

Inn's transformation has history of merrymaking

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By DIANA DILLABER
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BLOOMFIELD HILLS — The old Bagley Inn at Woodward Avenue near Long Lake Road was a welcome sight to travelers between Detroit and Pontiac in the early years between 1832-77.

They stopped in for a drink or a night's rest in the wood structure before continuing on their long journey over the rolling farm land. At that time Woodward was known as Saginaw Trail. According to Oakland County history, the inn was often "the place for holding public meetings and merrymakings."

Miner gave city its historical site and move was 'fabulous' for business.

The inn, now renamed Miner's Bagley Inn and relocated on West Long Lake Road, a block from Woodward, will be a place of merrymakings again Thursday.

Its current proprietor, Richard Miner, will hold an open house to celebrate the dedication of the building as a state historical site.

Miner's Bagley Inn is the first building in Bloomfield Hills to be dedicated by the city and state as a historical site.

Miner grew up in the inn, which his mother purchased in 1942. His family lived on one side of the two-family residence and his uncle on the other. After he went away to college and his family moved out, the building began to deteriorate.

But when the city requested Miner restore the inn during the planning stages of the nation's bicentennial celebration, Miner agreed to try it and transformed the building into a fashionable women's wear shop.

Miner, also the owner of a party

and gift shop a few doors away on Long Lake Road, says he gutted the inside of the building and rebuilt it. His family and friends did most of the work, he says.

And when he found white oak, hand-hewn beams under the old walls, he left them as they were and featured them. The beams give the clothing shop an early-American character.

One side of the building was left as originally constructed, but the other side had to be completely rebuilt to allow for a sales area on the second floor. A curved wooden staircase was built for access to the upper story. Miner added a parking lot and

landscaped the property.

Not only did he give the city its historic site, but, he says, it has been "fabulous" for him as a business.

The inn was moved from its original site when Woodward Avenue was widened, Miner says. It had been used as a tenant house by William Tefft Barbour who purchased the inn in 1910.

Amasa Bagley built a log inn at the Saginaw Trail site in 1919, thus the name Bagley's Inn. In 1932 William Morris, who with Bagley was one of the first settlers in the area, constructed the present structure over the same site. The corner became known as Bagley's and later

as Bloomfield Center.

The inn was owned by several people before Barbour purchased it in the early 1900s.

Miner says the city had to write a new ordinance when he restored his building in order to declare it a historical site in 1976.

A representative of the Michigan Historic Society will dedicate the building in ceremonies Thursday. City officials and friends who have helped Miner with his project will be present for the dedication. A state-awarded marker will be placed in front of the building, and Miner will serve champagne to invited guests after the dedication.