



ROYAL OAK Historical Society

JULY 2024 • ROYALOAKHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM

Ellis Berry: Royal Oak's Rhubarb King

By Don Drife

DURING THE LATE

1920s, Royal Oak was the shipping center for rhubarb. The lowly "Pie Plant" became a springtime delicacy in hotels and restaurants in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Buffalo, and other eastern cities. It was the first sweet "fruit" of the year, a welcome "spring tonic" in the north. People made it into sauce, custard, pudding, and of course, pies.

Instrumental in developing this trade was Ellis Berry, known as Royal Oak's "Rhubarb King." Working as an agent for the American Railway Express Company, Berry helped expand its express shipping services, including springtime shipping of rhubarb. He assisted local farmers so they could receive top dollar for their produce by coordinating their harvest time with the highest rhubarb pricing. In the late 1920s, five daily express trains ran through Royal Oak.

BY 1929, Royal Oak shipped an average of 17.5 tons of rhubarb each week, valued at approximately \$7,000. Two hundred growers shipped through Royal Oak. The season began in January and ended in early May. A farmer in one week, from one hothouse, could harvest 32 cases, each having 50 pounds of rhubarb, selling for \$5 to \$8 a case. This was approximately \$200. The average yearly farm income for Oakland County in 1929 was \$2,200.

A March 1929 article in *The Daily Tribune* reports that Berry "keeps in daily touch with the farmers, posting them on market prices and shipping conditions and in various ways aiding the handling of the large amount of produce that comes into Royal Oak every day."



Ellis Berry (left) standing with a rhubarb shipment at the Royal Oak railroad station in the 1930s.

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Construction Won't Stall Expanded Annual Historical Society Car Show

Despite ongoing construction along Crooks Road and Northwood Boulevard, it's full speed ahead for the Royal Oak Historical Society's 12th annual car show fundraiser at the Historical Museum from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. August 3.

Last year, more than 100 car enthusiasts and others gathered to enjoy vintage cars, muscle cars, hot rods, and more along with music, food, and camaraderie, and this year's **MUSCLE & MORE @ THE MUSEUM** is anticipated to be bigger yet. Car enthusiast Ralph Haney will be this year's grand marshal.

There will be dash plaques, awards, a \$100 cash prize, and more. In addition to the outdoor festivities, visitors are welcome to come inside the historic museum to view artwork from automobile designers and concept art from the past to the present.

Those wishing to display their cars can pre-register online at royaloakhistoricalsociety.com or at the museum, 1411 W. Webster Road, from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. For more information, call the museum at (248) 439-1501. All proceeds benefit the Royal Oak Historical Society.

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ROYAL OAK
Historical Museum

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Royal Oak, MI 48073

royaloakhistoricalsociety.com

(248) 439-1501

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

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

July

Rails Through Royal Oak

August

Car Designs of the 1950s and '60s
St. Paul Lutheran Church anniversary

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

President's Message

BY TOM TOGGWEILER

Upcoming Events Support Our Mission

The Historical Society hosted its annual community pancake breakfast fundraiser at the Farmers Market on Memorial Day in conjunction with the city's parade on Main Street (see photos on Page 3). The ceremony, normally held at the War Memorial in Centennial Commons, was relocated to the market because of inclement weather. The combination of our breakfast and the indoor ceremony was a huge success, raising nearly \$4,500 for the operation of our museum. I want to thank all our volunteers who helped make this event a part of honoring the military personnel who died while serving our country.

WE WILL BE HOSTING our 12th annual car show fundraiser at the museum from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, August 3. There will be coffee and doughnuts in the morning, and we will be grilling burgers and hot dogs and providing beverages and ice cream. We hope to greatly surpass the number of vehicles being shown from last year. This event as a great prelude to the annual Woodward Dream Cruise on August 17. It is also an opportunity to see some classic cars up close and avoid the huge crunch of people on Dream Cruise day. We hope to see you all there.

There are several more events planned for the coming months to encourage members and newcomers to learn more about the museum, enjoy a social evening, and pass along some usable items.

- Another **Euchre Tournament** is set for Friday, September 6. Pronto Restaurant is again graciously providing space for the event. The proceeds also support our museum's efforts to promote our city's great history. Details will be coming soon but save that night for a fun event if you are a player. It is also a great opportunity to meet new people and mingle with our volunteers.
- On Saturday, September 28, a **Granny's Attic Sale** will be held in the museum parking lot. Dropoff of items for the sale will be two evenings during the week before the sale.
- An October date is to be determined for an **open house** at the museum, with cider and doughnuts, to bring awareness of the museum and to promote membership. We urge all current members to encourage family and friends to share in our history and the importance of preserving our past. Details will be forthcoming about this event.
- Also in October is our **Annual Dinner**. A confirmed date is still to be settled. Hope to see everyone there to celebrate our successes and to congregate with all sectors of our city.

