagmires, consisting in part of Indian trails and with massive railway construction a concept still in the future, canal travel was still the best route. To add to this, canalization and water improvements were at a zenith of popularity, especially in the Eastern states; dredging and other improvements to rivers were the order of the day." Conger, no doubt, was counting on this trend continuing and aiding his fledgling village.

"One hundred village lots were to be sold at auction on October 3, 1836. The purchaser was to advance 20% cash, the balance to be paid in four installments of 20% each, at which favorable time an indisputable title would be issued. Ten per cent discount was allowed if payment was, at the time of purchase, in full."

These terms were reasonable, but the sales were not as swift as had been hoped. Luckily, Conger believed in his dream and did much of the purchasing for himself. James Conger bought 7 lots. Blackwell and Conger bought one lot. Conger bought steamboat landing. Conger bought a shanty for \$35 and a second outbuilding for \$26. Conger bought the west barn, cider mill, a threshing machine, etc. for \$130. Conger bought the hotel for \$3,510. Thomas Waterhouse, Zeras Maynard and Thomas Peck purchased a lot each. 106 feet on Clinton Street was sold for \$200. 57 feet on steamboat landing went for \$150. Some 20 to 30 other families bought lots. Those lots were apparently assigned by a lottery drawing. Why some were handled otherwise is not clear, but wouldn't we love to have

been offered those prices for waterfront property?

THE CITY

According to local historian, M.A. Leeson, "The city looked majestic on paper." Belvidere means beautiful to behold in Latin, and that was also part of Conger's dream. Belvidere had been platted first by Conger himself, and then replatted by A. Dickerson of Ohio. It included broad avenues, boulevards, docks, canals, and spacious parks. Washington Square was to be 236' by 300' at the intersection of Superior and Conger streets. Belvidere Center, two blocks north was to be somewhat smaller. A lovely drive was to encircle the, as yet uncut, ox-bow. The tavern, a two-story building, yellow with white trimming and dormer windows, was to be used as a hotel. It would at various times be known as Belvidere Hotel, Conger Hotel, and Steamboat Hotel.

Rapid construction took place throughout 1836-37. This was, no doubt, thanks to an ad which read, "Mechanics and others wishing to settle in Belvidere will at all times be accommodated with lots, furnished with employment, and assisted to build, if desired, upon the most favorable terms, by applying to the subscriber at Cleveland, Ohio or at Belvidere."

Conger even provided a map to lure prospective residents. "The map, however, failed to note that certain of the facilities, parks, structures, etc. did not in fact yet exist, save on paper and in Conger's mind's eye. In fact, the site had already been furnished with a canal on the map, which canal, for its construction, required the cutting off of an ox bow of the Clinton. The map maker had managed to take care of that little detail, but no construction crew had been at work. Dredging of the river and removal of a rivermouth sand-bar were only in the discussion stage. A wide canal was to be constructed through the business section to provide wharf privileges for the immense shipping interests expected to center there."

"Expected" is a key word here. Conger had a way of assuming that what was considered for the future would actually become a reality. This was, perhaps, his fatal flaw.

Later, in 1836, a more accurate map was drawn up by Edward Blackwell showing 1,009 lots. Lots had been platted extending nearly out to the lighthouse which later became the site of the old Mt. Clemens Hunting and Fishing Club. The Belvidere lighthouse was the first structure.

A sawmill, gristmill, warehouse and dock were built by Conger and Peck. Peck operated a well-stocked general store. Steamboat landing (later behind the home of Mrs. William Cottrell and today the Bryers) was soon in service. Conger, his wife, and family had a large residence. Conger's daughter was married there to Mr. Law. (an enterprising young man, full of ambition.) He became part owner of the saw-mill. Stores were built, and Mt.

. Clemens people came to trade, farmers to the mill, etc. (The stores and mill were operated for several years despite the fate of the city itself.) At least one steamship was built at Belvidere. A ship called the Star was outfitted there, to be used for communications with Cleveland -- thus to begin a link-in to the waterways from Ohio eastward. The Moross house was added to and made into a large hotel.

