When Business Didn't Rush So

By MARY ISABEL DAVIS

To one who has come to know Bloomfield Hills only in recent years, and taken for granted all its modern development, it is almost impossible to believe that this community, that one-time village with its own bank, church, and police department, not so long ago was but a large section of farmland with a few small ranch homes here and there among its hills. Fifty years ago, in 1874, its only inhabitants were pioneers, or their direct descendants, who in the general exodus westward, realizing the agricultural possibilities of Bloomfield, settled there. Even at that early date, however, its existence as a growing community was noticeable, for the "History of Oakland County" published in the preceding year, makes special mention of the district as follows:

"Although this little cluster of dwellings is in no sense a village, it perhaps merits a brief separation.

"We have already seen that its first inhabitant was Judge Amasa Bradley, who came in 1839, and from him and his log cabin the locality became pretty generally known as Bradley's." The public house was erected in 1832 by a frame tavern built by William Morris, his son-in-law, on the southwesterly angle of the roads, where it is still standing near the center; it has often been the scene of holding and meeting-making.

"In about eight years after the first settlement of the main line. After his death, the tavern was taken over by a family who continued the business, and included in the greater part of the section, the crosstrack road, and had a far-reaching effect upon its subsequent development. Township meetings were first held in the tavern, but on its closing were removed to the school house, as for some reason the township never decided on one.

"Ten or twelve years after the crosstrack road was laid down, Thomas and George Timmerman built the first building of business in the township, one story high, of brick and pottery making material, on the east side of the old plank road, from which the district might perhaps be mentioned. When the county seat was removed to Bloomfield Center, a store was built there for the use of the new county, and the building continued in use for a number of years. The store was subsequently razed to the ground.

"The store was built by John Denske, who with a machine shop was also the manufacturer, and who after the death of all that are here to die, and at Bloomfield Center was a most reliable and substantial citizen, and his successors until the last several years could have closed the store for 50 cents a gallon, and Bloomfield Hills' chief claim to fame was the bountiful and wild" "New York Times" and "Newspaper" were the only newspapers published in Bloomfield Hills. The school, which was named after the village, was established in 1854, and was one of the first in the area. It served as a center for the settlement of the area, where one could escape the harsh climate and exposure of the city. There was an vigilant police force to keep the area safe for sailors.

"Each passing year saw change, and the town grew. When the old inhabitants had migrated elsewhere, there were constant new arrivals. We note with interest that in the early days, the population of Bloomfield Township was very small, with only a few families residing there. The first schoolhouse was built in 1853, and was the center for the education of the children of the area. It was later replaced by a larger and more modern building.

"The building was constructed of brick, and was two stories high, with a large auditorium on the second floor. It was the center of community life, and was used for various events such as dances, meetings, and plays. The school continued to serve the community until the late 19th century, when a new building was constructed to accommodate the growing population.

"In the 1870s, Bloomfield Hills was incorporated as a village, and the first village council was elected. The village grew rapidly, and soon became one of the most important in the area. The village council was responsible for the development of the area, and was involved in the construction of the first roadways and the establishment of the first commercial buildings.

"The village continued to grow, and soon became a center for industry and commerce. The first business was established in the late 1880s, and soon the area was filled with stores, restaurants, and other commercial buildings. The population continued to grow, and soon the village was home to thousands of people.

"The village council was involved in the establishment of the first schools, and was responsible for the construction of the first hospital. The first hospital was established in the early 1900s, and soon became one of the most important in the area. It was the center for medical care for the people of the area, and was used for various medical purposes.

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