

Sylvan Lake Community Center Dedicated August 2008



“Hoosier John’s Camp” at Sylvan Lake, Oakland Co., Mich. 1916



Mothers vacation August 1916



Fishing in the Clinton River near “Hoosier John’s Camp” 1916



Bathing Beach at Sylvan Lake 1916



“Hoosier John”

and two of his “kids.”

1916



At Sylvan Lake 1916



At Sylvan Lake, August 1916



Hoosier John's Camp in Winter January 21, 1917



Charles Callahan, Oscar Love and R.
C. Sanderson, Sylvan Lake, Oct.
1916



Charles, Mildred, Ruby and Nellie Callahan,
Mrs. John Callaghan and children at Sylvan
Lake.

June 1917



Nellie, John, "Sandy", and Charles Callahan.
Callahan family swimming in 1917, old car
crossing the bridge, Detroit Free Press
Camp



June 1917



Callahan family boating near Tower Beach in 1917. You could ride the Interurban Trolley from Detroit for 25 cents, pack a picnic and rent a bathing suit and a cabin to change your clothes.



Bertha, Nellie and the kids at Sylvan Lake. August 1918



1919



1919



1919



Bertha Tilton, 1919



On Sylvan Lake, Pontiac, Mich. Mother, Aunt Lydia, Nellie and R.C.S. August 1920



A “Bill” fish, 3 ft. 2 in. long,
caught in Sylvan Lake 1921



1920



1920's bathing suits



Garden Club Ice Cream Socials began about 1965



Ice Cream Social



Bridge over the Canal

The bridge over the canal probably dates to about 1895 when the Sylvan Lake Inn was built on the Point. It originally served horseback riders from the hotel riding stables located where today is found the Sylvan Lake Community Center.

Sylvan Lake Village Council Minutes:

November 5, 1941

Moved by Trustee Beebe, supported by Trustee Ostrander that the City is hereby authorized to notify the Detroit Fresh Air Camp Inc., the Board of Trustees has decided it can take no action on their second request for financial aid in the proposed dredging of the canal between upper and lower Sylvan Lake.

Yeas: Shellenberg, Atkins, Watson, Beebe, Ostrander.

Motion carried.