There were many carp fisheries. Fish were so plentiful that farmers used sturgeon and other fine fish for fertilizer. In 1838 the description was, "Here is a post office recently established, a sub-collector's office, a steam sawmill, a store and store house, a tavern, several mechanics, and some 12 or 15 dwellings.

It has been written that, "An air of gracious living was perhaps hinted at." Conger and his wife were said to have welcomed young people to their spacious residence. Conger was noted for liberal views and philosophical writings. Belvidere was soon spoken of not only as an investment opportunity but as a lively Mt. Clemens suburb where well-connected, young Detroiters flocked, some even to hear Conger read poetry! The hotel was in existence as late as the 1890's.

THE CANAL CONNECTION

Conger had counted on the existence of the infamous canal which would connect the Clinton with Kalamazoo and would tie the lakes to the Mississippi. An 1827 authorization was given for the Clinton to be rendered "navigable for flat-bottomed craft, from Mt. Clemens to the site of the Rochester paper company." 5 million dollars was appropriated for improvements needed for the canal. This seemed to add a reality to the dream, but not a physical reality.

Unfortunately, Conger was not the only person making plans for this canal. Interests at Mt. Clemens wanted the canal and they prevailed. Mt. Clemens had political clout. Moreover, the expense of added mileage would be avoided. Thus the first lock pits were built inland from Belvidere. The first locks were poured and the die cast--unfavorably for Belvidere city.

The ceremony was magnificent and spectators from all over the state showed up to celebrate. There was one person, however, who did not exactly feel like celebrating. When a miniature steamboat stopped to pick up Conger to take him and other dignitaries to the festival in connection with the ground-breaking for the canal, Conger sent notice on that occasion that he was indisposed, but would arrive at Mt. Clemens by his own conveyance. It was unlikely that he wanted to discuss what remained by that time of his dream city. Even the ceremony was a disaster. It is said that Conger failed to do his part in the groundbreaking because one handle of the wheelbarrow he was supposed to put the shovelful of dirt in broke. Someone suggested that "the failure was emblematical of the fate of the canal." And so it was.

THE DEMISE OF A DREAM

The lots had sold, but property transfers back to Conger occurred soon. In the fall of 1836 Thomas Waterhouse transferred a lot back to Conger. There was a wholesale re-transfer of lots in 1837 following the first winter. One source wrote, "Conger gamely bought them in." Why? How had it all gone so wrong?

Perhaps this is time for a warning given by John Sturm in his Belvidere history. He wrote, "If the reader is coming round to the conclusion that these ironies betoken, somehow, an original attempt at swindle or fraud on the part of James Conger, he must be disappointed. There is no evidence, even though he seems to have been linked in with several disastrous enterprises. Rather he seems to have been a victim of his own expansive optimism and of the optimism of the heady times."

Well, you know about the canal. You probably know that the canal was also a dream, a dream that never fully materialized. With the coming of the era of railroad construction and lack of funds, canal building began to languish. Many had counted on this project which, unfortunately, fell victim to the unstable economy and died for lack of funds in 1843. This was, of course, long after the demise of Belvidere. So it must have been something else.

Conger had also counted on a network of railroads. You heard about them in his ads. In 1837 an Act incorporated the Lake St. Clair and Frederick Railroad. It was to connect Mt. Clemens to Belvidere or Liverpool but nothing seems to have come of that, either. The rail connection to Mt. Clemens or Frederick went down with the Panic of 1837.

Another disaster which spelled the end of Conger's hopes was the Bank of Lake St. Clair. It was integral to the founding and settlement of Belvidere. It was, however, only lightly capitalized with \$50,000. It had officers and stockholders. James Conger was its president. "It partook of the fate of other so called wildcat banks. Opened in March 1838, the bank closed its doors that same year, the money never circulated. Banknotes were printed in ones, twos and three dollar bills. They bore a classical representation of Ceres, also likenesses of Washington and Jefferson, well-fed cattle, etc, and were termed 'safety fund notes.' Conger nor any cashier ever put a signature to them."

One source explained that the bank, "came and faded like a wreath of mist at eve." Historian Leeson wrote, however, that "The bills were extensively circulated by the boys of the adjacent country, and in some instances, no doubt, were passed as money upon the'- ignorant or unwary."

