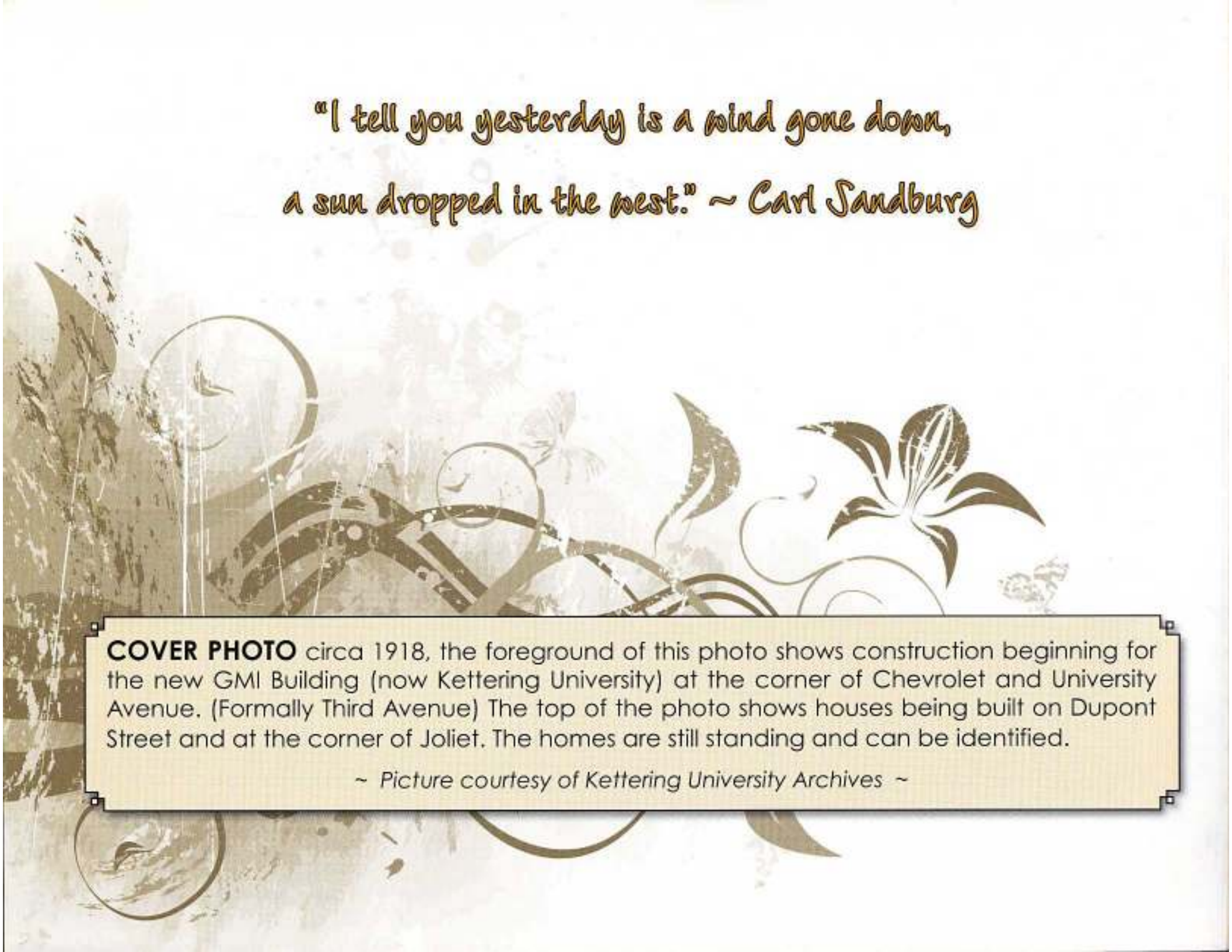


Mott Park Chronicles

The story of an American neighborhood...



*"I tell you yesterday is a wind gone down,
a sun dropped in the west." ~ Carl Sandburg*



COVER PHOTO circa 1918, the foreground of this photo shows construction beginning for the new GMI Building (now Kettering University) at the corner of Chevrolet and University Avenue. (Formally Third Avenue) The top of the photo shows houses being built on Dupont Street and at the corner of Joliet. The homes are still standing and can be identified.

~ Picture courtesy of Kettering University Archives ~

Mott Park Chronicles



**Historic Photos & Memories
of Life in Flint, Michigan ~ 1908-2009**

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Prologue

March 24, 1919.

The headlines on the front page of the Flint JOURNAL reads - **"General Motors Will Build 1,000 Houses Here at Once."** Now that was a stimulating headline.

The statement comes from GM President Billy Durant who has announced a plan for GM's Modern Housing Corporation. They were not just building houses - they were creating the nearest thing to the concept of Civic Planning.

The suburb was to be built on a tract of a thousand acres composed of the old Stockdale farm and portions of the Durant farm. New streets are built first and named as the boundaries. Dupont Street to the east, Brownell to the west, Third Avenue (now University) to the south and Dartmouth to the north. Chevrolet Avenue will run directly through the whole development.

Durant who said 5,000 houses need to be built adds, "We are not going into the real estate business. We want housing expansion to take place in Flint and stimulate (there's that word again) building in Flint to help the housing emergency."

First the property located in the township, had to be annexed to the City of Flint. The vote passes easily. Actually, 950 homes were built on 1,200 acres the first year with 4,000 more planned. The building of this number of houses in such a short time was unheard of - it took GM Engineers to make it happen. DuPont Engineering, owned by GM, came up from Nashville, Tennessee with the first group of carpenters, masons and excavators on April 12, 1919 to an open space. Three and half months later 600 houses were up, 16 miles of paved roads, thousands of miles of sidewalks, water and lights. It was all there by January 1, 1920. A miracle.

The housing program cost GM \$8 million more than the estimates. The average house sold in the \$5,000 range. GM financed most of the homes. "I don't care how much money we lost on those houses. What I consider of greater importance is that the men are being housed properly," said Jacob Roskob, Chairman of Finances. Next time you drive down Roskob Street, please bow your head.

We hope you enjoy the history of those magical years when Mott Park was born.

~ CATHY SNYDER



Archive One ~ History

Mott Park Chronicles

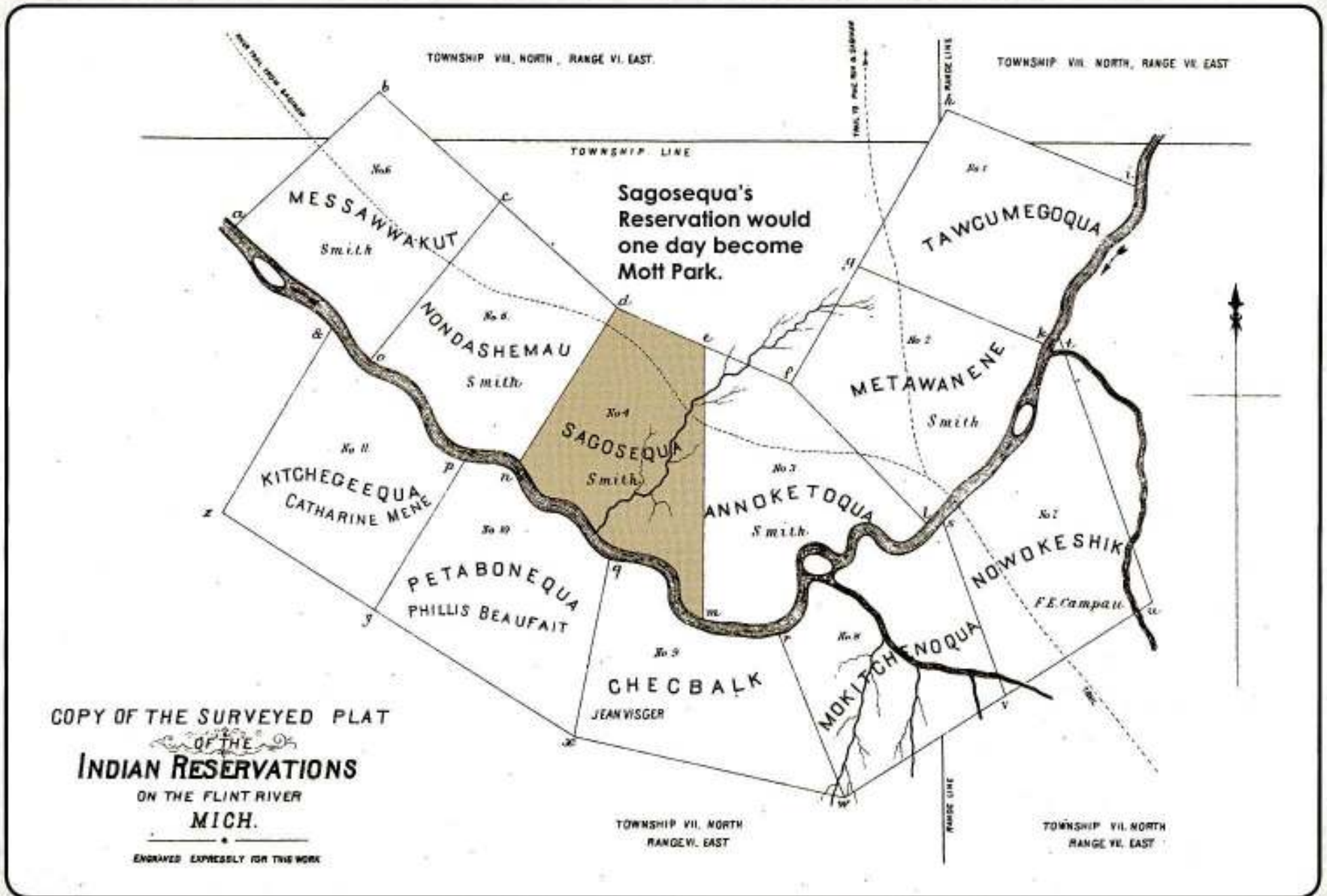
The story of an historical house building project in 1918.

It was something the world had never seen before.

Brought to you by the Archive Committee of the Mott Park Association.

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Indian Reservations



We could have been called "Sagosequa Park!"

Mott Park history starts at "the bend in the river"

Written in 1878, The History of Genesee County tells of an early French trapper named Bolieu who is the first declared white man in the wild Michigan territory. Bolieu loves the beauty and the freedom of Indian life so much, he marries a Chippewa woman and stays. She is the daughter of one of the Chiefs. They raise a "half breed" family of eleven children.

The Indian name for the Flint River translates to "River of the fire stones" - since the river was full of flints. The name transfers to the city that is rising on its banks.

THE MAP OF THE Indian Reservations (Page 2) shows territory of Neome, Chief of the Saginaw's Tribe who gives land to fur trader Bolieu who married one of his daughters. The couple named each reservation for one of their children. After Smith's heroism in the War of 1812, he is rewarded with five of the Reservations. Number Four, "Sagosequa" - is believed to be where Smith builds his cabin - the shaded area. He renames it after one of his daughters "Caroline" - eventually our Mott Park.

In the 1790's, another young trader arrives from Germany - Jacob Smith settles in Detroit. During the War of 1812, Smith fights with the US Army to defeat the British. Smith is an officer and a hero. He is admired by the Indians for his bravery. Actually, reading Smith's exploits in this book is like reading "The Last of the Mohicans" or "Dances With Wolves."

For one whole chapter it describes his actions... "Devoted to the cause of America, an officer under her banner, he braved great personal peril and risked his life to rescue prisoners from their savage captors ..."

After the war the government rewards Smith's bravery and his work on the Treaty of Saginaw by ceding land to him on the banks of



the Flint River. This makes Smith the first white settler to build a cabin in the territory and live in it. Smith has a wife and children who live in Detroit. They never moved to the territory.

The Treaty of 1819 describes the eleven Indian Reservations along the Flint River (each is 640 acres) that essentially belonged to the eleven Bolieu children. Each section was named for one of their children. Smith is given five sections. One of them is Section 4, located north of the river bend. It is named for Bolieu's daughter "Sagosequa" - (pronounced Sass-kwa).

That fall he wastes no time in claiming his right to the reservations.

He builds his cabin in Section 4, near the crossing at the bend of the river. Sagosequa's Reservation was now Smith's Reservation and titled that way in early maps. The case went all the way to Washington and took years to settle but he builds his home there. He traps and farms the land.

With a few visits back to Detroit, Smith remains in the cabin till the day he dies, June 12, 1825 at 45 years. By then, Flint has become an emerging town, but "Sagosequa" was considered too far away for development.

Anyway, if not for Smith, our "Mott Park" could have been named, "Sagosequa Park."

- C. SNYDER

Jacob Smith

The hero of the War of 1812

Geologists tell us that the story of Michigan goes back millions of years to when four huge glaciers moved back and forth creating our Great Lakes.

No one knows where the first "neighbors" came from; we only know they were a native people. There are hundreds of localities in Michigan, all through the Alleghenies and along the Mississippi; there is evidence that the hills and forests were populated with a race of people that are now all gone. The ancient mounds have uncovered only bones and some rude implements. Scientists wonder that a race other than the Indian had once made a home in the Saginaw Valley - an aboriginal origin. They were migrant hunters - stone age people - who discovered the largest of our lakes and streams.

They set up their campgrounds in the Ohio, Illinois and Michigan territory. Known as "Mound Builders", they roamed in bands and left huge pyramid-like structures that appear to be ceremonial or burial grounds. Bones found show them as a tall, strong people who hunted mastodons and found much food in this territory. But somewhere around 1600 B.C. they just disappeared and are replaced by the Early Chippewa, the



JACOB SMITH
builds the first cabin
in what will become
"Mott Park."

Odawa, the Sauk and Algonquians.

Long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, French fur traders and priests were populating the territory. The British were covering Canada and the Americans settled a city called Detroit.

Our story begins in 1786 when the Indians joined the British to push the American settlers out of the territory. The battle, known as the War of 1812, ended in 1815 with an American victory. A hero of that War was a settler named Jacob Smith who lived in Detroit. An educated man, he was a Captain in the US Army and spoke several languages, including six Indian dialects. That made him crucial to the negotiation of the Treaty of Saginaw. Smith brokered the treaty with The Chippewa by trading six million acres of the southwest part of the state to the US Government. In exchange, the Indians were given land up north.

For his part in the treaty, as well as the war, Smith was deeded five of the eleven Indian Reservations on the Flint River. He now owned Reservations 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Of those, Smith built his cabin in "Section 4 - Sagosequa" - destined to one day become our Mott Park Neighborhood. (Note: To those who live on Tiffin Street - the surveyor of Ohio who surveyed the property was named - Edward Tiffin. Now you know that Tiffin Street was named after him.)

After the war, Smith (whose Indian name was "Wahbesins" built his cabin and lived the rest of his life hunting and trading on his Reservation. His wife remained in Detroit with their son and four daughters; she passed away in 1817. Smith made regular visits to Detroit, in 1825 he contracted a disease and died alone in his cabin. He was 45 years old. Smith left the Reservations to his children but it was a legal nightmare that spent 40 years in litigation - including an Act of Congress in 1836, which also failed to solve it. Real estate development on the north side of the Flint River was stymied.

By 1845 two of Smith's sons-in-law finally prevailed in the courts. Our Section 4 was bought and sold several times by land speculators. Surveying in the area was difficult. Property descriptions were based on points of reference such as, "14 chain links to a white oak 12 inches in diameter bearing 86 degrees to a post" - which might be in the middle of Flushing Road. It was a realtor's nightmare.

THE FIRST NEIGHBOR - Around 1851, a farmer named Thomas Daly bought Section 4 and actually built a house officially making him the "first settler of Mott Park." Irish Catholics, Daly and his family gave a portion of his property to the Archdiocese of Detroit to be used for a Catholic Cemetery, still known today as Old Calvary Cemetery, it is located off Ballenger Hwy and abuts a portion of the subdivision.

As for development, the area was considered too far

from downtown Flint which was growing north and south, not east and west. So, Irish Catholics and English farmers were the first farmers of the Neighborhood. The area was made up of narrow farms - called ribbon farms - some a mile deep with houses located close to Flushing Road for ease of transportation.

The 1870 census for Section 4 records Edward Wright - a farm of 44 acres southeast of the Cemetery, John Rice - 40 acres, George Bolster - 64 acres and the wealthiest of the bunch, Daniel Frost with 90 acres. Properties were valued at \$3,800 and personal wealth around \$800. Some of the old farm houses can still be found on Flushing Road.

By the 1890's, the dozens of lumber mills in Flint were turned into dozens of carriage factories. Flint was identified as "Carriage Town" - the largest carriage-making community in the whole country.

By 1904, William Wolcott bought the Wright farm and he and his son Thomas began operating the Wolcott Packing Company - a slaughterhouse! Good thing it was next door to the cemetery otherwise any other neighbor would have been driven away by the stench. The company fell into mortgage problems (sound familiar?).

