



ROYAL OAK Historical Society

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When the Railroads Made Tracks in Royal Oak

By Don Callihan

IF ASKED TO NAME the railroad that runs through the city, many long-time Royal Oak residents would answer the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. However, CN North America is the latest in a long line of ownership and name changes since the railroad was first chartered as the Pontiac and Detroit Railroad in 1830. At the time, the area was part of the Northwest Territory, and Michigan was yet to become a state.

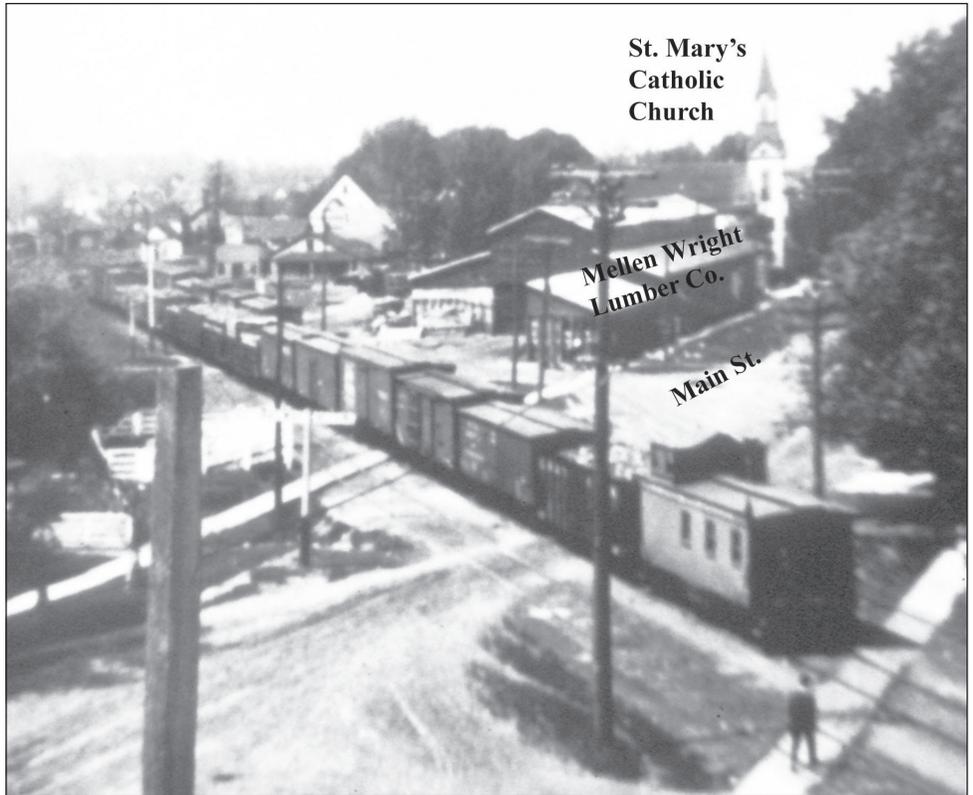
The railroad company was approved by the territory's legislative council and

ALL ABOARD

"Rails Through Royal Oak" is the upcoming exhibit at the Royal Oak Historical Society's museum in June and July. Featured will be additional historical photographs and stories about the railroad and its impact on the growth of the city and region. Come visit and support the museum.

given five years to complete trackage and begin regular operation. However, by March 7, 1834, no progress had been made, so the council granted a new charter to the Detroit and Pontiac (D&P) Railroad. This railroad was

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A freight train rumbles northbound through downtown Royal Oak near Main and Seventh, ca. 1910-1916. After 1916, St. Mary's Church had moved from that location.



Will Parker in 1919

William Heman Parker: Royal Oak's Western Adventurer

By Leslie S. Edwards

ONE MIGHT SAY Royal Oak native William "Will" Heman Parker had wanderlust. At the very least, he had a sense of adventure and was willing to try new things. While he always considered Royal Oak his home base, he traveled widely throughout his life, primarily in the western United States, including a trip to Wyoming in 1880 to work in the fledgling Yellowstone Park.

Will Parker was born on Dec. 14, 1853, the fifth child of Harriet Newell (Castle) and Asher Bull Parker. The Parkers were

pioneer settlers to Royal Oak; in fact, Will's grandparents, Lydia Gilbert (Bull) and William Morse Parker moved here in 1835 from New York and owned numerous tracts of land in Oakland and Genesee counties but settled in Section 6 of Royal Oak Township which became Parker's Corner (now 13 Mile and Woodward).

Will was educated at the District No. 1 School, later known as Parker School, across

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ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER ■ MONDAY, MAY 27 ■ 7 - 11 A.M. ■ FARMERS MARKET

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ROYAL OAK
Historical Museum

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royaloakhistoricalsociety.com

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Hours: Tues., Thurs., Sat., 1–4 p.m.
and by appointment

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

May 4 – 30

Judson Center 100th anniversary

June – July

Rails Through Royal Oak

August

Car Designs of the 1950s and '60s

All photographs, artifacts, and archival materials are from the collections of the Royal Oak Historical Society unless noted.

In Memoriam
Honorary Life Member
Gloria Moran Harper

President's Message

BY TOM TOGGWEILER

Members Continue to Help Support Our Mission

Greetings and warm wishes from the Royal Oak Historical Society. We hope your spring and summer bring the warmth of friends and family into your lives.

Our continuing mission has kept us busy in promoting and preserving our past. We have continued our monthly speaker program and have enjoyed the efforts of Bob Muller and Don Drife, along with other dedicated volunteers, to bring interesting and enjoyable historical presentations to our visitors and members. These programs have included the story of the Hamer-Finch family and the polio vaccine that was mass produced in nearby Rochester at the Parke-Davis Company. In March we learned how the Ice Age formed Royal Oak's landscape.

THE TOPICS COVERED in these programs have all been fascinating and well received by our visitors. We invite everyone to attend these presentations at 7 p.m. on the second Friday of each month at the museum. The cost is \$15, and preregistration is encouraged as seating is limited. See the box at the bottom of this page for information on upcoming programs.



Our curator, Johanna Schurrer, and her talented volunteers debuted an updated display on the Starr and Parker families. Coming in May, the Judson Center will celebrate its 100 years in Royal Oak with an exhibit highlighting the organization's work in providing comprehensive services to children and families. A free program will be presented by Judson staff at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 9 at the museum. Members and the public are invited to attend.

NEARLY 55 MEMBERS and nonmembers of the Historical Society gathered at Pronto on April 19 for our first-ever euchre tournament,

which raised more than \$1,200 to support the museum. Big thanks to Pronto and its staff for donating the restaurant for the event and to Jim Brady's Detroit for donating gift cards to the top three winners.

OUR MOST ANTICIPATED EVENT of the spring is our annual Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast held prior to the downtown parade from 7–11 a.m. at the Farmers Market. Please join us for the "best pancakes in town" and help us remember our fallen war heroes. We pride ourselves in this effort to join the community in this remembrance, and it is a great kickoff to a fun-filled summer.

All these events are part of our larger mission to promote understanding of Royal Oak's historical and cultural legacy through the preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story. We collect, preserve, interpret, exhibit, and teach the heritage of Royal Oak through the care and management of our collections.

Since we are a volunteer-based nonprofit, we rely on the financial support from our members and the public. If you are not a member, we hope you join us. If you are a past member, we hope you renew your membership. Join online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com or by mail using the form on the back of this newsletter and sending a check to the Royal Oak Historical Society. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the museum at 248-439-1501.

We sincerely hope that you will consider being part of our efforts.

