



ROYAL OAK

Historical Society

JULY 2019 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM

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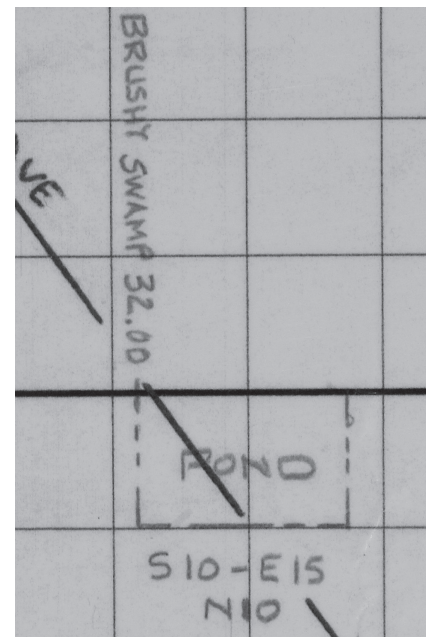
New Maps Highlight More Points Along the Path of the Saginaw Trail

By Bob Muller, ROHS President

Among some new features on the Royal Oak Historical Society website (royaloakhistoricalsociety.com) are downloadable maps of Oakland County townships that I compiled from the notes of a surveyor in 1817. These are the earliest observations written about the land around us. The maps were compiled for a group doing research on the 1818 expedition to disprove some of what the surveyor reported.

The group was interested in the original forest composition, and I purchased the Royal Oak notes, and the Royal Oak Nature Society purchased the Troy notes because part of Royal Oak was in Troy. To turn the notes into a readable map form takes about 30 hours per township. A considerable amount of time is spent in deciphering the faded cursive notes from 1817. Additionally, some tree names have changed and the language has words that have to be interpreted such as “do” means “dido” and “et” means “etc.”

Another problem was after the 1817 survey was completed, the head surveyor in Washington, D.C. said 10,000 acres in Michigan were not worth an acre in Ohio and the land in Michigan was unfit for human habitation. The area was removed from a program to give land to soldiers from the War of 1812 and therefore stopped people from settling in Michigan. However, my background in the geography of the area corrected some of their misconceptions and they asked me to document the land from more townships.



The diagonal line is where Woodward Avenue is today. The horizontal line is where 11 Mile Road is today and the rectangle with S10 - E15 - N10 is the distance surveyors had to go to walk around a pond that was too deep to walk through. This is measured in chains 66 feet long - therefore 660 feet south, 990 feet east, and 660 feet north to get back to the line they were surveying.

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THE ROYAL OAK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM *Presents*

WOODWARD MEMORIES

2019 CAR SHOW

SATURDAY AUGUST 3RD 10 AM - 3 PM



Pre-register online or at museum
Car show registration fee: \$15
Includes Chance to Win \$100 prize
Dash plaques to first 100 entrants
Goody bag to first 75 entrants
Music by Jamie Burean

Plus Fun for Everyone...

AUTOMOTIVE CONCEPT ART SHOW **MEET THE DESIGNERS**

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY AUGUST 2ND 7-9PM

• Refreshments & Dessert • Classic Cars Welcome - Priority Parking
\$10 donation at the door

EXHIBITION DATES: AUGUST 3RD - SEPTEMBER 21ST



THE ROYAL OAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

1411 W. Webster, Royal Oak, MI 48073 (248) 439-1501 royaloakhistoricalociety.org
MUSEUM HOURS: Tue, Thurs, Sat - 1 to 4pm



Homes & Buildings In Royal Oak

Edited by John S. Schultz

Each newsletter, the Royal Oak Historical Society will focus on historic homes and buildings in our city. The selections come from the book, "Royal Oak Images, Yesterday's Charm Today's Treasures," published by the Roundtable of Royal Oak Historical Organizations, a standing committee of the Royal Oak Historical Commission of the City of Royal Oak. The book was published in 2006, and a second edition 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 johnsschultz@sbcglobal.net.*

Max Hagelstine House 326 Hendrie Boulevard *An American Eclectic Bungalow Style*

According to a Burton Abstract and Title Company document, this lot was part of an 80-acre tract originally deeded by the U.S. government under President Martin Van Buren on January 29, 1834, to Edward C. Matthews. Since that time, there had been many different owners of the land, until purchased by George and Sarah Hendrie in 1890.

