

Early Township Days Are Uncovered

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now Grand River and Farmington Rd., voted to have that area become a village. The village common council held its first session on May 9, 1867. The village became a city in 1926.

In 1957, the Village of Wood Creek Farms incorporated, and includes one square mile of area bounded by Inkster, 13 Mile, Middle Belt, and 12 Mile Rds. The village is zoned almost exclusively for residential purposes.

Then, on Aug. 5, 1958, the residents of a one and one-third square mile north of the City of Farmington voted to incorporate into the Village of Quakertown. This village is also mostly residential.

There have been numerous changes and attempted changes through annexations, consolidations and incorporations—but today in 1970, there are these same four govern-

mental units within the 36 square miles of the original township.

The equalized valuation of the township was \$8.7 million in 1950, was \$66.9 million in 1960 and reached \$195.6 million in 1969.

UNTIL VERY recently, farming was the main work of the people of Farmington.

In the early days, there were quite a few mills, both grain and lumber, but these have disappeared. Only knowledge of the sites remain.

There were cheese factories that made use of the surplus milk but they, too, are gone. From before the turn of the century to even in some places now, the northern and western sections of the township constituted an apple and small-fruit orchard belt.

Many were those that arose at 3 or 4 a.m. to take truckloads of first-class produce to

the Eastern Market in Detroit. But now, due to the press of population, and with the advent of huge subdivisions developments and industrial parks, farming is fast disappearing from the face of Farmington.

At first, Farmington grew, just like Topsy. Then, as commercial, industrial and residential units were located here-sketter just anywhere, a need for zoning and planning became evident.

A master plan was adopted, and is reviewed and revised periodically. An industrial park was set up in the western part of the township, and many fine companies have located there. Major developers, in conjunction with township planners, have pioneered some new, yet-old, ideas subdivisions.

Based on the concept of "The Commons" some developments such as Canterbury Commons and Wedgewood Commons provide for easily

accessible recreation land in the middle with the houses on the periphery. Independence Green apartments are built around a golf course, and has a club house, swimming pool and other recreational facilities available for the tenants.

Planned and passed by the board, but not yet developed, is a "Planned Residential Community" which encompasses single family homes of various sizes, apartments and town houses in a new concept of residential zoning.

IN ADDITION to the need for shelter, food and work, the early pioneers had a great faith in God, and expressed it by establishing churches in their new land.

In addition to the Quaker meetings which were held in a small meeting-house on land donated by Arthur Power, other churches began to be organized.

A Baptist church was built on Halstead and 12 Mile Rds. Chauncey D. Wolcott was the first minister in 1827. In 1861, the Baptist church was built on its present site on Shiawassee, and has had two major additions.

Methodists first met in the Samuel Mansfield house, and met in homes for 10 years. Finally, in 1840, Ebenezer Stewart donated the land at the southeast corner of Warner and Shiawassee for a church.

It burned in 1930, but was rebuilt two years later on its present site at Warner and Grand River. This also has had an addition built to house the Sunday School units.

In 1852, the members of the Universalist congregation constructed a church on Warner Ave. between Shiawassee and Grand River. In 1936 the building was moved to the Fisher "Centennial Farm" property

on Halstead Rd. near Grand River, where it has a beautiful rural setting with adequate parking.

On rare occasions, preachers came from Ann Arbor or Detroit to hold services in the German language. In 1875, Rev. P. Malschat organized the first congregation at Clareville, and services were held every two weeks at a public schoolhouse.

In 1876, the services were moved to the Farmington Town Hall. Through the influence of Fred M. Warner in 1901, provisions were made for a church, and it was built on its present site on Oakland at Grand River; an addition was made in 1924.

For years it was called informally "The German Church," even though its official name was the Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church. Today it is the Salem United Church of Christ, and the pastor, the Rev. Carl Schultz, has served the congregation for 24 years.

Our Lady of Sorrows Parish was founded by the Rev. E.J. O'Mahoney in September 1927. The first small chapel was built on the hill at Power Rd. and Shiawassee. Later a grade school building, a high school and a convent were added to the site.

Then, in the late 1950s the original chapel was torn down.

The congregation met in the high school building, and the new large modern church of today was opened in 1961.

AS THE POPULATION of this area soared, so did the number and types of denominations increase. Today, in 1970, within the 36 square miles there are approximately 35 churches: one Assembly of God, seven Baptist, seven Catholic, one Christian Science, one Christian and Missionary Alliance, one Episcopal, one Evangelical, one Jehovah's Witnesses, six Lutheran, one Missionary, one Unitarian Universalist, one United Church of Christ, three United Methodist, and two United Presbyterian. In addition, some Jewish synagogues are being built in the northeast part of the township.

THE PIONEERS, brought with them the idea that "reading, writin' and 'rithmetic" were necessary.

In 1829, the first school in the township was built, a log hut on Shiawassee. Arthur Power's son, Nathan, was the first schoolmaster.

In 1830, the State Power was authorized to build a new school, and when this was outgrown, Mr. Power also built the next school in 1852, this being a two-story frame building next to where the present Farmington

Junior High school stands today.

This building served until it was replaced in 1888. The building that was erected in 1888 was known as the Union School and was destroyed by fire in 1918. After the fire, the older unit at the Farmington Junior High School site was then built and it has been in use continuously since then, although the interior has been remodeled many times.

Prior to 1888 the school was ungraded but after that date there were named classes in Farmington High School. School districts were set up in the township in 1830, but changes were made in their boundaries from time to time.

Nine other districts were established, some of which lapped over into other townships, and were called fractional districts. One-room school buildings were used in all these rural districts.

For many years, these rural schools provided education through the eighth grade and if a student wished to continue his education at a high school, he, per agreement between Boards of Education, could attend as a tuition student.

Sometimes the rural school district would pay the entire amount; in other cases, it would pay part, and the parents would make up the difference. The parents provided

transportation, or the student walked or drove. They did not have to go to any particular high school and could choose the one which was most convenient, or had room for them.

Consequently there were students from Farmington rural schools attending not only Farmington High School but also Northville, Redford, Walled Lake, Pontiac and even the Detroit schools.

BY 1944 there were six school districts plus some fractional ones that were parts of other systems such as Clareville and Walled Lake.

After much planning, much work, and a plethora of speeches, the six districts voted to form a consolidated school district. And so now there is (after some adjustments, straightening of boundaries and trading) the present Farmington Public School District.

With the huge increase in population, there has been a great need for new school buildings. Presently, there are 18 elementary schools, four junior high schools and two senior high schools. These house approximately 16,000 students. One elementary and one senior high will be open in the fall of 1970.

In addition to the public schools, there are two Catholic grade schools, two Catholic

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ART SHOW -- The Farmington Artist Club will again sponsor an art show during the Festival on Saturday, all day on the city hall lawn at Grand River and Liberty. Entered last year was the above painting of an Indian trail marker trees in Farmington Township done by Ruth Newkirk who is also shown above. (Evert photo)

Art Display On Saturday

Once again local artists will be displaying their work for the Farmington Founders Festival Art Show.

The show being put on by the Farmington Artists Club will be held on the City Hall lawn, all day Saturday.

Among the many local artists expected to show their work are Alice Nichols, Beverly Foss, Shirley Pomp, Bess Yasenctok and Jean Burger. The show usually attracts 20-25 local artists whose specialties range from oils, acrylics, water colors, and charcoal to tempera.

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