



ROYAL OAK Historical Society

OCTOBER 2022 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM

Teacher Recalls First Day in Royal Oak in 1914

Submitted by John S. Schultz

The following was written by M. Lucille Walker reflecting on her first day arriving in Royal Oak in September 1914 to take a teaching job at the Union School on the southeast corner of Lincoln and Washington. In that school year, Royal Oak had 650 students — 150 more than the year before — and 18 teachers — an increase of five; Superintendent E.J. Lederle also taught. It was the year the new high school opened on Main Street north of Eleven Mile and had an enrollment of 140 students. It was the largest increase in students of any year in the history of the schools at that time.

Because Lucille Walker began teaching in 1914 and taught for 47 years and because she referred to the superintendent who was in that position from 1962 to 1973, we believe this account may have been written in 1962 but could find no definite date. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Royal Oak and a member of the Royal Oak Historical Society. She died on Feb. 10, 1986 at age 95.

By M. Lucille Walker

EVERYBODY SAYS, "TIMES HAVE CHANGED."

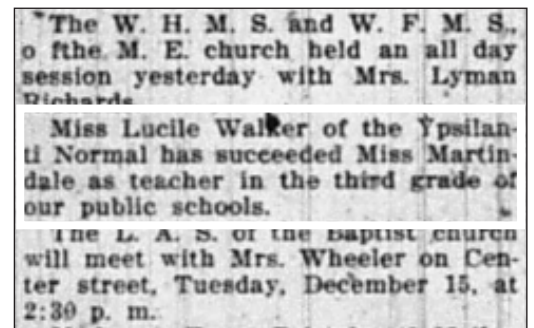
Just how much have some things really changed? Or is it just talk?

Consider, for instance, my arrival in Royal Oak as a new teacher in 1914. Superintendent E.J. Lederle came to Ypsilanti and hired me at \$50 a month to fill a vacancy in the third grade at the Union School, which was on the site of the present Washington School. Bess Martindale, the teacher, was to be released two weeks before Christmas as she had had a better offer in Grosse Pointe. As I recall, I was allowed to do extra work and leave college before the end of the term.

It was arranged that I call Mr. Lederle upon my arrival at the interurban station Saturday morning. When I called, Mrs. Lederle asked me to their home — north across the Grand Trunk tracks about two blocks. I arrived to find Mr. Lederle was just cleaning up after shoveling a delivery of coal into his basement. While waiting, I met Edith Crane, high school principal, and another high school teacher, Lou Hume. "High school" then meant what is now Clara Barton School.



The two-story brick Union School was built for \$12,000 in 1902. The name "Union" was chosen because the school united all grades in one building. The high school occupied two of the four second-floor rooms. In 1914, high school students transferred to their own building at Main and University (later Clara Barton Junior High). Union School continued as an elementary school until 1924 when it was demolished due to several fires and poor condition. Washington Elementary School soon was built to replace it.



Photograph courtesy of The Daily Tribune

Miss Walker's hiring was noted in The Daily Tribune on Dec. 11, 1914.

Continued on Page 4

GRANNY'S ATTIC SALE
at the Museum
Saturday, October 8

ANNUAL DINNER
Thursday, October 20

Check our website for ticket details
as they are announced.

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UPCOMING EXHIBITS

South Oakland Art Association
Show and Sale, October 15–29

Christmas in Royal Oak,
opens late November

Abraham Lincoln's Connection
to Royal Oak, opens Feb. 18, 2023

All photographs courtesy of the Royal Oak
Historical Society unless otherwise noted.

President's Message

BY BOB MULLER

The Royal Oak Historical Society was founded in 1939 and every year has held a banquet to help raise awareness and funds to keep our history alive in our city. Our last banquet was in 2019 when we celebrated our 80th anniversary year. Our banquet wasn't held in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, so I'm not sure we can call it our annual banquet this year. However, we'll begin anew with our next banquet on Thursday, October 20 to celebrate our 83rd year. We'll be having it at the Royal Oak First United Methodist Church at 320 W. Seventh St.

As usual, we'll have a silent auction, history awards will be given out and Royal Oaker Cas Swastek will do his trivia quiz. I'll also share some trivia about Royal Oak history, and we'll all

enjoy socializing with good friends again. Planning is ongoing, and we'll send out more information by email as it develops. We'll also update our Facebook page and website. Hope to see you all there. No need to be a member — however, we encourage all those who wish to support our mission to become part of our organization.