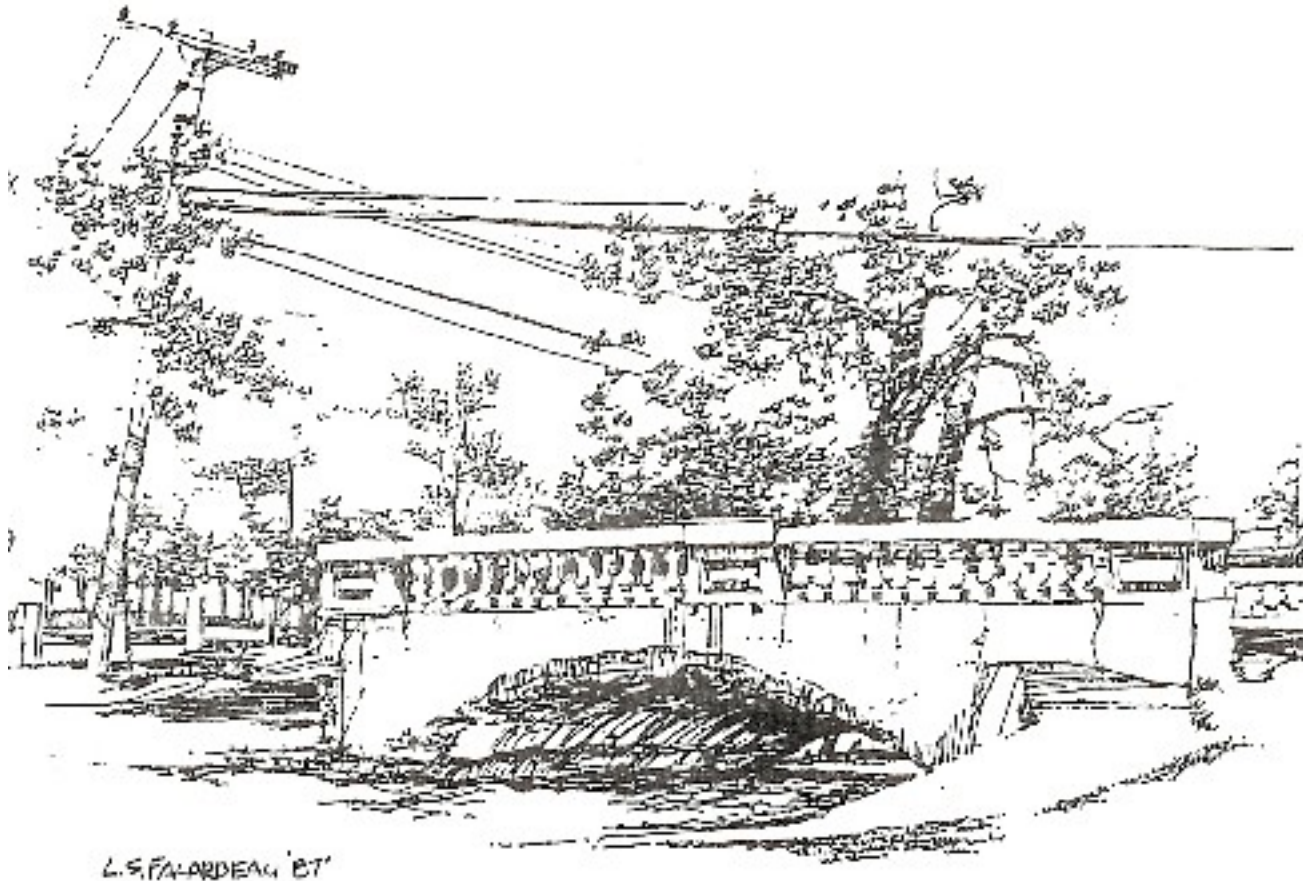
Valerie Morrill with her sons, Leon, Rod and Dale on the bridge at “the point”, 1940’s



Bridge in 2009



Sketch of the bridge on Pontiac Drive by Lawrence Falardeau, 1988



A snapshot in time

- In February, 1947, the Village became the City of Sylvan Lake. Leo Donaldson was the first Mayor. That same year, Sylvan Lake residents voted to become part of the Pontiac school district.
- Residential development grew quickly in Sylvan. Wood Lawn Subdivision was recorded on April 14, 1920. Most homes in Wood Lawn were built in the 1930's. The fenced park at the corner of Garland and Lakeview is part of that subdivision.
- Sylvan Lake's community water system and water tower were completed in 1955. When Telegraph Road was widened in 1957, Mayor Howard Wideman decided to have access closed from Garland to Telegraph Road.

Sylvan Lake near Pontiac, Mich. 1909 post card



Oakland County Boat Club

A meeting was held on August 7, 1912 at Reasons Store for the purpose of forming a Sylvan Lake Boat Club. An entertainment committee consisting of 10 people was formed to hold dances and such to raise money. On August 20, 1912 the name was changed to The Oakland County Boat Club. In 1915, Mr. Merrill Mills offered property on the shore of Sylvan Lake and the site was purchased for \$500.

The Oakland County Boat Club was started by seventeen men in 1912. They held monthly meetings at their homes until 1916 when the present clubhouse was built. Community meetings for the Sylvan Lake City Council and the Garden Club were frequently held at the Boat Club. The club was built on pilings and had boat wells under the structure. In the 1932 the clubhouse was moved back seventy feet to the present location.

Power boats dominated the club until World War II when sailboats took over with the fuel restrictions. Every Sunday morning in the summer, a canon would fire signaling a sailing race. The boat club had 19 members in the armed services at this time. After the war the club returned to their annual power boat regatta and had one or two per year. They also sponsor the annual fireworks display along with the city.