Check our website royaloakhistoricalsociety.com and Facebook page or contact the museum at (248) 439-1501 for information on all upcoming events.

MOST OF ALL, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all our volunteers at the museum whose hard work and determination make us what we are — the keepers of our history in Royal Oak. It is truly remarkable what our archives hold for those seeking information on their family's past and what our city has meant to us living in a vibrant city. Please visit and support us at the museum.

Upcoming Speaker Series

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

Friday, August 9 — Members of the League of Retired
Automotive Designers

Friday, September 13 — To be announced

Curator's Corner

BY JOHANNA SCHURRER

Popular Railroad Exhibit Continues

"Rails Through Royal Oak," the exhibit on display through July, has been very well received and describes the trials and tribulations of developing the tracks and locomotives in the 1800s and the impact the railroad would have on the community of Royal Oak.

We have model trains and artifacts on loan from people who either worked or now work for the railroad, or who just love trains like many of us. Bruce Kidder, one of our members who sets up a train at the museum at Christmas, has provided an interactive display for visitors to run several trains around the tracks. Brian Golden's talk on the D.U.R. (Interurban) railway on July 12 was another interesting train-related event.

We continue to improve the resources in the museum library. Visitors can access family histories as well as research homes, businesses, schools, and other archival information about Royal Oak. Finding aids to help with research are listed on our website and will be updated as we continue our progress.

In August we will honor St. Paul Lutheran Church — the first Lutheran church in Oakland County and Royal Oak — on its 151st year with a historical exhibit in our church display case. On August 27, a state historical marker will be dedicated at the church, 202 East Fifth Street.

Also during August, the museum will host the annual exhibit by the League of Retired Automotive Designers. This is always a popular display, especially for car enthusiasts to visit during the 12th annual car show on Saturday, August 3.

Pancake Breakfast Snaps



Photos by Marcy Dwyer



From Our Collections

Introducing William Beaumont Hospital, circa 1955

As a communication tool for the new hospital (which opened on January 24, 1955), the brochure shown at right not only served to educate the public about the hospital but also to highlight its features to bring in a consumer base.



The brochure emphasized that Beaumont "is your community hospital," built to serve the many needs of the sick and injured. It went on to suggest that even if you weren't sick or injured right now, you might have need of hospital services at a later date!



As described in the brochure at left, the rooms featured "hospital TV" that was specially designed for Beaumont. It included remote-control and a "built-in pillow speaker" for the service fee of \$1.60 per day.

The volunteer brochure (right) had pockets for letterhead and envelopes, postcards, and cards promoting the female volunteers.

"The women who wear this uniform are members of the Women's Service Committee of William Beaumont Hospital." Trained to assist the professional staff, over 800 women were already serving as volunteers.



Hospital letterhead

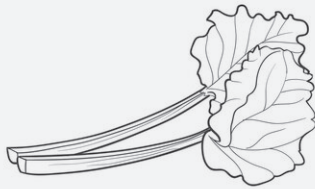
— Leslie S. Edwards


A Taste for Rhubarb Cultivated Many a Recipe. What Will You Make?

Rhubarb Pudding.
Cut fresh rhubarb into small pieces, mix with sugar and put into a baking dish with well-buttered bread, left in slices or cut into cubes. Set in the oven to bake until the rhubarb is soft. Serve hot or cold.

Lettuce with a plain French dressing is a salad which may be given the children. Plenty of spinach, beet greens and water cress, as well as other green leaf vegetables are invaluable to the growing child.

The Daily Tribune, August 6, 1925





SPRING TASTE-TEMPTER . . . A delicious dessert from our Home Service Department:

Rhubarb Cobbler

½ cup sugar or ¼ cup sugar and ¼ cup honey 1 lb. rhubarb (3 cups) cut in 1-inch pieces


Combine rhubarb, sugar and water. Bring to a boil and pour into greased 7-x-10-inch utility dish or into individual casseroles. Place biscuits on rhubarb and bake for 20 minutes in a preheated 400° F. oven.

Biscuit Topping

2 cups sifted all-purpose enriched flour 2 tbsps. sugar
4 tps. baking powder ½ cup shortening
1 egg
½ cup milk
½ tsp. salt

Sift flour, baking powder, salt and sugar together. Cut in shortening. Add milk to beaten egg, and add to flour mixture to make a soft dough. Turn out on floured board and roll. Cut in desired shape and place over rhubarb sauce. Serves eight.

