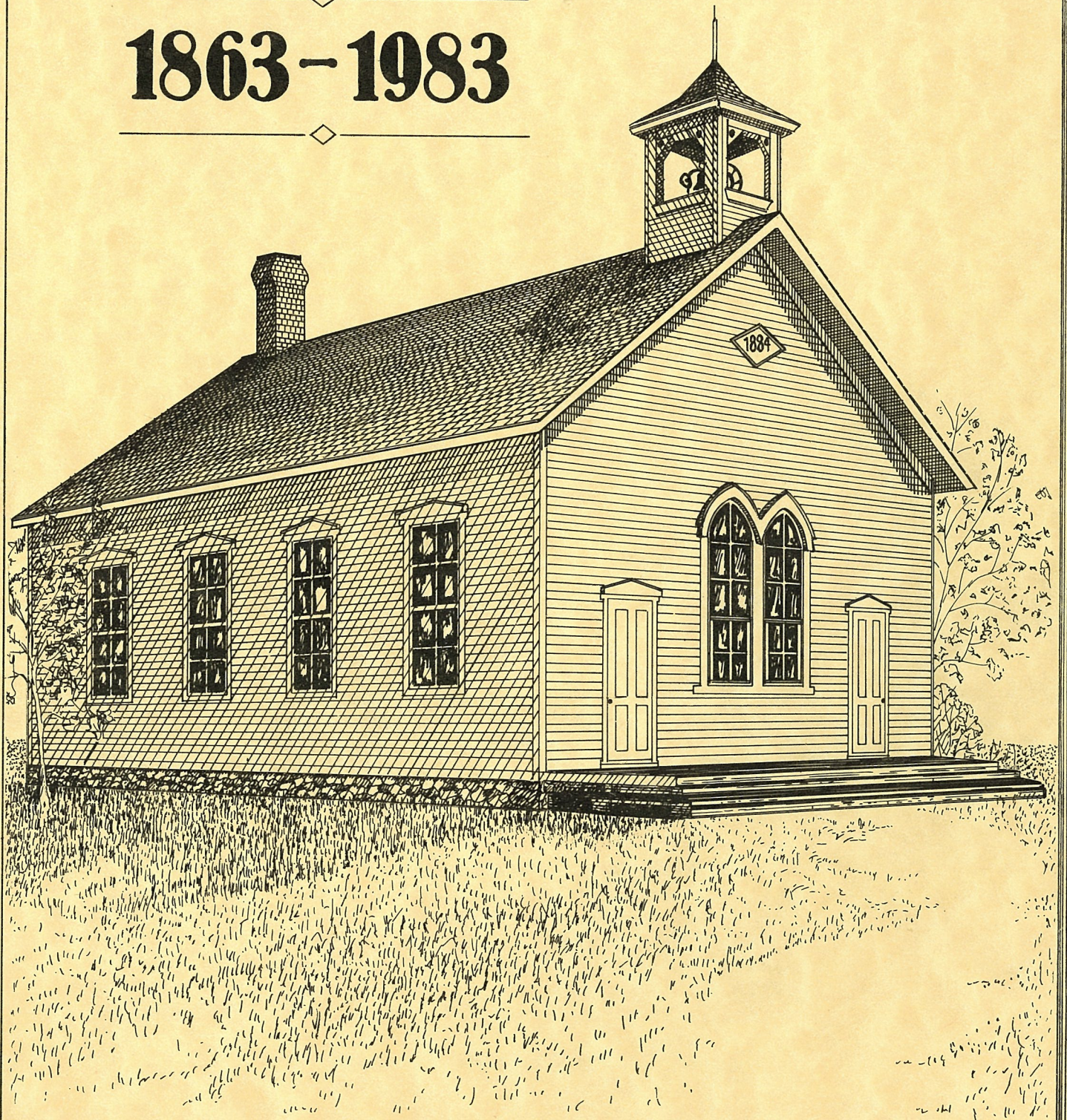


# Pleasanton Township

1863-1983

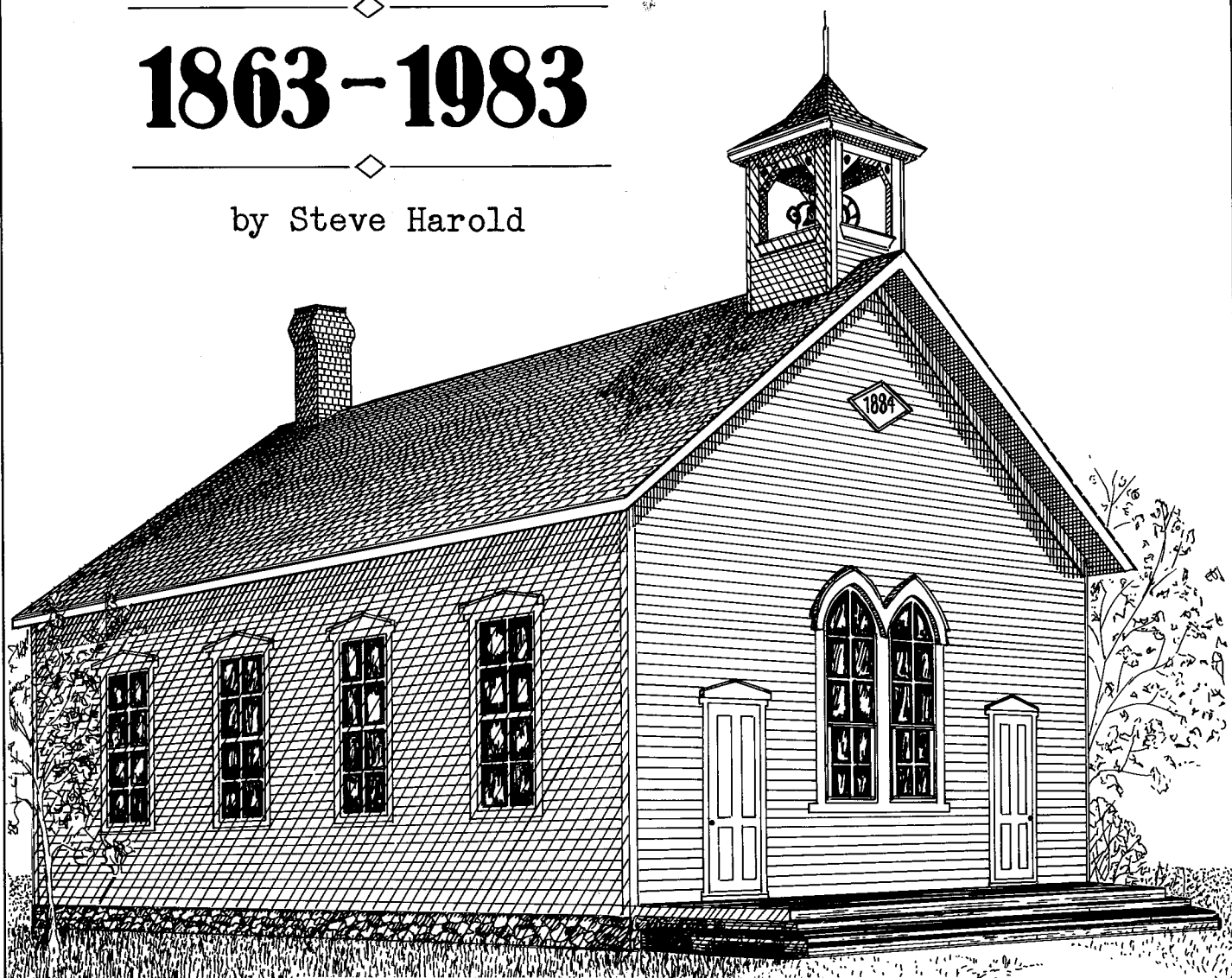




# Pleasanton Township

1863-1983

by Steve Harold



The cover illustration is of the Pleasanton Center School as it was built in 1884. The school, extensively remodeled in the '30's, served its original purpose for over 80 years. In recent years, Pleasanton Township has purchased the property and remodeled the building for a modern Town Hall.

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# Pleasanton Township

1863-1983

by Steve Harold

Dedicated

to

the hearty pioneers who toiled for years  
to create a productive and close-knit  
community from the dense hardwood forest.

The cover illustration is of the Pleasanton  
Center School as it was built in 1884. The  
school, unfortunately destroyed in the 1904  
fire, was the original nucleus of the town.  
In 1904, the town of Pleasanton, having  
been purchased the property and converted  
the building for a school house.

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## PREHISTORY

Geologists tell us Michigan was originally part of a large ocean, but Pleasanton Township as we know it today is the product of five glaciers which passed back and forth over the area for several million years. The last of these glaciers receded to the north about ten thousand years ago. At one point, the retreat was halted and the moraine found in Sections 14, 15, 22, 23, 26 and 27 was formed. The melting ice released large amounts of water which formed the various watersheds in the Township and smoothed the uneven soil deposited by the glacier. Finally, several large blocks of ice melted in place to create Bear Lake, Mud Lake, and Glovers Lake.

Following the passing of the glaciers, a dense hardwood forest grew up. At various times in the intervening years, Indians inhabited or passed through the area. Burial mounds, dating back about a thousand years, were found by early settlers on the south line of Section 31. Numerous Indian artifacts were found along the north shore of Bear Lake indicating a small occupation. Artifacts have also been found in other parts of the Township, but never in a sufficient concentration to indicate an extensive occupation. The materials found are usually considered to have been from Woodland Indians who inhabited the Great Lakes Region in the last thousand years.

One of the most mystifying artifacts found in the Township is a bayonet picked up along the course of Bowen's Creek in Section 19. This item, in the collections of the Manistee County Historical Museum, has been identified as of French manufacture and is thought to be about 250 years old. It would appear to indicate at least one Frenchman passed through the Township and several trappers may have been in the area at one time.

The land of Pleasanton Township was purchased by the United States from the Chippewa and Ottawa Indians in 1836. Two years later, John Brink surveyed the boundaries of the Township and returned in 1839 to survey the section lines in preparation for land sales.