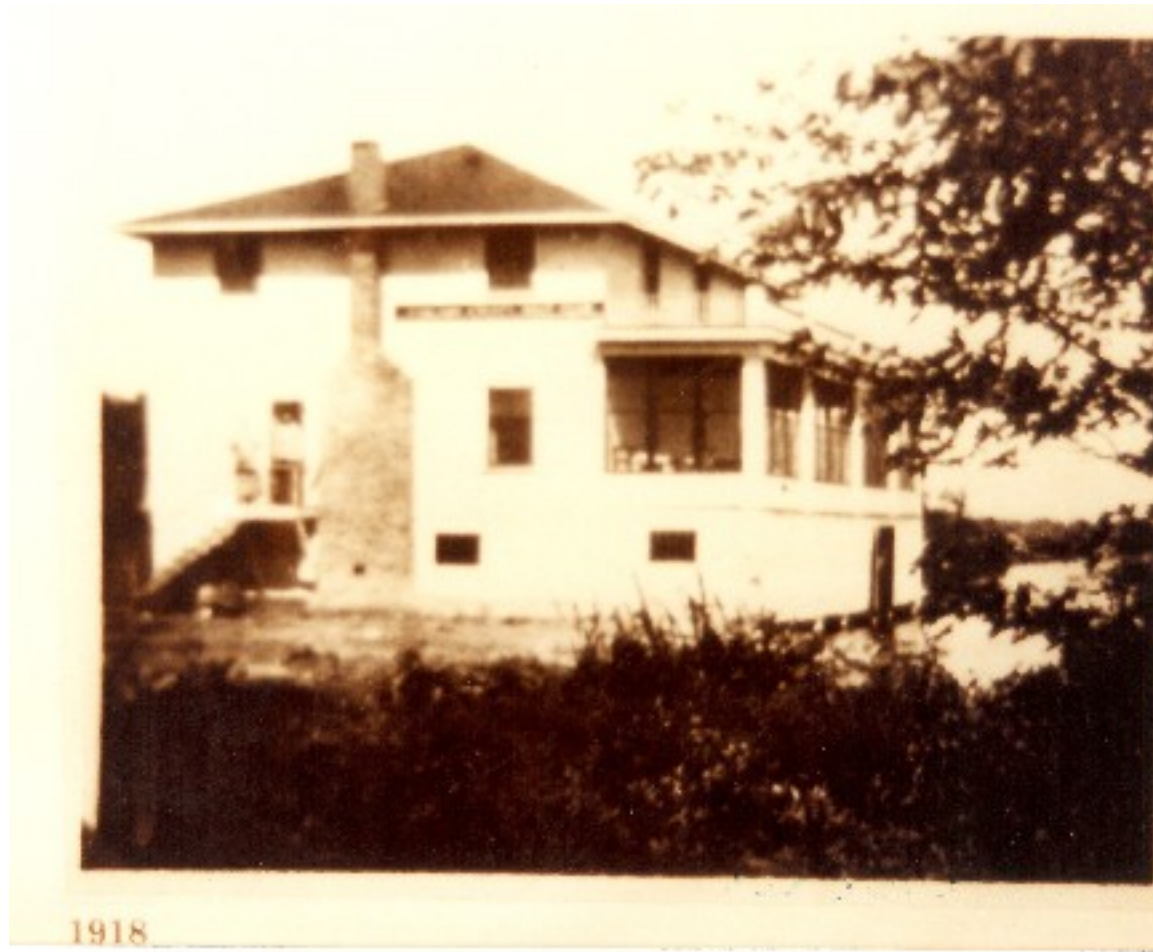
The club has hosted many regattas sanctioned by the American Power Boat Association.

Oakland County Boat Club

Built in 1916, the club stood on piles and extended over the lake with boat wells under it. In the winter of 1919 it was moved 90 degrees on its foundation.



Oakland County Boat Club - 1918



Oakland County Boat Club - 1919

taken by Mike Owens, O.C.B.C. member, after the
when the building was rotated 90° on its foundation.



1919

Oakland County Boat Club – Feb. 1920 – after the building was rotated 90 degrees.