After Wolcott's death, his son sold off the mortgage of the packing company to avoid foreclosure. Tom Wolcott, who went on to become Sheriff of Genesee County, gained some notoriety when his police car was overturned and burned during the Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936.

It's 1910 - Flint is a Boom Town! The "Horseless Carriage" has been invented and the area is completely overrun with people seeking work in the burgeoning automobile industry. Both Buick and Chevrolet, as well as many parts suppliers, shot the population of Flint from 13,000 to 91,599 and along with it - a massive housing shortage. Tent cities sprang up around the plants, the city fathers were at a loss. General Motors took over the problem by designing the first planned subdivision the country had ever seen.

Sure, some towns built company housing for their employees, but General Motors created a whole new concept. They called it "The Modern Housing Corporation." GM began to build homes for its workers. The project began in the Civic Park and Chevrolet Park areas - our neighborhood was part of Additions No. 1 and 6.

GM offered 29 styles of homes to choose from for \$5,000 to \$8,500 - with \$100 down and if a family lived in the house for five years the amount was credited to the mortgage. Talk about a stimulus! We had a gold rush. It was HUGE!!! All homes were

single family. Owners were given a list of "no-no's" - but the world soon learned that GM was more than an automobile company - It was a builder of houses.

It must have been a sight - hundreds of homes coming off a virtual assembly line. A railroad is built to deliver materials to the building sites. Chevrolet Avenue was the route for the narrow gauge 24" track. When the neighborhood was done, the rails became a trolley to take the men to the plants.

There we were - Mott Park - new homes on a thousand plus acres. A golf course, sewers, water lines, paved streets, trees to be planted, lawns seeded, schools and playgrounds. It was home.

This book is dedicated to those workers and to a forgotten man named Norbert Francis Dougherty. Meet the man who GM hired to make us into neighbors. Read how he named the streets - you already have two of them - Norbert St. and Dougherty Place. Learn about the man called "Doc" who made our world possible.

~ CATHY SNYDER



TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS of building houses, GM built a narrow gauge railroad that picked up building materials as they arrived at the downtown terminal to Civic Park building sites. When the job was done, the rails became a trolley to take the men to the plants.

Norbert F. Dougherty

The man who built Mott Park

Norbert F. Dougherty came to Flint in 1918 - not to build cars. He is hired by Billy Durant, the President of General Motors, to build houses.

Dougherty takes over at GM's new Modern Housing Corporation, which is losing money left and right. Two story houses are built and sold at cost, \$100 down. Large lots and garages. Payments are deducted from the workers' wages. If a man worked at GM for 5 years he would be credited with \$800 on his housing contract.

Dougherty is a wizard who plans to build 5,000 houses and more than just houses. He looks out at the beautiful landscape and he can see schools and parks and kids playing ball. His plan sets aside two sections of 50 acres for parks. One beautiful grove of trees is in an area too low for housing - it will become a golf course. There will be community buildings, baseball diamonds, tennis courts and picnic grounds.

But who's going to pay for all that? Dougherty sells the costly Park plan to the Flint City Council. Homeowners would only have to pay 50 cents a thousand per house. The Bond issue is approved.

For his family, Dougherty chooses a Tudor style house built at 2402 Nolen Drive.

Dougherty gets to name the new streets - that's why we have NORBERT St. and DOUGHERTY PLACE. He was born in TYRONE, Pa. and

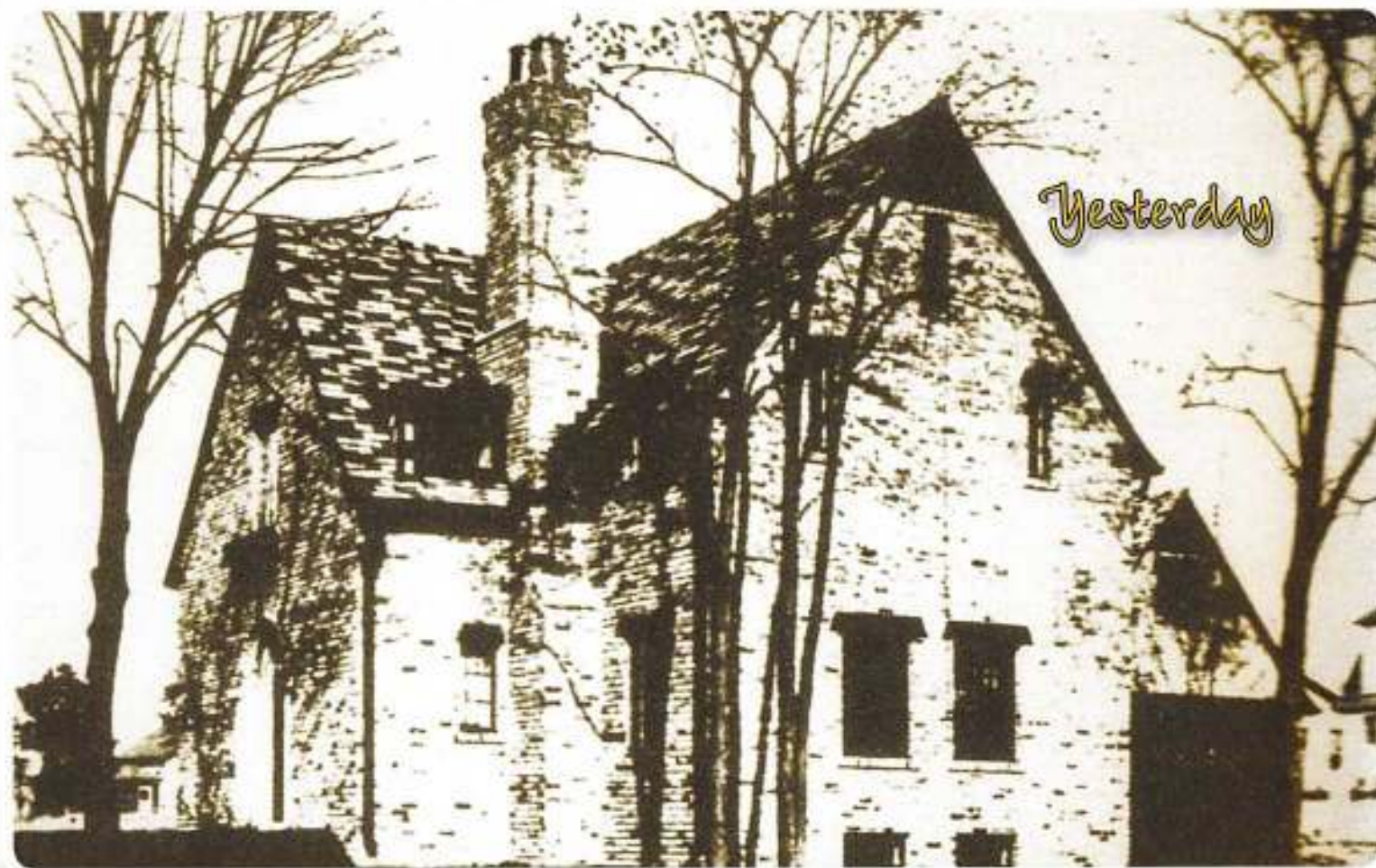
once lived in ALTOONA. His first boss on the Pennsylvania railroad was a man named FRANK.

He is married to Nell WELLER of Ohio. He loves literature, his favorite writer is Charles DICKINSON. He also admires the explorers - PERRY, MARQUETTE, MONTEITH, ST. CLAIR AND CADILLAC.

And we get a few GM leaders - DUPONT, CHEVROLET, DURANT, BALLENGER, DORT, and BEGOLE.

But GM is still losing millions of dollars. The houses get smaller and not quite as attractive. Lots are reduced. The houses still sell. Sewers to be done, streets to be paved, trees planted and lawns seeded.

Then the world stopped turning. The Depression hits Flint hard. Plants shut down. Construction stops. Modern Housing lays off 4,600 men. Dougherty takes part in helping people. He volunteers at food



distribution centers and other charitable activities. GM does not foreclose on any employee. House Payments are suspended or in some cases reduced to a small interest.

Finally, the Depression is over. Men go back to work. Houses sell rapidly. Dougherty builds 600 houses in one year. He is no longer losing millions of dollars. He sees the need for better roads, including two highways - one close to the City (Ballenger Highway) and another on the outer boundary (Dort Hwy). He is named Genesee County Supervisor.

In 1925, he is named the first president of GMI (now Kettering University). He could have run for Mayor...but he is called back to the Central office in Detroit where he is named director of Industrial Relations for GM.

He wrote four books, including his memoirs, and died April 10, 1964, at his son's home in Oklahoma. He is 88 years old. This man of vision is survived by one son and his wife Nell of 62 years.

~ C. Snyder

"THE TUDOR"

**Erected on Nolen Drive, Flint, Mich., for Mr. N. F. Dougherty,
Vice-President of the Modern Housing Corporation.**

The exterior walls of the "Tudor" design are of solid masonry construction in which old common-salvage brick laid up in cement mortar with raked joints are used. The cast stone entrance lends dignity and charm, while the old oak lintels over the windows blend with the old brick.



The interior of the "Tudor" is featured with every modern built-in convenience, including a gas furnace. The floors in the living and dining rooms are oak planks varying in width, laid at random with a 3/8 inch crack strip of walnut. The planks are all screwed to the joints and plugged with walnut plugs.

FOR HIS FAMILY Dougherty chooses the Tudor. "The interior features every modern built in convenience, including a gas furnace. The cast stone entrance lends dignity and charm, while the old oak lintels over the windows blend well with the old brick."



By Joyce Looney

"It was always our favorite house."

My husband and I used to ride our bikes up and down Nolen Drive and look at the houses. This house was always our favorite. It had more trees around it and always looked so cool and serene. I loved the bright red tulips in the yard during the spring time. It seemed like the best house in Flint.

We were actually in the process of buying another house when my husband burst into the room and said, "You'll never guess what's for sale?" We ran to the car, went over to see it and filled out papers right then.

Fortunately, the earnest money on the other house was a small price to pay for one we had wanted for so long. We love the park and the golf course. The roads are great for runners. The trees are great shade on a hot summer day. Dogs and cats love the yards to roam in and the neighbors are wonderful. It's so good to have a neighborhood organization to keep our community safe and also having a university like Kettering University so close to home. We are so lucky to be able to live in our favorite house in Flint.

From Carriages to Autos

140 years of service...1865 to 2005

Picture it.
The year is 1865
and the Begole
and Fox Co.
is building a
sawmill on the
south bank of
the Flint River. It is
one of two mills
being built along
this portion of the
Flint River.

The lumber
industry flourishes
in Flint - acres
of white pine
surround the
landscape.
Then early in
the 1880's the
lumber business
falls off. Investors
start looking for a
new investment
- Carriages. The
Flint Wagon
Works is born in
1882 on West
Kearsley Street.
Flint flourishes
again with
several carriage
companies
along West Kearsley Street.

By 1903, the newly formed Buick Motor Co. who owns the Wagon Works builds a one story brick building on the south side of W. Kearsley Street next to the Wagon Works. Buick begins to build automobiles there. Four years later, 1907, Buick leaves the Kearsley site and builds a new factory on the north side of Flint.



The Mason Motor Co. was
formed in 1911, and around
1913 became the
site for a new axle plant
Chevrolet Plant 4.
- Flint Journal file photos

In 1910, the Whiting Automobile is built at the Wagon Works. Two years later they move operations into the former Buick building. In 1911, Mason Factory 4 is built just west of the original Buick Building. Soon it becomes part of Chevrolet. Not long after, another one - Factory 5 is built. Eventually the two plants are connected and Kearsley St. is closed.

The complex becomes known as "Chevy in the Hole" when

Chevrolet moves operations from Detroit to Flint and takes over the building where the first production Buicks were built in 1904. Flint is home to the Buick Plant and now the Chevrolet Plant.

Chevrolet sales catchup with Ford. They are so successful that in three years they build a new assembly factory on Wilcox Street and then change the name of the street to Chevrolet Avenue. For many years Plant 4 is Chevrolet's sole source of the 6-cylinder engine. It becomes the venue for the famous Sit-Down Strike of 1936.

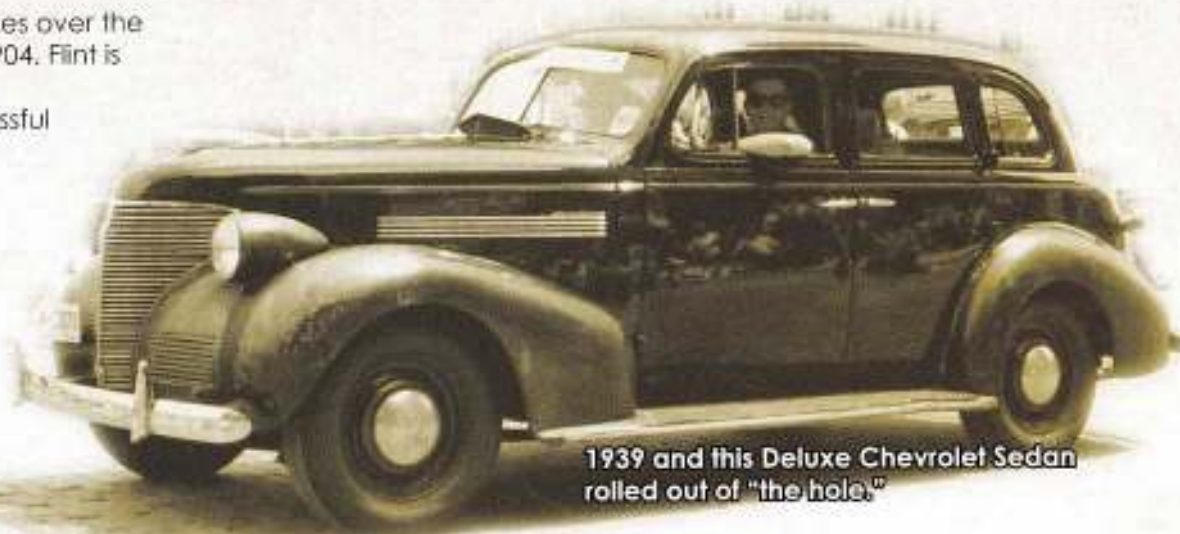
In 1942 car production ceases as Chevy in the Hole and all of GM becomes an integral part of the WWII effort producing military trucks, engines and other parts for America's Arsenal of Democracy. After the war a new engine plant is built on Van Slyke Rd. 1988, GM begins to outsource. The writing is on the wall. The old property in the hole is transferred to AC Delphi, which had been spun off from GM in 1999. Then Closure.

By 2005, after 140 years of service, the old factory is razed brick by brick. Today weeds and puddles have taken over the landscape. Not even a new bridge helps. There is nothing left for the thousands and thousands of people who worked here. Nothing but empty parking lots - no more lines of traffic that lead to and from the factory.

A new bridge is built and at the entrance a small memorial is erected that cries out the story of an immortal factory that once owned this spot and of the thousands and thousands of people who called this place "home."

But look, Dad!!! From the bridge you can see all the way to downtown Flint.

~ C. SNYDER



1939 and this Deluxe Chevrolet Sedan rolled out of "the hole."



The 1955 Chevrolet Belair has been called "The Most Popular Chevy ever made."



It is 1941, the last year for cars to be built, "Down in the Hole." For 4 years tanks rolled off the line but after the war, Chevrolet production is moved to the brand new Van Slyke Plant - just parts and engines are built in the hole.

Boomtown~

General Motors builds 5000 houses

The year is 1918. While her husband is at work at the Buick plant, his little wife dresses up. She puts on her best hat and her gloves. She sets out to walk some ten miles across town. In her purse is a down payment on a house - \$100.

The woman is one of thousands who line up to be part of the biggest house building project the world had ever seen. GM's Modern Housing Corporation is putting up five thousand houses for their workers. The houses are going up in Flint's Civic Park and Chevrolet Park (known today as Mott Park).

The little lady clutches her purse and picks out her house. She sits on the porch waiting for the real estate agent to come by to sign her up. At last her own home. A home to raise her family. A home they would live in till they die.

It is 1910 and Flint is a Boom Town. Everyday thousands of people arrive looking for work in the burgeoning automobile industry. Almost overnight

Flint's population goes from 13,000 to 91,599. Tent cities spring up around the plants.

The city fathers are frantic.

They put together an organization of Flint business men to create the "Civic Building Association." They buy 400 acres outside the city and begin building houses. They build and sell all of 132 houses when World War I breaks out. Construction is stopped.