Don't waste electricity during the coal shortage



CLEANING CRAFT . . . If furniture to be polished is first wiped with a cloth dipped in vinegar, it will polish easier and show no finger marks.

— The Detroit Edison Co.
Serving more than half the people of Michigan

Here is another rhubarb recipe. Rhubarb may also be made into trappe and salad.

Rhubarb Custard Pie.—Boiling water, two cups rhubarb, one cup white, brown or maple sugar, one cup white, spoon flour, two egg yolks, two tablespoons butter, one-eighth teaspoon salt. Pour boiling water over rhubarb. Let stand five minutes and drain. Combine rhubarb, sugar and flour. Add well beaten egg yolks, melted butter and salt. Line a pie plate with pastry, turn rhubarb mixture into it. Bake first in a hot oven, 450 degrees, for 15 minutes, then in a slow oven, 325 degrees, for 25 minutes. Cover with meringue made by beating the two egg whites with four tablespoons sugar. Bake meringue in a slow oven, 300 degrees Fahrenheit, for 15 minutes.

The Daily Tribune, April 8, 1933

The Daily Tribune, April 24, 1945



Ellis Berry at his desk in the Railway Express office, circa 1931

Royal Oak was geographically situated for the rhubarb trade. John Hafeli, a Detroit farmer in the late 1910s, discovered a method to force early growth of rhubarb. He shared his technique with local farmers. Royal Oak and the area in Macomb County immediately to its east became a center of rhubarb growing. Forcing rhubarb permitted an earlier crop at a time before frozen foods and international shipping eliminated seasonal fruit. This created demand for early rhubarb.

THE RHUBARB HOUSES, typically 20 feet wide and ranging from 60 to 120 feet in length, had double side walls and were partially submerged in the ground. Manure filled the center wall cavity. The roof was of boards and one-ply roofing, covered with four inches of manure. To keep rhubarb roots upright in the house, the farmers placed them close together. They did not grow in any soil except for what adhered to their roots. The plants grew in darkness and developed few leaves. A wood stove and the decomposing manure provided the heat. A

farmer controlled the heat. More heat meant faster growth, but the stalks had less color. Rich, red-colored stems were preferred. Farmers timed their harvest to receive top dollar in the fluctuating market. Forcing of the plants depletes their energy reserves, and plants were rested in the field for three years before being forced again.

Hothouse rhubarb production gradually died out in the 1930s. Manure was no longer free and became costly to acquire. Today rhubarb is forced in heated greenhouses or shipped north from southern states.

ELLIS BERRY WAS born February 20, 1896, in Staley Bridge, England. He immigrated to the United States in 1920 and married Helen Clapp in 1927. Working 23 years as a Railway Express agent, he semi-retired in 1943 and worked as a passenger agent for the Grand Trunk Railroad and expanded his own rhubarb warehouse in Ferndale. This warehouse was recognized "as the nation's leading processor and distributor" of rhubarb. He also owned a cherry orchard near Traverse City and was a partner in the Berry Wall Tile company, which sold steel tiles for home use from a store at Fifth and Center streets.

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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.

City records do not agree as to the exact date these homes were built. They may have been built, either in whole or in stages, between 1901 and 1917. This featured house at 1108 East Twelve Mile may actually be the most recent section constructed.

A house the size of the three sections would have needed domestic help, just as the fields that were farmed around it needed laborers. The house at 1018 East Twelve Mile, two doors to the west, is believed to have been built for the household and farm workers. There was an apple orchard between the two residences and a creek that ran south along



what is currently the back of the lots on the west side of Ferris Avenue. This was a part of the Red Run. Twelve Mile was then known as Oakwood Boulevard and was a dirt road.

This house at 1108 is a two-story edifice. Originally clapboard sided, it is now covered with siding. There are two staircases — one that rises from the front room and the other that descends to the kitchen, clearly a servant's passageway. The floors are hardwood throughout.

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VanderVelde House

1108 East Twelve Mile Road

Divided Country Estate House Built in 1917

TO THE BEST of everyone's memory, this house on the south side of East Twelve Mile Road near Ferris Avenue once served as the east wing of a very large country estate home. The right side of this photo is the west side of the lot, where there is more than enough room for a west wing and central section of what must have been an imposing edifice.

What happened to the other two parts of the house? They were moved down the road a block or two! The house at 1208 East Twelve Mile (which was torn down in early 2024) is believed to have been the former west wing, while the home at 1314 East Twelve Mile was once the central section where the ballroom was located.

The exact date of this division is not known. It is known is that Floyd E. Radabaugh, an attorney, and his wife, Clarice A., were living at the 1208 address in 1936. He can be located in the 1930 federal census in Pleasant Ridge, residing with his brother-in-law. At that time, Mr. Radabaugh was a teacher. So perhaps these houses were separated sometime prior to 1936, but probably the moves occurred considerably earlier.