FEB. 1920

This photo was taken by Mike Owens, O.C.B.C. member, after the

The Start, Sylvaniaqua Races.



Sylvanaqua



Sylvan Lake Post Card



Oakland County Boat Club about 1930



Construction site during the moving of the Clubhouse in 1922



Construction site during the moving of the Clubhouse in 1932



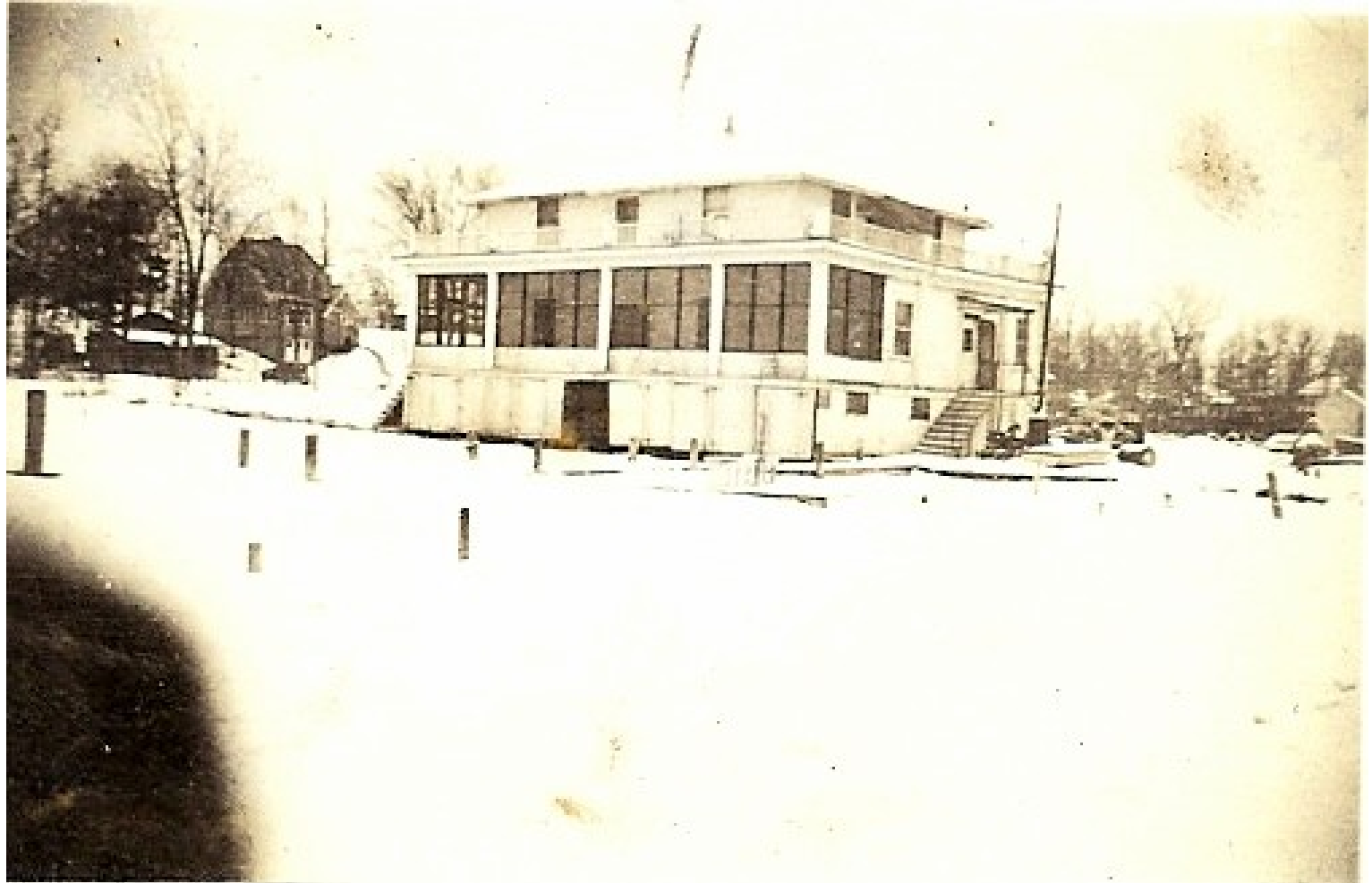
Construction site during the moving of the Clubhouse in 1932



Ice Skating near the Oakland County Boat Club 1930's



Oakland County Boat Club



Oakland County Boat Club

In 1932 the clubhouse was moved inland 70 feet and improvements have continued.