Upcoming Speaker Series

Second Friday of each month • 7 p.m. at the museum
\$15 per person • space limited to 40

Friday, May 10 — 80th Anniversary of D-Day, by *Jim Craft*

Friday, June 14 — Railroads in Royal Oak, by *Don Callihan*

Friday, July 12 — Detroit United Railway (D.U.R.), by *Brian Golden*

Curator's Corner

BY JOHANNA SCHURRER



OUR SUMMER EXHIBIT, "Rails Through Royal Oak," will be on the impact of the railroad on the development of Royal Oak. When Henry Ford opened the Ford factory in Highland Park, many jobs were opened in the area. Both the railroad and the Detroit United Railway (D.U.R.) (also called streetcars or the interurban) ran through the middle of town, allowing people to travel back and forth to work. Both rail lines will be featured in the exhibit, and we will have speakers and events to coincide with the exhibit. If members and the public have any memorabilia on the trains that ran through Royal Oak that you would consider loaning the museum for the two months of the exhibit, please contact me by email at curator@royaloakhistoricalsociety.org or by phone at 248-439-1501.

We are in the early stages of planning for our annual car show on Saturday, Aug. 3 — always a well-attended event. The museum will present an exhibit of car designs of the 1950s and '60s and designers will be available for your questions.

We have updated our website with some of the collections that are now available for research. Please make an appointment to come in to look at archival collections, though no appointment is necessary to use the library resources or view the museum exhibits.

Students Visit Museum for Historical Talk

The Royal Oak Historical Museum welcomed nearly 150 students and 25 teachers and chaperones from Royal Oak's Northwood Elementary School to listen to a presentation on the city's local freedom seekers Henry and Elizabeth Hamer, the Underground Railroad, and other historical topics.

LaKeesha Morrison, great-great-great-granddaughter of the Hamers, spoke about her enslaved ancestors, and the Hamer Finch Wilkins Park named for her family, including the plans for a bust of Elizabeth to be installed later this year. Historian Don Drife presented historical documents, including letters, newspaper articles, photographs, and census records. The students asked many questions about slavery, LaKeesha's family, details of the Underground Railroad, and Royal Oak history.



Photo by Judy Davids

From Our Collections

Spelling Bee Medal

The first city-wide *Detroit News* Spelling Bee was held in 1922. The 10 best spellers in each grade (5th – 8th) took part in an all-school bee. The winner then competed in a district bee. The winner of each district won a bronze medal and the opportunity to compete in the championship bee held at the State Fair Coliseum.

The medal, designed in 1929 by Dutch sculptor Johannes Christiaan van der Hoef, has elements of both the Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods. It shows Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and sponsor of arts, trade, and strategy. Also featured is a sphinx and a winged horse representing victory and wisdom.



On the left is van der Hoef's sketch for the medal (courtesy of the Bentley Historical Library, Bentley Image Bank). At right is the medal won in 1930 by Royal Oak's Donald Campbell of Longfellow Elementary School.

The talk was organized by Northwood teacher Kelly Waterstreet, who read about the Hamers in the February issue of *Hour Detroit* magazine and was teaching her students about Michigan history and the state's participation in the Underground Railroad. Three classes of fourth-grade students walked to the museum on April 10 and three fifth-grade classes came two days later for the talk.

The students knew of Detroit abolitionist William Lambert and George DeBaptiste, a prominent African American conductor on the Underground Railroad in southern Indiana and Detroit; the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act; the Emancipation Proclamation; the 14th Amendment; and what Juneteenth celebrates.

The Historical Society looks forward to more interactions with our local schools.

Fourth and fifth-graders from Northwood Elementary listened with interest to ROHS volunteer and historian Don Drife (left) and Hamer family member LaKeesha Morrison (right).

When Trains Collided in Royal Oak in 1893

By Don Callihan

On the morning of July 11, 1893, a northbound Detroit, Grand Haven & Milwaukee freight train stopped at the station at Fourth Street, just east of Washington Avenue in Royal Oak. The engineer directed his fireman to move the train into a railroad siding or (sidetrack) so that a soon-to-arrive Detroit-bound suburban passenger train could pass. Assuming the fireman would do as he was told, the engineer walked to a nearby lunchroom for a glass of milk.

To get the train clear of the switch, the fireman had to run the train a short distance up the track and then put the engine in reverse to back into the siding. However, for some unknown reason, the fireman continued up the line. When the engineer was informed that the fireman did not follow his orders, he bolted from the lunchroom, ran after the slowly moving train, and managed to board the train's last car. After climbing the car's ladder, he began running on top of the cars toward the locomotive, taking time as he went to set the hand brake on each car.

AS THE TRAIN approached the curve where the tracks begin to parallel Woodward Avenue (near the present-day Royal Oak Ford dealership), the fireman spotted the oncoming Detroit-bound passenger train and jumped from the moving train. Shortly thereafter, the engineer reached the locomotive, threw the engine into reverse and jumped from the train.

Upon spotting the oncoming freight train, the passenger train's engineer set the air brakes on his train, put the locomotive in reverse and then, along with his fireman, jumped from their train. The two locomotives collided at low speed, and while both were extensively damaged, there were no deaths or significant injuries.

Both *The Evening News* (now *The Detroit News*) and *Detroit Free Press* reported the incident; however, *The Evening News* said that a John Stewart was the passenger train's engineer, while the *Free Press* account said he was the freight train's engineer.

Nearly three years later, on Jan. 25, 1896, *The Pontiac Gazette* reported John Stewart as the engineer in an incident on Jan. 22. The article was about a court case and said Stewart was the engineer of a seven-car passenger train that killed Edward Stevens, a cattleman, who was crossing the track in Drayton Plains. Stevens, whose view was obstructed by other freight cars, drove his rig with his horse into the path of the oncoming train. The train, "running 50 miles an hour, struck the rig, completely demolishing the road wagon and drawing it and poor Stevens under the wheels." The headline said he was "CUT TO PIECES." The horse survived.

As engineers assigned to passenger trains did not usually operate freight trains, it can be concluded that Stewart was the engineer of the passenger train that collided with the freight train in Royal Oak on July 11, 1893.



A passenger train heading south rammed a slow-moving northbound freight train on Woodward Avenue, south of Catalpa Drive, in 1893.

authorized to raise \$100,000 in capital, and the stock price was set at \$50 per share. After 150 shares were sold, nine directors were elected to run the company and plan construction. The directors soon realized that selling the

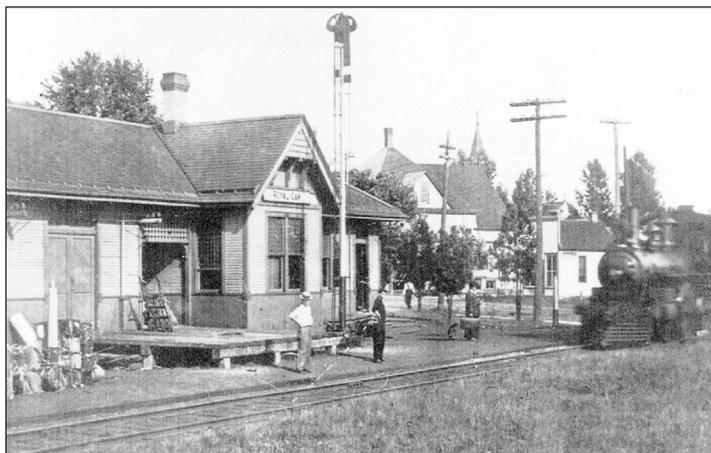
remaining shares would be challenging, so in March 1835 they were permitted to start a bank.