Among the first settlers was the Seth Bailey family who came in 1865 or 1866. Their son, Homer A. Bailey grew up in the developing years of the Township and left the following poem of those first years:

### Childhood Days

I am thinking tonight of the days long ago  
And the friends we have known in the past.  
Of the home of my boyhood, the old log home  
Where the days of my childhood passed.

Our nearest neighbor was B.F. Young  
Who lived across the way  
With his gentle wife and boys and girls.  
All happy, carefree and gay.

I remember the men and the patient wives,  
Who toiled for a home on stumpy farms.  
There each one sought in a heartfelt way  
To clear the land for crops, orchards,  
houses and barns.

Those Canadians were a hearty breed  
And they toiled both early and late  
To establish homes in that virgin soil,  
And were true and loyal to home and state.

If a neighbor was sick they made a bee,  
They put in the crops or cleared the land,  
So the needy family had something to eat  
Through the long, cold winter till  
springtime again.

I remember so well the old log church  
Where we loved to gather each Sabbath day.  
I shall never forget the old Dunke school  
That old log house with rough board floor,  
Those rough pine desks all full of knots,  
The chinked up walls and just one door.

Oh those were the days of the good ox team  
Those plain and faithful friends,  
They would pull the plow or haul the crops,  
They were loyal and true to the very end.

My friend, those olden days are past,  
The times are completely changed;  
But I often sigh for the boyhood plays  
And the home and friends of the olden days.



## THE FIRST YEARS

We can only speculate today on the attraction land of Pleasanton held for the first settlers. Southern Michigan settled in the 1830's while lands of the north were largely ignored. The Homestead Act, passed in 1862 providing (almost) free land to bonafide settlers, seems to have been the initial factor which induced settlement. Another factor causing the migrations may have been the travel provided by the Civil War. Soldiers from the New England states saw the lush fields of Virginia and suddenly realized the lands in the Great West might offer more than the soil of their homes. The Homestead Act generated untold excitement around the campfires of the Civil War. Improved land in the East sold for \$10 and up per acre while the Federal lands of the West could be purchased for \$1.25 per acre or homesteaded for 5 years of hard labor and fees of less than 10 cents per acre.

According to tradition, the first settlers to arrive in Pleasanton Township were the family of George Barron Pierce who settled in Section 15 in 1862. Pierce was a minister who came to the wilderness in search of better health. On his first night in the new land, Pierce is reported to have knelt in prayer and voiced his hope to be privileged to give part of his land as a church site. After his death, his widow, Mary Pierce fulfilled his wish by providing the land for the church standing to this day on U.S. 31 opposite the cemetery.

Three people purchased land in the Township in 1863. The first was Dwight E. Sibley who purchased 2 pieces of land in Section 29 in January. Later in the year he made a homestead entry on 80 acres in the same township. On April 8th, Charles Bailey purchased 274 acres in Section 28, perhaps for investment purposes. Finally, Pierce made his homestead entry on September 17th - he may have been on the land for the preceding year with a "preemptive claim". In 1864, at least 9 pieces of land were sold in the Township and in 1865, with the conclusion of the Civil War, settlers started arriving in substantial numbers. By 1870, about 65 families were living in the Township.

It is impossible for us today to comprehend the difficulties these settlers faced. Their farms consisted of solid hardwood forests. One early settler reported cattle could live for several months on maple leaves but then had to be sold or butchered for want of hay. Present day U.S. 31 was established as the Allegan, Muskegon, and Grand Traverse State Road in 1861 but was not completed until 1870. Early settlers followed trails through the woods when they walked to Frankfort or Manistee for provisions. Medical help was available only at Manistee. Even neighbors were often several miles away. It was 1871, before a saw mill was built at Bear Lake - before that lumber had to be brought from Lake Michigan and it was out of the question to have logs sawn into lumber.

But with each passing year, the situation improved. In 1866, Henry Erb opened a small store in a corner of his log cabin and it became much easier to obtain necessary provisions. The first schools were started in the 1860's and a church was built about 1870. As more land was cleared, hay and pastures were planted and the settlers obtained horses and oxen making their labor much easier. After the 1873 arrival of the Hopkins Brothers at Bear Lake, a mile south of the Township everything became easier. The Brothers built a very large general store, established industries, and connectd their community by rail with Pierport on Lake Michigan. The horses and nearby industry made it possible for the Pleasanton pioneers to sell forest products at Bear Lake providing an additional source of much needed income.



# ORIGINAL PURCHASERS

Thomas E. Brown 1866	William H. Woods 1873	Thomas Jeffs 1873	Myron Arnold 1872	Frank P. Bates 1875	Benjamin Taylor 1873	Lyman B. Goff 1866	Thomas J. Davis 1869	William Smeltzer 1876	Milo B. Halstead 1873	John L. Smith 1873	David R. Vanamburg 1872	John P. Smeltzer 1866
Joseph Shaddock 1866	George B. Matthias 1873	Milo R. Campbell 1900	Edwin Munn 1881	Julius A. Schuyler 1866	Henry Dunke 1882	Charles Acha 1872	Helen Demere 1870	William H. Stout 1866	George W. Smith 1873	Robert Flewelling 1876		
Lafayette	J. Morgan 1883	Daniel Malcoh 1880	Henry Arnold Sr. 1873	Henry Arnold Jr. 1873	Thomas W. Grennell 1869	Benjamin Gale 1872	Isaiah B. Seeley 1871	Henry Moulden 1868	William B. Smith 1876			
Long	John Mason 1889	John Nelson 1887	John McKee 1872	Michael Dunke 1872	Joseph D. Millard 1873	Lovina L. Barker 1865	Francis Barker 1873	H. Starke Land & Lum. Co. 1898 1899	Jonathan D. Glover 1871	John W. Green 1886	Starke Land & Lumber Co. 1897	
1873	Morris Downey 1882	David Green 1872	John McKee 1872	Michael Dunke 1872	Joseph D. Millard 1873	Lovina L. Barker 1865	Francis Barker 1873	H. Starke Land & Lum. Co. 1898 1899	Jonathan D. Glover 1871	John W. Green 1886	Starke Land & Lumber Co. 1897	
J. Morgan 1883	Morris Downey 1882	David Green 1872	John McKee 1872	Michael Dunke 1872	Joseph D. Millard 1873	Lovina L. Barker 1865	Francis Barker 1873	H. Starke Land & Lum. Co. 1898 1899	Jonathan D. Glover 1871	John W. Green 1886	Starke Land & Lumber Co. 1897	
Leonard Reed 1873	Henry Starke 1883	Joseph B. Crow 1868	Henry A. Austin 1865	Sidney Probert 1876	William Foltz 1903	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	
George Marsh 1875	John W. Allen 1865	Seth M. Bailey 1871	William Foltz 1903	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	John W. Allen 1882	Wm. Probert 1899	
Thomas E. Brown 1866	Phineas Miper Jr. 1871	Nelson Keillor 1875	Benjamin F. Young 1873	Moses Allen 1872	James Probert 1871	Henry A. Austin 1865	Lawrence Hudson 1871	William S. Lewis 1871	Miniova Hancock 1866	Elliott Moore 1866	James McKinstry 1875	Chas. A. Green 1887
John D. Bowden 1871	Philander Conklin 1873	Elias C. Stockman 1872	Francis Tunwell 1875	James Probert 1871	Henry A. Austin 1865	Lawrence Hudson 1871	William S. Lewis 1871	Miniova Hancock 1866	Elliott Moore 1866	James McKinstry 1875	Chas. A. Green 1887	George B. Crawford 1866
William A. Cook 1868	John Myers 1873	Joseph Moore 1871	Henry Haywood 1874	Chas. Bailey 1863	Ensign M. Benedict 1873	Lyman Allen 1866	James Fisher 1867	Joseph McDiarmid 1874	Leander Shirliff 1875	James M. Allen 1873	Thomas E. Snyder 1883	Clark Johnson 1867
Myron Higbee 1875	Eben Richley 1871	Dwight E. Sibley 1863	Chas. Bailey 1863	Ensign M. Benedict 1873	Lyman Allen 1866	James Fisher 1867	Joseph McDiarmid 1874	Leander Shirliff 1875	James M. Allen 1873	Thomas E. Snyder 1883	Clark Johnson 1867	Clark Johnson 1867
Geo. Hart 1884	S. Anderson 1871	Peter Burdell 1884	Chas. Bailey 1863	Ensign M. Benedict 1873	Lyman Allen 1866	James Fisher 1867	Joseph McDiarmid 1874	Leander Shirliff 1875	James M. Allen 1873	Thomas E. Snyder 1883	Clark Johnson 1867	Clark Johnson 1867
M.S. Cook 1886	John Lamb 1867	James D. McDiarmid 1874	Robert Stanlake 1887									

This map shows the original purchaser of each piece of land in Pleasanton Township. All of the land, except Section 16, was sold by the Federal Government and the year shown is the date of the original patent. In many cases, this date conflicts with tradition. This is readily explained in the case of homesteads where the patent was issued after 5 years of occupation and improvement of the land. Canadians may have preempted their land for a year, to meet the citizenship requirement, before filing initial homestead papers. In this case, they would occupy land for 6 years before receiving a patent. Section 16 was reserved for public school use, and was sold by the State for the best possible price. All the land in the Township passed into private ownership by 1903.