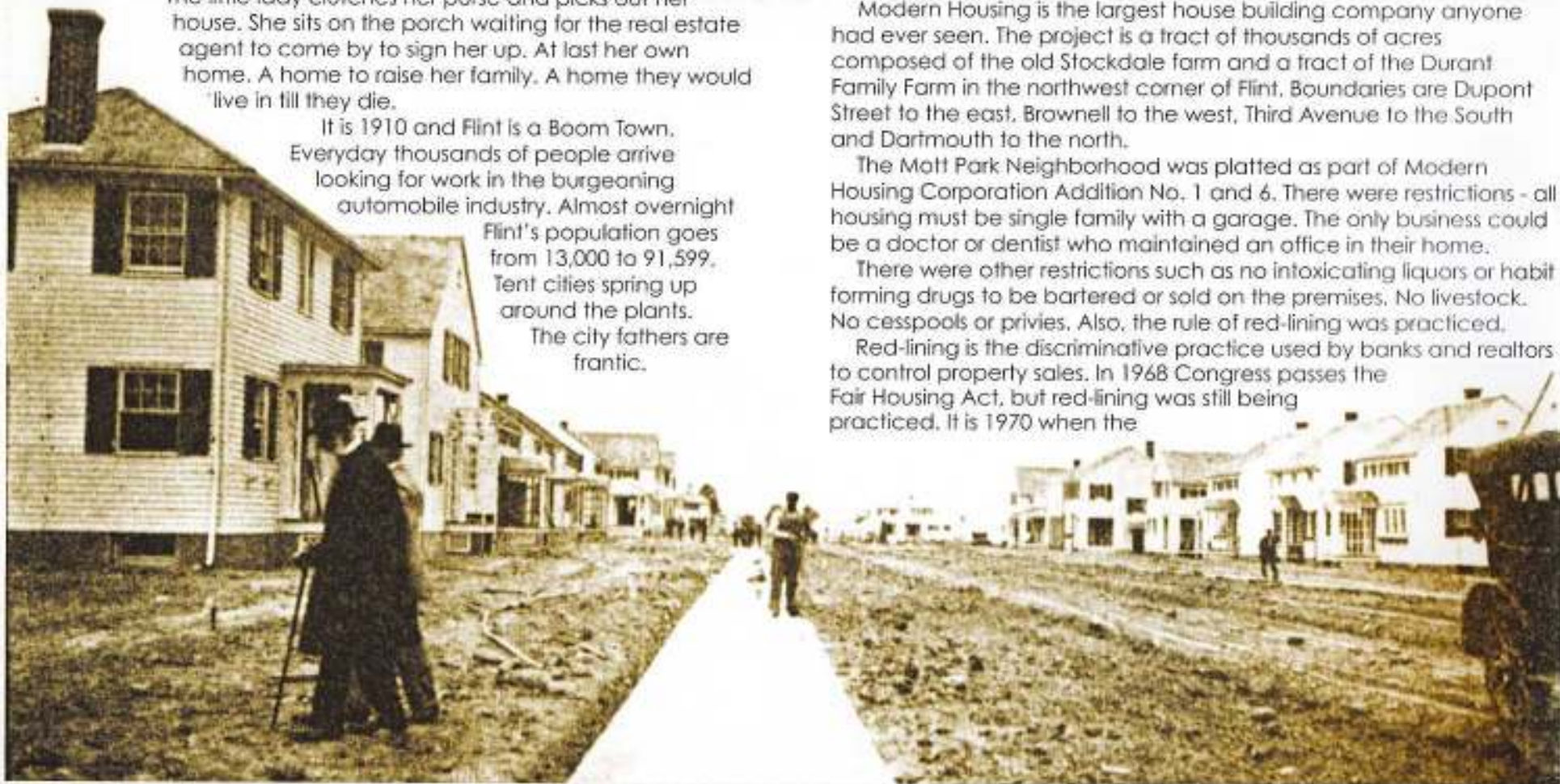
When the war is over, GM is the one who steps up and introduces a new company - "Modern Housing Corporation." The plan: Build five thousand single family homes. The houses will be built on good size lots. There are 29 styles to choose from for \$3,500 to \$8,500. Most popular is the \$5,000 range two story house. Down payments are as low as \$100. There will be parks, playgrounds, schools, sewers, lawns and trees. It is a gold rush!

Modern Housing is the largest house building company anyone had ever seen. The project is a tract of thousands of acres composed of the old Stockdale farm and a tract of the Durant Family Farm in the northwest corner of Flint. Boundaries are Dupont Street to the east, Brownell to the west, Third Avenue to the South and Dartmouth to the north.

The Mott Park Neighborhood was platted as part of Modern Housing Corporation Addition No. 1 and 6. There were restrictions - all housing must be single family with a garage. The only business could be a doctor or dentist who maintained an office in their home.

There were other restrictions such as no intoxicating liquors or habit forming drugs to be bartered or sold on the premises. No livestock. No cesspools or privies. Also, the rule of red-lining was practiced.

Red-lining is the discriminative practice used by banks and realtors to control property sales. In 1968 Congress passes the Fair Housing Act, but red-lining was still being practiced. It is 1970 when the



house at 2472 Nolen Drive is bought by Dr. Samuel Dismond breaking the red line for the first time.

After two years the Modern Housing Corporation gets out of the building business and opens the neighborhood to other builders - such as Gerholz. But the historic Mott Park district stands out, marked by its rectangular, diamond, triangular and trapezoid shaped blocks. This portion of the subdivision contains some two hundred and sixty one modest well-built homes, repeated in sixteen identifiable forms. You can still drive by and say, "That's a GM house!"

At the peak of construction, Modern Housing

hired 4,600 men. They were housed in a camp containing ninety-six bunkhouses, commissaries, sanitation, an outside theatre, even a barber shop and also a hoard of mosquitoes.

In three and a half months 600 houses were built, over sixteen miles of paved roads, sewage and lighting stations - it was all there. Such a wonder to build homes and build cars at the same time, both were necessary to the growth of the auto industry.

But we can look back with sweet memories of the years we lived in a charmed place. You had to be here to appreciate how this stimulation plan worked, it was our life. Our time and no one can ever take it away. Don't shake your head at what was once the great General Motors, instead, remember the "Miracle of 1920" - when GM gave us a world called Mott Park.

~ C. SNYDER



BRAND NEW SIDEWALKS and muddy, muddy streets do not discourage the lines of people who have come to buy a new house in Civic Park, one of GM's Modern Housing Corporation subdivisions.

"Just a spot to call my own..."

MODERN HOUSING CORPORATION Subsidiary of General Motors Corporation

Any of our salesmen can be reached at the Modern Housing Corporation Sales
Office at 1445 Chevrolet Ave. Ph 3-1717



TYPE 5020

Built by W.R. Howser

This beautiful home, a 6 room English semi bungalow with vestibule entrance and fireplace, has a living room across the front. A large kitchen with built in breakfast nook, a sink and plenty of cupboard space. One bedroom, stool and lavatory downstairs and a full basement. Make this an ideal modern home. The price on a 50x100 ft. lot with paving paid is only \$7,125 with \$925 down.

MODERN HOUSING CORPORATION



TYPE 2014

Built by A. S. Johnson

The foundation size of this pretty bungalow is 24x34 feet. It has five rooms and a bath with built-in tub. A large living room has side lights and is trimmed in gum wood. Oak floors are a feature throughout. A good size dining room and kitchen and two large bedrooms complete the home. It has a ten block foundation. Steel I-beam construction and has a full basement with furnace, gas heater, hot water tank and laundry trays. This price includes a 20x100 lot with paving paid, at \$3,570 with \$570 down.

MODERN HOUSING CORPORATION



TYPE 1201

Built by Anderson and Hougliid

Six rooms and bath in this beautiful home which has a large living room with cove ceilings and side lights. A side porch off the living room is another delightful feature. One large bedroom, toilet and lavatory, dining room and a kitchen with ample cupboard space complete the downstairs, and there are two large bedrooms and bath with shower upstairs. A full basement is modern in every respect. The price of this beautiful home on a 50x100 ft. lot with paving paid, is only \$7,700 with \$1,000 down.

MODERN HOUSING CORPORATION

(CREDIT TO: GMI Alumni Foundation's Collection of Industrial History, Flint, Michigan.)



Build Your Home the Skyscraper Way



The Crescent. FIVE ROOMS AND BATH
\$2,436 MONTHLY PAYMENTS \$40



The Gladstone SIX ROOMS and BATH
\$2,025 MONTHLY PAYMENTS \$35

Mott Park Chronicles • Archive L. History

Save \$500 to \$2,000 on a Complete Home

EASY PAYMENTS - FACTORY TO YOU

"This house came in 30,000 pieces"

You know the story of the growth of the "Vehicle City" - of how it was overrun in 1910 by people seeking work at the auto factories. Between 1910 and 1920 the population of Flint skyrocketed from 13,103 people to 91,599 - and they were still coming.

You've heard how GM created a new firm to build houses for its workers. Mott Park was platted as part of Modern Housing Corporation Additions No 1 and 6. Overall there were some 29 designs to choose from. We bring you three of those choices from an advertising brochure (on page 12). The Modern Housing Corp. began building homes - but when The Depression brought everything to a stop that included the construction business - it never came back.

General Motors changed the housing firm to allow other builders - such as Gerholz - to build houses. You can find streets filled with the beautiful Gerholz homes. And did you know you could also order a house from the Sears Roebuck Catalogue? Several were built in Mott Park - was it yours?

Called "Honor Bilt" Modern Homes, they offered guarantees, easy payments and instructions, in their catalogue. Sears advertised savings of \$500 to \$2000 with one of their houses. "No need to shop about in a dozen places. When you purchase a home from us, you dispose of the entire transaction in a few minutes. On acceptance of your order we ship at factory prices all the material to build your house...." And it all arrived all 30,000 pieces!



The Puritan. SEVEN ROOMS AND BATH
\$2,504 MONTHLY PAYMENTS \$40



The Conway FIVE ROOMS AND BATH
\$1,614 MONTHLY PAYMENTS \$30

~ Courtesy of Sears Archives, Chicago IL

"I remember Garden Street"

Earl Brandon

I remember Garden Street - it was a short street that ran from west of Chevrolet Avenue and south of Third Avenue - now renamed University Avenue. During the late 20's and 30's, the land was open and undeveloped except for the huge Hasselbring Greenhouse. There were very few homes on the street. One that will always be remembered, was the beautiful Hasselbring Home. The family operated the huge greenhouse and owned all the land west between the old Third Avenue and the Flint River.

We neighborhood kids used it for a softball field. Also, when the Great Depression hit Flint, Mr. Hasselbring permitted Mott Park residents to use the land for vegetable gardens. It was well appreciated - I remember because my parents were one of those who planted a garden.

The land was also used to plant Victory Gardens during WWII.

Today, the Hasselbring Greenhouse and home are all gone - now in that location, the busy Kettering Student Activity Building, parking lots and ball fields.

And today there is only one short piece of Garden Street left with only three houses located there. You can find what's left of Garden Street on the other side of the bridge, near the old fire hall off Glenwood St.



THE BEAUTIFUL HASSELBRING House
was located at 527 Garden Street.

~ Photos Courtesy of Scharsburg Archives



THE HASSELBRING FAMILY takes a spin in their
new automobile.

"Build it and they will come"...

GMI Acquires Garden Street

The Chevrolet factory on one side, homes on the other side, the Durant school property to the east - it is 1954 and expansion of General Motors Institute (GMI - now known as Kettering) is the hot topic. The college needs to expand. It is in dire need of parking and a place for students to have athletic programs.

The eyes go to the south, to a piece of property that consists of about 35 acres along the old Third Avenue. The property, called "The Hasselbring Gardens", is owned by Reinhart Hasselbring whose Gardens have been serving many years as the base of a huge florist operation. The property contains the beautiful Hasselbring home, as well as its huge greenhouse. The business is no longer functioning, but Hasselbring and his sister Margaret live in the family home. Hasselbring has no plans of selling the property.

But Hasselbring is a friend to the school. He allows students to make use of the property. He enjoys walking the campus and watching the boys play ball on his property. Hasselbring agrees to rent portion of his property to the school, stipulating that it be used only for athletic activities. Hasselbring also didn't want to make any problems for all the

neighbors that he allowed to plant vegetable gardens on the property.

It worked out. There is enough property for three diamonds and still not bother the vegetable gardens. Till the day he died, Hasselbring continued to come over and watch the games. After his death in 1962,

the property passes on to his sister Margaret who continues to rent the property to the school. In her will, she directs her heirs to sell the property to GMI.

It is 1963 - the Building Committee immediately begins planning for the new property. A Student Activities Building, a new library, a conference and classroom building, space for athletic fields, tennis courts and more. The plan is modified now that it is possible to acquire the rest of the property between Garden Street and Chevrolet.

This allows for the Student Activities Building to be repositioned to the

corner where it dominates the corner of Chevrolet and University Avenues. An award winning architectural building becomes the busiest structure of the campus. Just lucky for our side Reinhart Hasselbring was such a big baseball fan. Garden Street is gone from this side of the river. Think of it this way, Hasselbring's gardens and all the neighbors corn fields were turned into a ball field and you know what they say - "Build it and they will come."

~ C. SNYDER



THE HUGE HASSELBRING Greenhouse was located on the old Third Ave.

America's Best Colleges

Kettering University ranks at the top

They did it again! Kettering University, once known as General Motors Institute, has again been highly ranked in "America's Best Colleges" by US News & World Report. Kettering ranks in the Top Five in two

categories and the Top Twenty overall in the United States. It also is selected in a national listing of "Programs to Look For" the only Michigan school to be honored.

The idea for a "car" college started in 1919, when the Industrial Fellowship League of Flint, led by Albert Sobey, created night school opportunities for employees of the Flint factories. They met in the old Copeman Factories - where Northbank Center is today. By 1924, enrollment had increased to over 600 for the four-year cooperative engineering programs. Managerial classes were also initiated under the name of Flint Institute of Technology.

In 1926, General Motors agreed to underwrite the school and extend services to all units of the corporation. The school became known as General Motors Institute - GMI which was a pioneer in cooperative education, unique for its 56 year integral relationship with a single corporation.

Plans were immediately drawn up for a new school adjacent to the Chevrolet complex at Third and Chevrolet Avenues. By April of 1927, the building was available for occupancy. Over the years the building underwent numerous renovations to meet the growing needs of the school. But its beautiful arched front facade remains as a major symbol of the school.

In 1944 the Board of Regents agreed to a five year engineering degree program along with a Business Administration curriculum. On

August 23, 1946, the first class of 18 students graduated marking the true beginning of the University. During the 1950's a degree in Electrical Engineering was added. In 1962 the school was formally accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges.

The 1960's witnessed a great expansion of the school as the campus spread to the south of Third Avenue. A campus center, dormitory, parking deck and ball fields were added to the campus. Minorities and women were accepted to the degree programs for the first time. The first black student was enrolled in 1963 and the first woman in 1965.

The biggest change came in 1982 when the school shifted from GM ownership to become a private college under the GMI/EMI name. The school grew but its success was limited to its GMI name which no longer meant much since the school was no longer affiliated with GM. In 1998, the name was officially changed to honor Charles F. "Boss" Kettering, founder of the General Motors Research Laboratories. Kettering was a true supporter of co-op education.

The campus grew again when the Connie and Jim John Recreation Center was erected in 1995 and four years later, the first phase of the campus center apartments were built. Then in 2004 the newest renovation took place when the old AC/Delphi

Building next to the Student Center became the C.S. Mott Center - a classroom and laboratory building.

Future plans for the highly rated school call for a new Incubator building on Bluff Street, new fraternity houses on University Avenue along with other developments between the Flint River and University Avenue. Also, this year Kettering has begun a Pre-Med Program. In addition to state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, Kettering's cooperative experience will give students an advantage for acceptance into medical schools.

~ DAVID WHITE



BUILT IN 1927, KETTERING'S BEAUTIFUL FRONT ENTRY looks out on the corner of Chevrolet and University. (formerly Third Ave) Over the years the building has undergone numerous renovations but its beautiful arched front facade maintains itself as the major symbol of the school.

Chevrolet Avenue Bridge

Built in 1917 and originally called the Wilcox Bridge - but known to us as the Chevrolet Ave Bridge - carries traffic over the Flint River between Glendale on the south and University Ave on the north. The bridge was demanded by a growing population, as well as the bustling automotive business. To the east of the bridge, where the Begole and Fox Lumber Co. once stood, was now the growing Chevrolet Motors Co. Founded by Bill Durant in 1911, it had become a part of the new General Motors Co. by 1915. During the 20's, Fisher Body also built factories there to serve the Chevrolet Motor Co.

At the time there were only three bridges across the Flint River. The City contracted with Indianapolis engineer Daniel B. Luten and the Illinois Bridge Company of Chicago to build the Chevrolet Ave. Bridge along with five others in the City. Luten was known for his reinforced concrete tied arched bridges which he patented in 1905.

In 1965, the Chevrolet Ave Bridge underwent flood control modifications as the US Army Corps took over the river banks. The river banks on both sides of the river were lined with concrete and the brick street was covered with asphalt.

By the 70's General Motors shifted auto production to new modern plants around the country while the Delphi Division operated the site as parts factories. In 1995 GM began a massive demolition on the site which continued till 2004 when all but one building remained. The one building was transferred to Kettering University and was made into a Chemistry Lab. The plan for the

expansion of Kettering rests on ground contaminants which prohibits construction at this time. But plans call for the property on the south side of the river adjacent to the bridge to become Research Park.

