

# Time tracks by Jim Ingram

**(Fourth in a series on Lake Orion in the 1950s)**

In the 1950s GH Hogan DDS and CB Hensley MD shared a house on South Broadway for offices. It has since been torn down but was next to the law office of Paul Bailey. JL Sabato DO bought the Green house in Green's Park for his doctor's office in 1957. It was the former Lakeside Hotel.

Dr. Arthur Watson MD retired in 1953. He began his practice in Lake Orion in 1909, driving to his calls with a horse and buggy down mud roads and mired streets. His practice was continued by Percy Marsa at 46 West Flint Street.

The Grand Truck Western Railroad from Pontiac to Caseville on Saginaw Bay discontinued 73 years of passenger service in December 1955. The original line was called the Pontiac, Oxford and Northern Railroad.

Charles Carpenter, homesteader in the Joslyn Road area, became president and director of the railroad. Eames (Joslyn Road at Silverbell) and Randall Beach (on Clarkston Road, near Joslyn) were flagstops. The Eames station had been destroyed by fire in 1952.

Lake Orion's train station, built in 1901 and located on the southeast corner of West Flint and M-24, went up for sale in 1957 and would be torn down before the end of the decade thus ending all train service to Lake Orion.

John Lessiter's farm at 542 Baldwin Road was honored by the Oakland County Historical Society in 1953 as a centennial farm. It had been in the



Lessiter family for over 100 years.

The Lake Orion Boat Club in the early 1950s started their annual Winter Carnival. Originally they were centered on Park Island and later shifted to Green's Park. Events included sailboat racing, canoe tilting, water skiing, surfboard riding, a log race and rowboat races. These drew crowds of four to five thousand spectators.

LOBC also sponsored the Dancer Trophy

sailboat races every Sunday morning. Some of the local skippers in the 1950s were George Smith, John and Joe Taylor, Elmer Hartwig, Frank Tout and Dan Wurm and Milan Uzelac.

Also of interest in 1950 was the village council taking bids for sale and removal of the auditorium on Bellevue Island.

The end of the era of Lake Orion as a summer resort was signaled by fire early on a Sunday morning in August 1955. The Park Island pavilion was reduced to ashes.

The two-story 5,000 square foot building went up like a big bonfire lighting up the whole east half of the lake. The building had been erected by Carl Ruebelman in 1937 and had been operated by Stid Schaar as a bar and grill since 1950.

Fred Caldwell opened Sportman's Headquarters in the former DUR depot in 1950 on the southwest corner of West Flint and M-24. Behind it on the lake he had a gas dock and boat livery which also sold live bait.

Next to it long Lake Street were two more boat liveries, Seitz and Robbins Nest. The latter included a small store.

The lake lost one of its colorful characters when Johann Mayer died in 1950 at his home at 568 Bellevue. He had been a summer and of late permanent resident of Lake Orion for 50 years. He built many Swiss style cottages in that area and was

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