VanderVelde House • Continued from Page 5



Photo by Ellen Kehoe

1314 East Twelve Mile

1314 East Twelve Mile (above) was the former center section of the featured house at 1108 East Twelve Mile. The former west wing at 1208 East Twelve Mile is shown (top right) before its recent demolition; (middle right) in a property view from the north side of Twelve Mile; and (lower right) with two of three new homes under construction.

The dining room, between the front room and the kitchen, is large and easily accommodates a long table. The fireplace is located on the side wall of this room. There is a basement under the back part of the house, but the front covers a crawl space. The current owner, Mark Vargo, has done extensive updating since he moved there in 1999, taking care to maintain the character of the home.

In November 1923, Albertus VanderVelde, his wife, Hanny (Blacquiere) VanderVelde, and their children moved into the house at 1108 East Twelve Mile. They had emigrated from their native Netherlands in 1910 and lived in Grand Rapids among Dutch-speaking citizens for several years. They moved to Plymouth, Michigan, for a short time before their move to Royal Oak. The house was said to be in deplorable condition when they arrived, the prior tenant having kept chickens in the kitchen.

Albertus VanderVelde was a construction engineer who specialized in concrete and steel. He worked for Fisher Body in its architectural department. He designed the steel for the Willow Run Bomber Plant during World War II and later retired from General Motors in 1951. He lived in this house until his death in 1978.



Photo from Zillow

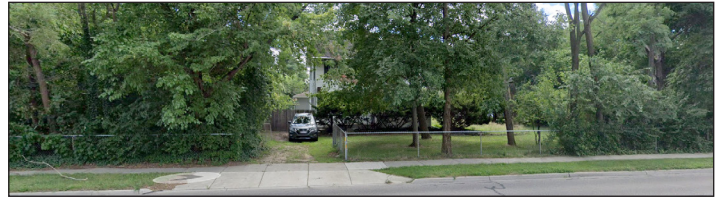


Photo from Google



Photo by Ellen Kehoe

1208 East Twelve Mile

Rhubarb • Continued from Page 4



Helen and Ellis Berry standing in snow in front of the rail station in Royal Oak.

Berry enjoyed all kinds of sports. In 1931, he won the Royal Oak Smoke Shop's Ping-Pong tournament. A life member of Red Run Golf Club, he was a skilled golfer and participated in golf events around the state, including tournaments at Red Run, Sylvan Glen, Tam O'Shanter, and Oakland Hills.

HE WON THE Canadian National Railways championship in 1931 and the Southern Oakland County golf championship in 1932. He shot the low amateur score (73) in 1941 at the Rammler Golf Club's pro-am tournament.

He died August 29, 1959, at age 63, while watching a golf tournament at Red Run.

Hanny VanderVelde was a prolific artist who had a studio as well as a gallery in the house. Trained at the Rotterdam Academy of Art, her impressionist landscapes were highly acclaimed and hang in both public and private locations around the United States.

She often painted local scenes, favorites sites being a thickly wooded area along Ten Mile Road between Campbell Road and Mohawk Avenue, and Gardenia Woods at Alexander and Gardenia avenues.

Hanny was also a wife and mother to six children. She was very child oriented and often invited the neighborhood children in for cookies.

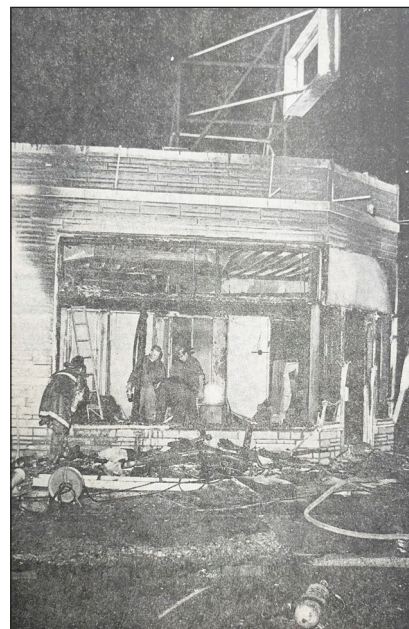
During the Great Depression, she used her paintings as barter, such as for medical and dental care for her family and a grand piano and music lessons for her children. Perhaps the most unusual trade was with state senator George Higgins, who owned a car dealership on Woodward Avenue in Pleasant Ridge. Though reluctant at first, eventually he accepted a painting as a partial payment on a succession of vehicles that she purchased. Hanny VanderVelde died in 1959.