In 1995, thanks to a \$2 million Federal Transportation Aid from Rep. Dale Kildee the old Chevrolet bridge was replaced with a new bridge. Demolition of the historic old bridge took place in 2006. Original elements of the bridge - such as the railing, lighting and original bricks - were used to create a small park near the entrance to the bridge that also salutes the union. A state historical marker will soon be placed in the location.

~ Credit to the Richard Sarchburg Archives.



MEMORIAL TO THE OLD BRIDGE - built on the west bank near the top of the new Chevrolet Bridge, sits a tribute to the lives of the men and women of General Motors. The memorial used lamps and railings from the old bridge as memory of the thousands of cars and tanks built there - as well to salute the historic site of the 1937 Sit Down Strike.

44 years "Down in the hole"

Die Build Plant is the only one working

On March 21, 1966 I hired in as a Die Maker Apprentice at "Chevy in the Hole," embarking on a 44 year career with GM. A Die Maker builds the dies that make the hoods, fenders, roof tops, etc. for cars and trucks. I was hired right away since I had completed classes in Mechanical Technology at Flint Junior College (now Mott Community College).

My first day I was taken to Plant 3, the building that housed the apprentice shop. For the next two years I learned how to operate all of the hi-tech machinery: grinders, lathes, mills, etc. People hear about "slack" workers at GM (and there probably were some) but trust me - we worked very hard in every plant I ever worked in. I also worked two years on the assembly line at Buick and at the end of the day you were beat.

When I was at the Chevy apprentice shop we began to get GMI students to our plant - as you know, Kettering was once GMI. GM had just begun to venture into training students for

management and engineering. It was a new program then.

This was 1966 and there were some 18,000 employees at Chevy in the Hole. We had a blacksmith's shop in Plant 4 and every apprentice would spend two weeks working there. At that time the profession of being a blacksmith was a dying career; for that matter our blacksmith was the last one GM ever had. We also had a heat treat facility next to the blacksmith shop and this too went away.

At that time, Chevy was operating about 12 plants on the site. Maybe more, I can't remember them all. Anyway, that required a lot of workers. We made gas tanks, mufflers, oil pans, grills, pulleys, gear covers, exhaust manifolds, engines, van doors and hundreds of other



Who can forget those days? Factories on both sides of the river turning out cars and men heading out for lunch. And remember Fridays? Pay day - the wives parked at the top of the bridge, lining up to collect the pay check?

products. Seven days a weeks, 10 hours a day was the norm.

Plant 10 which made rocker arms, was so noisy that you could not talk to the person next to you unless you shouted. I would come home exhausted from the noise. I can't believe that today I have good hearing. Plant 10 also made engine pulleys where you had to coat the die with what we called "honey oil." Before you could work on the die you had to try to wipe some of it off which was almost impossible. You ended up filthy!

After two years in the Apprentice Shop, the new Die Plant on the corner of Kearsley and Stevenson Streets was opened and I got to

move much of the die build products over to the new plant. Today, that is the only plant in operation at Chevy in the Hole. It is the Number One Die Plant in GM and in the world for building dies. There is no production or assembly in the plant - just Die Build. Right now there are some 250 skilled trade employees in the plant, with plans to add about 180 more from Pontiac. This is huge for the plant. It is the only plant still in operation - all others are gone. I retired with 44 years effective July 1, 2008.

~ TIM GILES



The factories are all gone. Weeds taking over and Kettering students are the only ones crossing the street. The white buildings top right are the new student housing units. The big white building, top left, is the new C. S. Mott Science Building. Plans are for another Science Building across the street.

Sit downers put... Flint on the map

February 11, 1937 - a day that lives forever in the hearts of the United Auto Workers. It's the day GM recognized the UAW as the bargaining agent for its membership. The bitter "Sit Down Strike" put Chevy-in-the-Hole on the union map forever. On February 1, 1937, the sit downers broad-sided GM with a diversionary tactic at Plant 9. The plan was to take over Chevrolet Ave.'s crucial Engine Plant 4.

The Women's Emergency Brigade kept Police busy at Plant 9 while the strikers secured the vital Plant 4. It was below zero weather and, police set up fire hoses to chase the women away. They turned on the water just as a strong wind came up and blew the water back on the police. Needless to say - they called it off. By that time the strikers had taken over Plant 4 where all Chevrolet engines were produced. Without engines Chevrolet operations nation wide were closed. The long strike was settled. ~ **BOB GILES**

A LONG BITTER STRIKE

There's only a handful of them around - people who lived through those 44 days. People who can testify to what happened 72 years ago, February 11, 1937 at Fisher Body and down in the hole at Chevrolet. There are some of us who have faded memories in the back of our minds. Several Mott Park residents can never forget the "war zone" when the governor called out the Michigan National Guard.

Another remembered the army tents camping on the school ground on Cadillac's Derby Hill. Another remembers machine guns set up at the corner of Chevrolet. It was exciting. It was dangerous. It was like a movie set.

It was a devastating time but the 44 day strike changed working conditions at the factories forever. The first contract was only 400



IT'S 1937 - THE STRIKE IS ON. Thousands of people jam together on top of the hill at Chevrolet and even on the top of the building. ~ Photo, courtesy of Sloan Museum

words, but that one page held the solution called Labor-Management. It changed forever the methods of solving problems. It was a dramatic event that began on December 30, 1936 at Fisher 1 on South Saginaw.

It spread to Chevy-in-the-hole when workers locked themselves in the plants and fought for the right to be represented by a Union. Most of the men did not come out until they marched out of the plants with an agreement after 44 days. It was meant to be just a sit-in, but the strike turned violent.

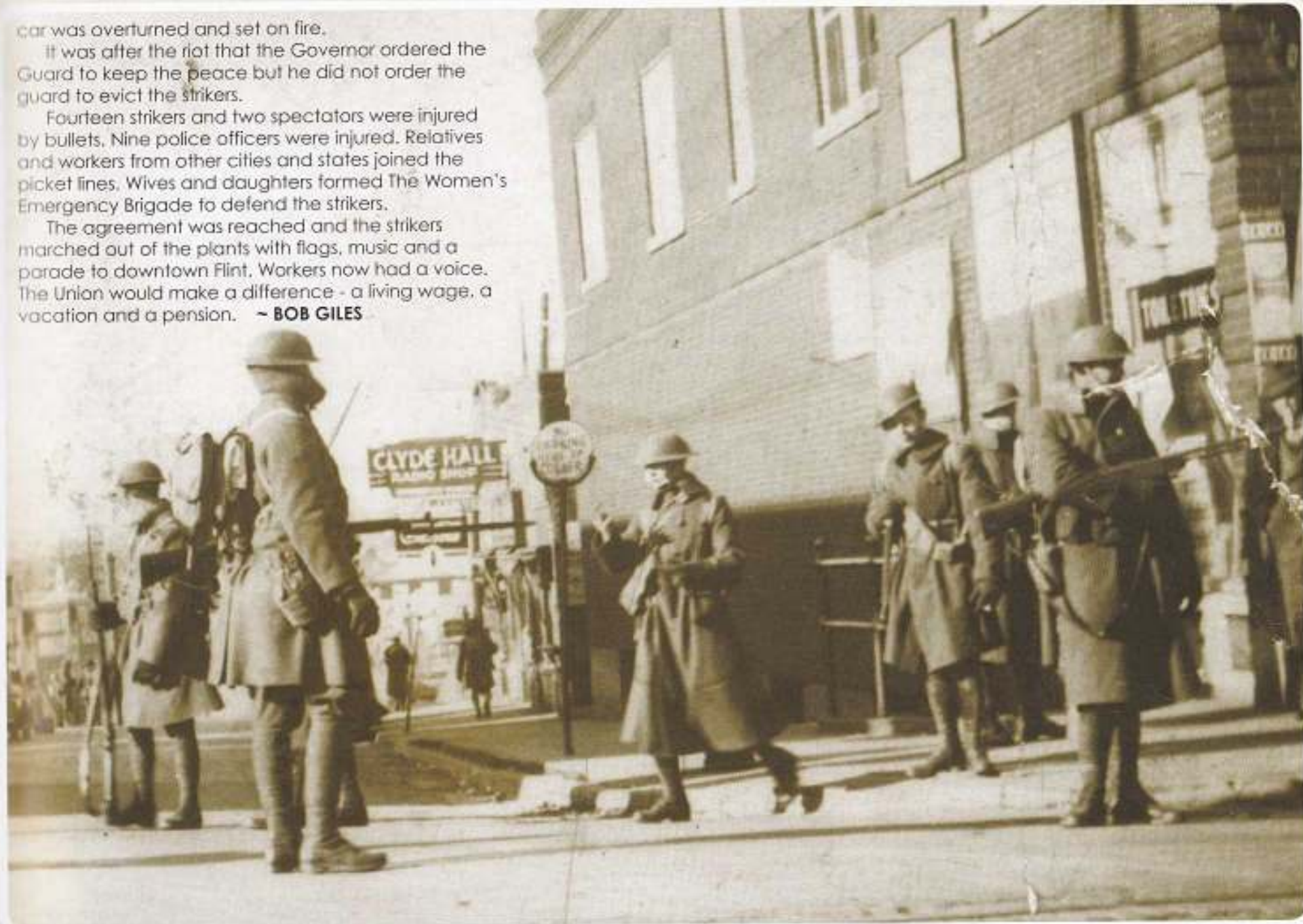
Flint Police attempted to storm Fisher 2 with tear gas. The strikers responded by turning fire hoses on them. The men actually threw car door hinges and other makeshift missiles. Police drew guns and opened fire. Police also threw tear gas at crowds at the end of Chevrolet who threw rocks at them. It was a riot. More excitement when the Sheriff's

car was overturned and set on fire.

It was after the riot that the Governor ordered the Guard to keep the peace but he did not order the guard to evict the strikers.

Fourteen strikers and two spectators were injured by bullets. Nine police officers were injured. Relatives and workers from other cities and states joined the picket lines. Wives and daughters formed The Women's Emergency Brigade to defend the strikers.

The agreement was reached and the strikers marched out of the plants with flags, music and a parade to downtown Flint. Workers now had a voice. The Union would make a difference - a living wage, a vacation and a pension. ~ BOB GILES



TO KEEP THE PEACE THE GOVERNOR CALLED up the Michigan National Guard, seen here on Chevrolet Ave.

Old Calvary

A peaceful place

Old Calvary ignores the traffic of Ballenger Highway - it is a quiet place. The lilacs are in bloom, geraniums and petunias grow amongst dusty artificial flowers. Birds sing and flutter in the huge old trees that have been there since it was established with the first burial in 1847. There is not much traffic or visitors here since the Diocese opened New Calvary on Flushing Road in 1925.

But go look for it. "Old Calvary," Flint's original Catholic burial place, is still open for ceremonies. Drive in and take in this final resting place of some of Flint's pioneer Catholic families - families who immigrated from faraway Ireland, Canada, France, Italy, the Slavic nations, Germany and the Middle East. In this historic place you might find the graves of some of your relatives along with people such as James Hurley (Hurley Medical Center) and Frank J. Manley, director of Flint's Community Schools and don't miss the monuments to the Daly family - the first Mott Park settlers who donated the property to the Church in the 1840's.

The six acres are two and half miles from downtown Flint. Originally, the entrance to the cemetery was off Flushing Road.

It cut through several blocks to Chatfield St. In 1951, with many new homes being built in the area, Father Mayotte asked for a new entrance on Ballenger Hwy to be opened for easier access into the cemetery.

In the center of the cemetery you will find "Priests Hill" - a large Celtic cross that marks the grave of Father Charles DeCeuninck, founder of St. Michael's who died in 1869. Also the graves of Msrg. Walter Mehm, pastor at St. John Vianney for many years, Rev. Dennis Mulchay, Msgrs. Earl Sheridan, Henry Mayotte, Timothy Murphy and Father Raymond DuKette, the dean of Black Priests in America, who died in 1980.

Because of its antiquity, Old Calvary is considered an Historic Landmark - once nestled peacefully on the quiet banks of the Flint River, the cemetery is now surrounded by the City of Flint and Flint Township with its heavy hospital traffic, stores and gas stations.

But take an escape - turn into the drive, go down the quiet streets where stately oaks whisper of days gone by as they plead for respect for those who rest beneath this hallowed ground.

NOTES FROM THE BY LAWS - 1876

- ◆ Opening and closing of a grave, \$2
- ◆ No horse teams or yoke of cattle allowed
- ◆ Any person disturbing the quiet will be compelled to leave
- ◆ All bodies must be buried in the forenoon
- ◆ A lot of six graves - \$10

~ Credit to Sloan Museum

Calvary ~ An Historic Church

Layman George Langson saw a need for a church in what was then called "Chevrolet Park" with its 390 homes. The year was 1920 when a few members began meeting in an old cafeteria owned by Chevrolet Motor Company on Third Ave. and Chevrolet. About 30 people attended with Rev. Horace Mallinson presiding.

The meeting was held in this building for a year before moving into a small butcher shop at the corner of Joliet and Perry Streets owned by Modern Housing Corporation. Now in charge was Rev. Mallinson who purchased the first parsonage at 950 Chevrolet for \$4,500. A year later they bought a lot at the corner of Woodbridge and Bagley Streets for \$3,600 and that's where the church was built. On October, 1923 the Bishop dedicated the new church which enjoyed a revenue of \$1,300. Four years later the church budget was up to \$6,500.

The church just kept growing and by June 1954, when Walter Saxman was pastor, the church underwent an extensive building program at a cost of \$145,000. But they weren't done yet - not by a long shot. By October 1976 the church had bought and took down a total of ten houses as a huge million dollar rebuilding program, which included the beautiful new sanctuary, social hall, kitchen, nursery, kindergarten and parking lot.

Calvary saw the arrival of Rev. Dorraine Snogren and his family in June, 1968. He continued to oversee and continue the growth of the church for 23 years. The present pastor, Rev. Ray McGee, arrived in Mott Park in June of 2004.



**Pastor Ray & Sharon
McGee**

CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH "Part of the Mott Park Neighborhood"

Over 85 years ago a few workers at the Chevrolet Plant, not far from the Mott Park neighborhood found that they were in need of spiritual care, fellowship and growth. Out of this was formed a group that met in the cafeteria of the factory which soon grew to become the Calvary Methodist Church.

From these humble beginnings a church grew that continues today to meet both the needs of the membership as well as the needs of the community. While the "roots" of Calvary's membership continues to be with Mott Park, the membership also includes many from the surrounding communities, making a wonderful mix of people to care for one another while they share God's love to others within the city of Flint.

During the past few years, Calvary UMC has found itself involved in the mission of offering to help repair or "makeover" homes for residents within the areas. Our hope and dream is that by doing this, we are offering help and hope to those that we meet. In doing so, we also find ourselves "back at our roots" of trying to find ways to meet the needs for spiritual care, fellowship and growth ... the very things that caused a group of people to begin meeting together over 85 years ago.

In these times of challenge and difficulty, Calvary UMC along with its Mott Park roots continues to be a shining example to people everywhere of what it means to be a community and neighborhood. Our prayer is that the Mott Park Neighborhood Association will continue to be a significant part of the vitality and hope for the future of our city and that Calvary UMC will continue to be a part of it.

~ PASTOR RAY MCGEE

St. John Vianney Catholic Church Starring Clark Gable...

It was December 14, 1940 when the Catholic Diocese of Lansing purchased the city block at the junction of Chevrolet and Bagley and Blair streets from General Motors Housing Corporation. Nine days later the church bought the house at 423 Weller Street for use as a rectory. Baptisms and confessions took place at the rectory. Weddings and funerals at St. Michael's. The house on Weller St. still faces Mott Park playground and is known as the "Pillar House."

Bishop Joseph Albers decreed the new parish of St. John Vianney would encompass the territory north of the Flint River and west of Dupont - including portions of the existing St. Matthew and St. Michael parishes.

In those days, it cost 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children to go to the movies. And at this time - February 2, 1941 - the Della Theatre at Welch Blvd. and Dupont Street was showing the blockbuster movie "Boom Town", starring Clark Gable, Spenser Tracey, Claudette Colbert and Hedy Lamarr. But that same morning the first mass for St. John Vianney was held in the same Della Theatre.

Frank Geary worked at Chev. Manufacturing, he also ushered Masses which were held at 6 a.m., 11 a.m., and 12 p.m. The church altar was left on stage behind the movie screen, but Father William Flanagan, the first pastor, brought everything else in his car. Around noon, they started the popcorn and the smell wafted into the theatre.



ST. JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC CHURCH opened it's doors for the first time **March 21, 1942.**

There were some children who hid in the theatre to avoid paying admission.