**ROHS Annual Banquet
Thursday, October 20**

We are busy converting the old firehouse bathroom on the museum's second floor into a storeroom for our expanding collection. We're also building a work table for the volunteers who build our displays. We're working on research into the Underground Railroad and the families of local Freedom Seekers who traveled it. This work is also being done by several of our neighboring historical societies.

As you're probably aware, the Main Art Theatre, which has been around since the 1940s, was demolished in late July, despite a citizen group's heroic efforts to save it. I hope its marquee was carefully taken down; it would be great if it could occupy a piece of the building that will go up in its place.



The Main Theatre in 1941



Above: The theater sat on Jacob Erb's former homestead on Main Street just north of 11 Mile, shown in this 1934 photograph.

Below: View of theater and grocery store in 1956



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 at jsschultz11@gmail.com.

Kimball House

1705 Greenleaf Drive

Brick Georgian Colonial Revival Built in 1938

The Kimball house was designed by architect Charles L. Phelps of Detroit and was built in 1938. Its design is Georgian Colonial Revival, popular from 1880 to 1955. Only in the original 13 colonies will you find 18th century (1720-1780) Georgian houses; however, the style came back and spread throughout the country during the Colonial Revival period of the early 20th century.

This house would probably be considered of Mid-Atlantic design with its brick and wood construction and Vermont slate hip roof. The original triple thick slash wooden windows still remain, and the interior walls of each room are insulated as well as the other walls. The peeling paint on the brick part of the exterior is in keeping with the early Georgian homes in Georgetown, Washington, D.C. and other parts of the East and Mid-Atlantic states.

The house is in the Vinsetta Park subdivision on a 90 by 180 foot lot and is among the many existing homes that were built in the 1920s and 1930s. There are also a few homes from the 1890s in the subdivision.

Clarence and Marie Kimball, who were residents of Royal Oak since 1930, originally owned the house. Clarence was a member of several community boards and in 1945 was elected to the school board after serving as a Royal Oak city commissioner for two years. During his 11 years with the school board, he was elected president for nine

Continued on Page 7



Teacher's First Day in 1914 • Continued from Page 1

Mr. Lederle soon put in an appearance and said he would go with me to find a place to live. We walked, mind you. (Mrs. Lederle tells me they owned their first car in 1919 or '20). Yes, we walked south on Washington to the corner of Sixth Street, where two teachers lived with the family of young Gil Davis. While they had no room to rent, it was suggested that another teacher, Beatrice Bixby, had a room with the John Monroes on the corner of Ninth and Lafayette — and just perhaps — so on we went to ask.

Well, trusting souls that they all were, there I found a home — board and room, the room to be shared with Miss Bixby, and only a block from the Union School. Some of you will remember Mr. John Monroe, a splendid, older gentleman — a Civil War veteran, and there I met daughter Mildred, a fourth grader, now Mrs. Victor Nelson of Royal Oak.

In due time, my trunk arrived in town and was delivered by Kenneth Lapham, whose father operated a horse-drawn dray.



First United Methodist Church photograph

Lucille Walker in 1969

Instructors 1914-15	
Superintendent	E. J. Lederle
Offices in High School Building	
High School	
Principal	Edith Crane
Science	R. B. Hunter
History	Mildred Taylor
Language	Lula Hume
English	Roberta Williams
Grammar Department	
Ward Principal	Mabelle Sifert
Grade	Emma Peters
	Lois Black
	Beatrice Bixby
	Margaret Swan
	Martha Ely
	Rhea Vedder
	Lucile Waker
	Lena Dougherty
	Ruth Sifert
	Helen McCarlin
	Harriet Younglove
	Isabell McCall

Photograph courtesy of The Daily Tribune

Lucile Waker [sic] is listed among the 1914-15 grade school teachers. Miss Walker and fellow teacher Miss Beatrice Bixby roomed together at 329 W. Ninth St.