Royal Oak Then & Now

BY JOHN MAURICE



Several firebombs destroyed part of Congressman William S. Broomfield's Royal Oak office at the northeast corner of Harrison and South Washington. The arrow has been added to point out the utility pole that is still there today. (Daily Tribune photo)



Royal Oak Fire Department and FBI investigators sift through the debris. (Daily Tribune photo)

PROTESTS AGAINST THE Vietnam War across the country hit home early May 15, 1972, when the Royal Oak congressional office of William S. Broomfield (R-Royal Oak), located at 1029 South Washington, was struck by a number of firebombs thrown by an unknown assailant.

This was a time of great unrest in the country and in Royal Oak as well. A *Daily Tribune* article from the day of the blast said that youths had demonstrated on Woodward Avenue just south of Broomfield's office a couple days earlier. An unsigned letter was sent to Broomfield's Washington office stating that the bombing was an "act in opposition to your support of the war in Vietnam. We shall continue to oppose you and the Nixon-Thieu fascist regime"

Although the congressman thought at the time that more incidents could be expected with 1972 being an election year, no other actions occurred and Broomfield won reelection that November.

WILLIAM BROOMFIELD WAS born in Royal Oak in 1922 and graduated from Royal Oak High School. His political career began in 1949 with his election to the Michigan House and lasted until 1993 with his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives, where he was a high-ranking member for many years. The Royal Oak post office was designated the William S. Broomfield Post Office Building in 2000.

The **Then** photo shows the aftermath of the bombing with police investigators on the scene. Royal Oak Lanes, which closed in 2006, can be seen in the background. But the most interesting piece of this photo is the streetlight that can be seen at the center of the photograph.

The **Now** photo shows that very same utility pole is still in place at this location. Scorch marks from the blast are still very evident. It's amazing that — more than 50-plus years after the incident — this piece of forgotten history still stands in our city.



The utility pole today still shows the charred marks from the firebombs. (Photo by Judy Davids)



The former office of Congressman William Broomfield today is the law firm Cavanaugh & Quesada PLC. (Photo by John Maurice)

Stories Behind the Gravestones

BY DON DRIFE



The Fraquellis: A Royal Oak Monumental Family

ONE OF THE ORNATE grave monuments in St. Mary's Cemetery marks the Fraquelli and Rostoni plot. Carved of "Rainbow Granite," it is about 5 ½ feet high and 4 ½ feet wide. A broken arch topped with book scroll surrounds an intricately carved urn. Other small carved panels adorn this work of art. The Fraquelli brothers, John and Frank, ran the Royal Oak Monumental Works for many years and carved hundreds of grave markers in Oakview, Royal Oak, and St. Mary's

cemeteries and elsewhere. They also produced limestone windowsills, door caps, columns, and other architectural details for buildings in the Royal Oak area.

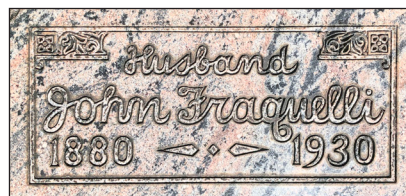
The original Royal Oak location of the business was at Rochester Road and Gardenia Avenue, where the Rite Aid Drug Store is now located. The Fraquellis were master stone masons and worked on many public memorials around the country, including providing the stone panels for the World War I and II sections of the Royal Oak Veterans War Memorial. Frank's sons, Al and Ray, who took over the business, supplied the Korean and Vietnam War panels. In 1947, the company name was changed to Fraquelli Brothers Monument Co. and moved to the west side of Main Street opposite the Royal Oak Cemetery, where the Vita-Dance Studio is currently located. The company closed in the 1980s when the next generation did not want to pursue stonecutting work.

John Fraquelli was born in 1880 in Switzerland. At the age of 19 he came to Royal Oak and on January 10, 1905, he married Rose (Rosie) Rostoni. They had three children, a son Francis and daughters Dorothy and Vera.

FRANK FRAQUELLI WAS born in Switzerland on July 9, 1879. He completed an apprenticeship with a stone carver in Zurich at age 16 and moved to Colmar, Germany, where he worked for a stonecutter for four years, mastering the trade that would permit him to immigrate to the United States. In 1903, he traveled to Cleveland and then to Clinton, Michigan. There Frank rented a room at Smith's Hotel (also called the Clinton Inn and now the Eagle Tavern in Greenfield Village) and was taught to read, write, and speak English by Ella Smith, the inn's owner. He became a U.S. citizen in 1909 just before he married Ersilia (Celia) Vanetti. They had three sons, Alfonso, Frank Jr., and Raymond. Frank moved to Royal Oak Township in 1918 with his family and began working at the monumental works with his brother John. Frank was an outdoorsman; the *Royal Oak Tribune* records a successful deer hunt with his nephew Francis in 1929.