The Architectural firm of Donaldson & Meier from Detroit designed and constructed the parish house, as well as the two-level church, 108' long by 68' feet wide. The ground-breaking was held August 15, 1941 and the corner stone was placed on November 2, 1941. The first Catholic mass expressed was on March 21, 1942.



THE DONOVAN-MAYOTTE SCHOOL THRIVES

Located right on the border of the Mott Park neighborhood, St. John Vianney Catholic School opened its doors on September 23, 1948 to 505 students in Kindergarten to 8th grade. The school was built under the direction of Monsignor Henry Mayotte, the pastor of St. John Vianney Parish. It was staffed by seven Sisters of St. Joseph and three Lay teachers.

In September 1951, twenty-nine students enrolled in the High School. By the time the new building was complete in February 1955, there were 219 students in grades ninth thru twelfth. Enrollment peaked at 1,218 in 1962.

With the opening of Powers Catholic High School, the 59 seniors in the Class of 1970 were the last graduating class from St. John Vianney. But the elementary school - now named Donovan-Mayotte Catholic School - continues to serve kindergarten to 8th grade.



PROCESSIONS OF COMMUNICANTS gather on the lawn of the church, a lost tradition.

THE BIG DAY *First Holy Communion*

- One of the biggest days in the life of Catholic children. You will never forget the white dresses and veils for the little bride's of Christ, and a white prayer book with a white rosary. The boys looked great in new dark blue pants, white shirts with a white tie. Then lining up to enter the church while parents snapped pictures and the organ played "On The Day Oh Beautiful Mother." The solemn march into church is a scene etched in stone to Catholic families everywhere.

They called it...

"The Mott Park Swing"

By Doug Mintline, Sports Editor

(as published in the Flint Journal, 1954)

I'll always remember the summer of 1939 when I think about Freddie Lawson.

My family had just moved to Flint from Traverse City. Our house on Thomas Street was only a four iron from Mott Park Golf Course.

Mott Park was a natural setup for my brother, Bob and me. We were kids and we liked golf. Freddie liked kids. So we spent a lot of time with him on the course. There were many kids around Mott in 1939. Freddie used to let us play without paying if we promised not to get in the way of the grown-ups. We used to pick up bottles and shag balls to make it legal.

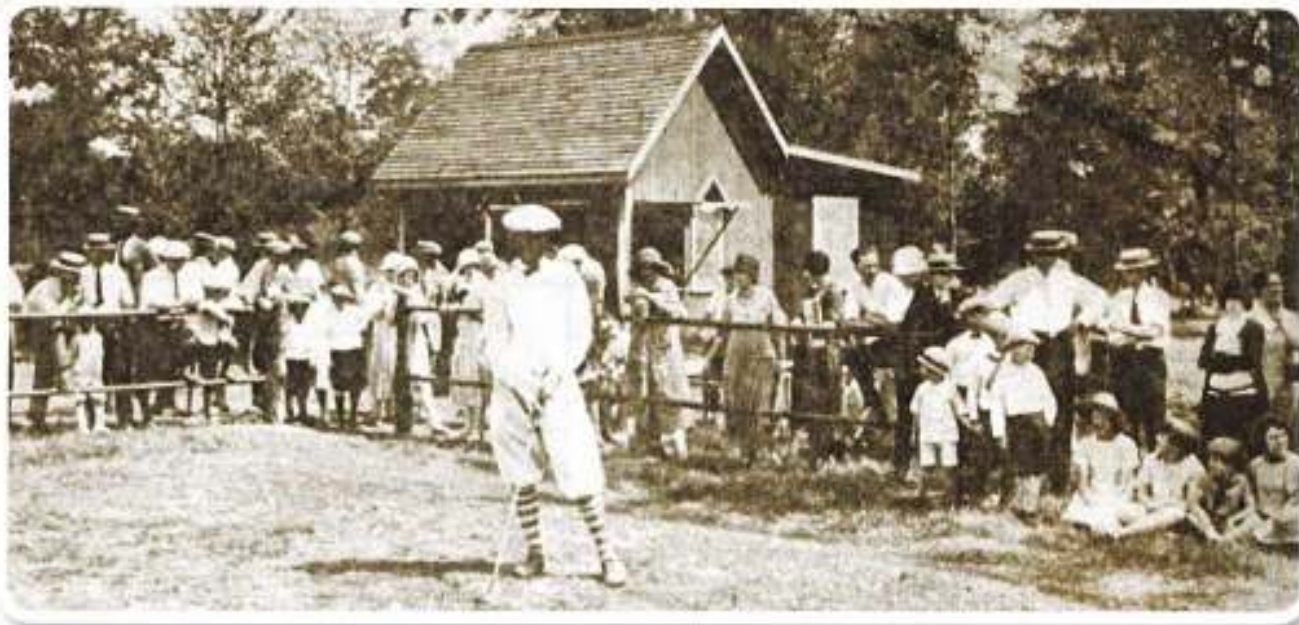
But it wasn't the playing for nothing I remember. Rather it was the way Freddie made sure we learned what he called, "The Mott Park Swing."

"If you'll be down there by the bench at 2 o'clock and keep quiet you will learn how to hit a golf ball," he said many, many times. Then he'd return to the practice tee in front of the bench with a grown-up paying pupil.

A half an hour later, Lawson would release his pupil and turn to us and ask, "there now boys, did you learn anything?"

I know now that he was teaching us. Once when I was hooking the ball and told Freddie and then he devoted a good time of the next lesson (with the paying pupil) on how to keep from hooking.

In the next 15 years I was privileged to get to know Freddie better. Each year I became more aware of how many little things Freddie did to help golf and golfers. But my fondest memory of him will always be that summer in 1939 when I learned the "Mott Park Swing."



JUNE 20, 1925 - THE FIRST BALL AT MOTT PARK GOLF COURSE

This photo catches for all time Golf Pro Fred Lawson hitting the first ball on the new Mott Park Golf Course near what he called "the shack." Don't you love those knickers and striped socks!! Lawson loved the game and passed on his legacy to thousands and thousands of local golfers. Retiring in 1953 after 29 years as Golf Pro at Mott Park and Swartz Creek, his many fans who appreciated the man who did so much to develop Flint golf, presented Fred and his wife Betty with a trip to the British Open being held that year in Carnoustie, Scotland. For Lawson, it was "going home in style". He had learned the game from his father in that "holy land" for golfers. One of the good guys - Fred Lawson died a year later.

MOTT FOR GOVERNOR



The Mott Park Golf Course was named in honor of Flint Philanthropist Charles Stewart Mott, who ran for Governor on the Republican ticket in 1920. The narrative (right) was part of his campaign.

Charles S. Mott for Governor

Republican Primaries
August 31, 1920

Ex-Mayor of Flint; Business Man and Industrial Execution; served in two wars; owes no political debts

Born June 2, 1875, in Newark, N. J. Graduating of Stevens' Institute of Engineering, Hoboken, N. J., 1897; Ganner's Mate U.S.S. Yankee, U.S.N.; enlisted man in New York State Militia six years; enlisted man during entire Spanish-American war; joined Weston-Mott Company, 1900; made General Manager of the company, 1907; married - has two daughters and one son; elected Mayor of Flint, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1918; commissioned Major U.S. Army, in charge of motor production, Detroit district, World War I.

Retired from active management Weston-Mott company, 1912, giving up \$25,000 a year job to devote whole time to city at \$300 per year; president Industrial Savings Bank; vice-president Michigan Finance Corporation, director General Motors Corporation.

Progressive in business and politics; trained executive used to large affairs and the economical handling of business; raises Holstein cows and O. L. C. hogs; interested in agriculture. A man who has made an honest success of his private and public career.

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623 St. Clair St. • By Earl Brandon

Remembering his neighbors



EARL (also called Bill) BRANDON, 93, now lives in Flushing. A cancer survivor, he is an active volunteer for the McLaren Cancer Institute.

I was ten years old when the Brandon family became the first family in the new section of Mott Park. It was 1926 and my parents William and Emma came to Flint from Tennessee. Our uncle's family followed the next day. They bought 619 St. Clair. Then the Blankenship family followed at 2008 Third Ave. My Dad hired into Chevy-in-the-hole. He retired at 65 and passed away a year later.

All over the neighborhood we could see construction of new houses beginning to be completed and families moving in - the Filers, Leukens, Coe, Rosebush, Turnbolls, Hollendahls, Neely, Mills, Whites, Davis and Pfaffs were all on St. Clair Street.

Around the corner, the O'Neill's, Sarks, Fahlman's, Riles, Collins were on Third Avenue. The influx of families were pouring onto Dickinson, Frank and Nolen, Monteith, Cartier, Dougherty and Dupont.

Also on the other side of the "gulley" as it was called then, the tennis courts were being built near Thomas St., Marquette and Weller Streets. I was fortunate to peddle the Detroit NEWS and the Detroit TIMES in this growing subdivision and I formed a lot of friendships, some of which still exist. I met a girl who lived on Thomas Street - Betty Steffen. We met on the tennis courts and we married in 1940. We will be celebrating our 68th Anniversary this year. We have three children spread around the country. There were many other marriages of Mott Parkers.

I mentioned the Blankenship family of Third Avenue - that home is still occupied by Helen Blankenship, a member of the original family. (Probably the only resident that can make that claim.) All of us who grew up in that area were lucky enough to have summer sports (tennis and golf) and in the winter, the hills of the Golf Course were available for sledding.

Shortly after we moved into Mott Park, GMI was built. It has really expanded since then. The original building is at the corner of Third



EARL on the stilts in front of 619 St. Clair plays with his sister Ethel and brother Bob. - circa 1920s. Earl made the stilts from scrap lumber left by the carpenters.

Ave and Chevrolet. The other business from that time period was a gas station, cleaners, barber shop and a grocery store east of the gas station.

GMI now called Kettering, the Student Activity Building sits where such places as the Betty Jane Cafe (a bar) and Freeman's Drug store - both popular hang-outs for students and teachers alike. Betty Jane's was in the old bank that closed during the Depression.

Long forgotten is the fact that GMI had football and basketball teams. The Depression caused abandonment of varsity teams. They had a cross town rivalry with Flint Junior College (now Mott Community College). I was the Ball Boy and Water Boy for these teams that were coached by "Had" Kinley.

Longfellow Jr. High was also built during the Mott Park construction period. And most of the Mott Park students attended that school. Also none of us can forget a popular hamburger shop (and later on beer spot) located on Chevrolet near Longfellow. I graduated from Flint Central in 1934. I worked at Fisher Body 2 for 37 years.

Before Mott Park, there was Chevrolet Park which consisted of Dupont, Joliet, Cadillac, Bagley and Perry which was built a few years prior to Mott Park. I remember the names of the original Mott Parkers - Bob, Pete and Mary Blankenship; John, Elmer, Lloyd, David and Marion Coon; R.J. Smith; Don Rennie; Ed and Duane Faulman; Dick Ponsetto; Ray Elliott; Beverly and Larry Stedman; the Bickerts; Hendersons; Saunders; Walters; Browns; Harris; Petersons; Connereys; Lyttles; Thorpes; Barnetts; Wenzels; Bishops; Merediths; Schulzes and Gadberrys.

2008 West Third Avenue • By Helen Blankenship

"I have lived in Mott Park for 59 years..."

I have lived in Mott Park for 59 years. In 1949 I married Pete Blankenship who lived at 2008 West Third Avenue. It was the house he grew up in and lived in till his death in 1996. We raised seven children there on Third Avenue. They all attended St. John Vianney school and five graduated from Powers High School.

I was Helen Beattie when I graduated from Nursing school in '45. My future husband was serving in England and France as a Corporal in the United States Army. We were married in 1949 and moved into the family house to take care of his widowed mother.

His parents, Grace and Alverass Blankenship, purchased the house in Mott Park for \$6,000 in 1926 from Modern Housing Corporation. They were able to keep it during the Great Depression by paying as little as \$5 a month. Pete finally was able to pay off the house just months before we were married in 1949.

His father worked in the Tool Crib at Chevrolet until he was side lined by a stroke. It was said that it took three men to replace him. His father died in 1942. And Pete, who had taken off work to take care of his father, now joined the Army.

His mother had been instrumental in getting him into the apprenticeship program at Chevrolet. She talked to the General Superintendent about Pete. He rode his bicycle from Central High School to Chevy in the Hole for the interview. He was 17 years old when he began his apprenticeship and also became the sole support of the family making \$18 a week. He also had a sister Mary Virginia and younger brother Bob.

After the war, he started back in the die apprenticeship program at Chevrolet where he worked for 45 years. He was only 18 when he started at the shop and always remembered being stopped by the police from going to work during the Sit Down Strike.

During his teen years Pete played hockey and one year was named All City Goalie. He always followed the game and was so proud when



Helen and Pete Blankenship

our son Bill was named captain of the Powers Hockey team in '73. Our children are scattered in seven states. Only Ginny is settled in Davison, working as a nurse for McLaren Home Care. Mary Grace lives in Chicago, Betsy in Florida, Ann in Wyoming, Bill in Massachusetts, Peter in Washington state and Matthew in Virginia.

It's great to hear the stories Pete's friends tell about all the skating at the park, golfing everyday and sledding on the hill where our kids did the same thing. We loved the woods across the street where we watched the "Victory Gardens" growing during the war with the big "Hasselbring Chimney"

overlooking it all. Then it was sad to watch them take it down to build the GMI dorms.

I remember hearing Pete talk about cutting the grass at the Hasselbring Green House. Owner, Mr. Hasselbring would throw away piles of flowers, and the kids would pick them up and take them home. I recall the huge line of lilac bushes that started on Third Ave and went to Garden Street - a whole block. It was beautiful. The lilacs and Garden Street are all gone now.

Even though I was not raised in Mott Park, I have loved living here and have met many good friends. There's no place else I'd rather live than here.



Pete with his sister Mary Virginia and younger brother Bob.



The Blankenship home on 2008 West Third Avenue.

Meet my mother ~ She's 103



MOTT PARK'S OLDEST neighbor - Loreta Smith at her 102nd birthday.

When we first moved to Cartier Street I was too young to play outside on the dirt street. I can remember the horse drawn milk wagon and the milk being put on the porch. The garbage man would go to the backyard - carry the garbage to a truck on the road, empty it and then carry it back to the backyard. ~ That was 80 years ago!

In a few years the road was paved and lots of neighbors moved in. We could roller skate and play hop scotch. Also we could ride our bicycles up and down the street. I was lucky

to have a girl neighbor my own age so I didn't have to play alone.

When I started school at Durant School on Third Avenue (it's now Durant Tuuri Mott) and Kettering was GMI - General Motors Institute. It was only one small building. Instead of walking down Cartier to Dupont and then Third Ave to go to school, I used to cut across GMI's big field. Sometimes it was weedy and muddy and in the winter the snow was up to our knees but that didn't bother us. On the Chevrolet side of GMI was a large hill we could slide down from the top to almost where we walked to school.

There wasn't much traffic on Cartier and Dickenson so we could ride our bikes all over the neighborhood. I remember one time I was trying to show off to some GMI students - there weren't any girls going to school then - just all boys. Anyway, I pedaled up the street toward them without holding the handles. I hit a big stone, lost control and fell off my bike! They ran over to help me get back on - I sure got their attention didn't I!

When we got tired of playing, we would sneak around to the back yards and pick cherries and apples off the neighbor's trees and have a party.

When my mother and I went downtown, we would take the Third Avenue trolley and ride for 10 cents. The end of the line was at Chevrolet and Dupont. The trolley would just go back on the same tracks it came on only going backwards. Other than that we walked everywhere we wanted to go.

I walked to Longfellow School all the time too, but by the time I went to Central High School, transportation was a lot better with cars and buses. When I went to work at Chevy in the Hole, sometimes I took a taxi to work and it cost 25 cents to go from Cartier to the Chevy. At that time Mott Park was just tennis courts. I lived there for 21 years when I got married sixty years ago, then I moved away.

My mother Loreta Smith is 103 and still has her house on Cartier. The house is still in good condition. The walls are all plaster not dry wall and we have no trouble with anything inside. She is in a nursing home right now but hopes to go back to Cartier St.

Of course the cherry trees and the apple trees are gone and so are a majority of our neighbors. GMI is now Kettering. It fills up the whole field we used to cut through (and girls are now going to GMI) - but my memories still linger there and go back to a simpler life at one time.



LITTLE MAXINE sits in a wagon in the front yard before paved streets.

"A beautiful place to raise our children..."



ISOBEL AND EARL GRAVES watched their Gerholz house being built in Mott Park 62 years ago.

We are Earle and Isobel Graves who live at 908 Fremont Street in Mott Park. We moved into our brand new house in November 1947. We had the opportunity to watch it being built by Gerholz Realty. We moved from a tiny house on Knapp Avenue off Corunna Rd to this new subdivision. It was a dirt road and a lumpy ungraded clay yard that was a challenge to turn into grass.