Miss Jennie Griswold had another theory on the fall of the city. In 1915 she read a paper before the Ladies' Literary Association of Mt. Clemens. She

said it was a winter cold wave that did in the new city. Maybe, but we do know that in the spring of 1836 the rains came. Twice that summer the Clinton overflowed, sending families scurrying to higher ground.

Reverend Supply Chase wrote that "Orchards of 50 years' growth were destroyed, houses flooded." The farmlands on which the new city of Belvidere had been built had been producing crops for a half century. Chase also said that transport was interrupted to Detroit and starvation threatened the farmers as their crops washed out, so that they were reduced to eating leeks and swamp-reeds as their livestock long had done. The lake water continued its inexorable rise to cover the riverside parts of Belvidere. The Bank of Lake St. Clair was inundated.

In 1838 the water in the Belvidere region reached its historical high point. The cellars of the settlers were caves of water. The warehouse of Peck and Conger, the hotel and all structures became unusable.

"The hotel where once the beauty and fashion of Detroit and Mt. Clemens were accustomed to assemble in brilliant social affairs...became tumbled and in ruins."

One source wrote, "It is logical to conclude that a combination of factors destroyed the morale of the settlers remaining after the first winter's assaults: water damage and flooding from spring 1837, followed by a winter of high water and ice-ramming, to be followed again by devastating inundation in 1838 which returned part of the region to lake bottom."

There was also a period of sickness, pestilence and fire. In 1839 a legman for a newspaper visited his Belvidere lot. His first impression was favorable, "The great beauty of this little basin...surrounded by improvements betokening comfort, was in terrible contrast with being immured in the Lady of the Lake" (the ship he had come on.)

A closer look, however, and "the magic of the name was dispelled, and this classical city lay before us, the most miserable miasmatic marsh, that our associations with lagoons, swamps and cane brakes...suggested. The whole city of 20 houses, 17 huts and 25 cords of wood was drowned and afloat. Fences...seesawing as if ready to give up the ghost, while a half-frozen horse occupied a small spot of dry land in the rear, shivering with agony and the anticipation of a higher rise."

"Belvidere, with its pier, its town house, its customs house, its hotel, its wood pile, was now Lake St. Clair. And swarms of wild ducks might be seen in lieu of inhabitants."

"The squares, the parade ground, the campus martius, the Peck palace... Washington...Pelham, Devereaux and Peck Streets and the Shakespearean

blocks were all mingled, with not...a ripple to designate their former glory. The lake had risen 6 feet, and Belvidere had fallen forever."

This wasn't exactly a surprise, however, even to Conger. It is said that an old Chippewa Indian chief predicted the downfall. When he heard the noise of building, he said, "No can stay. Water come high, wash away. Almost time. Every 35 years - always come." The priest at the Catholic Mission also warned the citizens of high water to come. He has been given at least some of the credit for the mass exodus after the first year.

But Conger wasn't ready to let his dream die. He remained. The reports of devastation in the area must have been slightly exaggerated because he just moved his family to the second floor of the hotel. Conger's wife died and was buried at Belvidere. Her remains were later moved to higher ground.

Most sources on Belvidere's final days speak of unkind jokes and taunting songs like, "During the last days of Belvidere, when encroaching waters were engulfing the fond hopes of Conger and his wife, the frogs organized and serenaded them every night with the refrain. 'Peck and Conger, Peck and Conger.'" Boys in Mt. Clemens sang, "The Bullfrog comes from Belvidere to fight with the catfish here..."

High water conditions eventually abated, however, and the Belvidere settlement was to have residents and farms some time later; about 1880 there was a "Club House" there, windmills, etc.

The Mt. Clemens Monitor of July 7, 1882 provides a final note as to Belvidere. The steamboat "Ida" which in the late 19th century provided Mt. Clemens with its summer connection to Detroit and ports further on, was to cast the last pebble.

The news article read: "Fire at Belvidere: The old warehouse at Belvidere, one of the remaining relics of the original city, took fire yesterday afternoon from a spark from the 'Ida' . It was burned to the ground. An adjoining shed, the windmill, and two boats were also burned. The loss in all was about \$300.00."