George was president of the Hendrie Boulevard Land Company of Detroit and is listed in the 1870 U.S. census as a contractor. In 1912, he had the land in the subdivision platted into 167 lots. This is lot number 31. In 1918, the house was the second house built on Hendrie Boulevard with the

first house built and owned by Alfred and Louise Stone at 179 Hendrie. Woodward was still an unpaved road when the two homes were built.

The house is best described as "an American eclectic bungalow style that was popular between 1915 and 1930," according to the book "*American Bungalow Style*."

The red tile roof, arched porch detailing and beige stucco all draw on subtle influences from Mexico and Spain and reflect the country's fascination with missions at the time.

The dark wood beam exterior detailing near the roof is much more ornate than that used in typical English

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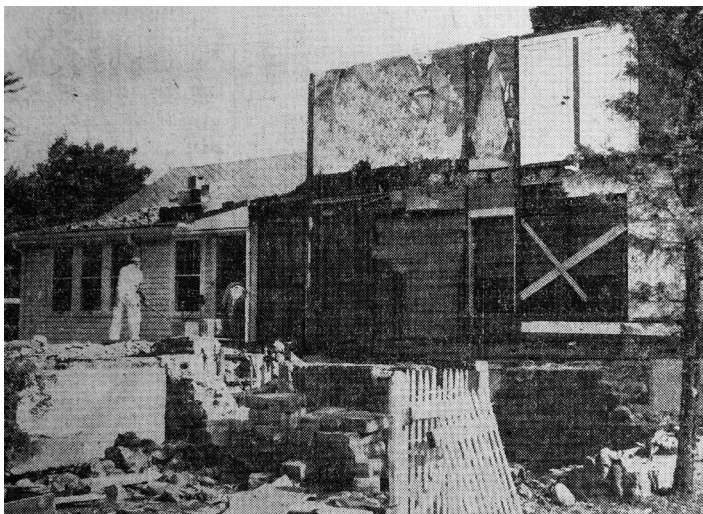
Looking Back

Taken from the pages of *The Daily Tribune*. Collected by John S. Schultz

What Was Happening In Royal Oak In July:

70 Years Ago – 1949

One of Royal Oak's oldest homes, the 131-year-old former residence of Dr. Ruth E. Wagner at 3915 Rochester Rd., is being razed to make way for a day training school for mentally handicapped children. FAR (Friends and Relatives South Oakland County Handicapped, Inc.) purchased the 20-room house last year, through a \$30,000 donation from retired Detroit industrialist Elmer J. Smith. A one-story, 60 by 100-foot structure with full basement is expected to be finished by mid-fall. Floyd J. Miller, president and general manager of *The Daily Tribune*, flies to Quito, Ecuador, where he will be an official U.S. delegate to the 5th Inter-American Press Congress. A director of the IAPA, he attended the 3rd congress in Venezuela in 1945, and the 4th in Colombia in 1946. It will be his sixth trip to Latin America.



Photograph courtesy of *The Daily Tribune*

80 Years Ago – 1939

A severe thunderstorm, which hit South Oakland County at 5 a.m. rages for an hour and brings some relief from the heat. Lightning strikes the hose tower at Ferndale headquarters fire station.

Kroger's new self-serve market opens at 301 South Main, Royal Oak, in the Roy building. (This is at the corner of Third and Main, the now closed Qdoba Mexican restaurant.)

90 Years Ago – 1929

While it lasted, there was plenty of monkey business on the screened sun porch of a York Road home early today after Elmer, one of the Detroit Zoo's oldest baboons, had found his way onto the porch before the eyes of an astonished maid.

Before Elmer was captured by zoo attendants two hours later, the animal had a great time breaking flower pots, scattering the earth and flowers over the floor and upturning chairs and tables.