Oakland County Boat Club 1935



Oakland County Boat Club About 1935



Oakland County Boat Club Boats 1936



Oakland County Boat Club Post Card – April 20, 1955



No lake scene would be complete without the Boat Club. The OCBC has been “doing things” with landscaping, extending the pier for sailboat berths, dredging the canal, and other improvements.

1944 Village of Sylvan Lake Christmas card sent to our service men and women.



Boat Club Dock

1940's



Ice Boating and Ice Sailing on Sylvan Lake 1940's



Ice Boating on Sylvan Lake 1940's



Skate Sailing on Sylvan Lake 1940's



Ice Fishing - Dec. 26, 1948



A winter day at the corner of Pontiac Drive &
Ferndale,
Oakland County Boat Club, later houses were built
on the corner - left (Barach's) & Dickie's on right



Oakland County Boat Club 1947



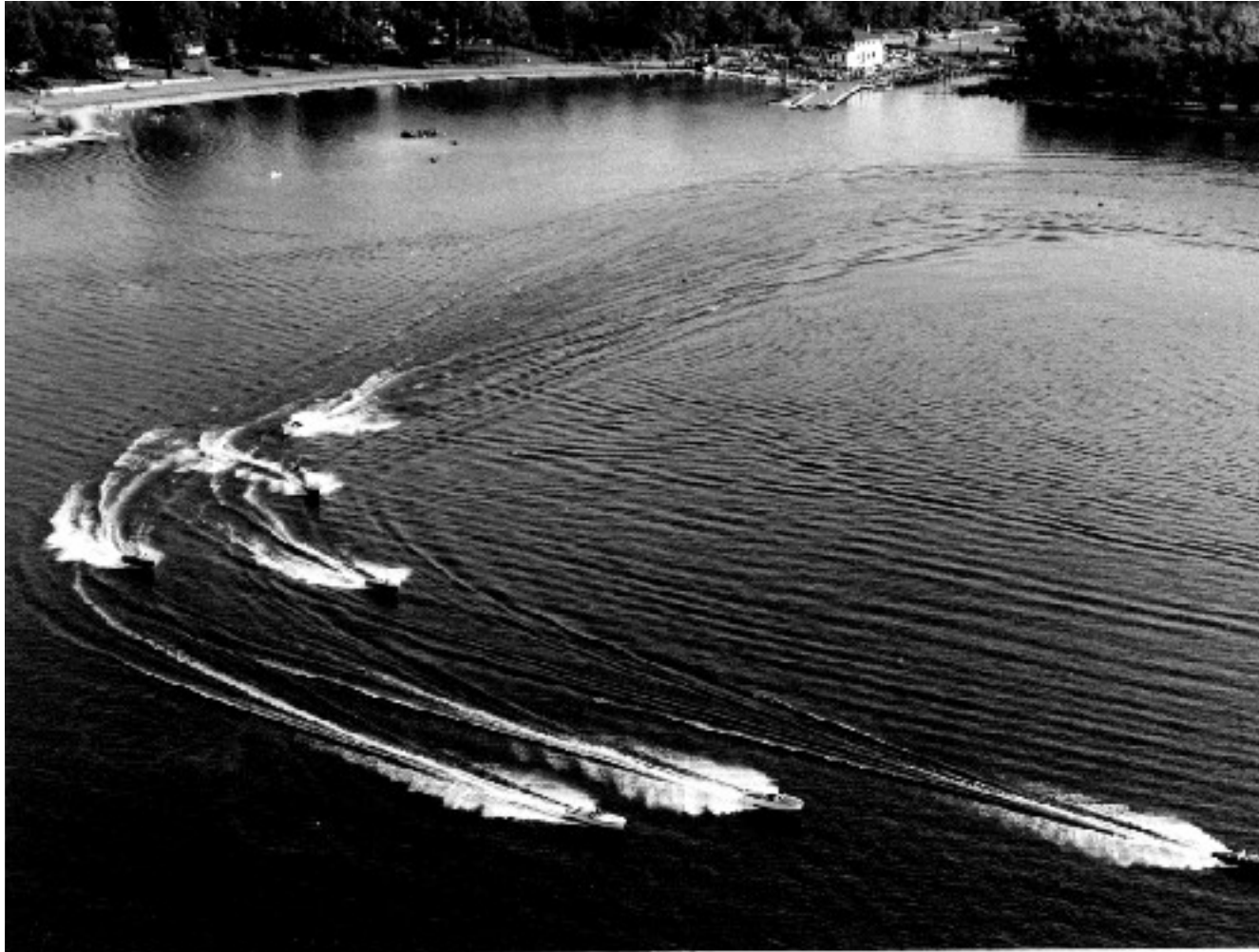
Oakland County Boat Club 1947



Oakland County Boat Club with bleachers and decorated for a regatta.



Boat Races – Sylvan Lake



BOAT RACES - SYLVAN LAKE

Race car drivers who have spent weeks souping up their motors, do a little tinkering before the regatta at the Oakland County Boat Club. Before 1948



Dock at Oakland County Boat Club, Sylvan Lake, MI



Oakland County Boat Club - Soapy Williams (bow tie),
Governor of Michigan attended the Boat Races