LIVERPOOL

In 1855 or so, a company of capitalists from Pittsburgh were interested in what was known as Pointe a Chovin or L'Anse Creuse Point for development of a town for shipping and, of course, as regards themselves, for investment purposes. This lake port on L'Anse Creuse Bay would have been at the intersection of what we know as Jefferson and Shook.

It isn't clear what happened to the Pittsburgh investors, but in February of 1856 David Shook of Mt. Clemens acquired a large tract of land (between the

properties of Joseph Ballard and Joseph Pomainville), surveyed it, and filed a map at the courthouse in Mt. Clemens for the "City of New Liverpool." The town was platted by Edgar H. Shook on February 21, 1856. The town seems not to have been an immediate success, but few of the platted "wild lands towns" were ever destined to be.

It was projected, however, that Liverpool, as it was commonly called, "would one day become a port that would hold its own against Mt. Clemens, St. Clair and - who would dare to think it - Detroit herself!" One source said that Arnold and Adolph Grueber were involved. Another wrote that "prominent members of Mt. Clemens society were associated with the development."

As originally conceived, it was not a large town. The town was sectioned into forty-nine lots, mostly of irregular shape due to the indentation of the bay. Some lots had road frontage as broad as 100 feet, some much smaller--45 feet or less. They were put on the market in 1856 and 1857 with prices of \$90 to \$100.

A dock at the foot of Main Street ran many hundred feet into the lake. Boats made regular trips to Detroit which necessitated the building of a plank road to connect the port with Mt. Clemens. The road was known as Shook Road. According to Macomb County Historian Robert Eldredge, even after the plank road was abandoned, "the spiles that carried the old red bridge on which the Shook Road crossed the river into Mt. Clemens at a point on the farm owned by George M. Crocker were still visible."

The port of New Liverpool served the lumbering industry as a shipping point. A Detroit Free Press article mentioned that wood cut during the winter of 1866-67 was stacked up all along the shores of Lake St. Clair which "are said to be almost literally lined and fenced with cord wood." New Liverpool was, however, always under the total commercial eclipse of Mt. Clemens, where a U.S. Customs station was built.

Main, Water and Front Streets were the only city roads. Shortly after the first land transfers from the hands of local French pioneers to the Shooks and others, Edgar Shook sold to David Shook, the platter of the original town, 28 lots of various sizes in town 2 north of range 14 east, Harrison, for \$2,000. This constituted some of the best property and included all land adjoining the plank road. We don't know much about the other residents, but Ma Smith was famous for the delicious meals she prepared at Smith's Club House.

Although not as short-lived as Belvidere, Liverpool was not destined to be the thriving port city its founders envisioned. The St. Clair Shores News of February 18, 1926 deals with Liverpool. "The ancient village was situated on Lake St. Clair, two miles southeast of Mt. Clemens. Difficulties of transport, pestilence, and disease--and finally fire, almost destroyed this settlement."

One problem according to historical sources was that "New Liverpool, it appears, was unrecognized by the U.S. Congress which funded improvements, dredging, and implacements of revetments, piles, etc. in myriad local ports."

Another report states that, "The end of lumbering as a major industry in Macomb and St. Clair counties in common with the vagaries of weather along marshy Lake St. Clair appear to have spelled the end to the lumber port pretensions of Liverpool."

Like Belvidere, however, the major culprit seems to be water level. "The floods of '61 appear to have done evil work, so much so that New Liverpool was no longer thought of as any sort of important commercial venture."

Again the warning signs had been there all along. "In 1836 it was, for a time, open water from the lake to, or almost to, the river near the line of the old canal and flatboats were going back and forth, at least so an old settler narrates to the Mt. Clemens Monitor in 1903."

Also like Belvidere, Liverpool would rise again for a short period, but not to its former glory. "When New Liverpool ceased to exist as a lumber shipping emporeum, the promontory of land upon which it stood came to be known for its 'Liverpool Clubhouse'. Toward the end of the 19th century, this clubhouse was much in fashion. Gentlemen farmers and local merchants would rub elbows with the old French habitants." The name "New Liverpool," however, had vanished by the turn of the century.