We have four children. Kenny was three years old, Mary fourteen months, and Jimmy a month old when we moved into our home. Cathy our youngest came along seven years later. The families around us were young couples with small children, we knew everyone. Some great neighbors were the Tulpans, Saxons, Cafmeyers, Hutchesons, VerWests, Prestons, Turners, Foxworthys, and Eufingers. Dr. Turner still lives in Mott Park, down on Nolen Drive.

When we moved here we didn't own a car. We'd walk down to the corner of Barley St. and Chevrolet, to catch the bus that went downtown. Our children found it very convenient to ride the bus to Central High School. It was also great to have Knob Hill grocery store nearby. The town houses and apartments on Orchard Lane hadn't been built yet, and since we lived so near to that empty field, it was very handy and we could run across to the store. We also shopped at several stores at the corner of Flushing and Chevrolet. There was a drug store, Charm Beauty Shop, Shuirman's Hardware, McKay's grocery, Buttercup Bakery and a shoe repair shop.



FOUR CHILDREN make up the Graves family - Kenny, Mary, Jimmy and baby Cathy. (circa, 1954)

In the winter time we would make a skating rink in our backyard. We built the snow up around the edges and flooded the yard with the hose that we haul up and down the basement stairs each night so it wouldn't freeze. The rink was a very popular spot for all the children in the neighborhood. A friend of the family who grew up with our kids visited us and remarked that the most fun she had a child was right here in our backyard.

Living here in Mott Park for 62 years has given us so many happy memories. It has been a beautiful place to raise our children, and we're happy to be still living here.

423 Weller Street • By Susan Arnould

They call it the “Pillar House”

Here we were, newlyweds, searching for our first home. I was born in Pennsylvania and my husband grew up in Flint. We were both unfamiliar with the Mott Park area.

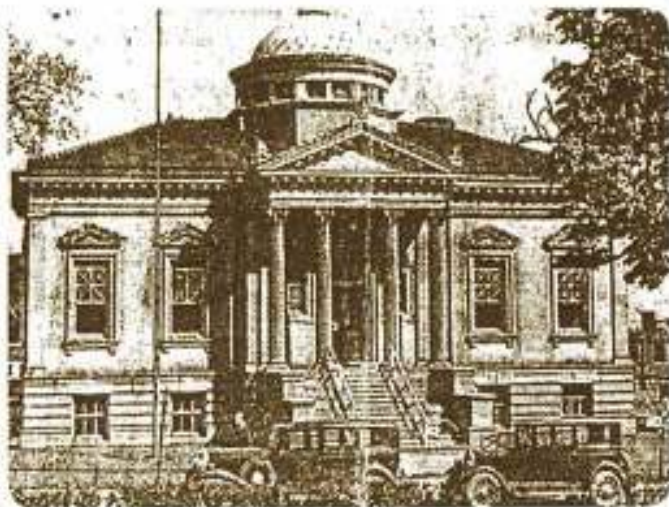
As we turned the corner, there it was, a lovely white house with four beautiful white pillars on the front porch. My husband, who is an historian, learned that the pillars were from the historic Carnegie Public Library that was built in 1905 on a hill in downtown Flint. When we found out this amazing history, we were sold! We knew we had to have this house.

The historic Carnegie Library had been torn down in 1958 to make way for a new public library in the College and Cultural area. The pillars were saved and placed on the front porch.

It is exciting to have a piece of history in our front yard. They have brought many conversations with people who have lived in Flint all their lives and remember the old Carnegie Library.

We have found out since we moved here that at one time the house served as a Catholic Rectory until the new church was built for St. John Vianney. Previous owners of the house were Duncan and Mary Ann Tremaine, George and Judy Makranyi (1994-1999), Benjamin and Frances Redokop (1999-2006) and we moved into the house in 2006.

ALL THAT WAS PRESERVED from the glorious Carnegie Library were the four pillars. There's no record to date as to what happened to the other gems - such as the dome or the pediments.



AMONG THE BEAUTIFUL HOMES in Mott Park is 423 Weller where the wonderful columns from the historic library dominate the scene.



THE FOUR PILLARS from the historic Carnegie Library were preserved in 1958 as part of the home of Duncan and Mary Ann Tremaine who purchased the pillars for \$25 a piece

and a box of donuts for the crew. Moving the 2-ton pillars some five miles was a major job. The Tremaines had to build a new porch undergirded with special concrete pilings to support the columns. The roof also had to be extended.



2115 Cartier Street • By Carmie Sleva

"I was born in Mott Park"



BABY CARMIE on the porch at 2115 Cartier St.

I have lived in Mott Park my whole life - I was born in 1930 in my parents house at 2115 Cartier. My parents were Vincent and Aurora DeAgostino who bought their house in the 20's. My father came to America to make his fortune in 1909 - he was 15 years old. He worked in New York in various jobs and even served in the US Army during WWI. Then he settled in Michigan.

In 1925 he went back home to Italy to marry my mother. He had written home to find a bride and actually fell in love with the picture of my mother. Her family did not want her to go to America. They lived in the small town of Colle Sannita (near Naples). He was 31, she was 19. Three months later they were married and living in America. They bought their first house on Cartier

St. in Mott Park around 1927. My dad owned and operated his own business, "Rite Way Shoe Rebuilders" on Detroit Street across from the Durant Hotel.

He bought one of the first homes built on Cartier. They had four children, three of us - including me, were born right at home on Cartier. I was born in 1930. I remember walking to school, first Durant, then Longfellow and then I graduated from St. Michael's. My brother Tom went to GMI. Youngest brother Gene started and graduated from St. John Vianney School. My six children all walked to school there too.

Our family was one of the charter members of St. John Vianney and still are parishioners. I have wonderful memories of growing up in Mott Park. We lived in the best place - we knew all our neighbors and made wonderful friends. There was everything to do - in the winter we skated and sledded on the golf course hills. We walked on the trails along the river, played ball and other games in the park. I even took tap dancing and had recitals on a stage in the park.

We endured the Depression, World War II and the Sit-Down Strike. My dad was a great shoe maker and worked hard at his shop - all of us did, including my mother. Then he was literally forced to sell his

building when a real estate company wanted to build another hotel downtown. He was the last one to sell out.

In 1950, I married Steve Sleva and we moved into a house on Flushing Road. Our family grew to six children and we moved to a bigger house on Nolen Drive. Our children were happy playing in Mott Park. We had three girls and three boys: Rori (Wibsen), Debbie (Nicholson), Mary Lou (Olds), Steve, Tom and Mike.

In 1980, my parents sold the house on Cartier because it was too big for them and they bought the house right next door to us on Nolen Drive. It was easy and we were able to help them. My dad lived till he was 94. My mother stayed in the house until she became ill and moved into our house. I took care of her till the day she died at 100. I still miss her and my husband Steve who passed away nearly the same time.



CARMIE IN THE MIDDLE, her brother and sister get their picture taken in a goat cart that traveled through the subdivision.



AURORA and VINCENT on the side of the house on Cartier in the 40's.

2429 Norbert Street • By Betty Stewart

"It was good to live near the park"

Beth, our youngest daughter was two months old when we moved to Mott Park and Donna our oldest daughter was three - that was fifty years ago. Both girls walked to school at Longfellow and they came home for lunch every afternoon. Their lunch hour was an hour and half.

As a parent I loved having the girls come home in the middle of the day. We would have lunch together - generally peanut butter and jelly and a cup of Campbell's tomato soup. Both girls went to Longfellow till 10th grade when they transferred over to Central High School.

Both girls were in the Girl Scout troops that met in school or generally at one of the neighbor's homes. The troops mainly consisted of neighbor children.

It was so good to live near the park. When the girls were young there was a person hired by the city to supervise and plan games, trips and excursions. One of my girls could care less about it. But the other one could hardly wait until it was time to go to the park and play. Then come home to eat lunch and run back to the park. Being near the park was wonderful. Often they would take their badminton set to the park and set it up there instead of our yard.

Norbert Street was a great place to live because there were children of all ages and they seemed to all get along well. The girls always



BETH AND DONNA STEWART play in front of their house on Norbert St.

**SOME OF THE
neighborhood
children gather
for a picture.**



had someone to play with. And while the children played, the young mothers would get together and they became good friends.

A couple of people in the next block got permission to block off the street and we had a neighborhood street party. That was great fun. Sometimes on holidays the neighbors would have a potluck. That was a fun experience and helped us get to know our neighbors better.

Several winters were really snowy and school was cancelled. The neighbors got out to help shovel out driveways and clean up the walks. Everyone was helping and to this day my girls talk about that. It is only fair to say that living in Mott Park those years were good. Everyone watched out for their neighbors and everyone was friendly. I remember how people would watch out for each others kids. If someone was ill or maybe a death in the family, we would go door to door and collect donations for flowers.

I remember the fruit and vegetable truck and all the women would come out and buy from him. I remember home delivery of milk and great ice he'd give us. It was round with a hole - you could put your finger through it and then suck on the ice.

I remember going outside and you always had someone to play with. We could stay out till the street lights came on. We all walked to school and back. There was a man on Thomas Street that had a water fountain we could all get a drink from it.

I remember people helping each other during the big snow storm and how dad had to walk home from work. And I also remember the girl across the street who had a VW Bug and we all picked it up and moved it so the snow plow could come down the street.

729 Cadillac St. • By Jim Butler, Flushing resident

"I grew up on Derby Hill..."

I was born April 14, 1923 in the north end of Flint. I remember when I was just 4 years old and my mother took me on a long street car ride from Bishop Ave. to Third Ave. We got off at Cadillac Street and walked north to 729. The house was just being finished. It was one of about five being built at that time. I remember the basements being dug with a team of horses pulling a scoop.

I grew up there and remember that my father, Raymond W. Butler worked at Chevy, Plant 4. Not long after we moved, the Depression set in and there are no fond memories of it. Nobody in the area had a car and hundreds went back to Missouri and Arkansas. Block after block of houses on Joliet, Monteith and Cartier were empty. I know because they became our playground.

I remember going with my Dad to the Modern Housing office on Chevrolet at Flushing Rd. and asking if he could pay the interest only for that month. He kept his house. God only knows how our parents kept things going in those days. I was the baby in the family - with an older brother Doug and sister Dorothy.

Early memories are of FDR becoming president, creating the CCC, Social Security and a gradual recovery from the Depression. Things must have been getting better because Christmas of 1935 was quite an event with great gifts and plenty of food.

Then came 1937 and the Sit Down Strike with Walter Reuther taking over. My Dad was on supervision and his life was threatened three different times. I remember the National Guard camping on the Durant school grounds right across the street from our home. I remember machine guns set up on the corner of Cadillac, Third Ave and Chevrolet - scary times.

On a lighter note, the Soap Box Derby was held on our street. We lived right in the middle of "Derby Hill." The ramp was built at the corner of Gladwin. At first, the race was really run with cars made from crates and boxes with wheels from wagons and baby carriages. Then the fathers got involved and the cars became sophisticated and actually stayed on the

street. I remember cars flying right off the hill.

There were two commercial areas in our neighborhood - one at the corner of 3rd Ave and Chevrolet. GMI was on the northwest corner, a Sunoco station was on the northeast corner

and a row of stores and a bank on the southwest corner. The other area was at Flushing Rd. and Chevrolet. Remember Kelly's Bakery, Shuisman's Hardware, a Bar and best of all - Babe LaBranches "Wimpy's Hamburgs."

For us, the Mott Park Golf Course was just a place to go tobogganing or falling in the river or for catching poison ivy. The bridge across the river was made of 50 gallon drums with a walk way on top. Every spring it washed away and we'd have to go find it.

I remember the summer Ballenger Park opened on the northwest corner of Dupont and Flushing Rd. I remember helping to clear out the brush to create the park. It was a place to play tennis, go skating in the winter to Frank Sinatra music and meeting a girl when the lights weren't shining. I was mostly interested in girls and playing football at St. Mike's. Toward my senior year, I entered the Apprentice School down in the hole. I had to quit because at that time you had to be 18 to be in the program. I was making such good money - \$18 at 40 cents an hour.

Things were going great until that Sunday in December 1941. I walked into Krupps Drug Store and was told that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. We didn't know where Pearl Harbor was but we found out and we also found out it was the end of our life as we knew it. The plants converted from making cars, to making military equipment. And several million of us got to see parts of the world we had never heard of.

I joined the Navy in 1942 and served on a group of islands in the western Pacific known as the Mariannas. It was a great Easter Sunday when we sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and back home. Then it was back working "in the hole". I finished my apprenticeship and began work as a die maker until 1953 when I became a tool salesman. I married a Central grad, Dawne Ward and we have three children.

My parents remained in their house on Cadillac Street until their deaths - my father in 1965 and my mother Dora in 1974. I am sure that we of the "Greatest Generation" gained our strength and insight from the efforts of our parents and growing up in America in a place called Mott Park.



JIM BUTLER AND WIFE Dawne celebrated 66 years of marriage.



THE BUTLER HOUSE at 729 Cadillac St. around 1927 shows Jimmy playing on the porch.

Mott Park was a way of life

Our parents, Robert and Evelyn Gazall, bought their house in Mott Park in 1956. It was located on the corner of Marquette and Altoona Streets. Our parents made several additions to the house as the family expanded to six children.

Growing up in the Mott Park was like no other place. Waking up on hot summer mornings, we headed to the park. During the summer months, Mott Park had "Park Supervisors." They brought arts and crafts, Hula Hoops, games and all sorts of activities that kept us busy all day.

Mary Gazall remembers learning and loving to play "4 Square", always competing for the server spot. There also was the huge sand box where she could create her own magical castles.

Brothers Bob and John Gazall remember riding their bikes down "Dead Man Hill" and the thrill of making it down the hill without wiping out. They loved playing baseball at the diamond and trying to hit a baseball over the hump which divided the baseball field from the playground. They remember hiking on the trails and running through the tunnel and yelling just to hear their echoes.

John remembers the day when the "rocket" came to the park and what a blast it was climbing to the top. Bob always climbed around the top of the rocket - hanging on for dear life.

Roberta remembers bike riding with her friends through the neighborhood up and down the streets. While Rosemary remembers how so many large families made

Mott Park a special neighborhood to live in.

Kathleen enjoyed playing hide-and-go-seek until dark and playing kick ball in the street. She recalls the bells from the ice cream boy's cart as he pushed it down the street and all the kids running outside to get a popsicle.

We all remember the honking of the horn of the fruit man's bus and heading out to the street to see what fresh fruit he had for the day.

We remember playing tether ball for hours and learning how to play

tennis. Crossing the swinging bridge at the golf course was always an adventure, swaying back and forth on the old bridge thinking we were would fall into the river. We also knocked on our friends doors and yelled their names to come out and play.

**"YOU
KNEW
IT WAS
Christmas
when
Dad put
the lights
on the big
tree in the
front yard of
our house."**

For a special treat, our Mother would let us go on our bikes to the golf course club house

where Dorothy would make us the best hamburgers ever. Mom would let us walk to Knob Hill Market or Wood Bridge Market or we'd go to Bowman's Drug store.

During the school year we walked to school and what a big decision it was to either cut through or walk around the park.

Winters were spent sledding at the golf course, building snow forts and ice skating. It was never too cold or too snowy to go out and play. We enjoyed ice skating so much that our Dad braved the cold temperature and made us our own ice pond in the back yard.

We remember how our parents would pile all six of us in the station wagon and head through the streets to look at the Christmas lights. Our neighbors knew the holiday season was upon us when our Dad lit up the big tree outside with lights. It was a magical time.

There was Gerb, the milkman and Andy, the mailman who knew all our names and gave us candy. He listened to the Tiger games as he delivered the mail.

We made lifelong friends and throughout the years we connect with each other. Everyone knew each other and everyone looked out for each other. It was a perfect place to live and raise a family.



Local architect Robert Gazall and his wife Evelyn raised six little Gazalls in their home in Mott Park. Both have since passed away.

Growing up in Mott Park



FOREVER FRIENDS - front, Kim Leonard, back row: Amy Lindman, Jackie Berardo and Kathy O'Rourke.

The year was 1963, the year JFK was assassinated. It was the day, my parents, Thomas and Marilyn Lindman, were moving ten children into the house they had just built on Nolen Drive. I remember my mother telling us to go in and watch the TV. But the only thing on was The Funeral. It may have been history, but we kids didn't go for it. We wanted to explore our new neighborhood.

We had lived on Norbert Street and then Fremont - I was born on Fremont St., next door to the McLogan's, who were my Godparents. My parents built our house on the corner of Nolen Drive and Marquette with six bedrooms - we needed it. There was Mark, Cathy, Jerry, Joan, Tom, Mary, Matt, Amy (that's me), Marilyn, Jim and Ann. That makes eleven children total.

At the time I didn't realize how special this neighborhood was. I remember walking to Kindergarten at Longfellow (St. John Vianney didn't have a Kindergarten yet) with my friends Kim Leonard, Susie Cunningham and Jojo Leoni. It was a long way for five year olds, but the

neighbors looked out for our safety. Some of the best times of

my life - playing with my friends - Kim, Jackie Berardo (they had 10 kids in her family) and Kathy O'Rourke. To this day the four of us have remained best friends. Only Kathy has moved away - but we all still keep in touch.