Walker, Lena	rural	Aug., 1915	Jackson
Walker, Lloyd	A.B.	June, 1915	Ypsilanti
Walker, M. Lucille	life	Dec., 1914	St. Johns
Walker, Rhea May	graded	Aug., 1915	Jackson
Walker, Winifred B.	graded	Aug., 1915	East Tawas

Photograph courtesy of HathiTrust Digital Library

The 1914-15 Michigan Normal College yearbook lists Lucille Walker's graduation in December 1914.

Just think of it — on my first day in Royal Oak, I had met the superintendent and his wife and baby son John, the principal of the high school, and at least one fifth of the teachers of the whole school system — two schools and 15 or 16 teachers.

Perhaps current Superintendent Donald M. Currie might take a few hints from those days — meet his new teachers personally — he wouldn't have to walk. I'm sure he has a car. But no, no such personal touch. The last I knew they took the newcomers by bus and drove them around town to view the buildings — about 25 of them. Oh, they had a luncheon for them. Think they called all this "Orientation Day." But I'll bet the superintendent couldn't tell you where half of his teachers live. To be sure, he has a few more teachers. They tell me there are 958 on the professional staff at the present time.

Well, we'll all admit this is progress. This the way it must be. Times have changed. But wasn't there something special about those prehistoric days?



Tribune photograph

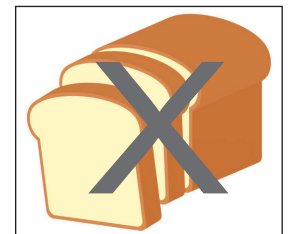


Left: E.J. Lederle in 1948. Right: Donald M. Currie, Royal Oak superintendent of schools from 1962-1973.

Winning World War II: Sliced Bread Outlawed

By Don Drife

As part of the war effort, the Office of Price Administration outlawed the sale of sliced bread on January 18, 1943. The OPA was in charge of rationing and price control of food, metal, paper, gasoline and rubber. *The Daily Tribune* reported, "Bakeries today began delivering unsliced bread with comparatively hard baked crusts in accordance with an OPA order designed to keep the price down to present levels, generally 11 cents for a 20-ounce of white bread." This order was intended to reduce packaging costs by producing unsliced bread with a firmer crust which could be sold in cheaper, lightweight wrappers. It didn't work.



The Congressional Record for the House for April 1, 1943 states, "Most wholesale bakers got little savings, because one principal savings expected was light waxed paper to be used with unsliced bread, and the expected paper order was never issued."

The *Tribune* article continues, "Some of the younger generation of wives, who have never sliced their own bread, were shopping for bread knives and were faced with a short supply. As a tip to them and to those who have forgotten how, set the loaf down on its side and cut with a light, even stroke to avoid shredding."

Royal Oak Then & Now

BY JOHN MAURICE, ROHS FACEBOOK EDITOR



Twelve Mile Road is one of the main east-west thoroughfares in Royal Oak and runs from Jefferson Avenue on the east side all the way to the village of Milford in the west. It's probably most widely recognized as the location of the National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica, which is located at the intersection of 12 Mile and Woodward Avenue. Shrine began as a parish in 1926, and the church as we know it was constructed around 1930. Before that, 12 Mile was just a quiet tree-lined path that wasn't paved until the late 1920s.

Our **first Then** photo is from 1902 and was taken just east of Woodward looking east down Oakwood Boulevard, as the road was known in those early days. Trees had been planted along both sides in the 1800s and had become quite mature by 1902. Our **second Then** photo shows the same area in 1928 just prior to 12 Mile being paved. Although you can't really see it in this photo, the original Shrine church would be to the left of the photo, near where the car is parked. To the right side is the future site of Shrine Grade School, which wouldn't come into

being until quite a few years later. If we could see far enough down the road, we'd see the original Northwood Elementary that was built in 1923.

One thing we wouldn't see in 1928 is the railroad viaduct as the train tracks weren't put into their current location until the early 1930s. As the city continued to grow, 12 Mile would eventually widen to four lanes, and today carries about 17,000 vehicles per day. The road became generally known as 12 Mile Road in the '20s, at least in Royal Oak. In Berkley, however, it carried both the 12 Mile and Oakwood monikers interchangeably until at least the late 1940s.