Some of the railroad directors traveled to Buffalo, New York, where they met with Sherman Stevens, formerly of Grand Blanc and Pontiac, whom they hoped to hire to run the bank and railroad. Stevens relished the challenge and convinced another former Michigan resident, Alfred Williams, to accompany him to the Michigan Territory, where each invested approximately \$5,000 in what became known as the Bank of Pontiac.

Stock sales for the bank began on June 3, 1835, and all stock was sold one week later. Only 14 investors bought stock, with Stevens and Williams purchasing the majority. Stevens was named the bank's cashier and the railroad's manager.

Land for Sawmill Acquired

The initial plan for the railroad was to have horses pull passenger coaches along the wooden rails installed from Detroit to Pontiac. The rails' smooth surface and gradual grades would be superior to any roads of the time. On



Railroad station on east side of tracks north of Fourth Street.

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Trains • Continued from Page 4

April 1, 1836, railroad manager Stevens purchased 120 acres of heavily wooded land halfway between Detroit and Pontiac in the future village of Royal Oak. He built a steam-powered sawmill near the present intersection of Sixth Street and Main Street and began clearing the land. The plan was to cut oak trees into 5 x 7-inch timbers for rails. The leftover scrap wood and bark would be burned to generate steam for the sawmill. As the land was cleared, lots would be sold for future housing and businesses.

Progress was slow and little had been accomplished by the time the Michigan Territory became a state in January 1837. Slowly the company learned how to cross bogs and fill sinkholes, and by the spring of 1838 the tracks were in place between Detroit and Royal Oak. Service using a horse-drawn car on wooden rails began on July 31, 1838.

The passenger car was 20 feet long and could carry 24 passengers. It was divided into three compartments, each with a door on the side, a bench on each side, and a double bench down the middle. A high window allowed light to enter but did not permit a view of the outdoors without standing. Going from Detroit to Royal Oak in under two hours was possible under the best circumstances but rarely occurred.

With daily use, wooden rails wore out quickly, but the railroad did not have the \$100,000 needed to purchase strap iron (strips of iron approximately two and a half inches wide and five-eighths of an inch thick) to nail to the wood rails to prolong their durability.

To buy the strap iron, Stevens applied to the legislature for a guarantee on 20-year bonds that would pay 6 percent interest. To bolster his case, he invited a group of legislators to ride the train from Detroit to Royal Oak. Stevens himself took the reins and completed the trip in record time (which was not duplicated until a steam locomotive was used a year later). The tactic worked — the legislature approved the guarantee and Stevens got the needed strap iron.

While strap iron solved one problem, it created another. As the train moved over the rails, it slowly caused the nails to lose their grip, and eventually the strap iron would come loose, roll upward with the wheel, and sometimes penetrate the floor of the passenger car and in some cases cause injury. The phenomenon was referred to as a "snakehead." (The last strap rails were eliminated on state railroads in 1852).

First Steam Locomotive Arrives

Stevens then purchased the line's first steam locomotive, a wood-burning 4-2-0 (locomotive wheel pattern, leading – driving – trailing) from Matthias Baldwin of Philadelphia. The locomotive had brass plates reading "Sherman Stevens" mounted on each side. Once manufactured, the locomotive had to be shipped to Detroit. There were neither good roads nor a railroad between Philadelphia and Detroit, so it was disassembled and shipped by canal boat, riverboat, and schooner. An engineer traveled with the locomotive, reassembled it, and it was put in service on Aug. 16, 1839. The arrival of the locomotive coincided with the track being completed as far as Birmingham.

Stevens did not make a single payment for the locomotive to Matthias Baldwin, who had accepted the order without a down payment. Eventually Baldwin had to sue for his money, settling for \$5,150 rather than the original amount of \$10,257.

While the railroad was under construction, the country was hit by the Panic of 1837, a financial crisis that began a significant depression and lasted until the mid-1840s. As a result, the Bank of Pontiac's failure began and it closed for good in 1840. Its depositors lost their money, and the holders of \$200,000 to \$300,000 of bank-issued currency also lost their money.

As track construction progressed toward Pontiac, Sherman Stevens parted with the D&P, filed for bankruptcy in 1842, and returned to Buffalo. He would go on to make his fortune servicing the mining industry in California. The tracks and the little Baldwin locomotive — renamed the "Pontiac" — would reach Pontiac on July 4, 1843. While the D&P was now complete, it was plagued by strap-iron rails, inadequate roadbed, and an underpowered locomotive.

In 1851, the railroad succeeded in selling \$150,000 in 8 percent bonds to build a new station on Brush Street at the



Detroit to Pontiac steam locomotive, June 28, 1930.

Detroit River (land currently occupied by the Detroit Renaissance Center) and replace the strap iron-clad oak rails with English iron T-rails. When the new rails were in place, the trip from Detroit to Pontiac was reduced to an average time of 1½ hours. The locomotive put in service in 1839 was still the railroad's only one.

Era of Railroad Mergers Begins

In 1855, the railroad realized the advantage of a train that would traverse the state from Detroit to Lake Michigan and merged with the Oakland and Ottawa Railroad to form the Detroit and Milwaukee (D&M) Railway. This line would run from Fentonville (present-day Fenton) to Lake Michigan in Ottawa County. While the railroad did not go to Milwaukee, passengers could get there via ship from Grand Haven.

By 1860 the railroad could not meet expenses and defaulted on its debt payments. Canada's Great Western Railway (GWR) provided a bailout in return for financial control and a share of the profits; however, the D&M continued to lose money. In October 1878, the GWR purchased the D&M outright, refinanced its debts, and reorganized it as the Detroit, Grand Haven & Milwaukee (DGH&M) Railway. Four years later, in 1882, Canada's Grand Trunk Railway acquired the GWR and with it the DGH&M.

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In 1960, a Grand Trunk passenger train moves northbound toward 11 Mile Road, crossing over Fourth Street near Washington Avenue.

At Lincoln in Birmingham, the tracks followed what is Woodward Avenue today, while Woodward ran through downtown Birmingham (Old Woodward). Once around Birmingham, the track again followed what is now Woodward north until reaching Lone Pine Road. There the track veered to the right and joined the present-day right-of-way near Opdyke Road. Relocation of the track to its present location through Royal Oak, Birmingham, and Bloomfield Hills was completed in July 1931, permitting Woodward to be widened to its present eight-lane width.

Commuter Trains Begin

With the railroad relocated to the east, new tracks, and a new station in Birmingham, commuter service was inaugurated from the Brush Street Station in Detroit up to Pontiac on Aug. 1, 1931. Six daily commuter trains carried passengers between Detroit and Pontiac, making the trip in 45 minutes. In January 1974, the newly formed Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) began covering Grand Trunk's commuter service losses. The reimbursement continued for several years until funds ran out. SEMTA discontinued commuter rail service on Oct. 17, 1983.

In the meantime, the last steam locomotive on the Grand Trunk — and in the state — pulled a passenger train through Royal Oak on March 27, 1960. It was also the last regularly scheduled steam run on any major railroad in the U.S. Another "last" occurred on April 30, 1971, when Grand Trunk ended passenger service between Royal Oak and Chicago. Grand Trunk had offered passenger service to Chicago through Pontiac, Durand, Lansing, and Grand Rapids since 1926.

Amtrak Service Launches

On Nov. 2, 1995, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation — or Amtrak — initiated service to Chicago. This was the first time in almost 25 years that Royal Oak had Chicago-bound passenger service.

Royal Oak's railroad legacy continues to this day. Amtrak runs 12 trains through the city every weekday: three southbound and three northbound every morning and afternoon. Six trains run on Saturdays and Sundays. Freight trains — both mixed freight and intermodal — fill the gaps between the Amtrak trains.