The opposite side of the Fraquelli monument bears the name Rostoni. The center urn is one of several artistic carved decorations.



Grave markers of husband and wife John and Rose (Rostoni) Fraquelli (above) and John and Frank's mother, Teresa (below).



Brothers John (left) and Frank Fraquelli in front of the original business location at Rochester and Gardenia.

John and his wife Rose, and Frank and John's mother, Teresa Fraquelli, all have individual granite grave markers. They are lettered in cursive and have small carved panels. John died August 14, 1930.

FRANK'S ONLY MARKER is the large family monument. It is odd that a man who stone-cut grave markers for so many and advertised for years with the slogan "Mark Every Grave" should be buried without a marker bearing his name. Frank's death date is unknown.

Author's Note: Although one source called John and Frank cousins, multiple sources refer to them as brothers and Teresa as their mother. An obituary in the May 5, 1922, *Royal Oak Tribune* for a Mary Fraquelli is believed to be the same person as Teresa, which may be a nickname or a middle name. Additionally, it says she is the mother of John and Frank; however, no census record was found for a Teresa or Mary Fraquelli or a certificate of death.

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

ROYAL OAK CITY COMMISSIONER Donald G. Field asked the city planning department Monday to study restaurants on Woodward and possibly come up with a plan to curb further construction. "At last count there were nearly 50 restaurants on Woodward and that's enough," Field said. "I believe the merchants and residents in the area would probably agree with me." Field suggests that a special zoning might be created for Woodward, with stiffer setback and parking requirements, which he feels would limit new restaurant development on the street. Field says the numbers of restaurants on Woodward — especially those serving liquor — causes traffic problems on nearby streets.

ROYAL OAK OFFICIALS found little amiss when they slogged through more than two miles of underground Twelve Towns Relief Drains on Marais and Thirteen Mile Tuesday (July 9). City Manager Bruce W. Love and Engineer William G. Sharpe are seeking evidence of illegal connections or undersized pipes which would account for a consultant's report that the Thirteen Mile truck drain, part of the Twelve-Towns' north section is inadequate. "We found nothing significant to the flooding," Sharpe said after the trip. The engineering report last month told city commissioners the inadequacy was due to design of the north section rather than improper or illegal connections. The consultants recommended construction of a new \$8.8 million relief drain parallel to Thirteen Mile to relieve potential flooding.

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50 Years Ago — 1974

4th Generation Royal Oak Residents to Graduate from Dondero High



Mrs. Frederick (Mary Belle) Lantz helps her twin daughters Lois (left) and Lisa, adjust their caps in preparation for their graduation from Dondero High School, Royal Oak. The twins are the fourth generation of a family that has been in Royal Oak 141 years. (Daily Tribune photo, June 7, 1974)

TWINS LISA AND LOIS LANTZ, who will graduate next Thursday (June 13) from Dondero High School, have the distinction of being the fourth generation born to a family whose history in Royal Oak dates back nearly 150 years.

The fraternal twins are the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick (Mary Belle Evans) Lantz, 1428 Edgewood, Royal Oak. When they were born on April 26, 1956, at William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, their fourth-generation status also was noted in a *Daily Tribune* photo (below right).

The twins were born two blocks from the land settled by their great-great-grandfather and grandmother in the covered wagon days. John Evens, Wales, and his wife Mary Barton, Ireland, received a land grant from the government in 1825.

The grant covered the Thirteen Mile and Woodward area. At that time, Woodward was just an Indian trail through the property.

THINGS HAVE changed since 1825, including the Welsh family name. The headstone in Royal Oak Cemetery carries



Mrs. Frederick Lantz, 1210 Marywood, Royal Oak, holds her new twin daughters, Lois May (left) and Lisa Kay, for an "OK," from sisters Sally, age four, and Susan, age two. (Daily Tribune photo, May 4, 1956)

the "Evens" spelling, while present generations go by "Evans." No one knows quite how or when the name changed.

The twins' great-grandfather, David W. Evans, was born in 1833 on the same land. His wife, Mary Cook, was born on east Twelve Mile in Royal Oak.

David's son and the twins' grandfather, Herbert D. Evans, was born at North Main and Crooks in Royal Oak in 1887 and operated an insurance business in Royal Oak under his own name for 35 years. Herbert married Lillian R. Campbell, a Detroitier. They live at 1026 North Washington, Royal Oak.

THE TWINS' MOTHER, Mary Belle Evans Lantz, has lived in Royal Oak all her life except the first year of her marriage and was graduated from Royal Oak High School, Dondero High School's predecessor. Her husband is a native of Bay City. The Lantz's home is in one of the three subdivisions which were created from the family farm.