Oakland County Boat Club

March 7, 1966



Oakland County Boat Club

March 7, 1966

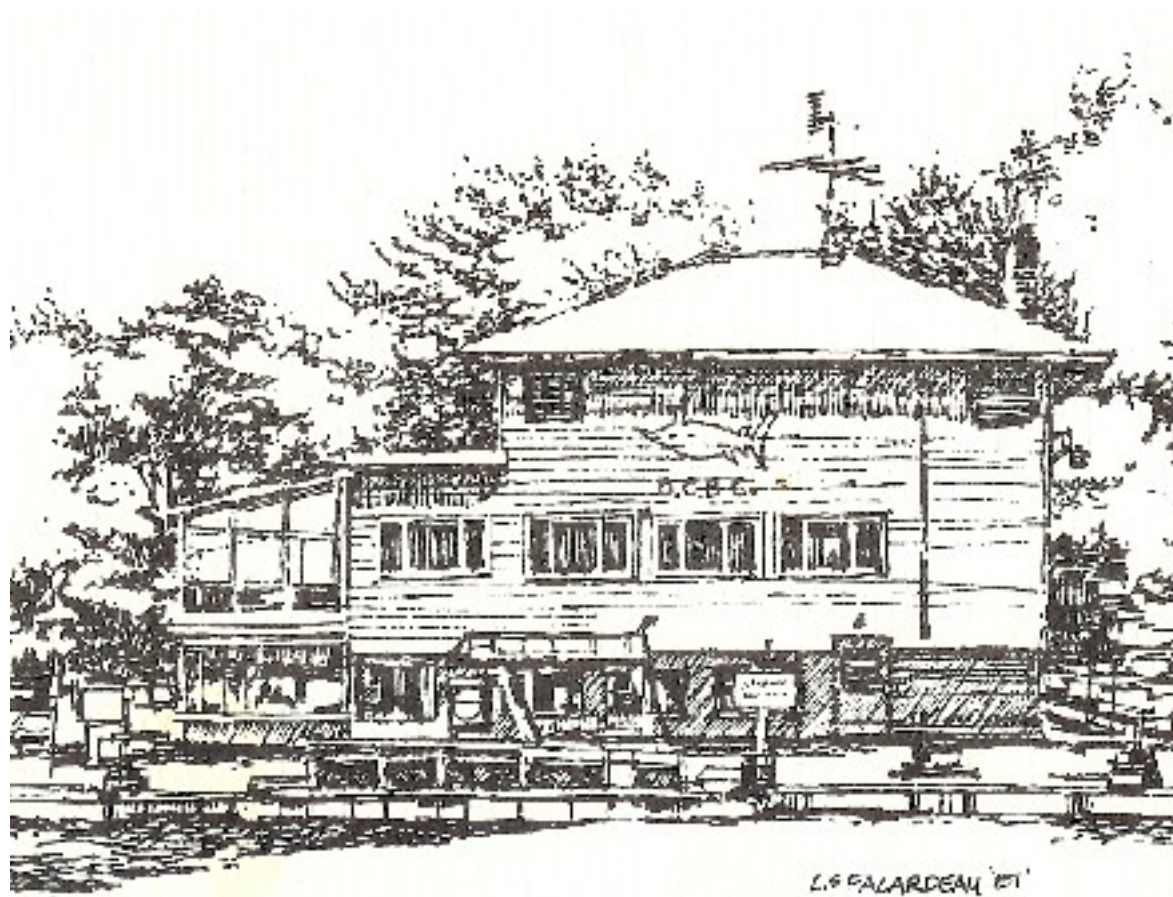


Oakland County Boat Club sponsored hydroplane boat races for many years



Oakland County Boat Club

Sketch by Larry Falardeau - 1987



The Oakland County Boat Club has sponsored the July fireworks since at least 1955.



Moonlight on Sylvan Lake Pontiac, Mich. 1909 Post Card



Ferndale flooding, May 26, 1943



Tower Beach

Sylvan Lake, Oakland Co., Mich.

August 18, 1918

When the Detroit and United Railway plotted its course through the Sylvan Lake area on its route between Pontiac and Detroit, local residents became more interested in the development of recreation. An amusement park called Tower Beach and a picnic spot called Happy Home in Voorheis Grove were developed. It became the "in" thing to pack up the whole family, a large picnic basket, mount the trolley car and spend the entire day fishing, swimming, bathing and enjoying their picnic lunch. The big day was climaxed by the trolley car ride back home.

Oakland County Book of History,

The Sesqui-Centennial Publication 1820 – 1970; Arthur A. Hagman, Editor

October 7, 1931 Tower Beach Bridge

Resolved by Trustee Cox, supported by Trustee Mitchell: that the Clerk be authorized to correspond with the proper authorities of the Michigan Eastern Railways in regard to getting information relative to securing the Tower Beach Bridge for the Village.

Yeas: Sener, Cox, Mitchell, Woodbridge

Resolution adopted.

The late Daisy Worley remembered that the late Roy Durfee owned concessions at Tower Beach at the north end of the Lake. At the beach, people could rent a little cabin in which to change into their rented swimming suits. Boats were available for fishing. Visitors entertained themselves by taking a board to the top of the tall slide and sliding down into the lake. There were numerous injuries as the boards and people collided.

Tower Beach, Sylvan Lake August 8, 1918



Bridge near Telegraph

Tower Beach was to the right, between
the bridge and the white building



General Market, Garland & Telegraph – Steve's Store



Inside the Grocery Store at Tower Beach. Late 1800's or early 1900's.



Bridge over Telegraph



1925 at Sylvan Lake



Canoeing in Sylvan Lake



Beach, Sylvan Lake Post Card



Shore of Sylvan Lake Post Card



Sylvan Lake Scene Pontiac, Mich. Post Card



Yes, in the next picture you are looking north toward the Free Press
Fresh Air Camp from the “Old Swimming Hole.” We know
you won’t believe it, but there’s dry land out about 100 feet
from the shore line – just not enough rain this past
summer.

1944 Village of Sylvan Lake Christmas card sent to our service men and
women



Old Beach on Lakeview.