It would be strange to be in downtown Royal Oak and not hear the trains blasting their high-powered air horns as they approach the seven grade crossings between 10 and 11 Mile roads. Steam and diesel-powered locomotives have been thundering through Royal Oak for 185 years. They are a part of the local scene and a part of us.

Grand Trunk and Canadian National Emerge

Although now owned by the Grand Trunk, the railroad operated as the DGH&M. Complete consolidation occurred in 1928 when the Canadian government nationalized Grand Trunk along with other insolvent Canadian railroads. The combined entity became the Canadian National Railroad with Grand Trunk Western its U.S. subsidiary. In 1991, Canadian National merged three North American railroads — Grand Trunk Western, Duluth Winnipeg & Pacific, and Central Vermont — into CN North America. Since then, the **GT** logo has been replaced by the **CN** logo, and the only evidence of the Grand Trunk Western is the faded markings on the railroad overpasses through Royal Oak.

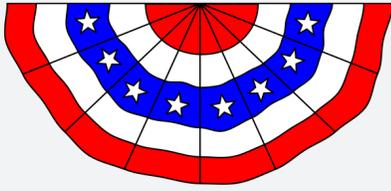
Railroad Route Changes in Royal Oak

In addition to ownership and name changes, the railroad's route north of Eleven Mile Road has also changed. Before 1931, the single track leading out of Royal Oak did not run straight northwest as the dual tracks do today. Instead, the track curved to the west and followed present-day Sherman Drive to just south of Catalpa, where it then ran in what are now the northwest-bound lanes of present-day Woodward Avenue.

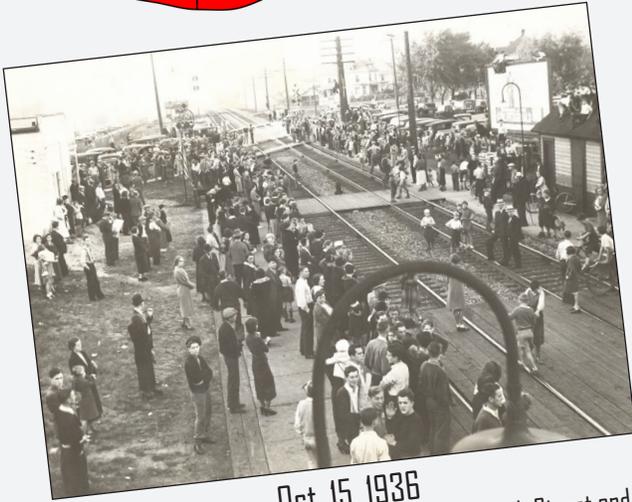
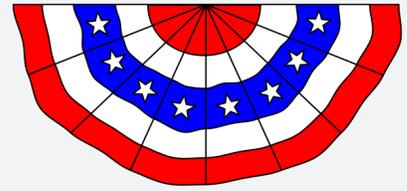


Grand Trunk passenger station on Sherman Drive just north of 11 Mile Road in 1954.

Story concludes on Page 7



Whistle-stops of Presidents and Candidates



Oct. 15, 1936

A crowd gathers outside the rail station at Fourth Street and Washington Avenue awaiting the arrival of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of his reelection whistle-stop tour. Nearly 2,000 spectators gathered along the Grand Trunk tracks to get a glimpse of him as he passed through Royal Oak at 5:30 p.m. Unfortunately neither the president nor Mrs. Roosevelt appeared on the rear platform of the train. The crowd saw only the drawn shades of the presidential coach, as did 3,000 spectators who lined the tracks in Ferndale. (Photo by The Daily Tribune)



Oct. 1, 1940

Wendell Willkie, left, waves to the crowd during an early-morning whistle-stop at the Grand Trunk Railroad station in Royal Oak, accompanied by former mayor and U.S. Congressman George A. Dondero (at the microphone). Willkie needed no introduction, as the spectators sent up a cheer when he walked through the door. The Republican presidential candidate later lost to Franklin D. Roosevelt. (Photo by The Daily Tribune)



Oct. 24, 1952

Nearly 7,000 persons greeted Republican presidential candidate Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower during an 11 a.m. whistle-stop at Fourth and Washington in Royal Oak. His speech criticized Democrats for their campaign of "fear" and outlined a four-point program to clean up the "mess in Washington." (Photo by The Daily Tribune)



Aug. 27, 1996

President Bill Clinton was greeted by 7,000 people in Royal Oak as his "21st Century Express" campaign train traveling through five states to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. (Photo by Alamy)

Royal Oak Then & Now

BY JOHN MAURICE



RAY'S ICE CREAM, a Royal Oak icon — known for its long lines and homemade ice cream — and one of the longest continuously running businesses in the city, first opened on Coolidge Highway in 1958. That year, Ray Stevens took everything he had learned working at Mint's Ice Cream on Woodward Avenue in Birmingham and brought it to the ice cream parlor that has borne his name ever since.

Initially a one-story structure, as seen in the **Then** photo, Ray's Ice Cream today occupies two stories and more than 4,400 square feet. Owned by the Stevens family for nearly 65 years, the business stayed in the family with Ray's two sons, Ray Jr. and Dale, and their sons taking over from their father when he retired.

And although the family sold the parlor in 2022, the Stevens family continues to have a presence in the shop, as one of Ray's great-

granddaughters still works there. New owners Jason and Lindsey Eddleston are also carrying on the family tradition as Jason has a passion for the ice cream business and has great respect for the Ray's Ice Cream legacy, considering himself to be the steward of a neighborhood institution. So far in his time as owner, Jason has worked to expand the Ray's name through partnerships with local restaurants and with retail locations. Lindsey — even though she works full-time as a commercial Realtor — has used her social media skills to grow Ray's following through Instagram and Facebook. With the recent Coolidge Road construction now in the rearview mirror, this summer looks to be a great one for the popular shop.

PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II, the area where Ray's parlor now stands was largely farmland. But in the post-war years, with Royal Oak's population booming, the neighborhoods surrounding the Coolidge and Normandy area began to take shape. Ray's, at 4233 Coolidge, opened its doors at a time when a single-scoop ice cream cone sold for just 8 cents.

Next-door neighbor Bowlero Lanes, with its iconic neon sign, was already established at the corner of Coolidge and Normandy when Ray's opened, and just east of Coolidge on the north side of Normandy sat the Oak Drive-In, which could accommodate more than 1,000 vehicles and served as a conduit to bring people into Ray's after enjoying a movie on the big screen. The Oak, which opened in 1949, operated throughout the golden age of drive-in theaters until closing in the late 1970s and finally falling victim to the wrecking ball in the early 1980s. Through it all, Ray's Ice Cream has persevered. Standing just a third of a mile north of Memorial Park, generations of Royal Oak baseball and softball teams have enjoyed the short walk for a sweet treat after a game.

For more than 65 years, Royal Oak families, and those from other cities, considered Ray's a must stop not only in the summer but year-round. Even former residents visiting Royal Oak stop at Ray's as a mandatory obligation. With spring and summer on its way, Ray's Ice Cream is ready to serve the next generation of ice cream lovers, in addition to their many, many longtime customers.

THEN photo from the collections of the
Royal Oak Historical Society
NOW photograph by John Maurice



Homes & Buildings in Royal Oak

EDITED BY JOHN S. SCHULTZ

In each newsletter, the Royal Oak Historical Society features stories on historic homes and buildings in our city. The selections come from the book *Royal Oak Images, Yesterday's Charm Today's Treasures* (Roundtable of Royal Oak Historical Organizations, 2006). A second edition of this book is in the works.

We encourage other Royal Oak residents to share the history of their home for possible publication. For more information, contact John S. Schultz, co-author of *Images of America: Royal Oak*, at jsschultz11@gmail.com.