PLEASANTON TOWNSHIP - 1870 CENSUS

NAME	CHILDREN	NAME	CHILDREN
ALLEN, James	0	LEWIS, William & Eliza	1
ALLEN, Sarah	1	LUMLEY, Rufus & Louisa	3
ALLEN, John & Hannah	4	MARSH, George & Mary	3
ALLEN, Moses	0	MARSHALL, Joseph	0
ARNOLD, Henry Sr. & Sidney	0	MATER, George & Margaret	2
ARNOLD, Henry Jr. & Hellen	1	MATHEWS, Levi & Maria	3
ARNOLD, Myron & Emma	1	MATTIS, Elisabeth	2
AUSTIN, Henry	1	McDIARMID, James	0
AUSTIN, Lyman & Emma	0	McDIARMID, Joseph & Mary	4
BAILEY, Seth & Flora	3	McKEEN, John & Sarah	4
BAKER, Frances	0	McKINSTRY, James & Margaret	6
BAKER, George & Alma	1	MILLARD, Joseph & Jane	2
BATES, Francis & Eliza	3	MIXER, Thomas & Margaret	0
BENEDICT, Ensign & Anna	3	MOORE, Joseph & Jane	9
BOWEN, Elisabeth	0	MYERS, John & Jane	4
BRITTAN, Samuel & Juliet	0	PIERCE, George & Mary	4
CHURCHILL, Charles & Laura	1	PROBERT, James	0
CONKLIN, Philemon & Lavinia	3	PROBERT, William & Jane	1
COREY, Steven & Hannah	5	REED, Leonard & Barbara	2
DAVIS, John & Susan	1	RICHLEY, Ebanezer & Anna	4
DENNU, Alice	0	SHIRTLIFF, Leander & Chartell	0
DENNU, Elam	0	SMITH, John & Aroline	1
DUNKE, Michael & Mary	4	SOAPER, Mary	0
ERB, Henry & Sarah	5	STEVENSEN, Alonzo & Mary	0
FLEWELLING, Robt. & Cornelia	2	STOCKMAN, Elias & Ora	2
GALE, Benjamin & Clarisa	3	STROUD, Charles & Maydelia	1
GALE, Elisabeth	3	TAYLOR, Benjamin & Mary	1
GILLESPIE, Joseph & Mary	4	THOMPSON, Comfort & Susan	3
GILLESPIE, Mary	3	TILSON, Morgan & Maria	3
GLOVER, Jonathan & Sarah	4	TUNWELL, William & Cinthia	2
GREEN, David & Eliza	0	WASS, Jesse & Sarah	2
GREEN, Gotlib & Magdatina	2	WILLIAMSON, Henry	1
HANCOCK, Minivoa	0	WILSON, Richard & Lucy	0
HAYWOOD, Henry & Elisabeth	7	WOLODENE, Jerimiah	0
JEFFS, Thomas & Amanda	1	WOOD, Emmons & Martha	0
KEILLOR, Nelson & Mary	7	WOOD, John	0
KEILLOR, Robt. & Josephine	2	WRIGHT, Silas & Rachael	0
KENNY, Ephram & Jelletta	3	YOUNG, Benjamin & Margaret	3

About a third of these families left the Township within a decade for other frontiers. It is interesting to note the settlers of 1870 valued their real estate at \$68,800 for the census taker, while the tax collector only valued it at \$34,560, a considerable difference. Between 1870 and 1874 the population increased from 283 to 419 continuing the rapid growth of the preceding 5 years. For the most part, population changes have been gradual in Pleasanton Township. The only dramatic change came during the decade of World War I when about 20% of the population moved to the cities for high paying factory jobs. Following are the population figures from the other Federal Censuses:

1870 - 283	1900 - 659	1930 - 480	1960 - 469
1880 - 481	1910 - 685	1940 - 451	1970 - 486
1890 - 593	1920 - 553	1950 - 487	1980 - 627



## THE CANADIANS

The people of our neighboring country to the north, Canada, were as attracted by low priced land and the Homestead Act as were people of the United States. In particular, the residents of the village of Iona, Ontario, located near Lake Erie and south of London, discovered the merits of Pleasanton at an early date. The first Iona resident to make the move was Frank Young who arrived in 1866 after visiting a former neighbor living in Benzie County. In 1867, the Nelson Keillor family settled on a farm adjoining the Youngs. The following year, the Oscar Keillor family and Rufus Lumley made the move. It is believed Dan Malcolm, a bachelor came in 1869. 17 people, the extended families of John Malcolm, Sam Keillor, and David Lumley made the eventful trip reported in the Migration Fever article. For many years there was a steady communication between Iona and Pleasanton and frequent moves back and forth.

The Iona families were by no means the only Canadians to settle in Pleasanton. Others coming at an early date were the families of Glovers, Flewelling, Moore, Erb, McKinstry, Haywood, McDiarmid, and Kenny.



The group from Iona gathered each year at the home of Dan Malcolm on the last Saturday in June starting in 1901. This reunion photo was taken in 1906. From left to right: Back Row: Nels Keillor, Bert Lumley, Lauren Reed, Dill Lumley, Glen Keillor, Ward Mason, Marie Keillor, \_\_\_\_\_, Delia Keillor, Emma Keillor, Alex Keillor, Bessie Keillor, Alex Preston, Lizzie Malcolm, Mary Mason, Gertie Lumley; Second Row: Lon Reading, Roland Keillor, David Lumley, Charlie Keillor, Ray Mason, Mary Lewis, Frank Keillor, \_\_\_\_\_, Ethel Reading, Ada Parker, Belle Mason, Maggie Read; Third Row: Pearl Keillor (holding child), Mable Lumley, John Lumley (holding child), \_\_\_\_\_ Reed, William Lumley, Bertha Lumley, Zada Mason, Daniel Malcolm, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Nancy Keillor, \_\_\_\_\_, John Mason; Seated Adults: Dave Keillor, Sandy Preston, Mrs. Preston; Children in front not identified. Names provided by Mary Mason Ebert about 73 year after photo was taken.



## MIGRATION FEVER

Following is a semi-fictional diary created by Linda Lamont Holm to describe the thoughts of her great grandmother, Kate Keillor Lamont, previous to the move to Pleasanton from Iona, Ontario. Although fictional, it provides a clear image of the migration fever of the 1860's:

"June 20, 1871 - A letter created a lot of excitement around here today. I guess it all started about 1865 when Frank Young visited his friend Jake Decow, who had gone to a new frontier in the United States settling south of Benzonia, Michigan. Once there Frank was easily convinced of the advantages of living in the area and purchased a farm 20 miles north of Manistee. When he got back home, he talked to many people including father, Nelson, Oscar, the Lumleys, the Malcolms, and John Mason. Frank took his family to Michigan in 1866. In 1868, Nelson and Oscar, along with Rufus Lumley decided to go with their families to Michigan. We do miss Nelson and Oscar, especially their young children. I hope we can see each other again soon.

"July 19, 1871 - Today Sam was all excited because he got a letter from Nelson in Michigan. Nelson wants some horses real bad and since they are so expensive in Michigan, he wants us to buy him a team here.

"August 19, 1871 - Father and Sam are talking seriously about going to Michigan to live. I don't know what I want to do.

"September 13, 1871 - Everyone is excited as Dan Malcolm and Alex Keillor came back today. Dan is trying to get his father John to go back with him. Dan has been in Michigan for some time and knows the land. It looks like that as soon as we get some business settled, we will be headed for Michigan. Sam and Alex have a lead on a good team of horses for Nelson. Alex has grown and matured so much since he left in '68.

"September 30, 1871 - Sam came running up the walk today. The men finally got enough money together to secure a ship. We are leaving October 18, from Port Stanley aboard the SHICKLUNA.

"October 15, 1871 - It won't be long now and we will be ready. It will be hard to leave. I won't be able to take much as Sam says the ship will be crowded and we don't want anything along we don't need.

"October 17, 1871 - I said good-bye to most of my friends today. Tomorrow we are to go to Port Stanley and will be on our way.

"October 18, 1871 - We are finally at sea. I stood on the deck wondering what was ahead of me and if I would be happy in the new land. I don't mind admitting that I am a bit scared, but I feel I have been guided to make the decision to go to Michigan.

"October 20, 1871 - We are having a very rough trip. Heavy seas kept us all uncomfortable and anxious.

"October 22, 1871 - The Captain of the boat offered the men a \$75 refund if we would get off the boat at Empire. They told us a sand bar had formed across Frankfort harbor and that we can't get into that port. I will be so glad to get my feet back on solid ground again.

"October 23, 1871 - Someone said the distance was about 15 miles from Empire to Frankfort, but I believe it was a lot longer than that. We left between 4 and 5 p.m. and arrived at 2 a.m. We really appreciated the team we bought for Nelson. Those who couldn't walk, could ride.

"October 24, 1871 - Today we travelled from Frankfort through a place called Benzonia to Pleasanton, about 25 miles. We got to Nelson's log cabin after dark and in much distress. The ground hemlock kept tripping us in the dark. Eva Lumley (9 years old) was so proud she walked 'every step of the way.' I am glad we are finally in Pleasanton."



## HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1863 Pleasanton was one unbroken wilderness. The wild flowers grew in beauty and blushed unseen, except by the native habitants of the forest; only an occasional song bird was heard in the great depths of the wilderness.

Not far from this time Rev. Geo. B. Pierce and D. Sibley sought home and health in this northern climate; and with their axes felled the trees and built each a cabin wherein to find shelter. Soon after, others seeing the offer of our Government to give away large tracts of land upon certain conditions, came and took up homesteads, built log cottages, burnt the timber and in this way laid the foundations for future farms.

In the fall of 1866, there were only three horse teams in town; these were owned by B. Gale, Henry Erb, and James M. Allen. Potatoes of poor mixed varieties were sold at prices from \$1.25 per bushel upwards according to the mercy of the producer, and the depths of the buyer's purse. Flour sold \$16 to \$18 per barrel. Pork \$22 and \$24 per barrel. The soil is a light sandy loam and easy of cultivation and can be made to yield splendidly by applying a top dressing.

At present writing the town contains two churches, a Congregational church, a simple common place structure situated in the center of the town; the building is also used for school purposes, town business and Grange Hall. The Methodist church is a good log building capable of seating a large congregation.

There are two school buildings; one of which is a well built frame house and cost in the neighborhood of \$800. There is one store situated near the beautiful sheet of water known as Bear Lake owned by H. Cook. This lake by the way belongs largely to the town of Pleasanton. Its shores contain splendid situations for country villas, and mill privileges and it only requires a few enterprising men to step in and make veritable Edens of these localities. A good number of pretty frame dwellings painted white, dot the town in place of the original log cabins, showing the thrift of the inhabitants or 'moss-backs.'

One of the best public libraries in the county is to be found at Pleasanton; and judging from the appearance of the books, it is a reading community. We do not know of a single family that does not take at least one of the county papers and very many take two besides state and other papers and some one of the best periodicals of the day.