Rod, Leon & Dale Morrill, early 1940's



1950's 1646 Inverness

Dennis Tryon, Sharon McRae
Martha Spark, Helen Jane Spark, Nancy Attwater



Skae School 1894 - 1927



Skae School – the second school on this site on Orchard Lake Road



Skae School

A cottage type school



Skae School



Daniel Whitfield School

The first school to service Sylvan Lake was a small white frame building with a drab interior, built at a cost not to exceed \$300. May 22, 1852 was the first day of school.

When a new cottage-type school was erected in 1894, the first school was sold for \$13. In September 1920 the name of the school was changed from Skae or Hammond to Daniel Whitfield School who donated the land for the school.

Designed by Charles Fisher, the third and final school was completed in 1927. Its original design included seven classrooms, an office and a clinic. In October, 1929, a library, music room and gym were added. There were approximately 180 pupils enrolled in 1947 when Whitfield was annexed to the Pontiac School District.

In 1953, a two-story addition of six classrooms was added. The Primary building was added in 1955. In June, 1959, the enrollment was 715 students.

Former pupils and teachers have fond memories of Whitfield School. The school was like a family. Everyone walked home for lunch. Daniel Whitfield School was closed in 1991 after 64 years of service because of Pontiac School District budget problems. The school was razed in 2003.

Daniel Whitfield School



Daniel Whitfield School



Whitfield School joins Pontiac System 1947

Daniel Whitfield School Will Join Pontiac System

Electors of the Daniel Whitfield school district, in Sylvan Lake, Thursday voted to become a part of the Pontiac school district. The vote was 209 for annexation and 113 against.

The merger becomes operative July 1, under the state law regulating annexation of territory to third class school districts.

Move to annex to the Pontiac district was brought about by the need for high school facilities, after Pontiac, because of crowded conditions, barred out-of-city pupils. This year Whitfield's higher grade students not previously enrolled in Pontiac have been attending Roosevelt school.

Next fall the Whitfield school will operate as a unit of the Pontiac system, probably with instruction through the sixth grade. Seventh to ninth grade pupils will attend Washington Junior High school and students at the three top grades,

Pontiac High school. Bus transportation is to be provided.

The Pontiac district will assume Whitfield's outstanding school debt of \$17,000 and the area's property owners will share in the Pontiac district's debt service tax. Total school tax in the district is expected to decrease from present rates, however, as Whitfield district now has a 14.5 mill rate, while Pontiac's school tax totals 7.5 mills.

Whitfield faculty will work under the Pontiac board next year, as the present Whitfield board will pass out of existence when the district formally merges with Pontiac.

Daniel Whitfield School 1950's



Daniel Whitfield School 1960-61



DANIEL WHITFIELD SCHOOL, PONTIAC, MICH. 1960-61

Daniel Whitfield School view from the back



Daniel Whitfield School

Girl sitting behind the school near railroad tracks



Pewabic Tile from the fireplace at Daniel Whitfield School



Daniel Whitfield School Kindergarten Room

“Mary Had a Little Lamb” painting by Roy Gamble over the fireplace



“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

was painted by Roy Gamble in 1928. The picture was painted on canvas and attached to the wall above the fireplace in the Kindergarten room at Daniel Whitfield School. It is currently on display at the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society Museum.



Daniel Whitfield School,

June 1930, First Grade,

Mabel Zimmerman, Teacher, Bob Cox on left



Daniel Whitfield School Grade 5, 1939-40



All of you who attended Daniel Whitfield School will recognize the setting for the first picture, Mr. Husted, Mr. Gilchrest, and most of the teachers. We wouldn't want the teachers to know this, but we think that they are sort of "acting up" when this picture was taken.

Left to right: Mr. Gilchrest, Mrs. McLaughlin, ?, Mr. Husted, ?, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Stolpe, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Wolford, School Secretary
1944 Village of Sylvan Lake Christmas card sent to our service men and women.



Mr. Glenn Husted Daniel Whitfield School Principal

Whitfield Principal



Mr. Husted at home,
2234 Garland, Sylvan Lake