"The twins have been in the same classes since fourth grade, and when they go to college in the fall, it will be the first time they've been separated," Mrs. Lantz said. She also said the twins attended Northwood Elementary School and Clara Barton Junior High Schools, the same she attended.

60 years ago — 1964

TEACHER SALARIES reached a new pinnacle in South Oakland, when the Birmingham School Board agreed to permit classroom teachers to earn more than \$10,000 annually. Only 87 school systems throughout the nation pay teachers as high as \$10,000.

THE CURRENT LOW RETAIL sales price of gasoline is expected to rise at least by July 4 weekend. Some dealers see a price change upward from the 10.9 cents to 20.9 cents per gallon prevailing price at many South Oakland stations. One dealer said and others agree with him that his major oil company supplier guarantees him at least 4.2 cents per gallon profit during price wars. The margin, he says, is usually more than 6 cents.

AMERICAN WOMEN are about to get almost everything — if not quite all — they want in the way of legal equality with men as the result of a 1963 act of Congress and a rather unpublicized amendment to the pending civil rights bill. The Equal Pay Act of 1963, which goes into effect on Thursday (June 11), puts women on an equal footing with men — with a few minor caveats on the basis of pay. Title VII of the rights bill will do the same thing in regard to job opportunity.

70 years ago — 1954

THE TEACHERS OF Blackie, a talking mynah bird being carefully groomed at the Detroit Zoo to entertain children, made only one mistake: They didn't teach him to yell, "Stop, thief." On Thursday afternoon, some human swiped Blackie from his cage in the keeper's room in the zoo's bird house. Bent the bars apart, seized the mynah, probably secreted him in a pocket or a bag while sprinting away. Frank G. McInnis, zoo director, was more upset on the effect his captor may have on Blackie than he was over the theft — the first of an animal at the zoo that McInnis can remember. "Unless whoever has him is very careful, Blackie probably will die," he said. "One has to know how to take care of him." The zoo wants Blackie back. It won't ask any questions if he is returned, or if anyone will let the zoo know where he may be found.

FINAL BOOSTER SHOTS in the polio vaccine program begin next week in South Oakland. They are the third in a series being administered to more than 17,000 first, second and third grade children in the county through the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

80 years ago — 1944

ROYAL OAK'S POST-WAR Planning Committee of which E. Clyde Hobart is general chairman enters upon another phase this week. Its committee for economic development will undertake the unprecedented task of distributing 8,000 questionnaires in the city. The questionnaire will ascertain individual family needs in household furniture and furnishings, repair, new building, heating, appliances, and other household equipment. Because most Royal Oak families will be faced with unemployment and other economic problems after peace is declared, the committee is confident that citizens will cheerfully cooperate with survey workers.

CALCIUM CHLORIDE for Royal Oak residents who wish to suppress street dust in front of their homes will be available at the township hall. The township was to purchase a ton of chloride in 100-pound sacks. The sacks will be sold to residents for \$1.25 each, slightly under the retail price. The resident will spread the chloride. The price at which bonds are sold to property owners for payment of taxes was boosted from 35 cents on the dollar to 50 cents by the Royal Oak Township Board.

90 years ago — 1934

DAVID C. MILLER, son of Mrs. Minnie B. Miller, 1418 East Lincoln Ave., is Royal Oak's first ensign. He was graduated from the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis yesterday. His mother, sister Josephine and uncle John of Detroit attended the commencement exercises. He will spend the summer in Royal Oak. Miller played end on the 1933 Navy football team. He was also graduated from Royal Oak High School in 1929.

100 years ago — 1924

DON'T TAKE DOWN your old street numbers, even though the new ones have been put up. This post office and the city manager both

70 Years Ago — June 9, 1954



A 71-year-old woman whose car stalled on the Grand Trunk railroad tracks in Royal Oak Tuesday (June 8) escaped with minor scalp cuts. Mrs. Gust Feole was treated at Royal Oak General Hospital. The engine of a southeast-bound train brushed her car off the tracks, smashing the left front fender. Engineer Wayne H. VanLoan said the train was traveling about 25 miles an hour when the car stalled 100 feet ahead on the tracks at Fourth Street crossing. "She was waving for me to stop but you can't stop a train on the spot," he explained. "I'm glad she wasn't hurt bad." The accident was one block from the Washington crossing where a Royal Oak woman was killed May 25.