The log home of Mr. Pierce at the center was the first house built in Pleasanton and what is remarkable is that the first marriage in the town took place in this house and also the first death.

There is a good cemetery, well fenced, handsomely laid out and decorated with young native trees, although no elegant monuments yet adorn its peaceful mounds.

The town is for the most part well watered, and the forest affords shade and pasturage for many herds of cattle that now roam at large during the hot summer days. Almost every farmer owns a span of horses and many of the best improved farming utensils. A few farmers are stocking their farms with sheep. These are found to be of great service in keeping down the weeds and briars, that are such a constant nuisance in a new country.

Some of the resources of wealth, are found in maple logs, hemlock bark and small fruits. And whoever chronicles the history of Pleasanton ten years hence will no doubt inform the world that it is one of the most flourishing towns in the State of Michigan.

Originally published in Times & Standard, August 18, 1877.



## POLITICAL HISTORY

When Manistee County was organized in 1855, the area of Pleasanton Township was included in Brown Township. This changed when settlers moved in and the township of Bear Lake was organized to include present-day Pleasanton in 1864. Many Pleasanton residents served as Bear Lake Township officials in those early years. The first classes of Bear Lake District No. 2 were held in Pleasanton in Henry Erb's log cabin in Section 34.

In the fall of 1866, the residents of Pleasanton petitioned the Manistee County Board of Supervisors to be set off as a separate township. This was opposed by residents of Bear Lake and was turned down on a technicality. The next fall, with population increasing rapidly, the request was readily granted. The first Annual Meeting of Pleasanton Township was held on April 6, 1868, in the home of William S. Lewis at the center of the Township. Samuel Brittan was elected Supervisor; George F. Barker, Town Clerk; and Michael Dunke, Town Treasurer.

Although no location is mentioned in official minutes, Town Meetings must have been held in private homes for several years. The exact date of the construction of the first Congregational Church is lost to history but official meetings were held in the building as early as 1871. On two occasions, residents voted down a special millage for construction of a Town Hall. Following completion of the Union Hall in 1882, meetings were held in that building for 4 years. This came to an abrupt halt in 1886 when meetings were moved to the Grange Hall at the "center" of the Township. Ten years later, the Township meetings returned to Union Hall where they remained until recent years.

On March 26, 1878, the Township Board gathered at the Congregational Church to audit the books of the Treasurer before the Annual Meeting. Finding school in session in the building, the meeting adjourned to the Pierce home. The first item of business was a challenge by J.D. Millard for the balance of a surveying bill the Board had refused to allow. Discussion of this question took at least 9 hours and resulted in payment of the full bill. The Board then adjourned without completing the audit. Meeting on April 2nd, the Clerk recorded: "The Board having had something to eat and some rest, had no trouble in balancing the accounts".

Residents took a keen interest in reading material and established a library at an early date. In 1871, a special school tax (perhaps State mandated) was used for the purchase of library books. Several times after this, funds were transferred from the General Fund for more books. Residents were justifiably proud of their library and employed the services of a librarian for many years.

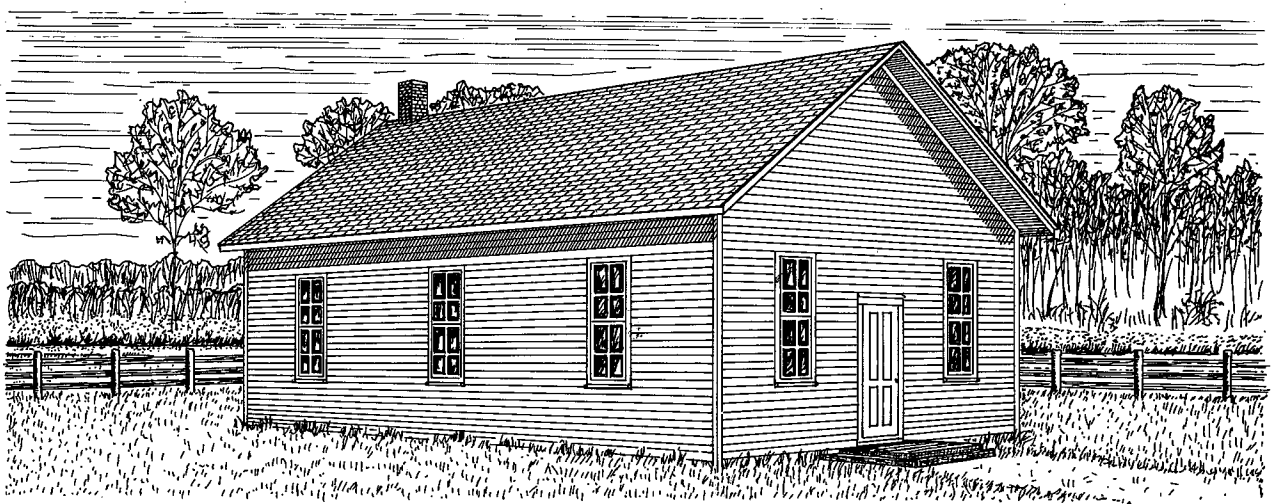
The biggest issue facing early voters was public roads. Until 1893, the Township was responsible for all roads including the State Road. Residents worked a certain number of days each year as a road tax besides considerable money spent on improvements. Besides removing stumps and leveling land, gravel and clay were hauled to build roads. Starting at the turn-of-the-century, the County Road Commission gradually took over the road system.

A look at some of the votes will give a final view of early Township politics:

On Statewide Prohibition	- 1868	32 yes	20 no
Referendum to allow women the right to vote	- 1874	26 yes	27 no
Special millage to build a County Courthouse	- 1875	1 yes	27 no
Special millage to build a Town Hall	- 1876	31 yes	38 no
Special millage to build a Town Hall	- 1877	26 yes	46 no
Establishment of a County Road system	- 1893	7 yes	23 no



## UNION HALL



The residents of the western part of the Township, an area including most of the Canadian immigrants from Iona, were dissatisfied with the lack of an adequate public hall. In consequence a group of citizens met on February 3rd, 1880, with the following intent: "Whereas there has long been felt the necessity of a building or Hall, for public purposes in the township of Pleasanton, Therefore be it resolved, That we associate ourselves together as a joint stock Co. for the purpose of erecting such building and such Co. shall be known as the Pleasanton Union Hall Co., Said building to be located one mile west of Pleasanton Center."

In less than a month, one hundred fifty dollars were subscribed to the new Company and it was decided to commence construction at once. A building measuring 22 by 40 feet was agreed upon and Rufus Lumley was asked to provide additional specifications. He proposed walls 12 feet high sheathed on the inside and sided on the outside. Hewn timbers were used for the foundation but sawn joists and rafters were specified. Eight windows (each with eight 12 by 16 inch lights) were used, three in each side and two in the south end of the building. There was to be a single door in the south end.

It required at least two years to complete the building located in the southeast corner of section 17 on property leased for a hundred years from Seth Bailey. The building was far enough along by September 13, 1880 for the meeting of the Company to be held inside. At about the same time a dance was the first social event held in the new hall.

Early in 1882, the Company added up their expenses and found they had spent \$331.43 on the nearly completed building. 100 chairs were ordered from Hannah & Lay at Traverse City for \$35.42 with an additional \$2.55 for freight by boat to Frankfort and \$5.00 for drayage to the Hall. In the following year another \$58.00 was spent to finish the building. Thus for a total of \$432.40 the citizens of West Pleasanton had their public hall.

It appears Union Hall received very heavy use in its early years causing almost immediate abandonment of the old Congregational Church. Revival meetings as well as religious activities of three churches - the Methodists, the Congregationalists, and the Baptists - were held in the building. All township meetings were held there and the community social activity seems to have been centered at the Hall. Oyster suppers, dances, neck-tie parties, traveling and peep shows were held there. Organizations like the Grand Templars, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Democrat Club and the Republican Club all met in the Hall at various times. As time passed, the building saw less and less use until, in 1921, it was presented as a gift to the Township by the original Company.



## SCHOOLS

Schools have always been important to residents of Pleasanton. By 1870, 79 students were attending schools and in 1880, four schools served 166 students.

The first district established, commonly known as the Myers School, was located in the southwest portion of the Township. Initially, school was held in private homes or in log cabins which became available as owners built better homes. On December 14, 1868, a site was purchased in the northwest corner of Section 29 and a school was built within a short time. Substantial improvements were made or a new building was built in 1887 when extra taxes were voted by the District. The school operated until about 1940 and then bussed students to Bear Lake. The building was later sold to Carl and Virginia Richmond for use as a cottage.

District No. 2, known variously as the Dunke, Wass, or Malcolm School was also organized before 1868 in the northwest part of the Township. In 1869, the District leased an acre in the northeast corner of Section 17. A log cabin which stood on this corner until recent years may have been used as the school as family tradition reports this building was built in 1865 as the first home of John McKeen. When this lease expired in 1877, an acre of land was leased a half-mile to the west for 10 years and a small school was built for less than \$200. In 1885, an acre was purchased a quarter mile to the west from David Green and a substantial building was erected at a cost of about \$500, almost identical to the Pleasanton Center School. This district was consolidated with Bear Lake about 1955. After several years of standing vacant, the building was converted to a seasonal home.

The District in the northeast part of the township, No. 3, known as Glovers School was organized in 1868. Three years later, an acre was purchased in the northwest corner of Section 12 for a school. From tax rolls, it appears that a substantial school was constructed at a cost of \$500. The school burned on April 3, 1923 and classes were temporarily held in a nearby home. It was decided to build anew in the southwest corner of Section 1, adjacent to the old site. Bonds of \$3,000 were issued and Frank Wallace constructed the school. Classes were held in the new building until about 1955, after which pupils were bussed to Bear Lake.

The large population concentration at the center of the Township seemed the next logical place to add a school. Thus District No. 4 was established as Pleasanton Center in 1869. For their first 15 years of operation, the Congregational Church was rented for school purposes. In 1884, two acres were purchased in the southeast corner of Section 16, and a large school was built in 1884 at a cost of about \$650. The building was substantially remodeled as a WPA project in the '30's. After 1958, the District sent its students to Bear Lake and the building was purchased by the Township for use as a Town Hall.