Merritt House

1914 Northwood Boulevard

Tudor with Waving-Bending-Protruding Brick Built in 1929

THE UNDEVELOPED PROPERTY was transferred from the United States prior to 1845 to Daniel Elwood. The abstract of title gave certain restrictions such as: "dwelling facing Northwood must be two stories of stucco or brick construction and shall not cost less than \$5,000." And that "at no time shall any part of said land be used or occupied for manufacture, brewing, distilling or sale of spirituous liquor, etc."

The property passed through several owners before it was acquired in 1917 by Firman W. Clawson. His F.W. Clawson Land Co. secured several undeveloped lots. The Northwood subdivision was annexed to the city of Royal Oak in 1923 and assessment of city taxes began.

A series of defaulting contractors were involved in the construction of the house in 1929. Financial challenges were faced by the contractors and extensive legal claims/action ensued with the material suppliers trying to obtain payment. The house, never occupied, went on the market for past taxes of \$5,500 and was purchased in 1933 by Harry and Blossom Merritt, in whose family the home remains. The legal entanglements connected to the house prevented a clear title until 1935.

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the road from the Parker homestead (where the Woodward Corners shopping center now stands). He attended secondary school in Birmingham as it was not available in Royal Oak at that time. From 1876 to 1878, Will spent the spring semesters studying at the Northern-Indiana Normal School and Business Institute in Valparaiso, Indiana.

In between his studies, Will traveled. In June 1876, he went west to Colorado and then back east in August — to Washington, D.C., and then to Philadelphia to experience the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition — the first world's fair to be held in the United States.

In a letter home to his parents, Will described a fire he witnessed near the fairgrounds in Philadelphia. An entire block of temporary structures ("shanties") went up in flames. Will wrote: "The fire department of this city is the most inefficient of any I ever saw ... if this fire had been in Detroit, the engines would have been on the ground in half the time, and the fire would have been subdued before it had burned buildings."

In the fall of 1877, Will was back in the west — teaching school in Schuyler, Nebraska. He wrote home about blizzard conditions and expressed surprise at how people there tied a cord around themselves to make their way in the whiteout conditions. Will graduated in May 1878 from the Fine Arts department at Valparaiso, where he excelled in drawing. He returned home to Royal Oak and represented Oakland County at the Republican county convention in Pontiac with his brother-in-law, John Benjamin, and local Civil War veteran Reuben Russell.

In the late summer of 1880, Will traveled west again — this time to Yellowstone Park to join P.W. (Philetus Walter) Norris, superintendent of the park. Norris was exploring peaks and valleys and having workers plot out roads through what was previously — for at least 11,000 years — a center of Native American commerce and spiritual and cultural importance. The mountain ranges were popular vision quest sites. Volcanic rock (obsidian) was used to make tools and for trade. Tribes hunted and fished, gathered edible plants, and used the thermal waters for spiritual and medicinal purposes.

In the treaties of Fort Laramie (1851 and 1868), the United States government agreed that the Yellowstone region belonged to the various local tribes. However, in 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant ended indigenous occupation within the park's boundaries when he signed an act establishing Yellowstone as the country's first national park. Park superintendent Norris was determined to remove indigenous people from the newly established park, believing that "Indian presence" was a threat to tourism and to government officials in the area.

Under Norris's supervision, from 1877 to 1882 park officials heavily

discouraged Native Americans from being there and downplayed the historical roles of tribes in the area. Tribal peoples were forced onto reservations, the U.S. Army was brought in to keep them out of the park, and the public was told that they were never there in the first place — that they were afraid of the geysers. On the contrary, long-time park historian Lee Whittlesey stated, "Tribal people did not fear Yellowstone. They respected and revered it, and were they given the opportunity to be reintroduced to it, they would embrace the land once more."

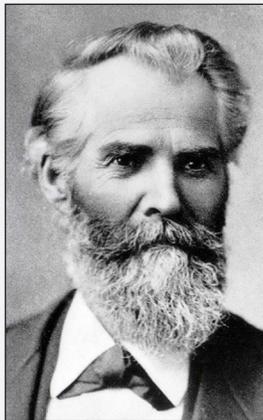
Why did Will Parker choose to go to Yellowstone? It is possible that he knew of or had met Norris, who lived in Detroit for many years. As described in Norris's 1880 superintendent's report, he and two other men left most of his expedition party "to open a trail" along the brink of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, the first large canyon on the Yellowstone River downstream from Yellowstone Falls. The other men were Parker and a man named Jack Davis, "both excellent navigators." The threesome ascended the Yellowstone River to the lake. There they navigated the lake, exploring all of its bays, fingers, and islands in a small sailboat called the *Explorer*. The boat proved barely seaworthy, and the explorers encountered several mishaps during their 10 days circumnavigating the lake. They also ascended Pelican Creek and the Upper Yellowstone River to its rapids — a feat no other white men had attempted as of that time.

As Norris, Parker, and Davis continued, they met up with Henry Bird Calfee, one of the noted Yellowstone photographers of that time. Along with two guides, the men

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P.W. Norris: Another Michigan Connection to Yellowstone

Born in Palmyra, New York, in 1821, P.W. (Philetus Walter) Norris moved with his family to Nankin, Michigan (now Westland), in 1832. He eventually settled in Ohio, founding the town of Pioneer. He served in the Union Army and was also an Ohio legislator.



P.W. Norris

In 1865, Norris moved his wife and children back to Detroit. He became a federal land agent and a partner in a real estate firm. By 1870 his personal real estate was valued at \$100,000. In 1873, he founded the village of Norris in Hamtramck Township (annexed by Detroit in 1924) on then-unsettled land along today's Mount Elliott Street between McNichols and Seven Mile roads. Norris's house, located at the corner of Mount Elliott and Iowa streets, was the oldest standing residence of the former village until it was destroyed by fire in 2016. Norris also founded the Two Way Inn in 1876, the oldest remaining bar in Detroit. It is said that the bar is often visited by the spirit of Norris himself.

In addition to his businesses, Norris traveled through the American West. In 1870, he first entered the Yellowstone Park area, returning again in 1875 collecting specimens for the Smithsonian and writing accounts for *The Norris Suburban* newspaper.

Congress appointed P.W. Norris as Yellowstone's second superintendent in 1877, a post he held for five years. He spent summers there, exploring and mapping much of the area, finding suitable routes through the park for better access. Norris was known for his explorations of the park and its geysers and wrote extensively of his findings. He also established the first written rules and regulations.

Norris then worked for the Smithsonian's Bureau of Ethnology recording Native American culture. While working at Rocky Hill, Kentucky, he fell ill and died there on January 14, 1885, at the age of 64. His son brought his body back to Michigan and he is buried in Detroit's Woodmere Cemetery.



Southeast arm of Promontory Point, Yellowstone Lake, by William Henry Jackson, 1871 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress).



Stereoview image of Hoodoo Sentinel, by Henry Bird Calfee, ca. 1881 (Courtesy of the Berry Collection).

were the first non-native group to travel up the east fork of the Yellowstone River (renamed the Lamar River in 1885). This territory (the eastern half of the park) historically belonged to the Crow nation until they were relegated north to reservation land.

Norris and his men explored the medicinal springs and other areas in the region, including what Norris named Hoodoo Basin due to its eerie rock formations and labyrinths. While Norris pushed on to take elevations of the nearby peaks in the Absaroka Range, Calfee and Parker “explored and obtained sketches and views of many of the weird wonders of erosion.” Norris described these sharp-cornered rock fragments as wild and unearthly “gnome like monuments of the legendary Indian gods.” According to Norris, Parker’s sketches were later “elaborated” on by the ethnologist Walter James Hoffman for publication. The location of Parker’s original sketches is currently unknown, if they even still exist. During this trip, P.W. Norris named a 10,203-foot-high peak overlooking the Hoodoo Basin “Parker Peak.”