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are issuing this warning to Royal Oak citizens whose promptness in taking down the old house numbers has raised a considerable problem, especially in the delivery of mail. Letters still come and will continue to come for several months to the old numbers, and it is necessary that these remain up at least until January 1925, if satisfactory mail delivery is to be obtained. Especially at Christmas time much difficulty is expected if the old numbers are not up, as friends and relatives will have the old address and will send mail there. Both old and new numbers should remain up until January 1925.

A THIRD CASE OF SMALLPOX has broken out in Royal Oak, but it is of the mild type. Gertrude Plank, 16 years old, a student at the Royal Oak High School is the one to develop the disease. She lives with her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Plank, 124 North Troy Street. As a result of this case and of those recent developments in the smallpox situation in Detroit, vaccination has increased somewhat here. Recently the number of calls on local physicians dwindled to a very small number, but the last flurry in Detroit, plus another local case, have impelled many to hurry to the doctor for a serum injection. The two cases which developed earlier in Royal Oak are reported as progressing satisfactorily. Both were of the mild type.

THE CITY OF ROYAL OAK is girding to battle vigorously with the D.U.R. (Detroit Urban Railroad) over the ownership of the right-of-way occupied by the streetcar company's tracks on East Fourth street. The whole question arose when the paving of the south side of Fourth Street was considered and it was found that the D.U.R. tracks where the Stephenson line comes into Royal Oak were some distance above the street and sidewalk grade. This developed the proposition that if the D.U.R. owned a private right-of-way in the center of the street, the city could not force it to lower the tracks to conform to the street grade.

The mysteries in the case began to pop up when this ownership was looked into. First it was discovered that the Fourth Avenue Land Company, owners of the subdivision which stretches along Fourth street just west of Troy Street, the old city limits, had given the D.U.R. a deed for the strip of land which the tracks occupy. But this deed was not recorded until two years after the land company had dedicated the street to public use, therefore, the city contends, the deed is worthless.

Still more excitement was caused when the mayor and commissioner examined the two copies of the plat on file in the city offices and found that they were not alike. One carried a line indicating a D.U.R. right-of-way, but the writing was different from that of the remainder of the plat. The other, which is supposed to be a duplicate, made no reference to any D.U.R. right-of-way. What purported to be the signatures of the same persons also appeared different in the two copies. City Attorney George B. Hartrick has been instructed to look into the matter so that the city may take proper steps to regain control of the strip which it now maintains belongs to it.

100 Years Ago — June 20, 1924 Hospital Need Emphasized by R.O. Physicians

Royal Oak needs a hospital.

This hospital, to serve the community adequately and to attract to itself the highest type of physicians and surgeons, should be conspicuous for its completeness, although of moderate size.

These were the two opinions voiced at a conference of Royal Oak physician surgeons at the Chamber of Commerce Tuesday evening (June 20). The hospital idea had been one of the foremost advocated by members of the Chamber of Commerce in the survey undertaken by the new secretary, W.H. Holmes, to determine what should be the main objects of the organization's program for the year.

"The conference with the doctors," said Holmes, "was the first step in the new program. It showed that there is a general feeling among the men of the medical profession as well as among our members in general, that Royal Oak needs a hospital with an ambulance attached.

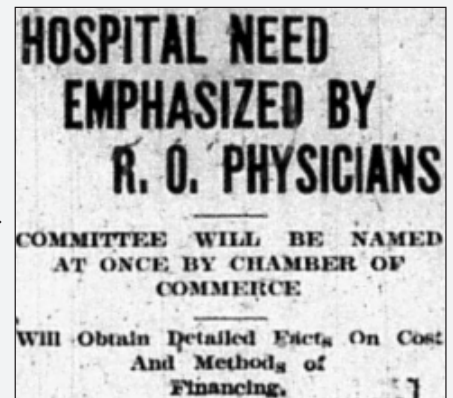
"A committee of physicians and citizens will be appointed at once to conduct an immediate investigation into the subject, seeking particularly to determine:

1. How to build and maintain the hospital;
2. Whether it will not be impossible to make it care for the demands of surrounding communities, and if so, how to care for that part of the financing;
3. How large an institution would be needed.

"It would be the desire to make this hospital a model institution with equipment which would bring to the hospital all the cases developing within the territory and not have the more important ones all go to Detroit. It would not be the size, but the excellence of the equipment which would be depended on the attract the attention of the leading men of the medical profession in southern Oakland County.

"The need for a hospital is becoming more acute each day. In several accident cases the injured persons have had to lay an hour or more in great agony before even getting transportation to Highland Park, Detroit or Pontiac. That is wrong and dangerous. The inconvenience and added expense of treating cases of sickness in Detroit hospitals instead of here at home also is obvious."

The survey committee will begin to function at once as the first part of the comprehensive program now laid out for the Chamber of Commerce for this year.



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.



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