Deulah Harriman, maid in the home of Dr. Palmer E. Sutton, 1138 York Rd., Royal Oak, went to open the house door to the sun porch at 5:30 a.m. today and could hardly believe her eyes. For there, calmly unfastening the outside door was a large monkey. The maid phoned the police immediately. About two hours later, Mrs. Sutton said, the zookeepers arrived and carted off Elmer, a sadder and wiser monkey. Park attendants today were unable to find out how Elmer got loose. And Elmer is too wise to tell them.

An airplane crash at John R and Fifteen Mile Roads kills one man and critically injures another. The two were passengers in a 3-place Waco biplane which made a dead stick landing.

A traffic bottleneck will be eliminated when Pleasant Ridge widens Main Street pavement between 10 Mile and Woodward from 18 feet to 48 feet. This will connect with widened South Main in Royal Oak. R.D. Baker is awarded the paving contract for \$10,564.

100 Years Ago – 1919

Three men walked in on D. Hout, the confectioner on Washington Avenue, about six o'clock Monday evening and after gagging and binding him, robbed him of \$285, his gold watch and his razor and made a get-away in their automobile. It was a daring piece of work but contemptible because of the fact that Mr. Hout is not of a man's stature physically and incapable of vigorous resistance.

Royal Oak Then & Now

by John Maurice, ROHS Facebook Editor

This installment of Royal Oak Then & Now features the historic Northwood Fire Station, which is now home to the Royal Oak Historical Society Museum. The station was built in 1927-1928 at a cost of \$65,000 on land donated by the Northwood Land Development Association. This land was once part of the F.W. Clawson Farm, which occupied a large portion of the Crooks and Webster area from Royal Oak's early days until it burned down in 1917. F.W. was the original owner and his son Lloyd was the developer of the Northwood Subdivision. A stone memorial commemorating F.W. can be found at the junction of Northwood Boulevard and Crooks Road.

From Royal Oak's village days in 1913 until it officially became a city in 1921, the fire department had been a volunteer one. In 1922 the newly established city decided to replace the volunteer department with a paid one. After the construction of this station and the onset of the Great Depression followed by World War II, the city did not build another new station until the 1950s.

In the Then photo, you can see the beautiful home at the rear of the station that used to stand at 1408 Northwood to the south of the fire station. You can also note that there was very little construction at this time on Evergreen to the west of the station. The Northwood station can be seen in the background of many of the historical photos of the area that are housed in the Historical Society's collection since it's been a Royal Oak landmark for 91 years. The Now photo shows that the building really hasn't changed much in all those years.



photograph courtesy of Royal Oak Historical Society



photograph courtesy of Google Maps

Royal Oak Historical Society

by Bob Muller, ROHS Board President

This issue's Photo Game features some of downtown Royal Oak's alleys. Can you identify which Royal Oak alleys are pictured here?

(Answers on page 7)



Photo Credits: Bob Muller

ROHS Notices

What's Going On At The Orson Starr House?

The Orson Starr House is a Michigan farmhouse that was originally constructed about 1845. Located at 3123 N. Main St., one block south of Thirteen Mile Road, the house is owned by the City of Royal Oak and is open to the public from 1-4 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month or by prior arrangement. Additional parking is available two doors to the south at the Salvation Army Citadel.

The house was occupied by the Starr Family for nearly 100 years and was home to one of Royal Oak's pioneering families.

Open houses and tours are provided by the members of the Orson Starr House Guild, a volunteer committee that organizes special events at the monthly sessions.

Admission is free; however, donations are always welcome.

Donations to the Royal Oak Historical Society Are Gratefully Accepted

Send checks payable to:

The Royal Oak Historical Society • 1411 West Webster Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48073

Donations are tax-deductible. Thank you in advance.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I live near the Springsteen House and have always wanted to know more about it. Loved the article (May 2019) in the newsletter. One more mystery solved.