In mid-November 1880, Parker went to Bozeman, Montana, where he lectured on phrenology, physiology, and physiognomy (personality and character, how the body works, and the study of facial features.) The following spring, he joined Henry Calfee in Dillon, Montana, where they exhibited “views of the Wonderland.” Will “gave a very interesting and instructive lecture ..., in which he gave a full description of each view.” The pair continued their tour for several months, exhibiting in towns across southern Montana. Parker did return at least once to Yellowstone as 1897 archival records show that he received a permit to carry a .22-caliber rifle through the park to Cooke City, Montana, via Soda Butte.

Parker had now taught school, lectured on aspects of the human body, and explored parts of Yellowstone Park. At some point, he became interested in mesmerism (hypnotism) and began lecturing on the subject. In 1885, the *Birmingham*

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Yellowstone Photographer Henry Bird Calfee



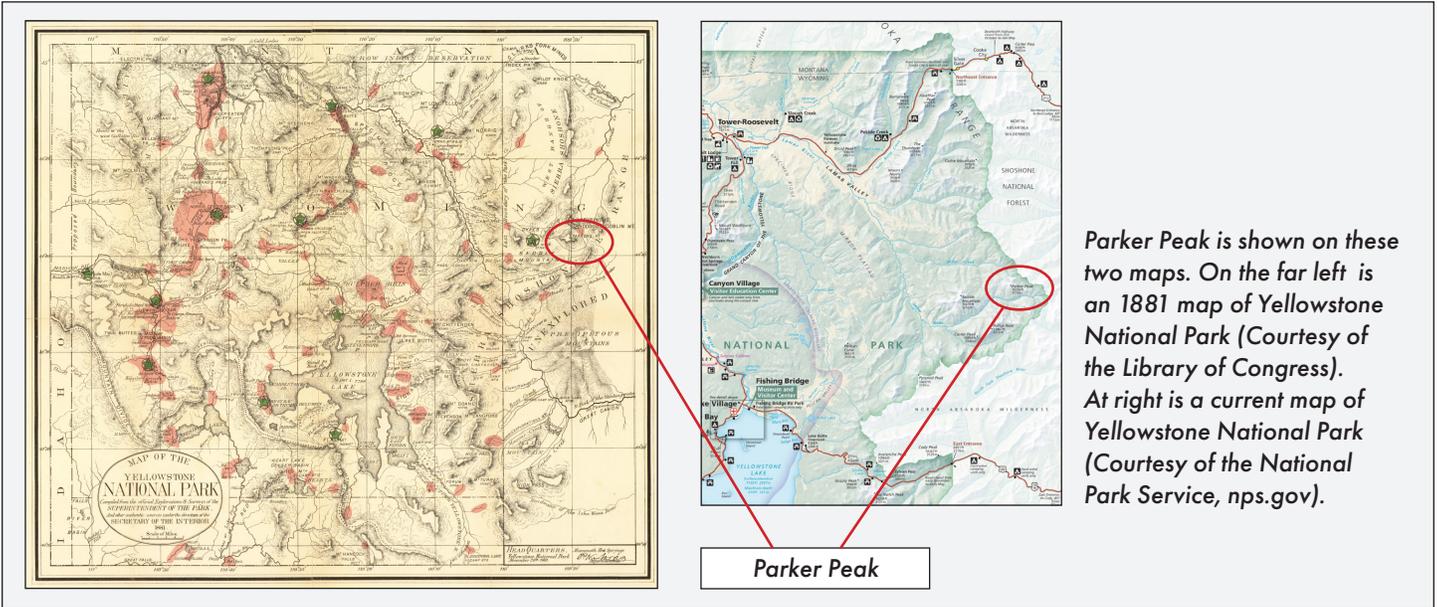
Henry Calfee

Henry Bird (H.B. or Bird) Calfee, born in Arkansas, followed his brother to Bozeman, Montana, in 1870, forming a partnership with Nelson Catlin in a photographic business. Calfee first visited Yellowstone in 1871 and began taking photographs in the new national park between 1871 and 1874. He set up a crude tent store in the Upper Basin to sell photos to visitors.

For nearly 10 years, Calfee spent each summer at the park and took nearly 300 photographs of features including waterfalls, geysers, and rock formations. As he searched for captions for his photographs, including Demon’s Cave, Pulpit Basins, and Fairie’s Falls, he was likely responsible for naming these geographical features.

Calfee and Catlin also photographed members of American Indian tribes in and around Yellowstone, including the Crow and Shosone. His stereoviews were taken back east and reduced as paintings on glass, creating lantern slides. In 1881, Calfee began touring southern Montana giving promotional magic lantern presentations — first with W.H. Parker and then with William W. Wylie. Woodcuts from Calfee’s photos were printed in Wylie’s 1882 park guidebook “Yellowstone National Park” or “The Great American Wonderland.”

In 1882, Calfee moved to Missoula, Montana, and sold his images in a photography studio. In January 1884, Calfee’s “Wonderland Exhibition” was presented at Ming’s Opera House in Helena, Montana, where the 26-foot-square images were projected above the stage. Calfee and his agent continued east via St. Paul and Minneapolis to present the exhibition in New York and Philadelphia. Calfee died at age 64 in Bozeman, Montana, in 1912.



Parker Peak is shown on these two maps. On the far left is an 1881 map of Yellowstone National Park (Courtesy of the Library of Congress). At right is a current map of Yellowstone National Park (Courtesy of the National Park Service, nps.gov).

Eccentric reported that he was home from a long trip through Texas where “mesmerism, psychology, and ‘dead asleep’ and ‘dead awake’ are entirely new.”

During these lectures, now called stage hypnosis, he hypnotized members of the audience and had them do various things like eat potatoes or gather the corsages from women in the audience — none of which they remembered. He continued this career for 20 years, across Michigan and elsewhere. In his will, he stated that he wanted to be buried in Royal Oak Cemetery, next to his father if possible. “I desire a very modest marker with the words ‘Twenty years a Hypnotist’ thereon.” (Editor’s note: “Stories Behind the Gravestones” in our February 2023 newsletter described William Heman Parker’s grave with this unusual inscription. We now know more about Parker’s interest in hypnosis.)

It is believed Parker also lived in Oregon, Arizona, and California, though he “never voted or claimed a residence” anywhere other than Royal Oak. He also never married nor purchased property. By 1915, he had settled in San Antonio, Texas, lodging at 1331 N. Flores Street where he made friends with a dressmaker named Cynthia Amanda Rhyne. In late March 1923, he was hospitalized for two weeks and died on April 6 of a cerebral hemorrhage.

In his will, dated February 20, 1923, Parker named his niece, Leslie Blodgett, as executrix and divided his property between his family members and Cynthia, the dressmaker, who received the largest percentage. Will’s body was brought back to Royal Oak and his funeral was held at the former homestead at Parker’s Corner. Adventurer, teacher, and lecturer, William Heman Parker also had a sense of humor, perhaps from his days as a stage hypnotist. In one of the last lines of his will, he stated “I am not married and never have been married but to any woman claiming to be my wife I give the sum of Five Dollars.”

Homes & Buildings • Continued from Page 9

Two adjacent lots were purchased in 1941 and 1943. The house sits on Lot 115 of Northwood subdivision on a part of the southeast quarter of Section 8, town 1 north, range 11 east, Royal Oak Township of Oakland County. Lot 114 adjoins on the west and Lot 113 on the north, giving driveway access from Northwood Boulevard through to Ferncliff Avenue. The three lots represent 160 feet on the boulevard and are about 120 feet deep.