As for the Shook family, their name is connected with the barrel stave industry which shipped internationally, presumably from points along the Clinton River.

LAKESIDE

We don't have specific dates for the resort at the foot of Crocker, known as Lakeside, but the 1894 Cutter's Guide doesn't mention it and the 1895 guide does. We do know that the founders were Pittsburg capitalists, and that the idea was to take advantage of the mineral bath traffic which by 1900 was thriving.

According to an early Cutter's Guide, "This ... popular resort is at the east end of the Crocker Boulevard, where the Mt. Clemens and Lake Side Traction Company have built a pier about 1,200 feet long, extending to deep water in Lake St. Clair, two and one half miles from the city of Mt. Clemens, and is reached by one of the best electric car lines in the country. Here the company has built one of the handsomest hotels of its class, a boat house, power house, and are still extending their improvements, which are to include a handsome casino, for various amusements, and a commodious bath house on the lake beach for the accommodation of bathers; flower gardens, walks and drives."

A later copy of Cutter's Guide, however, has a description which is about half the length and makes no mention of a casino, bath house, flower gardens, walks or drives. The pier, the electric line, the boat house, and the handsome hotel, however, gained great notoriety. The area became so popular, as a matter of fact, that two other hotels were built and flourished.

The hotels, according to the Cutter's Guides, took advantage of the cool breezes off the lake and provided an ideal spot for the weary visitors from the cities. Many visitors to the bath houses in Mt. Clemens preferred rooming at Lakeside and making the daily ride into the city on the electric cars. (From everything we've heard about the dinkey, the small electric car which took half an hour to make the trip down Crocker, these were not visitors who suffered excessive pain, at least not before their ride on the dinkey.)

The first hotel, known at various times as the Lakeside Inn, McSweeney's, and Bingham's was known for its fish, frog legs, and chicken dinners, served with all the trimmings for about a dollar. The early Cutter's Guides had nothing but praise for McSweeney, or Mack, as he was known. "A meal at McSweeney's is never to be forgotten, especially if you have just returned from an excursion on Lake St. Clair, a fishing trip, or a duck hunt. His fish dinners are worth traveling miles to partake of, his fish pond is near by and the supply is inexhaustible. Mack will supply you with any kind you desire; and if you can extract the information, an easy matter with his favorite patrons, he will tell you where to fish to catch them yourself; but best of all, persuade him to go with you, and you will be sure to return with a boat load."

An interesting side note is the question of whether Cutter made a trip to Lakeside after Mr. Bingham, better known as Bing, took over the operation. You see, the only thing that changed in the description in later guides was the name of the hotel, its proprietor, and his nickname.

The other hotels were the Pontchartrain-on-the-lake which one newspaper ad called the "place to go" for sweltering Detroiters - at least during the summer months - and the St. Clair House which was billed as "the place to go and have a good time."

Although we don't have much information on the Pontchartrain yet, we do know quite a bit about the St. Clair House and her owner, Frank Campau, partially thanks to a local history written in 1905 and partially due to the fact that Frank's daughter, Eleanor Buchman, is one of our most loyal members.

According to Eldridge's report, Frank A. Campau engaged in farming for a number of years and in 1896 he built a hotel upon his farm in Lakeside, which he called the St. Clair House. "He is the proprietor of this summer resort that has become popular because of the capable management of the owner, who puts

forth every effort in his power to promote the comfort of his guests, and has therefore secured a liberal patronage. He also put in a neat bar and is doing a thriving business. He is one of the public-spirited citizens of Macomb County and takes quite an active interest in local politics as a supporter of republican principles. He served as township clerk for one year (We could find no record of this, but he was definitely township supervisor for several years) and has been chairman of the republican township central committee for three or four years and has been sent as a delegate to numerous county, congressional and state conventions. He was appointed postmaster at Lakeside and filled that position until the office was discontinued."