Photograph courtesy of Google Maps

Twelve Mile Road looking east from Woodward Avenue

Neighborhood Baseball Turns Rivalry to Camaraderie in the 1930s

John A. Clark, Sc.D.,* a June 1941 graduate of Royal Oak High School, spent most of his active years in academia with 10 years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and 35 years at The University of Michigan from which he retired in 1988 as professor emeritus of mechanical engineering. John became reacquainted with his hometown some years ago after coming to the Royal Oak Historical Museum for an exhibit of World War II uniforms. He served as a pilot flying combat missions over Germany in World War II; his late wife Marie was a pilot with the Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). John and Marie met at the Las Vegas Army Air Base in 1944 and were married when John returned from combat duty in 1945. He lives near his two children in Bloomington, Minnesota. (*MIT uses Sc.D. to denote a Ph.D.)

By John A. Clark

I was raised at 3114 Garden Ave. in Royal Oak and lived there for the first 18 years of my life in a small four-room house that my father built starting in 1923, the year I was born. It was never really finished before I left for World War II in 1943. We didn't have indoor plumbing until 1935. Garden Avenue runs north and south from Webster Road to 13 Mile Road in the northwest part of Royal Oak between Woodward and Greenfield.

Most of our neighbors were employed as auto workers in the 1920s and 1930s, struggling most of the time to make ends meet. This was especially true in the dark days of the 1930s. My father was employed as a steel hardener by the Ford Motor Company at the Rouge Plant in Dearborn when there was work, but he was often laid off during the Depression, as were many of our neighbors.



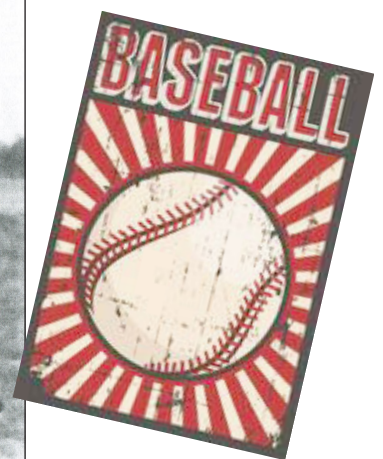
Our family consisted of three boys and two girls, all born between 1920 and 1927. I am the last survivor of the family and will be 100 years old (God willing!) next year. My mother had only one arm but managed quite well considering this handicap.

Webster Road (also known as 12½ Mile Road) was the boundary between Berkley and Royal Oak and was quite heavily wooded when I lived there. This led to some – usually – good-natured rivalry between the Berkley boys and the Royal Oak boys that sometimes, however, led to more serious conflicts involving battles employing slingshots, various sticks and stones and mutual wrecking of “bunks” each group had individually built in the woods. The gravel roads provided ample supply of stones for our slingshots.

These skirmishes went on during the summers for two or three years until older boys, probably directed by their parents, decided to call a truce and suggested we put our competitive energies into more civilized activities, namely baseball. We agreed to meet at Sam's Market [later Ward's Friendly Market and Everson's] at 12 Mile and Bacon Avenue in Berkley to work out the arrangements for a two-team baseball league. We set up these teams, and over a period of several years until WWII, we had these summer games with the “Berkleyites,” as we called them.



Photograph courtesy of John A. Clark



The Garden Avenue baseball team in May 1934 just before a game with Berkley which the Garden Avenue boys won 6-3. Standing (L to R): Dick Smith (center field), Charles Clark (left field), Floyd Buck (second base), Walt Pollack (manager), Harley Elwood (pitcher and center field), “Red” Johnson (pitcher and center field), Eddie Buck (first base). Sitting (L to R): Paul Smith (shortstop), Jack Spence (third base), and subs Donald Elwood, John Clark, Ralph McMann and Dick McMann. Ralph McMann was killed in Italy during World War II.

Kimball House • Continued from Page 3

consecutive terms. In 1957, the new high school was named in his honor for his dedication and contributions to the Royal Oak school district.

The front courtyard is paved with bricks from the streets of old Detroit that were found under the asphalt when the streets were repaired. They were dug up and sold to contractors, and the present owners were fortunate to have been able to acquire them.

In 1998, they replaced the old shrubbery in the front of the house with plantings of azaleas, rhododendrons and boxwood for an 18th century look that fits the design of the house, as well as adding a brick walk and porch.

The house is about 3,300 square feet of living space with a central entrance hall, typical of Georgian style. There are 17 rooms including bathrooms and counting a basement recreation room, office, laundry and tool room.