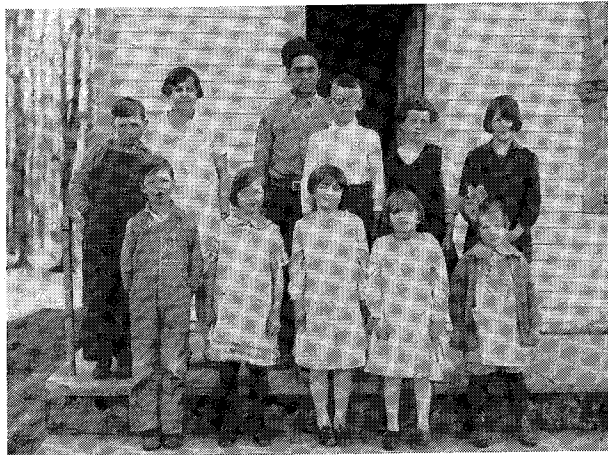
Number 5, the Allen District in the southwest corner of the Township was the last to be organized, holding its first meeting on April 30, 1881. In 1883, an acre of land was purchased in the southeast corner of Section 27 and a small school was constructed there at an apparent cost of less than \$300. The building served the needs of the area until 1920, when the District joined two others in the formation of the Bear Lake Consolidated Schools.

Portions of the Township have been included in joint Districts with adjacent areas. The first of these was Bear Lake District No. 2 which included portions of Sections 33 and 34. The Wood District was organized in 1882 and included sections 4, 5 and 6. The Big Four School formed in 1913 was near the southeast corner of the Township and included Section 36.

All the schools in the township were closed by 1958 as it was thought large districts could offer substantial educational advantages to students.



## SCHOOL PHOTOS



Myers School, about 1930 (left to right): Front Row: Silas Merrill, Ruby Merrill, Phyllis Iverson, Elaine Iverson, Allison Bear. Back Row: Steward Sanford, Dorothy McKinstry (teacher), Ray Wheeler, Albert Alkire, Mary Alice Iverson, Esther Alkire.



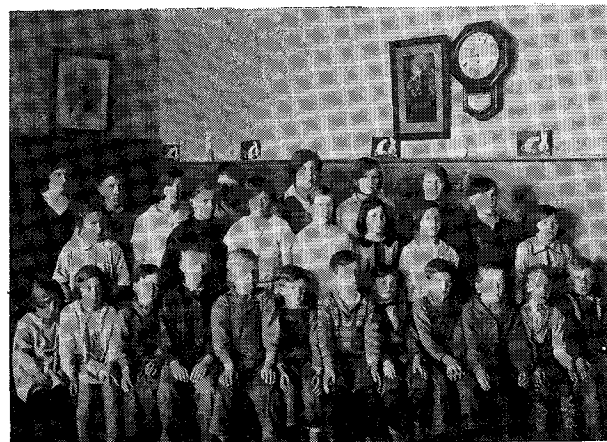
Glovers School, 1935 (left to right): Front Row: Jesse Leatherman, Dean Lentz, Richard Leatherman. Middle Row: Floyd Leatherman, Naomi Alfred, Donna Leatherman, LaVerne Wallace, Blaine Lentz, Reita Leatherman, Leonard Merrill. Back Row: Faith Kline (teacher), George Myers, Maxine Wallace, Edwin Alfred, Phyllis Merrill, Rita DuPeron, Marie Alfred, Stella Merrill.



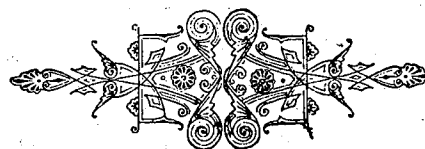
Allen School, 1903 (left to right): Emily Babcock (?), \_\_\_\_\_, Helen Allen, Vida McComb (?), Genevieve Allen, \_\_\_\_\_, Chester Babcock, \_\_\_\_\_, Jessie Lake (teacher), \_\_\_\_\_, David Allen, Prentiss Norconk. Probably in picture, but not identified- Leo Babcock, Anson McComb, George Hulbert, Berton Hulbert, and Chester Stilwell.



Malcolm School, about 1900 (left to right): Front Row: \_\_\_\_\_ Reed Clarice McKeen, Winifred Green, Marie Keillor, Jessie Wass, Gladys Green, Ewen Keillor, Willie Keillor, Walter Reed, Foster McKeen, Winnie Keillor, John Reed, Hope Keillor, Minnie Reed (?), Bessie Synder, Mary Mason, Bernice Wass, Eunice Wass. Middle Row: Frank Keillor, Ward Mason, John McKeen, Sherwood Lumley, \_\_\_\_\_. Back Row: Willie March, Fred Reed, Earl Reed, Alex Preston, Chester McKeen, Charlie Keillor, Elmer Alway (teacher), Ray Mason, Anne Lumley, Stella Lumley, Bessie Keillor.



Pleasanton Center School, 1928 (left to right): Teacher-Lorna Jones Valencourt, Floyd Vincent, Dorothy Girven, Roscoe LaMont, Vivian LaMont, Frances Reed, Elizabeth Reed, Helper Girl, Ray Huntington, Kathryn Reed, Audry Warren, Nita Vincent, Frances Girven, Victor Haney, Violet Sweiger, Lucile Girven, Helper Girl, George Myers, Charles Myers, Bud Stratten, Wesley Smith, Roy Bair, Bob Myers, Grant Reed, Carol Reed, Mason Reed.





## THE GRANGE

The National Grange was the most important organization in the United States to farmers offering political clout, cooperative buying and marketing. The following article was prepared by Mary Grude and May Buell detailing the history of the Pleasanton Grange:

The Grange was chartered April 12, 1875 as Pleasanton Grange No. 557, with 45 charter members listed. Many names are familiar to residents - Probert, Gillespie, McDiarmid, Shirtliff, Dunke and Swain. The first meetings were held at the Congregational Church for which the Grange paid rental. Later the Grange properties were moved to Bro. G. B. Pierce's and the meetings were held in homes until the Grange Hall became useable for that purpose.

In 1879, George B. Pierce donated land for the Hall (across the road from the present Town Hall). In 1881, shares of stock were issued for financing costs of material and labor. On June 20th, 1882 Pleasanton Grange proudly entertained the Pomona Grange in its new hall.

The hall was painted in 1884 and work was done towards completing the ante rooms and other finishing touches needed inside.

In 1889, membership fees were reduced from \$3 to \$1. Minutes of 1890 mention "the tornado which swept over the country on August 9th leveling timber and fruit trees and causing much damage to crops".

The Grange moved slowly from 1892 to 1897 when there was a big membership drive which resulted in the addition of 11, namely Charles Norconk, Ezra and Eliza Ingersoll, Lionel and Eleanor Millard, Emma, Mary and Eugene Johnson, Edgar and Minnie Bell and George F. Bell. Added later that year were Frank and Clara McManus, John and Eliza Jones and Mary Hanson.

The first woman "Master" of the Pleasanton Grange, Mary C. (Pierce) Holden was elected in 1901 and served until her resignation upon the death of her husband in 1902. The 1901 minutes mention prosperity of the Grange and harmony of the members.

Another surge of membership occurred in 1905 when another lady, Jennie Austin was Master. She continued in 1906, but was ousted before the year was out for non-attendance and was replaced by Charles Myers.

Some happenings, from 1907 until the Grange was dissolved due to the modern living trend cutting into membership and support have been: The Hall was raised in 1910 when John Lumley was hired to put a cement foundation under it - at that time 23 barrels of cement cost \$42 and the total bill was \$108. The next year Grange funds were low and they entered a contract to buy supplies from Grange Contract House.

The Grange remained "dormant" from 1914 to 1924. It was reorganized by Dora Stockman and Mrs. Benton of Yates in the latter year. By that time the Hall needed redecorating inside and this was done along with fixing of the driveway and installing a drop curtain on the stage. Merchants of the area financed the curtain by placing their advertising on it. In 1928 electric lights were added.

After the installation of lights, there were many different social events in the Hall, although a request for dances was turned down. Women's activities increased and many were the prizes brought home, reflecting farm, crafts and baking skills.

As the Grange went out of existence, the building was sold to Mr. & Mrs. Robinson and they established an antique store there. They had living quarters in the building, but were not at home when lightning struck in 1977 and the structure was burned to the ground.



## CHURCHES

Almost from the arrival of the early pioneers, Pleasanton Township has had some form of regular religious services. As noted earlier, the first settler was the Reverend George B. Pierce, a Presbyterian minister. He was followed by at least 3 other ministers who took up residence the Township.



PLEASANTON METHODIST CHURCH

turn-of-the-century, Rev. L. E. Holmes, who may have been a Baptist, held regular services in the Malcolm School. Since 1980, the Lighthouse Baptist Church has held services in the former Methodist Church.

Sometime before 1870, a church building was built an eighth of a mile west of the "Center" in Section 21. Many accounts refer to the building as a log church while others insist it was of frame construction. In either case, the building served a multitude of community services. It housed Township Meetings, the Pleasanton Center School, and several congregations. In 1874, the property was deeded to the Pleasanton Congregational Church. Rev. H. A. Austin was the first regular minister of the Church. In 1887, property was purchased in the northeast corner of Section 22 and 6 years later a church was built by Rufus Lumley and Rev. Hannaford. Among early families attending the church were the Austins, Allens, Millers, Beairs, and Millards. Regular services were held until 1911, after which Julia and James Millard held services when possible. About 1933, a Ladies Civic Circle was organized which took over the building, and provided necessary maintenance. As time went on the building was modernized and improved. In 1941, it was deeded to Pleasanton Township by the former Congregational Church. With the acquisition of the Pleasanton Center School in recent years, the Township sold the Church and it is now used as a summer home.