The exterior of the house is Tudor style. The outstanding feature of the exterior is the waving-bending brick lines accented by protruding bricks. The flow of the brick work almost suggests the bricks were able to be bent. The brick on the front of the house is accented by insertions of limestone with stucco and wood trim. The framing brick design around each window also varies. Many inquiries have been received about the brickwork. The actual craftsman is unknown but an Andrew Allegrina from Detroit was the mason contractor. He immigrated to the United States in 1906 from Italy where he was born in 1887.



Unique brick and stone design

An outside balcony connects on the west and north sides. Landscaping has been updated over the years. An interlocking brick walk was installed in 1999. The house interior has six levels, two on each floor. The walls on the main floor are textured plaster and the wood trim is dark oak. The lower living room is open by two archways to an upper balcony room.

The house has 3,255 square feet that includes 14 rooms (including four bathrooms and two recreation rooms). A hallway, known as “the tunnel,” connects from the recreation room level to the 660 square foot, three-car garage. The living room and lower recreation rooms have the original gas fireplace units that are used today. The interior wall sconces, leaded glass doors, tiled bathrooms, and rough plaster walls are reflective of the Art Deco period.

Stories Behind the Gravestones

BY DON DRIFE

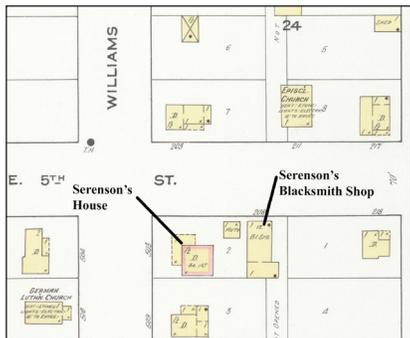


Martin H. Serenson: Royal Oak's Last Blacksmith

MARTIN HANSEN SERENSON WAS BORN IN 1875 in the province of Schleswig-Holstein, then a part of Germany but part of Denmark after World War I. As a boy he attended school, worked on a farm, and apprenticed for three years as a blacksmith. During his apprenticeship he earned \$100 and his room and board. Martin "slipped out of Germany" to avoid a two-year compulsory military service and immigrated to the United States in 1894 with his brother Peter. They lived with their sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Peter E. Bracker, who emigrated five years earlier, on their farm on Rochester Road near 13 Mile.

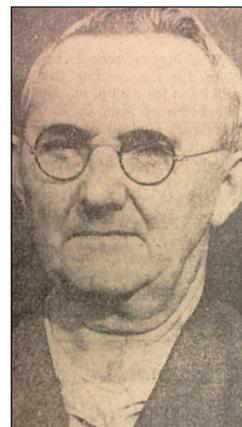
One of Martin's early jobs was to take the milk to market in Detroit. Traveling down Woodward was a challenge, particularly in the springtime. At his retirement, he recalled that a four-horse team took two and a half hours to drag the milk wagon through the sand and mud to Grand Boulevard. In an interview with Royal Oak's two remaining blacksmiths in the July 8, 1935, edition of *The Daily Tribune*, Serenson remembered: "'Lots of horses when I came here,' ... 'I moved to Royal Oak on Thanksgiving day of 1894. There was no way to go to Detroit in those days except by horse and buggy or the Grand Trunk railroad. The street car was put in a few years after I came.'" He worked on different farms for nearly four years before his desire to see his parents prompted his return to Germany. Fulfilling his military obligation, he served his two years plus an additional 3 month penalty for leaving the country. The peacetime army was enjoyable, and he later described it as "the best time of his life."

Returning to Royal Oak in 1900, he became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (St. Paul) in Royal Oak. He worked at the blacksmith shop at South Main and Fifth street, owned by his brother and Frank E. Springsteen. (Springsteen was later township supervisor and a Royal Oak city commissioner from 1931 through 1935.) Earning 50 cents a day, Martin bought Springsteen's share of the shop two years later. He worked in partnership with his brother for about 10 years, until his brother sustained an injury and could no longer blacksmith. Around 1912, Martin moved the forge to 210 East Fifth Street near Williams Street, alongside his home.



The 1916 Sanborn fire map is labeled with the location of the Serenson house and blacksmith shop at Fifth and Williams streets.

This photograph shows the shop with the house and garage to its right.



Martin Serenson at age 72 as pictured in *The Daily Tribune*, Jan. 25, 1947.



He became a U.S. citizen. In May 1907, Martin was appointed to fill a vacancy on the village council of Royal Oak. In 1908, he was elected a village trustee and served for four years. Marrying Emma Brinkey in 1903, they lived at 503 Williams. She died in February 1932, and he married Martha Kamin in November of the same year. Retiring at age 70 in 1945, Martin Serenson had not shod a horse in 28 years after the last horse he shod injured him. His last years at the forge were spent making "iron doors,

iron frames for windows, braces, brackets and other odds and ends." His speech always retained a "heavy German accent."

Martin died Nov. 29, 1957, and is buried in Oakview Cemetery. Martha died a year later and is buried beside him. Emma is buried at the foot of Martin's grave. Their graves are marked with simple gravestones — name, dates of birth and death, and a simple double-line border. They are located in section "B" just across the road from Lake Royal and are in the first and second rows behind the upright "Allen" stone.

This series highlights people buried in Royal Oak's three cemeteries as we approach the bicentennial of Royal Oak Cemetery in 2026.

Looking Back

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY JOHN S. SCHULTZ FROM THE PAGES OF THE DAILY TRIBUNE

What was happening in Royal Oak...

50 years ago — 1974

THE TRANSFER CASE of Huntington Woods and Royal Oak children from Royal Oak to Berkley schools was sent back to the State Board of Education (May 9) because the decision “woefully failed to comply with the law.” Judge William P. Hampton, Oakland County Circuit Court, remanded the case to the State Board because of the reason given by the State Board for upholding the transfer don’t conform to “findings in fact and in law.” It means that a stay of transfer order is in effect and status quo is maintained for this school year, at least, while the State Board reviews its findings.

60 years ago — 1964

ROYAL OAK MAY BECOME the second Southeast Oakland city to approve the proposed Ten Mile Route of the East-West (I-696) Expressway at a special meeting tonight (May 14). City commissioners have called a public hearing at 8 p.m. at city hall and invited residents to give their opinions on the route. The Planning Commission formally recommended approval in an 8-0 vote on Tuesday. Detail maps and large, color, aerial photographs of the route, supplied by the Highway Department, will be available for examination. Lathrup is the only Southeast Oakland city to approve the route to date. Highway officials are hoping for approval from Royal Oak, Madison Heights, Hazel Park and Warren soon. Pleasant Ridge, Oak Park, Southfield, and possibly Huntington Woods have indicated they’ll fight the Ten Mile route proposal.