In the backyard is a Williamsburg-style garden full of flowers, herbs and boxwood plantings.

The living room's fireplace wall is a reproduction of the wall found in a 1760 Rhode Island home; the den has pine board floors and a beamed ceiling along with 18th century interior style trim in all the rooms.

The backyard has a Williamsburg garden full of flowers, herbs and boxwood plantings. Two brick patios flank the garden, and a small red storage barn sits to the rear of the property.

Thank You!

The Royal Oak Historical Society Board and Trustees thank these recent generous donors for investing in the future of the history of Royal Oak and the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum. Donations are always welcome and are tax deductible as the Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. Make checks payable to Royal Oak Historical Society, 1411 W. Webster Rd., Royal Oak, MI 48073, or you can make a donation via credit card on our website at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com.

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2022 Car Show, Woodward Memories, and Concept Art Exhibit



Photographs by Ryan Gertner and Mike Frenz

The Car Show was a big success this summer! The Royal Oak Historical Society held its annual automotive classics event on August 6 in the museum parking lot.

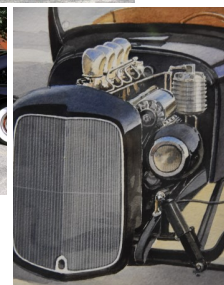
More than 100 guests came to view dozens of classic cars outside and walk through the Automotive Concept Art Show and Woodward Memories exhibit inside the museum.

The event is one of the Historical Society's fundraising efforts to keep the museum operating. For more photos from the event, visit our website: royaloakhistoricalsociety.com.



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Looking Back

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

What was happening in Royal Oak in October...

60 years ago — 1962

SOUTH OAKLAND'S EXPRESSWAY link to northern Michigan will be open in two sections—one next week, the other next month. The 22.5-mile section of Interstate-75 freeway from U.S. 10 north of Clarkston northwest to U.S. 23 southwest of Flint will be open with traditional ribbon-cutting ceremonies at 10:30 a.m. Thursday (Oct. 24). The section cost \$17.5 million. The other link, 12.5 miles from U.S. 10 near Clarkston southeastward to Opdyke Road (M-24) northwest of Pontiac, will open sometime in mid-November.

70 years ago — 1952

ADVISING SOUTH OAKLAND VOTERS that “now is the time to caucus your conscience,” Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower today (Oct. 24) criticized Democrats for their campaign of “fear” and outlined a four-point program to clean up the “mess in Washington.” The Republican nominee, speaking from the rear platform of his 18-car special train, attracted more than 7,000 persons at Fourth and Washington on his “whistle-stop” in Royal Oak.

80 years ago — 1942

ROYAL OAK HOSPITAL, established 12 years ago, probably will close not later than Oct. 20, and it is unlikely that the city will take it over. Although a committee of three commissioners was appointed to study the hospital problem, the mayor declared it would be impossible to secure surgeons to staff the hospital for the city. (The Royal Oak Hospital was located in the Washington Square Building.)

NATURAL GAS will arrive in the major portion of the City of Royal Oak and part of Royal Oak Township on Thursday (Nov. 2). This will comprise the territory from Ten Mile Road north to Twelve Mile Road and from Woodward to Dequindre Road.

75 years ago — 1937

FIFTY THOUSAND PERSONS, double the population of the City of Royal Oak, lined the two-mile Michigan Centennial parade route to watch probably the largest parade ever held in Southern Oakland County. Centennial and city officials marched in the parade including Congressman George A. Dondero and Royal Oak Mayor H. Lloyd Clawson.

90 years ago — 1932

THE REV. CHARLES COUGHLIN, pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower, Woodward and Twelve Mile Road, will resume the broadcast of “The Golden Hour of the Little Flower” on Sunday, Oct. 16, continuing for 27 consecutive weeks. “The Golden Hour” will be broadcast by 26 stations in the

Continued on Page 10

1932

Jo Mendi Still Seriously Ill

Jo Mendi was the star of the chimp shows, but behind the scenes, he was described as a boisterous, raucous, difficult-to-control wild animal. Here he is with zoo director and owner John Millen who was serving him alcohol as part of the act.