What a place to grow up. We lived at Mott Park. We took tennis lessons and the Park supervisor had daily activities for us kids. The Library was on the other side of the river, just past the golf course and over a rickety narrow wood bridge. The bridge was over the Flint River and Kim and Kathy would hang upside down from the cross wires. I would get pretty upset with them.

We didn't care about playing golf, but oh did we have fun on the course. We would sit on a hill and watch the golfers who would hit the ball on the hill or in the bushes, then we would run down and get the ball. The golfer would get to the spot and look and look. We'd hide and laugh.

We also had forts on the golf course - four I think. One fort was underground and it got really wet so we decided to go to the trees. The boys in the neighborhood also had a tree fort but they wouldn't allow girls in. So we built our own tree fort - one of our forts was right on the golf course in front of Kim's house. Later, we built another one in front of Kathy's house. We were getting older then and boys were now "allowed." That's where we played spin the bottle for the first time - but the boys didn't want to kiss us - Yet. We did mischievous things - like trying to smoke or drink beer. But you had to get home before the street lights came on or there would be consequences to pay!

In the winter, Mott Park was fantastic. We were just across the street from the sledding hill. There was also an ice rink. The club house was the meeting place for the friends. We



DR. THOMAS LINDMAN AND MARILYN came to Mott Park from Chicago.

could even snowmobile on the course back then. Kim's mother, Nova Leonard, had two snowmobiles and her son Bobby would keep them running for us. It was too fun. Sometimes Bobby would drive the snowmobile and pull us on the toboggan. We'd end up at the club house where a lady named Dorothy who ran the clubhouse would make the best hamburger ever - winter and summer.

Dorothy would let us know when we were out of line. Sometimes she would tell our parents. Years later when I got a job working for Dorothy she reminded me about all the trouble I had gotten into. We had so many great people in the neighborhood everyone watched out for each other. There was a man named Jim Kelly who gave us candy and on Saturdays - bubble gum. He would take some of the kids with him to trips to Niagara Falls or Grand Canyon. I got to go once and we had such a great time.

What a great place to grow up. There were the Guzaks, the Bourquettes, the Dutilis and the McGovern families, Cunningham's, George's and the Davis'. The Peterson family - who made almost everything they had - also had a bunch of kids. We used to go fishing with Pete, my sister Mae and brother Jim. I will always remember that Mrs. Peterson, who was very crafty, made my daughter's baptismal gown.

2110 Cartier Street • By Jackie Berado Hamper

"We had such an awesome childhood..."

My name is Jackie Hamper and I grew up on 2110 Cartier Street. I was the eighth child out of ten born to Rose and Dominic Berado who picked out their house in Mott Park. I have so many memories of growing up in Mott Park.

I started school at Saint John Vianney and it was a wonderful experience. One of the best things about going to St. John's was that it was close enough to walk there. When I got older I realized just how special it was. I would meet my friends Amy Lindman, Kim Leonard and Kathy O'Rourke at the park and we would all walk to school together. We walked everywhere. One of our favorite things to do was go skating at Ballenger Park. We would have a blast walking there and back. We would go to Ballenger for what they called 10:00 to 1:00. They had bands and we would listen to music and skate till late. Then we would walk home, that is when it was safe for kids to be out late.

We never even thought about our safety - it was just a fact. Also,

another winter activity was sledding at Mott Park Golf Course. That is one of the best hills in Flint and we lived so close. My girlfriends Amy and Kim lived right across the street so when we got cold we would go there to warm up. We would also go to the club house and get hot chocolate.

Dorothy worked there the whole time we were growing up and even after we grew up and moved away. My dad golfed there and she would tell him stories about what hellion kids we were. Of course my dad already knew that. We also would walk to Burger Chef on Ballenger Highway and have a burger and fries for less than two dollars. Underhill's was just across the street and we would go get candy, Bowman drugs was on Chevrolet and we would go there

for candy and gum too. Boy those were the good old days. Long gone forever.

By far the best thing about growing up in Mott Park area is the friendships that I formed as a child. I am still best friends with Amy, Kim and Kathy and I believe it is because we had such an awesome childhood hanging out at the park that glued us together forever.



ROSE AND DOMINIC BERADO raised ten children in their Mott Park home. The whole family celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary. Always together - Rose died Dec. 28, 2002; Dominic followed her, Jan. 30, 2003



THE BERADO FAMILY added an extension to their house so they could accommodate ten children - Nan, Jeanette, Thomas, Patricia, Tony, Dominic, Paula, Jackie and a set of twins, Matt and Michelle.

"I'm living in Peggy McWhirter's house..."

My house was built in 1928. In the same year Herbert Hoover was elected President. A new car sold for \$495. A loaf of bread was 9 cents. A gallon of milk was 56 cents (delivered to your house in a horse drawn buggy) and a gallon of gas set you back 12 cents. Times sure have changed.

I am the fifth owner, having bought this house in the fall of 2003. I retired in 2002 and lived in Nebraska for a year. I came to Flint one week in August and looked at fourteen houses in three days. This particular house felt good to me so I made an offer. The offer was accepted and it has been an awesome adventure ever since.

I have wonderful neighbors who have taken me under their wing and made me feel welcome. They have been my navigator in learning my way around the city. What restaurants to go to, short cuts to the airport, the vet, doctor and grocery stores. I feel like I have lived here forever.

Part of my discovery process has been to learn about the lady who owned this home before me. Her name was Peggy McWhirter she bought this house in 1950. It's almost like I knew her but in truth I never met her. I do know that she was a vital force in the formation of the Genesee County Society for Crippled Children in January of 1944. Peggy and C.S. Mott developed this organization into what later became known as the Easter Seal Society located on University Drive near the Durant Tuuri Mott School.

Some of my favorite things about living here is sitting on the porch in

the summer and listening to children at play. The maple trees lining the street provide shade in the summer and glorious color in the fall. What a wondrous place to live.

I also learned that Peggy collected tea cups and dolls and had a terrific hat for every suit in her closet. At 97 years young she was still driving her own car. Peggy also was an avid gardener. My neighbors tell me she would be pleased with what I have done to her yard.



PEGGY McWHIRTER dedicated her life to others. She was involved in many volunteer programs, but was known for her work for 37 years with the Crippled Children's Society which was renamed the Easter Seal Society. She passed away August 5, 2002 at the age of 97. Pat Seals bought her home in August of 2003.

2307 Monteith Street • By Mary Smith

Remembering our neighbors

We moved to Mott Park and bought a four bedroom house in Mott Park in 1962. The house had been built in 1927. Unknown to us there were three other houses on our block all purchased in a six month span. We all became good neighbors and our children played together. The interesting thing about this scenario is that we are all still here. The children all grew up and make their own lives, but the friendships still remain - 46 years and we are still friends. We all love Mott Park.

Meet the neighbors:

- 1) My husband Jim worked at Consumers. We have three children and lived at 2307 Monteith.
- 2) Vera and Dom Whiteside lived at 2302 - they have four children. He retired from GM. Dom recently passed away, but Vera still lives there.
- 3) The Corrells lived at 2314 Monteith. They have four children. One of their daughters, Jann bought a house next door to her mother. She married Tom Alex. Tom's father is the Tom Alex who owned Mott Park's Knob Hill Market. Young Tom operates a store at the Flint Farmer's Market called "Knob Hill Meats."
- 4) Virginia and Dominick Corrado lived around the corner on Cartier. They had four girls. Dom worked for the Flint Journal and passed away nine years ago. Virginia lived here until six years ago when she moved to an apartment.

Between the four couples were fourteen children who walked to Durant Tuuri Mott everyday. At that time, they were dismissed for lunch hour. They walked home for lunch, ate and walked back to school to finish their day. Then walk home. Can you imagine kids doing that today?

Our son Jimmy, was chosen to be the captain of the safety patrol. Their job was to help the students cross the main streets such as Chevrolet and Third Ave. It was an honor and huge responsibility for him.

The kids remember the ice cream truck slowly roaming the neighborhood playing it's tunes, the vegetable man who sold fresh fruit and vegetables, the ice cream socials in the park. The tot lot and the scary walks through the brush on the hill behind the playground.

We all still love our neighborhood.



A WELL MAINTAINED HOUSE IN MOTT PARK SHOWS IT - the Smiths landscaping and vinyl siding on the house in 1986 and a rebuilt front porch with new windows. There's a new front door and last year another new roof.

THE SMITH FAMILY - Jim and Mary with children Debra, Laura and Jimmy in December 1966.



THE BLOCK PARTY - 2001 we got permission to block our street on both ends so we could have a pot luck block party. We had music, story telling, games and just a fun day for about 28 people. Then again in 2008, we had another block party with some of the younger neighbors joining us. Josh Alex played and sang on his guitar and the food was spectacular.

Like a Norman Rockwell Painting

My first awareness of Mott Park was in 1965 when my folks (Manford and Dorothy) purchased the first and only home they ever owned - 857 N. Chevrolet. In 1965, I was working at Buick and had moved out on my own. I spent a lot of time moving in and out of apartments. I would stop over at mom and dad's and go for a round of golf on the course. I didn't travel through the neighborhood as the streets were so confusing.

In June of '68 I married Bobbie Convis and bought a house north of Pasadena. I also became an apprentice and moved to Chevy-in-the-Hole. I traveled through Mott Park going to work and to visit my folks. I began playing more golf and joined a men's morning softball league that played on the GMI diamonds on Third Avenue.

Then June of '75 my father passed away and left mom with five children still at home. Bobbie and I began spending more time at mom's house helping out. We had two sons, Eric born in 1965 and Jason in 1972. One beautiful spring day in 1976 we turned onto Blair St. and Granville Auker was putting a "for sale" sign in the yard at 902 Blair St. We stopped, looked and bought the house.

Mott Park became an integral part of our lives. Our boys enrolled at Durant Tuuri Mott. I began walking to work. We could walk to the golf course and so we played more often, even my wife joined a golf league. We loved walking or biking through the neighborhood. We played tennis, baseball in the park and an occasional picnic.

It was an ideal place to live. Grandma, aunts and uncles lived just blocks away. Our boys had many friends. There were swings, a sandbox, and tennis courts, so much to do. They developed their own imagination and made a "whiffle ball stadium" in our front yard. What a great place to raise a family - the boys were nearby and safe.

Coming from the north end of Flint, we had been members of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. I started school there. I graduated from there in 1963. Bobbie and I were married there in 1967. Both boys were baptized there. I was heavily involved in a leadership role. We had a big decision - it was a traumatic step to change parishes. But we made the decision to become members of St. John Vianney. It was a good decision and to this day we are still members. The parish, it is so much of our lives.

At St. John's I led the teen youth group and became youth minister at the church. It was a huge impact on my life. Both boys were in the youth group which gave us time together - it was a natural fit. Our days were busy in the 1980's; the boys attended Longfellow Junior High and took religion classes at St. John's. Then, Northern and Southwestern

Academy.

The year 1987 and with it came a life changing tragedy. On July 24, Eric, our oldest son was killed in a car accident. The aftermath was so tragic. Bobbie and I realized that many of Eric and Jason's friends were having difficulty dealing with his death. They were reluctant to come to our house. We spread the word that Bobbie and I would be at the "Street Light" (a local gathering spot on Dougherty) at 11 pm if anyone wanted to spend some time with us.

The result was simply amazing. Between 75 to 100 people showed up. Some wanted to hug and share stories, others just stood on the perimeter and let the darkness hide their emotion. This emotional gathering is forever etched in my mind. When I drive by the spot it still tugs at my heart.

Bobbie and I talked about the house and all the memories it held for us. In spite of all the great times we had in our house, she could no longer go upstairs to his room. She wanted to move. That was 1990 - so after 14 years of happy and joyous family gatherings and great neighbors, we sold our home and moved to Flint Township. I still miss the view down the hill into the park. I miss walking to work. I miss our neighbors and family. I miss all the memories - good and bad. We still take part in the church and my mother Dorothy McClanahan and my youngest sister live on Chevrolet. I still golf a few times a year and drive through my old neighborhood. It is a part of my life that I will never forget.

To me Mott Park will always be a Norman Rockwell painting on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post.



THE ROLE OF YOUTH MINISTER at St. John Vianney kept Bard and Bobbie McClanahan close to their boys.

Chevrolet Avenue • By Dorothy McClanahan

"It was my 47th and last move..."

It was a big day for us - August 1965, after 21 years of marriage and eight kids we were buying our first home on Chevrolet Ave. in the Mott Park area of Flint. After 23 years in the US Air Force, my husband Manfred "Mac" McClanahan retired from the service. In the service you move frequently. We rented houses, apartments, lived with friends and relatives. So this was a major milestone - it was my 47th and last move.

I remember as we were moving in, a neighborhood kid went by and asked, "Hey, lady got any kids?" I said, "You pick the age, I've got one." And I was expecting number nine. What a wonderful place to raise a family - any time of the year. The kids played outside till it was dark. I never worried.

Most of my kids went to St. John Vianney and we all attended church there. I am still a member of the church and I have been the housekeeper at the rectory for over 40 years. My third daughter works in Kettering's Business Office and my oldest son worked "Down in the Hole."

Our house is located on the block that is by Chevrolet and Woodbridge, Perry and Joliet. In 1965, Woodbridge Market, Les Drug Store occupied the building that faces Joliet. Another building on that block was occupied by the Plumbers Union. Woodbridge Market was owned by Dee and Lee Rainville, who lived on Perry Street. They had two children. They had a small meat counter and they sold Mother's

bread, packaged in white bags with blue letters on it. It was from the Balkan Bakery on Dayton St.

I also remember Les Kinney's drug store because it had a couple

of pool tables. A lot of the older kids hung out there. I recall hearing about a fight where the brawlers used the pool ball for weapons.

The corners of Flushing and Chevrolet were occupied by several businesses. The northeast corner had a gas station. The southeast corner had a dry cleaner. The northwest corner also had a small strip mall and the northwest corner - it housed Herve's Dress Shop, Charm Beauty Salon and Rube's Bar, which was a gathering place for local sports teams.

One day when I was getting my hair done at the Charm Beauty shop, one of the beauty operators told me her grandfather helped build the GM houses on Chevrolet Avenue. She said he told her that at one point, the several boulevards north of Flushing Road were lined with

bathtubs for installation in the houses. That must have been a sight.

When I look around Mott Park area, I'm reminded of a song - "Those were the days my friend, we thought they'd never end..." It appears they have. As an active member of the Mott Park Association, I invite all current residents to join us to maintain the beauty, safety and community of Mott Park.



THE McCLANAHAN CLAN - top row, Shaun, Chris, Connie, Bard, Bryce. Bottom row, Barbara Camarro, Jo Ann McClanahan-Blair, Mom Dorothy, Janet Foster and Renee Abraham.

2548 Tyrone Street • By Larry Ford

"We lived thru the war years..."



MY MOTHER in her Mott Park kitchen.

The year was 1942 when my parents bought a home at 2548 Tyrone Street. My parents owned and operated a used furniture store on North Saginaw Street. My parents had two children. My brother started kindergarten at Longfellow Elementary and I was in the first

grade. It was a bit scary for us moving into a new neighborhood. Tyrone Street dead ended into a large field that gave us a place to ride our bikes.

The war was on and we wanted to do our part - so I formed a group called, "The American Boys' Club." We collected newspapers, tin cans, and grease from the kitchens in the neighborhood. It was our way to help fight the enemy. It was a big deal for a bunch of kids in their preteens.

We used to play war games and dug fox holes. I remember the end of the war. Downtown Flint filled with hundreds of people celebrating - horns were blowing, people dancing in the streets, and I asked my father if I could sit in his car to blow the horn. It was a wonderful day that a nine year old will never forget.

The Mott Park area was blessed to have all kinds of activities to do after school and summer. The winter brought skating and hockey or roller derby for hours. In the summer we kids had all kinds of special events in the park, baseball, tennis, and picnics. Mott Golf course was just a few blocks away and a lot of kids took golf. I learned early that if I found a golf ball I could sell it for a nickel. I was wading in the Flint River looking for golf balls and a local doctor was standing on the tee, preparing to hit over the river. My hunch was right, he hit five balls into the river! He tossed his golf bag and pull cart into the river. There were four or five of us in the river at the time, looking for golf balls. One of

the other boys recovered the bag and clubs. He took off for the club house to return the doctor's clubs. The Dr.'s response was, "No, they are yours now Alex." From that day on I never had to compete against him for golf balls, he took up the game. The river was a great place but also a very dangerous

place. A few kids fell into the river and lost their lives.