60 Years Ago — 1964 UFOs Need Investigation

In a letter to the editor in *The Daily Tribune*, John Laval wrote:

“Concerning the very dangerous problem of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), the facts are as follows:

1. UFOs are unknown superior machines under intelligent control, emanating from an extraterrestrial source, which have been continually invading our atmosphere in great numbers since 1944 for the obvious purpose of observing the Earth civilization and mapping this planet. Whether the motives of these highly advanced beings are friendly or hostile remains to be seen, although, in that regard, they have committed many hostile acts.
2. The United States Air Force, with the help of the super-secret Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Council, has been conducting a very skillful and effective propaganda campaign in which they have brainwashed most of our 185 million Americans into believing the UFOs are nothing but misidentified natural phenomena, illusions, or hallucinations. They further lead us to believe that anyone who believes UFOs are extraterrestrial vehicles is slightly off his rocker.
3. Major Donald F. Keyhoe, USMC (Ret.), Director, National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, has been fighting for many years now to persuade Congress to conduct an impartial open investigation into the UFO problems. If these hearings are finally held (and the chances look good in 1964) the Air Force policy of secrecy and censorship will almost certainly be ended.
4. When the truth finally comes out — and it will — and contact is achieved with this superior civilization, you can expect a completely fantastic change on this planet such as mankind has never seen nor experienced. These changes will be very radical on religion, governments, science and the military establishment. The greatest change, though, will occur in the human mind, which is extremely provincial in its relationship to the infinite universe.
5. The manned space gains of the United States and the Soviet Union are a propaganda front. Let’s face reality. The use of gigantic and costly rockets for the purpose of space exploration is already obsolete and extremely primitive. You can be sure that we and the Soviets, and other technically advanced nations as well, are feverishly at work in top-secret projects endeavoring to duplicate the UFOs’ anti-gravity propulsion system, and are using the most advanced scientific brains available.”

THEY SHALL HAVE MUSIC wherever they go — at the Detroit Zoological Park, this summer. When the zoo opens tomorrow (May 14), a new highly automated electronically amplified carillon donated by the James Holden Fund, will greet guests, but for the opening day, at least, it won’t be automated. The carillon normally will be played by punched paper rolls, much like an old player piano. It will be used before chimp shows, occasionally throughout the day and at zoo closing time. A nationally famous carillonneur will play the instrument, consisting of 100 miniature bronze bells whose sound will be amplified. More animate attractions for zoo visitors will include an island full of Java monkeys, replacing the rhesus monkeys on Monkey Island; a new pool for the hippos, flamingos in the area near the main railroad station, the zoo’s first family of Kodiak bears.

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60 Years Ago — 1964



Formerly a sheep shed, this log cabin on the site of a future department store at Fourteen Mile and John R, in Troy, has been donated to Prince of Glory Lutheran Church, Madison Heights. Men of the church began to dismantle it today (May 9) to move it adjacent to a church building on Fourteen Mile between Campbell and Stephenson. Believed to be more than 100 years old, it will be used for Boy Scout and youth activities.

70 years ago — 1954

BECAUSE OF A HIGH NUMBER of rat complaints in recent months, Royal Oak officials declared a “clean up week” and urged residents to tidy up their premises. Sanitarian Gilbert W. Caswell said that 165 rat complaints have been received by his office in recent months from all parts of the city. “All garbage and rubbish should be kept in covered metal containers,” Caswell said. He also urged building rat walls under buildings and garages. “Rats are shrewd, crafty, daring, aggressive, and disease carriers,” he added. “Poison should be used with extreme care so that nothing can get at it except rodents. There are commercial poisons which are harmless to anything else but rats.”

80 years ago — 1944

WARTIME PAPER RATION has forced *The Daily Tribune* to restrict the amount of advertising which it can accept. The inevitable result is the necessity of asking readers to pay a larger share of the cost of bringing them the news. Accordingly, *The Daily Tribune* is compelled to announce an increase in price to 5 cents a single copy and 20 cents per week delivered.

90 years ago — 1934

ROYAL OAK'S NEW STATE LIQUOR STORE specializes in wines and champagnes, but Jo Mendi, the educated chimpanzee at the Detroit Zoo that now rates as the city's number one master of ceremonies, selected cognac when he placed the first order at the counter at 9 a.m. today. Royal Oak officials were among the 25 persons who witnessed the official store opening at 14000 Woodward Avenue near Lafayette. As the first customer, Jo supervised manager Russell A. Webb in filling out the order for a bottle of expensive imported spirits. The chimp was willing to uncork the fancy bottle on the spot but when informed that the law forbids imbibing liquor stores, he took zoo director John T. Millen by the hand and hurried to his residence at the Detroit Zoological Park, just back of the store.

CLAYTON JOYCE IS ONLY 3 YEARS OLD, but he figuratively stood Royal Oak on its ear for several hours last night. At about 5 p.m., Clayton, who is the son of Robert C. Joyce, 935 North Pleasant Street, disappeared from Cass field on a tour of the city. Two hours later his parents reported the lad was missing and the Royal Oak Police and other southeastern Oakland County departments started a hunt for him.

After 9 p.m., Bruce Fisher, age 2, complicated the situation when he was found by Sgt. Joseph Parker and Patrolman Cyril J. Stroh at 431 North Main Street. Bruce answered the description of Clayton in many respects, but he was claimed by his mother, Mrs. G.W. Fisher, 413 Fairgrove Avenue. Meanwhile Clayton's description was broadcast on the radio and Elwood Robbins, age 18, 3181 Kenwood Avenue, notified the police he saw the lad near Campbell and Twelve Mile roads. At 10 p.m., Fred Dircks, 1311 East Thirteen Mile, spied a small red-haired boy in a blue coat with real brass buttons sitting along the road at Campbell and Twelve Mile, about two miles from Cass field. A few minutes later, Clayton was restored to his parents. “He was tired, but was not crying,” said Dircks. “All I could make out was that he wanted his daddy.”

100 years ago — 1924

THREE SONS of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bennet of Crooks Road have died of scarlet fever in the past six weeks. Laurence, age 7, died March 17. The funeral was at the Howell cemetery on March 19. Junior, age 5, died March 21 and was buried March 23. Lawton, age 9, died April 23 and was buried April 25. Rev. Orr, pastor of the Presbyterian church of Howell officiated the three funerals. The three boys were students at the Starr School.

THE ROYAL OAK COUNTRY CLUB, which has been in course of preparation for several weeks, will open its doors to its members on May 21. Carpenters and decorators have transformed the old home and made important additions to it. Service of first-class meals, music, dancing and general club privileges may now be enjoyed by the members of this club, the first of its kind in the community.

Looking Back entries are taken directly from historical articles printed in The Daily Tribune and in some cases the actual wording conveys the language, expression, and punctuation of the time.

100 Years Ago — May 2, 1924 'Mad Dog' Scare

FIVE ROYAL OAK SCHOOL CHILDREN are being given the Pasteur treatments for rabies and the city and police department have warned that all dogs unmuzzled or off their owner's property, unaccompanied by the owners, will be shot — all as a result of a mad dog scare that has gripped Royal Oak and vicinity since three high school girls and two boys from Whittier school were bitten Tuesday afternoon by a stray Airedale dog.

Edith Lehman, a 14-year-old freshman, was standing outside her school and bit in the ankle as she stopped to pet the dog. Ruth Spaulding, also 14, was the next victim of its angry jaws. It then ran from her as she screamed and dashed into the music building where the Girls Glee Club was in practice and bit Norma Winters, a 19-year-old member of the senior class.

An hour later the dog appeared at Whittier school where children were playing at recess. Clyde Toman, age 10, was the first bitten, and then George A. Spear, age 11, also was attacked. Before police arrived, the animal had been captured and tied to a telephone pole by a Detroit Edison lineman working in the area. The dog was immediately put down by officer Roy Truesdell and was identified by school children as the same that had previously bitten the three high school girls.

The girls were immediately taken to the University Hospital at Ann Arbor, where they were given the first inoculation of the Pasteur treatment. The boys were also taken there later.

An examination of the deceased dog showed it was in the advanced stages of rabies. Warnings were printed and distributed informing dog owners to muzzle their pets and keep them upon their own premises. A number of dogs were killed on Thursday. Police answered calls all day telling of stray dogs, and several of the animals were brought into police headquarters. Since the issuance of the warnings, there has been a noticeable scarcity on dogs on the street.



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