Photograph courtesy of The Daily Tribune

Jo Mendi, the 5-year-old educated chimpanzee, the pride of the Detroit Zoological Park, is still seriously ill today (Oct. 1), from an infection caused by a penny he swallowed that was thrown on stage at his private theater. Jo's temperature was 100.1 and his pulse was 80 and respiration was slightly improved. Dr. G.F. Ewalt, zoo veterinarian, said his condition was still serious.

If director John T. Millen, Jo's owner and best friend, ever had any doubts as to the popularity of the star, they have been dispelled during Jo's illness. Telephone calls have been taxing the facilities of the zoo staff as children and grown-ups, who have enjoyed Jo's acts, inquired about his condition. In addition to the many flowers received yesterday, there has been a steady stream of floral messengers bringing in the offerings of esteem sent by children with whom the chimpanzee is a great favorite.

Mr. Millen said again today that every effort to save Jo would be made.

Editor's Note: Jo Mendi survived this illness and died in 1934. He was later replaced by Jo Mendi II.

Looking Back • Continued from Page 9

Middle-west and East from 4 until 5 p.m. The local station will be WJR Detroit. "This hour is in nowise donated," Father Coughlin said. "It is fully paid for by the free-will contributions of the interested radio audience."

100 years ago — 1922

COMMISSIONERS GUSTAVUS DONDERO and Dr. J.S. Morrison were appointed to represent Royal Oak city on the committee composed also of two representatives from Ferndale and Pleasant Ridge villages and Royal Oak Township to consider creating a metropolitan area to erect a joint disposal plant at Red Run Creek and Twelve Mile Road for disposition of sewage from the entire community.

THE TRIBUNE THIS WEEK (Oct. 16) begins the fourth year of its operations by the present company by another expansion, one which places it among the twelve-page weekly papers of Michigan. This increase in size will mean greater ability to serve both readers and advertisers and will permit the publishers to return to some of the features which have been added at various times in the last three years. The *Tribune* is now one of the few weekly newspapers in the United States to carry a full page of comics and cartoons. Soon, two of the best American novels will be published simultaneously as part of its service.

105 years ago — 1917

THE NEW PAVEMENT on Woodward between Royal Oak and Detroit will be completed on Tuesday (Oct. 4) and this week as well as the pavement work on Main Street downtown.

Oct. 6, 1922

Ira Lee Cleaner Corp. Plans to Build Immediately

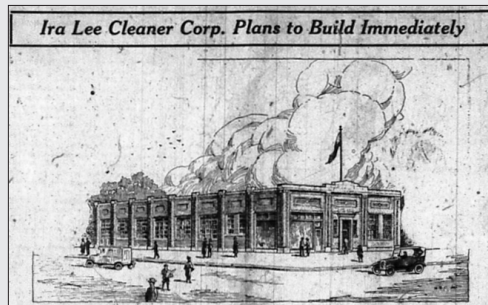


Illustration courtesy of *The Daily Tribune*

The plant, to be located at the northeast corner, will be electrically operated and Ira Lee Sheffler, president, says its operation will be practically noiseless and smokeless.

The building as designed is an attractive structure with an exterior of selected pressure brick with stone trimmings. The building will be 60 by 220 feet with office space of 20 by 60 feet. Part of this space will be utilized as a display room.

Steel trusses 60 feet long will support the roof spanning the entire width. Ample lighting will be provided with windows with steel sashes.

A modern steam heating and ventilating plant will be installed. Production of the cleaners will be started as soon as the building is completed, as the machinery is now stored in Royal Oak ready for use.

About 10 men will be employed on production at the onset, but the future plans call for expansion so that several hundred men will be steadily employed within five years. Four hundred cleaners will be built here by December, according to the schedule.

Editor's Note: Read more about architect Frederick D. Madison on Page 11.

The architect's plans prepared by Frederick D. Madison for the factory of the Ira Lee Suction Cleaner Corporation, which is to be built at First (Eleven Mile) and Maple streets, have been completed and bids will be called for immediately.

Mr. Madison states that if a suitable bid is received now the construction can be completed by Dec. 15.