The first regular services seem to have been those of the Methodists. Rev. Prickard came to the area in 1866 and was followed by Rev. Wm. Bell. Several accounts report a Methodist church constructed in the southwest corner of Section 21 by 1868 but there is no legal record to verify the building. Methodist services were later held in the first Congregational Church, Union Hall, and the Grange Hall. On December 12, 1892, a church site was donated by Mrs. George Pierce in Section 15 on the State Road. In 1893 and '94 a church was built on the site by members and dedicated late in 1895. Over the years the building was gradually improved and services were held continuously until December of 1979 when the Pleasanton congregation transferred to the Bear Lake Methodist Church.

The next formal church organized in the Township appears to have been a Baptist one organized in 1869 by the Reverend A. Joy. The church had 15 members with Henry Arnold serving as clerk. Many of the Canadians were Free Will Baptists and may have attended this church. After the



## FARMING

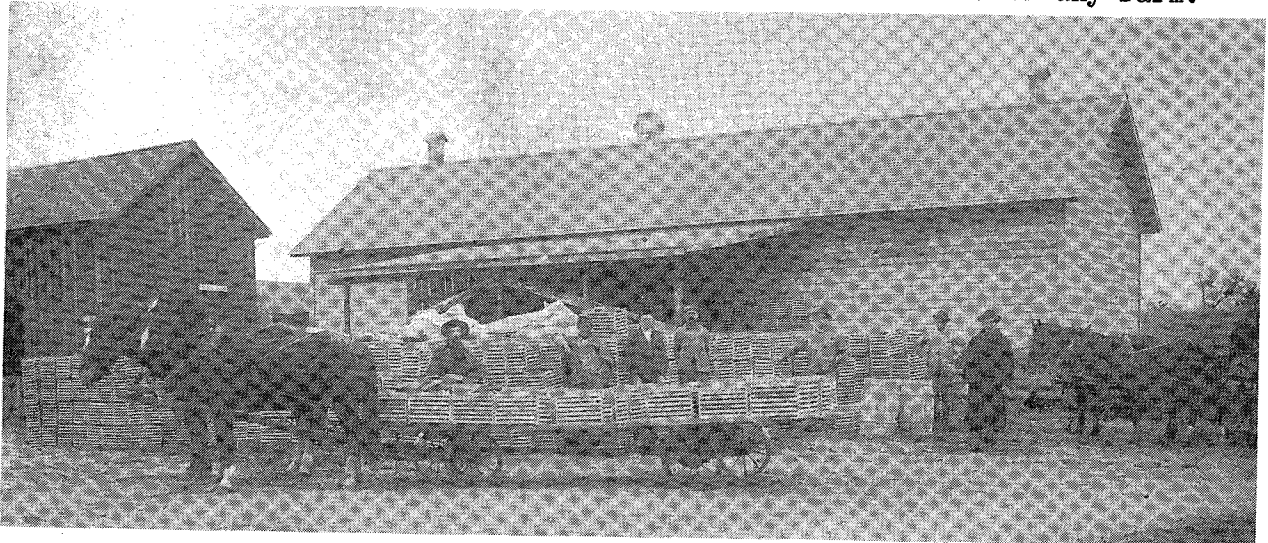
The people who originally settled in Pleasanton came to farm. The 1880 Census shows 103 of 111 adult males employed in farming. Yet the task facing the first settlers was seemingly impossible - to create productive farms from dense hardwood forest.

For the first 20 years of settlement in the Township most of the timber cut in clearing land was burned where it fell. One enterprising pioneer, Duncan Joseph McDiarmid of Section 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ , cut his large logs into 4 four foot bolts; these were stood upright next to each other forming a solid fence around the perimeter of the farm. In clearing land, smaller stumps were dug out but it was impossible to remove larger stumps. These were allowed to rot away, which took at least 20 years and were cultivated around in the meantime. A township resident born in 1893 remembers her father's farm, which he obtained about 1880, being almost entirely covered with stumps.

Many settlers arrived with a yoke of oxen or other livestock. Unless the pioneer had the means to buy hay, he sold the stock shortly after arrival. This meant the first land cleared was cultivated by hand, until enough hay could be planted to support livestock. After 10 to 15 years on the land, horses replaced oxen as more acreage was cleared.

A Manistee newspaper reported on a number of Pleasanton Township farmers in 1878. Michael Dunke had cleared 70 acres of land in 13 years, owned a team of horses, 9 cattle, and 14 pigs; he produced 773 bushels of grain, 15 tons of hay, 350 bushels of potatoes, 500 bushels of rutabagas, and 600 heads of cabbage in 1878 on his land. Rufus Lumley had been on his farm for 10 years and was still using oxen, he had cleared 40 acres of land, had 11 head of cattle, and an equal number of pigs; he produced 335 bushels of grain, 100 bushels of potatoes, and 6 tons of hay in 1878 on his acreage. Both farmers had planted extensive orchards. These are just two of the many fine farms developed in the early years of the Township.

The coming of the railroads was the final element in the development of Township farms. In the first years, produce had to be transported to Manistee for sale. With the growth of Bear Lake, the Hopkins brothers commenced buying produce, but this still meant a 10 mile trip for many farmers. In the 1880's, two railroads were built through the Township and produce could be shipped from points within several miles of any farm.

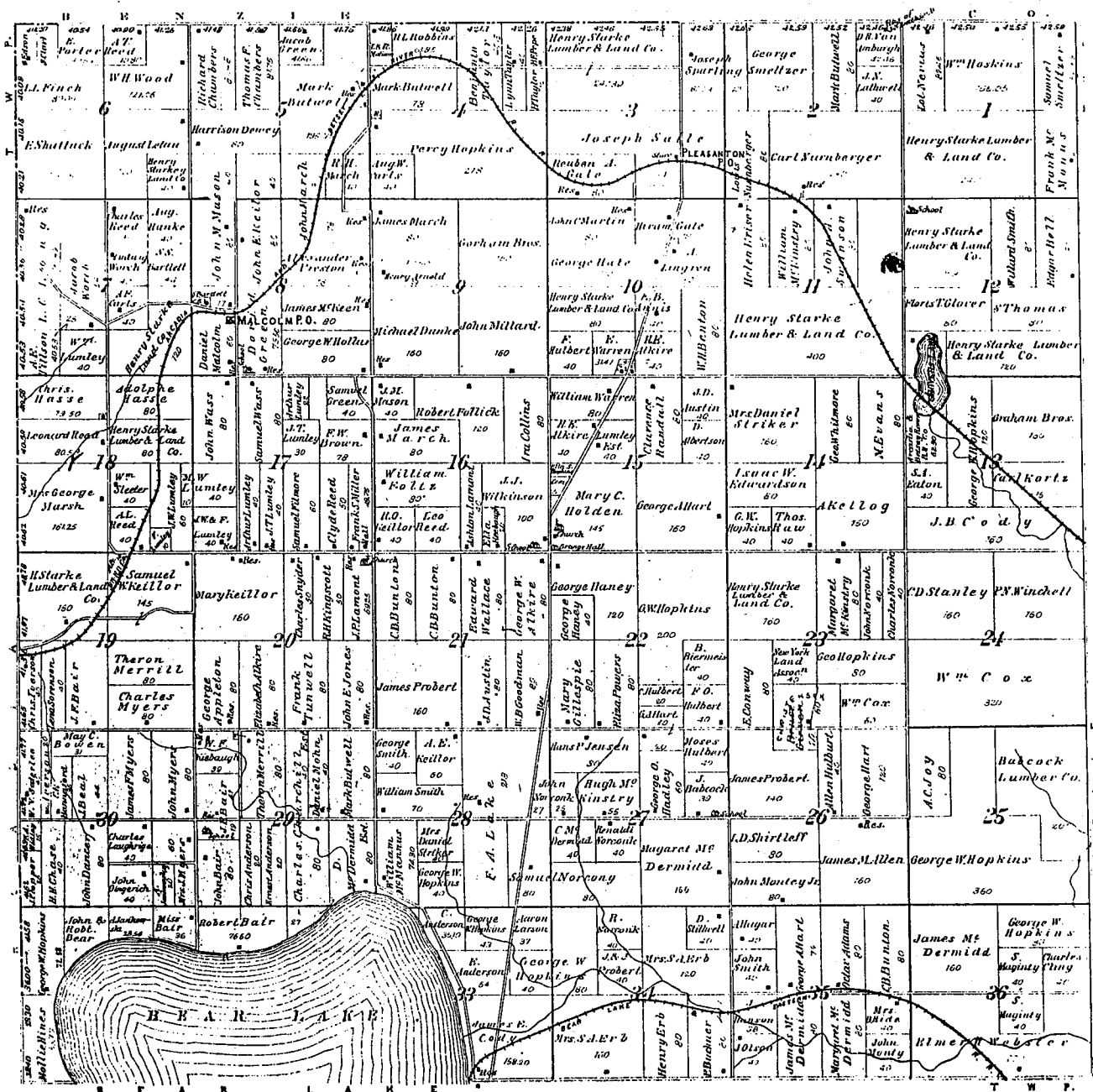


The potatoe warehouse adjoining the railroad at Malcolm. From left to right Hervey Ashton Lamont, Charles Eggart, \_\_\_\_\_, Sam Bartlett, Will Reed, Leo Reed, and Jake Worch next to his team.



The year 1903 may well represent the peak of farming in the Township. In any case it is fairly close to the peak of agricultural activity. Although there is no real thing as an average farm, can provide some idea of the 133 farms in the Township in 1903. This fictitious farm would have contained 96 acres, with land valued at \$1800 and buildings at \$650. Machinery found on the farm was worth \$150 and livestock \$500. About 55 acres of the farm had been cleared and was under cultivation. Nine tons of hay, 450 bushels of grain valued at \$260, and 250 bushels of potatoes were produced on the farm each year. The orchard provided about 150 bushels of apples and 25 bushels of peaches. The farm had at least one team, 8 cattle, besides sheep, pigs and chickens. Dairy products sold amounted to \$60 and eggs \$25.

In of about 50 years, Pleasanton was converted from a forested wilderness to hundreds of acres of rolling fields and productive land.



Pleasanton Township as found in the 1903 Manistee County Plat Book.



