

## Island rich in tradition

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the island after his defeat against the British at Detroit in 1763.

Pontiac and his tribe lived on the abundant fruits and wildlife game the island offered them for many years.

But, the small island is best known for "Pontiac Mound" which, according to Indian legends, is the final resting place of the great chief Pontiac. But American historians dispute the tale and say they have proof that Pontiac was murdered by members of the Peoria tribe of Illinois in the spring of 1769 because of his desire to befriend the powerful British.

It is in St. Louis, Mo., rather than Greater West Bloomfield that Pontiac's body lies, these historians say.

LOCAL HISTORIANS believe the island was occupied as early as 2,000 B.C. because of the tools and weapons uncovered on the island grounds that link it to prehistoric settlements.

In the middle 1800s one of the island's early residents found the bones of an Indian holding a pewter pan with trading beads still in it, but no one has unearthed any evidence that proves Pontiac was buried on Apple Island.

TWO INDIAN reservations were on Orchard Lake in the early part of the 19th century — one on the traditional Indian homestead of Apple Island and the other situated on the south end of the lake. The Indians continued to plant fruit trees and grow vegetables on the reservation lands until the U.S. government sold the property to members of the Scottish community.

Instead of using the waters to bathe and fish, as the lake's first residents did, the Scottish pioneers waited until the winter

had frozen the lake and formed the first curling club of America. For almost a half century the Scots played this game on the ice of Orchard Lake, a sport so foreign to the Indians who snowshoed their way across these same frozen waters centuries before.

SINCE SEPTEMBER 1827 when Apple Island was purchased from the U.S. government by James Galloway, the landmark has remained the property of several local owners. Among them was William Dow, son of the original settler of the "Scotch Neighborhood," who began to build a house for a woman he had hoped would be his bride.

After receiving a wedding invitation announcing his love's intentions to marry another, Dow abandoned his plans for the house and sold Apple Island to John Coates.

Colin Campbell, a Detroit merchant, later acquired the island from Coates who returned to his native Scotland after living on the island for many years. Campbell built a family compound on the island and made his home on Apple Island for 60 years.

AFTER WORLD WAR I, Willis Ward, a longtime resident of Orchard Lake, bought Apple Island from Campbell for \$40,000. Ward wanted the island to be preserved naturally as a conservatory. A committed naturalist, Ward later gave the island to his daughter Marjorie. The younger Ward, like her father, wanted the island to be left undeveloped and its natural state kept intact.

Although no one actually makes a home on Apple Island, it still continues to serve the community for both recreation and education — a tradition of which even its first residents would be proud.

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