Illustration courtesy of *The Daily Tribune*

More Memories of the Brooks Coffee Club

I enjoyed reading the article in the May 2022 newsletter by Leslie L. Haight about the Brooks Coffee Club on Woodward Avenue. My mom knew someone who helped her make arrangements to take me there for lunch. Mom said she had to make a reservation and give her name. She couldn't remember the name of the restaurant but knew it had all kinds of railroad memorabilia and was a very small place. There was a very limited menu, and we were the only customers. Mom told me we had hamburgers delivered on a small train. The fact that the restaurant was torn down in 1964 lines up with my age. (I was four years old in 1963.)

Thank you so much for running this story. I enjoyed the trip down memory lane.

Bonnie A. Burnett, Royal Oak



Letter to the Editor

Franklin D. Madison: The Architect Who Put the Face on Royal Oak

By Trish Oliver

Franklin D. Madison (1888–1969) was a prolific architect who gave Royal Oak its distinctive sense of place by designing most of the prominent buildings in Royal Oak including most of Royal Oak's public schools as shown in the incomplete list to the right — and also some buildings in other Michigan cities.

News of Madison's death was front-page news in *The Daily Tribune* which summarized the full measure of the man.



**Designer of
Royal Oak
Bldgs. Dies**

Sept. 24, 1969

With proper care and an occasional facelifting to keep it current

with the times, an old building can survive and remain productive indefinitely. An old man can't.

What man can do, if he is so endowed, is leave behind him a bit of his creativity, his knowledge and his sweat — a bit of himself — in the form of buildings.

Such is the legacy of Franklin D. Madison, who died Tuesday at the age of 81.

Largest Buildings

With his architectural tools, Mr. Madison sculptured much of the face of a young Royal Oak during the 1920s and '30s. The Washington Square Building, a six-story office structure, built at Fourth and Washington in the late 1920s, still is downtown Royal Oak's tallest building. Franklin D. Madison designed it.

1916	Mary Lyon Elementary School (later junior high) (demolished)
1919	Longfellow Elementary School* (demolished)
1921	Parker Elementary School* (demolished)
1922	Baldwin Theatre (formerly Washington Theatre)
1922	Grant Elementary School* (demolished)
1922	Whittier Elementary School* (demolished)
1923	(formerly) Royal Oak Savings Bank
1923	Northwood Elementary School*
1924	Oakland Elementary School
1925	Washington Elementary School* (demolished)
1925	Home at 160 Hendrie Boulevard. At almost 7,000 square feet, the largest residence in Royal Oak at that time and home to builder and frequent Madison collaborator Norman Starr (see "Recollections of Norman A. Starr" by his grandson Michael D. Harveth in our Fall 2008 and May 2020 issues.) Homes in West Branch and Lapeer known also to be of Madison's design.
1927	Franklin Elementary School* (demolished)
1928	Royal Oak Middle School (formerly Dondero High School)
1928 opening	Washington Square Building, northwest corner of Washington and Fourth Streets. First six-story building in Royal Oak (and tallest one until at least 1969)
1929	Montgomery Ward (located in the Conga Building)
1934	Royal Oak Post Office
1951	Oak Ridge Elementary School
1951	Upton Elementary School
1951	St. Paul Lutheran School, Royal Oak

* Source: April 2, 1941 *The Daily Tribune* on the occasion of Madison's 53rd birthday



Tribune photograph

Frederick D. Madison
photo from 1969

What now is Dondero High School was Royal Oak's first big educational plant when it opened in 1928. The 42-year-old First Methodist Church at Washington and Seventh is one of the area's biggest.

The block of South Main between Fourth and Fifth is the home of Wayne-Oakland Bank, a major financial institution through Royal Oak's growth years. The Washington Theatre is a well-known local landmark.

Mr. Madison designed them all, plus almost countless other school, office and store buildings throughout the city. His pen, ruler and compass also went into plans for the Oakland County Jail and TB sanatorium and Genesee County courthouse and jail, among others.

A Royal Oak resident since 1914, Mr. Madison opened his first architectural office two years later. He retired some 40 years later. After World War II, both the Royal Oak School District and Oakland County retained him to design long-range construction projects. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects.

Mr. Madison was a longtime resident of 703 Woodcrest. He died at Alexander Convalescent Home, Royal Oak.

Born April 2, 1888, at Kingsley (near Traverse City), he was married to the former Sadie Hammond in Royal Oak June 26, 1914. She, two children and six grandchildren survive. Services were held at the Royal Oak First United Methodist Church and burial was in the Royal Oak Cemetery.



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