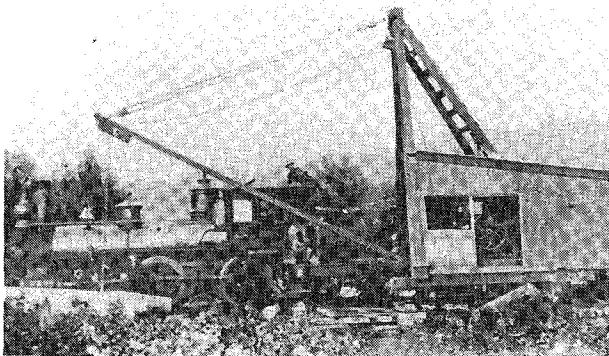
## RAILROADS

In our era of modern, high speed truck transportation, it is difficult to appreciate the significance of the railroads which were to serve Pleasanton. All the first settlers used oxen, at speeds of a mile or two per hour for bulk transportation. Then came the use of horses and the time involved was cut in half and the load size increased. However with the coming of railroads, farmers could consider growing more than they could haul to Manistee in a single wagonload and they had the option of selling timber products rather than burning them.

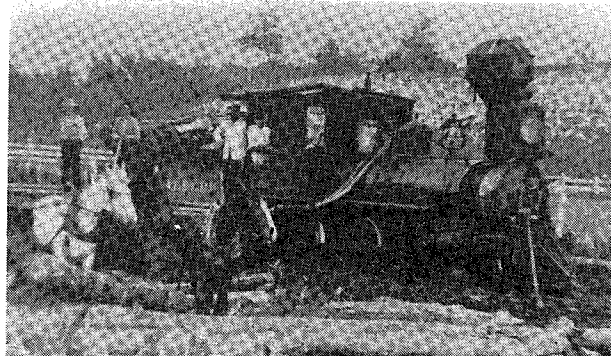
The first railroad to serve Pleasanton was a narrow guage line started in 1881 by Henry Starke of Arcadia. By 1887, the road extended into Sections 6 and 7 of the Township with two and a half miles of track. Primarily a logging road, the narrow guage provided an economic link to Arcadia.

Another logging road, the Bear Lake & Eastern Railroad was built into Pleasanton in 1883. The first tracks of this narrow guage railroad were laid down in 1882, to connect Bear Lake with the shipping center of Pierport. The new railroad allowed the Hopkins Brothers to purchase \$100,000 worth of forest products from area farmers in the first year of operation. Plans were soon announced to build tracks to the east all the way to Sherman on the Manistee River. The initial objective however was the hardwood timber in the southeast corner of Pleasanton and tracks were laid into the area in 1883. The main line of the track is shown on the map on page 17 - a siding in the early years extended into Sections 24, 25, and 26. The Bear Lake & Eastern served the Township until 1903 when tracks were taken up and sold.

The final railroad to reach Pleasanton Township was the most important. The Arcadia and Betsy River Railroad was built in 1895 as a standard guage replacement for the Starke narrow guage. Rather than attack the highlands of the northwest corner of the Township as the earlier line had done, the new rails were laid along the easier course of Bowen's Creek. Again the line of the Railroad is shown on page 17. Stations were built at Sorrenson on the western edge of the Township, at Malcolm in Section 8, at Butwell in Section 4, at Saile in Section 3, and adjoining the Township in Springdale at Humphrey. General stores were frequently established near the stations - the rails could provide fresh merchandise on a daily basis. Produce buyers, particularly Byron Burmeister and George Iverson, built warehouses at the stations and farming flourished. About 1930, the old Allegan, Muskegon, and Grand Traverse State Road, now called M-11, was paved through the Township. Almost immediately truck transportation became cheaper and more convenient than rail. Revenues for the Arcadia and Betsy River Railroad dropped rapidly and the line was abandoned in 1936.



Steam log loader and early locomotive of the A & B.R.R.



A locomotive of the B.L. & E.R.R. stops for logs in Section 35.



**THE MANISTEE COUNTY  
PIONEER PRESS**

Phone 21

Old Timer's Issue

September 3, 1963.

**GEN. RUSSELL KELLOR**

Inspiring to every school boy is the rise of this Pleasanton lad from an enlisted raw recruit to the position of Brigadier General in the U. S. Air Force.

Russell graduated from Bear Lake High School in 1922, enlisted at once and was assigned to mechanics training at Selfridge Field. He soon qualified as a pilot and great was the thrill when he revisited his home town, zoomed down over the school house to wake up any drowsy pupils and later put on a circus demonstration of air plane acrobatics to amaze a big crowd of his fellow citizens.

He became one of the most highly rated test pilots. During World War II he was Colonel in charge of Ladd Field in Alaska and was especially commended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for that Field's splendid service in transporting supplies to our fighters in the Pacific.

Later as Brigadier General he was in charge of procurement in the Central States area. He died in November of 1954. His body was laid to rest in Pleasanton Township Cemetery.

**The Manistee Gazette**

IS PUBLISHED  
EVERY MONDAY, AT  
MANISTEE, MANISTEE CO., MICH.,  
BY  
**ROBERT RICE.**

**SEPTEMBER 10, 1866.**

**NOTICE.**

**New Township---To all Whom it May Concern.**

Notice is hereby given, that an application will be presented to the Board of Supervisors of the County of Manistee, at their meeting to be held at Manistee on the 9th day of October, 1866, praying them to erect and provide for the organization of a new Township, to be called the Township of Pleasanton, to consist of the territory described as follows:

Township 24 North of Range 16 West.  
Dated August 29th, 1866.

Geo. B. PIERCE,	H. A. AUSTIN,
J. P. WOOD,	J. M. ALLEN,
S. M. BAILEY,	I. D. GLOVER,
SAMUEL W. COMPTON,	J. E. GODHOLD,
H. ARNOLD, jr.	F. GEO. BARKER,
GOTTLEIB GREEN,	D. GREEN,
MOSES ALLEN,	JOHN MCKEEN,
WM. S. LEWIS,	WM. WEAVER.

**BEAR LAKE BEACON.**

\$1.25 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

A. J. L. KEDDIE, Publisher

BEAR LAKE, . . . MICHIGAN

**JUNE 17, 1899**

**PLEASANTON.**

Geo. D. Hale of Pleasanton and Miss Eva M. Remington of Marilla were married last Monday by Rev. A. T. Ferguson at the M. E. Parsonage, Manistee.

Samuel Green lost a valuable horse on Friday of last week of spasmodic colic.

The Pleasanton M. E. S. S. will have Children's Day exercise next Sunday afternoon, June 18. The program entitled "Peace or War," in connection with some primary exercise has been prepared. Exercises begin at half past two. All are cordially invited.

Orlin Keillor is working as a motor man on the electric railway in Manistee.

Mr. Edgar Bell of Springdale and Miss Effa Martin of Pleasanton visited at Yates last Sunday.

A dime social will be held at the home of Mr. Moses Hulbert's next Friday evening, June 23, for the benefit of the Epworth League. All are cordially invited.

**HELLO!  
HELLO!**

Yes This Is

**Geo. E. Iverson**  
Produce Buyer

**Prices?** They are always right.

**Bring That Produce**  
You're Sure to  
be Satisfied.

**Sorrenson Station**

Both Phones On the A. & B. R. R.

**Iverson's**  
**"Biggest Little Store" Always Welcomes You**

We are able to sell the best line of Fresh Groceries---due to the quick transportation direct to our door.

**Honesty, Courtesy, Quality, are the Ultimate Objects of Our Store**

**F. O. Iverson & Co.**

SAILE, MICH.

THE HUB OF THE COUNTRY

## BUSINESSES

Numerous businesses have served Pleasanton residents in the past 120 years. The first business was the general store Henry Erb opened in a corner of his log cabin in 1866. One can imagine, the welcome this business received since all other stores were a days' journey away.

Listed below are many of the business which were actually located in the township. Although every attempt has been made to identify all business, many have been lost to history.

### Agricultural Prod. & Machinery:

Bear Lake Equipment  
Buckner Equipment  
Buckner Snowmobiles  
Johnson Brothers  
F.M.C. Chemical

### Sawmills:

Alkire  
Berman  
Blaugh  
Harold  
Reed

### Cottages:

Bolen  
Brunk  
Buell  
Cosier  
Mallison  
Marks  
Novis  
Saunder  
Wareham

### Stores:

Anderson & Cook  
Buttwell  
Crystal Forest  
Erb  
Iverson  
Marchand  
Marks  
Novis  
Quillen  
Schnipke  
Warren

### Garage & Auto Sales:

Buckner  
Girven  
Hullinger  
Loranger  
Zaikas

### Miscellaneous:

Bear Lake Disposal  
Camp Rademaker  
Crystal Forest Campground  
Dayton Outing Club  
Gilberts Gift Shop  
Graham's Restaurant  
Harlan Girven Antiques  
Hummon's Juice Mill  
Laman Asphalt  
Malcolm Basket & Barrel Factory  
Maple Grove Motel  
Robinson Antiques  
Saile Bowl Factory  
Swanson Juice Mill

### Real Estate Agents:

Gilbert  
Jennings  
Peterson

---

### Mallison's Cottages & Cabins

North and South Shore Locations

*900 ft. of Safe Private Beaches*

10 Housekeeping Units

*Folders on Request*

**Clarence R. Mallison**

---

### Bolen's Resort

Four housekeeping cabins and one duplex housekeeping cabin. Furnished with bottled gas stoves, oil heat, innerspring mattresses, running water, inside toilets, and semi-private showers. Each cabin sleeps four persons. Linens furnished on request only at a small additional charge. Row-boat furnished with each weekly rental. Open for fall hunting.

Rates for two or more, \$5.00 to \$7.00 daily; \$35.00 to \$45.00 weekly.

Boats, motors, and live bait available to guests and the public.