Shelly Kemp

New Maps Highlight More Points *Continued from page 1*

One of the major highlights of the maps allows us to search the path of the Saginaw Trail, the major American Indian path out of Detroit from Eight Mile to 14 Mile roads. We always knew that the trail passed the Starr House on Crooks Road, but now we have 12 other points in the Township along its path. It is interesting that it split into two trails at about where Ferndale High School is today and came back together at about Woodward and Normandy. We can only speculate why this occurred. History is like that; not everything was written down, and there are always pieces missing that can only be filled in with speculation. They have also added confirmation on the path of Red Run.

The surveyors in 1817 called many of the creeks “runs,” and the 1818 expedition, when reaching about eight miles out of Detroit, commented on the wet prairies being the headwaters of Red Run. The 1817 surveyors had no name for the run, but by the 1818 expedition, they knew its name.

Annual Car Show in August

The Historical Society’s 8th Annual Car Show will be held August 3 at the museum. We have preview nights coming up before new exhibits open, and they are always fun. We ask a donation of \$10. On August 2, we have the opening party for the Automotive Concept Art Show at which you can meet the designers; this one is not to miss.

Pancake Breakfast Another Success

Our Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast was a great success this year. We were a little worried that the lack of parking around the Farmers Market would result in low numbers of attendees; however, we had almost 600, a pleasant surprise! Everything has been cleaned, put away and inventoried for next year. The breakfast takes more volunteers than any other event the Historical Society puts on and is our major fundraiser. So, for weeks in advance, we are preparing for it, and when it is over, it feels good to know we have a year before we do it again.

Max Hagelstine House *Continued from page 3*

Tudor Revival styles, which makes it all the more unusual and hard to define style-wise.

The architects of the house were C. F. Barnes of Detroit and Fredrick D. Madison of Royal Oak. Madison was an architect in Royal Oak during the peak of its settlement, having designed Royal Oak High School (which became Dondero High School and is now Royal Oak Middle School), the Washington Square Building, and the Royal Oak Post Office among other homes and commercial buildings located within the city.

The home was first deeded to Max and Clara (Hayden) Hagelstine on April 17, 1919. Mr. Hagelstine was listed in the census as a merchant and is believed to have been the owner of a grocery store in Royal Oak at the time. He was also in the automobile business and in the early 1930s, *City Directories* list him as a vice president of the Waterseal Roof and Title Company. He formerly was assistant chief

engineer and service manager of the Studebaker Corp. in Detroit and was a Hudson-Essex dealer in Royal Oak.

The second occupants were Henry Willis Farr and his wife, Margaret S. Farr, moving from Highland Park and were registered owners in 1933. Mr. Farr was the sales manager for the Carter Carburetor Company. They lived in the house for nearly 15 years until it was sold to Arthur Seaborn, M.D., and his wife, Margaret on October 15, 1948. Dr. Seaborn was an obstetrician/gynecologist working out of Mt. Carmel Hospital in Detroit. Dr. Seaborn delivered a larger number of children of Royal Oak families during his years.

In the 1960s, the Seaborns had an enclosed porch and half bath added to the north side of the house. The porch is covered in wood with trim and paint color to match the house. The garage originally was built to match the house with stucco walls and metal contoured roofing to simulate the tile on the house.

PHOTO GAME ANSWERS:
• (A): Alley west of Main Street between Third and Fourth Streets.
• (B): Alley along railroad tracks between Fourth and Fifth Streets. It has been decades since this Varsity shop has been in Royal Oak, but their sign is still there.
• (C): Alley west of Main Street between Sixth and Seventh Streets.



THE ROYAL OAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1411 West Webster Rd. • Royal Oak, MI 48073
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ROYAL OAK
Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

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Individual: \$20___ Family: \$30___ Supporter: \$50___
Century: \$100___ Club: \$200___ Premium: \$300___ Benefactor: \$500___

**Mail your check to: Royal Oak Historical Society
1411 W. Webster Road • Royal Oak, MI 48073**

Dues also are payable online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com. Click on the Membership link and you may pay your dues online or subscribe and have your dues paid automatically annually. For more information about membership levels and benefits, visit the website. Thank you in advance!

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