The Cutter's Guide also mentions a shooting park in connection with Lakeside. Lakeside was also a popular spot because of the long pier which ran out into the lake. It was "the destination of large parties" (private yachts and steamers) out of Mt. Clemens and Detroit. Perhaps the most famous photo is the one seen in Cutter's guide of the steamer Newsboy at the Lakeside dock. The Lakeside Boathouse was also popular with those who needed to rent their water transportation.

Of course, the resort would have been nothing without the Detroit, Lakeshore and Mt. Clemens Electric Line which had its power house at this busy intersection. According to local historians, in the spring of 1898, a party walked from Mt. Clemens to Lakeside. There were speeches and a golden spike was pounded to indicate to the world that the scenic railroad was open for business. The refrain, "ten cents, Milk River station to Mount Clemens" was soon heard. One account said that the line was "built hurriedly and cheaply, to sell to investors, but it was so popular from the start, that it had to be entirely rebuilt. It was too good a thing to sell."

Unlike our other stories, it wasn't high water that spelled the end for Lakeside. As passenger ships declined in favor of the interurbans which were faster and better and as the bath era business began to slow down, Lakeside lost its popularity.

An interesting side note to this resort which in all of our research was listed as at the foot of Crocker is our photo of the Lakeside School. It was not located at Crocker and Jefferson, but several blocks down at the corner of L'Anse Creuse and Jefferson, the present site of the L'Anse Creuse Administration Building.

JEFFERSON HEIGHTS ON LAKE ST. CLAIR (Not really a lost village, but an interesting story)

In 1932, the Consolidated Finance Corporation of Detroit promoted the development of Jefferson Heights. Their brochure explained their thinking. It read, "No matter where Detroit industries are located, there is no choice for builders of high class homes except to follow Lake St. Clair." Jefferson Heights

was to be the newest area "where highly paid executives of industry build expensive homes."

The plan was to build the ultimate development for the elite of rapidly expanding Detroit in the early years of the auto industry. It was to be located near the border of St. Clair Shores and Harrison Township on Jefferson, extending through Clinton Township to Harper. Like Grosse Pointe it was to consist of "beautiful and highly elevated points on the Lake St. Clair shore" with "expensive and exclusive homes" on large lots for those days - one quarter acre.

As with the other dreams we've discussed tonight, Jefferson Heights involved a lot of speculation. Its success depended on the success of Detroit and the auto industry and on money being available for improvements to the roads and trolley lines.

The brochure states that, "Detroit is now the fourth largest city in the United States. In a few years it will be the third." This was not a reality, just speculation.

It went on to say that "The telephone, telegraph and railroad companies, realizing this, are completing extensions to accommodate several million people in the Detroit area by 1935."

The brochure also predicted that the trolley cars which carried passengers down Jefferson Avenue would be removed from the shore line and pass to the rear of the property. This would make room for the new superhighway called the Dix-Waterloo Super Boulevard which would connect Jefferson Heights with Detroit.

According to the brochure, "Jefferson Boulevard, already paved and lighted, will be greatly widened, and the new Dix-Waterloo and other super Boulevard thoroughfares will make Jefferson Heights the most accessible lake property for the price in the Detroit district."

But this was yet another dream that never turned into reality for Harrison Township. Today the section is partially developed with middle class homes. While some of them are very nice, they would never rival the average Grosse Pointe shoreline mansions.

Dead-ends with woods beyond are where the main thoroughfare, Michigan Avenue, was to have gone through. The names of most of the avenues have been changed...though some state names remain, a reminder of the "dream."

Maine Avenue, the first avenue off Jefferson, has become Munsie. New Hampshire Avenue has become Genereaux. Vermont Avenue has become Virgil. Massachusetts Avenue has become Alcina.

But Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania remain. And Michigan Avenue, a main thoroughfare bordering the development and connecting it with Lake St. Clair, has become Manila, a street which dead-ends in woods midway in the development.

Cottrell, the other thoroughfare which was to have bordered the development and connect it to the lake, also remains.

In the words of local history writer, Robert Selwa, "Just as the 'dream' of Detroit becoming the nation's third largest city faded with post-war development favoring the South and the West, the 'dream' of Jefferson Heights as its new Grosse Pointe also faded away."