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## BRIEFLY NOTED

The origin of the name Pleasanton has been lost to history. It would be easy to imagine the name is an abbreviation of Pleasant Town. Another explanation is the Township was named after a Civil War general named Pleasonton with an "o" instead of an "a". Pleasonton led the Cavalry at Gettysburg shortly before the Township was named. George B. Pierce may have first applied the name when he filed an application for a post office in the summer of 1864. Pierce became the first Postmaster of the Pleasanton Post Office on September 24, 1864, when his application was approved. Despite two extended closings, the Pleasanton Post Office served the community for many years. Its final location was at Saile where mail could be readily delivered by rail. The Office was closed on April 30, 1909, when Rural Free Delivery was inaugurated with delivery directly to each home in the Township.

The second Post Office to serve the community was at Malcolm, another location easily served by rail. Henry C. Johnson was appointed the first Postmaster on July 20, 1897. About a year later, H. D. Farnsworth took over the office and continued as Postmaster until Rural Free Delivery was initiated.

Land in Section 15 was purchased in 1870 for the first Township Cemetery. For several years, considerable money was spent clearing the land and improving the property. Lots were laid out in 1872 and the grounds were fenced the following year. Finally in the spring of 1873, the grounds were completed and a bee was held to move the bodies previously buried elsewhere to the new cemetery.

For about the first 30 years of occupation, Pleasanton Township had "open range" which meant livestock was allowed to roam at large and farmers were expected to fence their cropland. This was a particular nuisance during the maple sugar season and the first laws of the Township were to regulate cattle from March first to April 30th.

As stated earlier, the Township was responsible for maintaining all roads within its boundaries. Until taken over by the County Road system, the State Road was the largest cash drain on the road fund and hundreds of dollars were spent on it each year. The next most expensive road was the one around the east shore of Bear Lake. After the turn-of-the-century several hundred dollars were spent each year applying gravel and clay to the shore road.



A Township road crew prepares 604, west of Butwell Road, for planking.



Another crew levels Butwell road south of the Congregational Church. Dan Powell is the lead teamster.

## VETERANS

With the large number of Civil War soldiers who settled in Pleasanton it is only natural for many Township residents to have served their country in the time of war. The pioneers were a patriotic group and raised their children and grand-children with the same ideals. Listed below are the names of all Township residents known to have served their country in time of war. While many hours (even days) have been spent in searching out information for the list, it is suspected a number of errors or omissions may have occurred. If those finding errors would report them to the Manistee County Historical Museum, the information will be kept on file for future publications or reference. The stars indicate soldiers who died in the line of duty.

### CIVIL WAR:

Pvt. Edward D.P. Alkire	Co.A 118 OH Inf
Thomas Bair	Co.A 98 OH Inf
Cpl. J.D. Baker	Co.B 25 MI Inf
Ben Bowen	Co.I 100 NY Inf
Pvt. Abner D. Burdick	Co.G 46 PA Inf
Pvt. Charles A. Churchill	Co.H 177 OH Inf
Dennis Clapp	
William Conkright	
Stephen C. Corey	Co.O 3 OH Inf
1/Lt Michael Dunke	Co.H 103 OH Inf
Cpl. William Foltz	Co.I 88 OH Inf
Sylvester H. Gilbert	Co.E WI Cav
Cpl. Bruce Girven	Co.K 58 PA Inv
David Green	Co.C 86 OH Inf
Pvt. Charles A. Gunn	Co.B 3 MI Cav
Cpl. Hiram B. Hicks	Co.B 1 NY Cav
Pvt. Calvin C. Higbe	Co.B 12 MI Inf
Pvt. Ezra Ingersoll	Co.B 10 MI Cav
Cpl. Lafayette C. Long	Co.D 12 MI Inf
Sylvester Maginity	
Duncan Miller	
Carl F.A. Nurnberger	
Pvt. John W. Myers	Co.C 15 OH Inf
Cpl. John McKeen	Co.H 103 OH Inf
Pvt. William Probert	Co.B 1 WI Inf
Benjamin F. Pope	Co. 22 WI Inf
Pvt. Joseph Sanders	Co.B 10 NY Cav
Pvt. Leonard Reed	Co.B 1 NY Drg
Lester M. Reed	Co.B 9 NY Cav
Pvt. Thomas E. Snyder	Co.B 22 OH Inf
George Sheldon	Co.K 2 OH Cav
CSgt Jesse Wass	Co.C 8 MI Cav
Edward Wallace	Co.H 197 OH Inf
Pvt. William H. Wood	Co.B 25 MI Inf

### INDIAN WARS:

QMSgt George W. Hollar Army

### SPANISH - AMERICAN WAR:

William E. Turner

### WORLD WAR I:

S/2 Phillip A. Bair	NRF
Maurice Buckner	Army
Charles T. Boyd	
Pvt. William Cermak	Army
PFC Fred Churchill	Army
Pvt. George A. Girven	Army
Cpl. Earl Holmes	Army
Alton S. Hulbert	Army
Pvt. Ceford P. Jones	Army
PFC Glen G. Keillor	Army
Pvt. Henry J. Lang	Army
Pvt. Lewis E. Long	USMC
Sgt. Gerald G. Lindgren	Army
Pvt. Edward G. Myers	Army
Sgt. John W. Myers	Army
Sylvester Myers	Army
PFC John L. Reed	Army
Cpl. Adolph Swanson	Army
Cpl. Barney Swanson	Army
Pvt. Carl Swanson	Army
Don W. Triece	Army
Irving H. Wallace	



## WORLD WAR II:

Edwin Alfred	Army
*Pvt. Wayne Aylsworth	Army
1Lt. Edward Babcock	Army
Roy Bair	Navy
Arival Buckner	
Herbert Buckner	
John Cermak	Army
Robert Curtis	
*TSgt Calvin C. Davis	A.F.
Nelson F. Davis	Army
Cpl. Leo Drumm	USMC
Ralph E. Drumm	
Rex Drumm	
Sgt. Joseph DuPilka	A.F.
John Erickson	
Robert Erickson	
PFC Harlan Girven	Army
Cpl. Harley Girven	Army
Keith Green	
Kenneth Green	
Roy Green	
Cpl. George E. Gonyon	
Cpl. Byron Harold	Army
Paul Heistan	
Donald Hinds	
Sgt. Christian Iverson	Army
S/A George E. Iverson	Navy
Sgt. Robert Iverson	Navy
Sgt. Darwin Johnson	Army
Sgt. Forest Johnson	Army
Pvt. Irwin Johnson	Army
Lavern Johnson	Navy
Lloyd Johnson	
Jean Koons	
Ada Kortz	
James Lamont	
Blaine Lentz	
Dean Lentz	
Donald Lettau	
Veryl Lumley	

## WORLD WAR II (con't):

Paul Lumley	
Raymond March	
Frank Martin, Jr.	
Merton Merrill	
John J. Miller	
James Moore	
Sp/5 Arthur Myers	
Charles Myers	
George E. Myers	
Reynold Myers	Navy
*Cpl. Stanley R. Myers	Army
Louis Nurnberger	
Cyril H. Nowak	
Gene Orr	
Sp/5 Fred Osborn	Army
Caroll Reed	
Charles Reed	
Grant Reed	
Robert M. Reed	Army
Dorothy Robbins	
Jack Shira	
*PFC John Wesley Smith	Army
Y2/C Gerald Swanson	Navy
Herbert Swanson	
Sp/4 Don Triage	Army
Francis E. Wade	
Lavern Wallace	
Sgt. William Wallach	Army

## KOREAN WAR:

Gordon Johnson	Army
Cpl. Robert Johnson	Army
Cpl. Frank Looman	Army

## VIETNAM WAR:

*Sp/4 Hugh W. Merrill	Army
Sgt. David Schafer	Army

## PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS

Maj. Donavan E. Anderson	USMC/AF	24 Jul. 1940 - 31 Dec. 1960
Col. Frank Dietrich	Army	04 Jun. 1941 - 01 Sep. 1975
MSgt. Donald Girven	AF	31 May 1949 - 01 Dec. 1969
BrGn. Russell Keillor	AF	1922 - 1954

## RECENT YEARS

This book has concentrated on the early years of Pleasanton Township, since it is the time period largely unknown to residents of 1983. In the half century of time following 1915, the agricultural character of the Township changed substantially. With the introduction of the automobile, society became more mobile and industrialized. Following World War I, many young people left the area for the factory jobs in the industrial cities to the south. The exodus was temporarily halted by the Depression of the '30's, when many returned to subsistence farming for survival when the factories closed briefly. As the older farmers passed on, fewer and fewer of the farms were worked by the younger generation. Often residents of the former farms commuted to jobs in Bear Lake and Manistee.

The most recent change came with the development of substantial leisure time and money by the industrial workers of the cities. They see the former agricultural lands and rolling hills of northern Michigan and Pleasanton as a recreational mecca. Consequently, many from southern Michigan and ever further away purchased land and built seasonal dwellings. The 1980 Federal Census indicates Pleasanton has more seasonal homeowners than the 627 people who live in the Township year around.

In addition to the recreational character of the Township in recent years, it should be noted that Consumers Power Company has purchased hundreds of acres in the northwest corner of the Township and has removed all buildings from the land. They someday plan to have a large commercial venture on the property.

Although the agricultural character of the Township has changed, more people than ever before consider Pleasanton a desirable place to live.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

It has been both a challenge and a pleasure to write this little booklet; a challenge because of the large amount of history which had to be condensed into a limited space and a pleasure because of the rich and fascinating history of the Township. The book will undoubtedly be frustrating to genealogists because of the limited material on individual families. To them, I can only say the material is available through regular research channels.

I have tried to mention the subjects pertinent to the history of the Township in this brief space. However, many things may have unintentionally been left out. I invite all who know of additional material or who note mistakes, to file the material with the Manistee County Historical Museum where it will be available to future researchers.

Special thanks are due to many who have helped in the publication; to Roscoe Lamont, Linda Holm, Donovan Anderson, and Hazel Harold for research assistance; to the Manistee County Historical Museum, Roscoe Lamont, Linda Holm, Mary Alice Grossnickle, Faith Swanson, Tillisa Anderson, Isabelle Anderson, and Clarice Moore for photographs; to Sue Baker for art work; to Betty Buda for type setting; to Catheryn Harold for editorial assistance; and to Scott MacDonald of J. B. Publications for printing.

Steve Harold