Longfellow School had two Boy Scout troops, 65B and 65C. I joined 65C as soon as I was old enough. We had a great group of guys. I was a patrol leader and we were getting ready for a Jamboree to be held in Kearsley Park. My mom helped my patrol prepare for the cooking contest. She made us go into the field to find a bunch of small rocks, which we could use as a stuffer in Cornish hens. We boiled them in water placed them in the belly of the hens, then buttered and seasoned the birds and wrapped them in foil. Once the fire had a nice bed of hot ashes, we placed the chickens in the fire and covered them for 45 minutes. Needless to say, we won the contest as the birds were delicious. I was fortunate to reach the rank of Eagle, along with several of my friends before I turned my attention to other things.

We grew up with the wonderful Mott Foundation Program of football, baseball, and basketball. Some of us continued well into high school but most of us turned to working and girls. All in all, our days in the Mott Park area were wonderful and my folks remained in that house 52 years of marriage, and in fact, my father died in his home. We knew all the neighbors and laughed with them and cried with them. It was the good life and I would not trade it for anything.



LARRY ON THE club house motor scooter.

2622 Thomas Street • By John Northrup

Getting lost in Mott Park

Somewhere in time, I think about 1960, some friends who lived on Golfside invited me to come over to play Contract Bridge. I asked for and received directions and successfully arrived at the house.

At evening's end I confidently left. But it was dark now and as I tried to retrace my route of entry, I turned the wrong way. I had no idea where I was. I made another wrong turn. Then another. I went down this street and that street. I finally found my way out.

Mott Parker's know how their streets weave and bob every which way. Pity us poor non residents who get lost.

A few months later, I was invited back for another round of bridge. The same house. You know the story. Yes, I got lost again! There was only one thing for this Buick accountant to do - in 1966 I bought a house on 2622 Thomas Street and became a Mott Parker. It was a Gerholz house and I was only the second resident to live in that house.

In 1976 you elected me as City Councilman - a job I kept for 26 years. I am now your representative on the County board. The night Jimmy Carter was elected President, I went to a big political celebration. That night I met a lady named Lucy Morrissey who I learned lived just down the street from me on Thomas Street. Lucy and I became good friends. At least I had no chance of getting lost going home.

Lucy is one of those people who makes friends wherever she goes. There was one special day she always remembers when the kids were playing in the back yard. They were attempting to climb over a picket fence when one of the little girls caught her

foot in the fence and fell. Lucy realized the child had broken her arm. She put her arm on a pillow and drove her home - she happened to live right around the corner on Nolen Drive.

That's the day she met her neighbor, Nova Leonard (now Denison). It was Nova's little girl, Kim, who had fallen. The two mothers didn't know each other, but Lucy drove them to McLaren Emergency and stayed with them till the arm was set. By then, both single mothers and both teachers, the accident had brought the two neighbors together maintaining a friendship that has lasted forever.

Then there was the day Lucy and I were having dinner at our favorite restaurant - The Pink Garter on Clio Road. I asked Lucy to marry me. She was so stunned she didn't even touch her steak. We were married November 29, 1982. We moved into her house at 2549 Thomas Street where we make our home.

Lucy, now a retired school teacher, has five children from her first marriage - they are; Mary, Martha, John, Jim, and Anne. Then add my three children - Jenny, Sam and Johnathan. The kids are spread all over the country which gives us a chance to visit them. And life is good at 2549 Thomas Street.



**John and Lucy Northrup
married November 29, 1982.**

From Mott Park to the Super Bowl

Growing up in Mott Park.



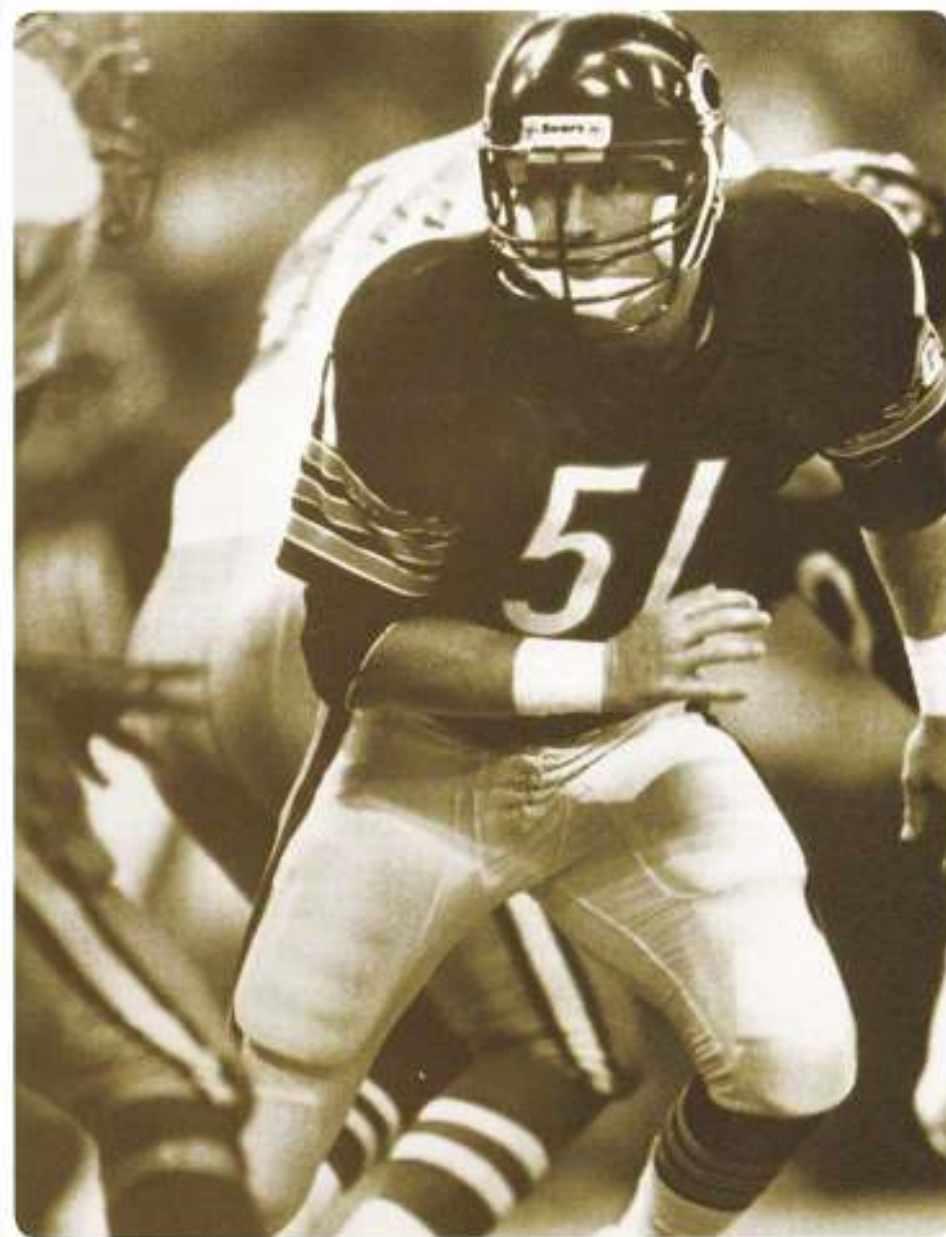
JIM MORRISSEY of the Chicago Bears, remembers playing football on the Mott Park Golf Course.

Well, some of my favorite childhood memories of Mott Park are sledding at the golf course on the big hill, playing baseball by the clubhouse and trying to hit a homer over the tennis court fence. Playing football on the rough on the second hole of the golf course.

What really made those experiences so special were all the friends we had to play with. That contributed to all my fond memories like walking to school at St. John Vianney with my friends and then going to Powers where I played on the football team. I graduated in 1981 with a scholarship to Michigan State. In 1985 I was named All Big Ten Line Backer. My senior year at MSU, I was drafted by the Chicago Bears.

In my first season with the Bears we went to the Super Bowl in New Orleans. We were winning and Coach Mike Ditka let the rookie on the field at the end of the game. Hey, I made my first interception in Pro football. I played with the Bears from 1985 to 1993 and one season at Green Bay and it was time to retire.

Today I live in Lincolnshire, IL working at a brokerage firm. My wife Amy and I have four children and if you see a car driving around Mott Park with a license plate that reads, "MA BEAR" - that's my mom Lucy Northrup.



The home of a Pulitzer Prize Winner



THE GALLAGHER FAMILY - in front Mike and Joe, back Jimmy, Mom Kathy and Mary Catherine. Taken July 1994.

We moved to our home at 955 Perry Street in 1955. We wanted a home close to Bill's job at the Flint Journal. He worked the night shift and covered many sports events. We found the location not only answered our need, but gave us so much more.

Bill replaced the porch with an enclosed area for the children to play and even sleep on hot summer nights. Later he and his friend Lewis Klink built an addition on the back of the house with a large family room down and two more bedrooms up. They also replaced the garage with a two car garage.

The schools were close. The kids could even come home for lunch. Two blocks up Perry was Ballenger Park with ice skating in winter and tennis in the summer and there was also the golf course. In the winter we went sledding on the golf course hills. In the summer we would take our chairs and walk one block over to watch the Crim racers go by and I remember when we used to go up the Cadillac hill to watch the Soap Box Derby. The children always enjoyed the recreation we had everywhere.

Stores always so nearby, the post office, churches and hospitals. We were blessed. But most important were the neighbors - so many good friends. They were always there for us. The children made so many close friendships that are still a part of their lives today. There were so many children in the Mott Park area including five little Gallaghers - Mike, who now works for Saginaw NEWS, Tom (passed away in 1978), Mary Catherine, a preemie intensive care nurse at Hurley, Joe who lives up north and Jimmy who lives in Mott Park.

We couldn't have had a better place to live.

"We had so many cool areas to play..."



JOE GALLAGHER

To a boy prone to looking for adventure and excitement under every rock and behind every bush, he sure found it living in Mott Park. We had so many cool areas to play. The parks were by far the biggest part of my little world. It provided the woods for a city kid who longed for the country.

There were tennis courts, the tunnel and the cement stage where we wondered if Grand Funk Railroad ever played there. And in the winter we wore these oddest snow pants that swished as you walked to go sledding. They kept you warm and dry but you never wanted to be seen in them. We got on our Radio Flyers - got a good running start to flop

on your chest and ride down the hill. The best riding was the saucers - totally out of control, no steering and you went really fast.

Remember how the river flooded the golf course every spring? When it receded there were pools of water on the greens with carp stranded in them. Even after the U.S. Army Engineers put in a massive flood control project, the river would still rise every spring. There was a lot of excitement one year when a kid fell in and drowned. They replaced the old swinging bridge that used to wash away every spring - now's there's a permanent bridge and the river never rises anymore.

The most exciting year of my life was earning my Eagle Badge. Our Troop 60 met at the Methodist Church who sponsored the troop. We were over 45 scouts strong. Back then it was cool to be a Boy Scout. When I left for college the troop was down to a dozen. Those days before a camp out I was useless in school. After our Thursday night meeting a few of us would hang out under the street light at Perry and Cadillac and we'd talk about life and its exciting possibilities. Oh, to have those deep conversations again.

All around us lived families that I knew all their names. These were people and these were places that made up our community. Good times and bad times. I've had my share and I've traveled it seems a million miles, but in my mind I'm still on that playground called Mott Park.

By Bill Gallagher • Written in 1955

Pulitzer Prize Winner

On Labor Day of 1952 Gov. Adlai Stevenson of Illinois visited Flint on a political tour of the state. He was campaigning for the office of President of the United States. I was assigned by my paper to cover this visit at Flint Park.

Gov. Stevenson, seated on the platform in the first row with Michigan's Governor G. Mennen Williams, was going over his notes. Most of the photographers were on the platform. There were local news men, Detroit papers, wire-services and several magazines were traveling with Stevenson.

Most of us were using old 4 x 5 Speed Graphic cameras instead of cameras with a long lens, so we had to be close for a close-up. I moved to the front of the platform directly in front of Stevenson, figuring I would be in good position for the close-up.

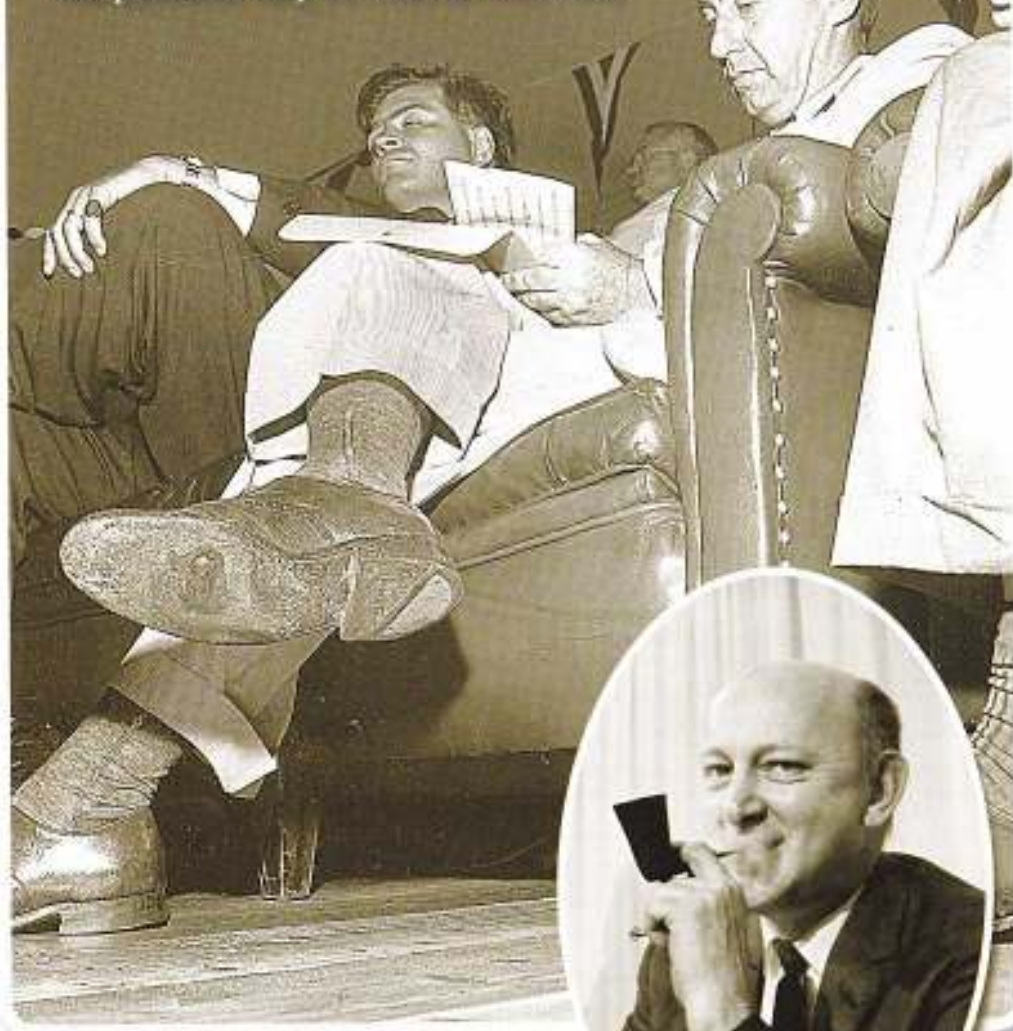
While kneeling there waiting for him to be introduced, he had his legs crossed which put the sole of his shoe a little below eye level for me. I spotted it. I thought that here was a man running for President - a wealthy man but he has a hole in his shoe. I thought it would make a fun picture. A run of the mill picture.

I set my focus on about six feet, set the lens opening and removed the flash gun so as not to cause him to uncross his legs. I calmly set the camera on the platform, raised the flash and fired one bulb. The Governor casually looked at me and he uncrossed his legs and went back to his notes. So the one shot was all I had a chance to get.

Back to the office I developed my stuff and noticed that my negative was almost perfectly exposed and it completely filled the 4 x 5 negative with the all important subject matter. I started making prints and called one of the reporters to write me some cut lines. I had an idea of getting it in the mail right away with the thought of selling it to maybe Life Magazine. They would pay \$125!

I took it to the post office to mail. The next day my boss suggested that I offer the picture to the wire photo network. I didn't want to but I did. Then I went home. The next morning to my surprise, almost every paper on the stand carried my Stevenson picture on the front page. I could hardly believe it. On May 5th, I was notified that my picture won a Pulitzer Prize in News Photography. When it was over I won about \$1600 in prize money. Luck and fate certainly dealt me a good hand.

THE FAMOUS HOLE IN THE SHOE picture stars Adlai Stevenson with Gov. Mennen Williams on stage at the political rally in 1952 at Flint Park.



BILL GALLAGHER, a fun loving Irishman, passed away in 1975. His Pulitzer winning photograph still hangs in the hall of the Journal offices.



Talk about lucky kids



Pete Sark

Our family was all sports lovers - what else could you be when your dad is Pete Sark, the longtime local sports announcer for WFDF Radio. Dad also wrote sports columns in several newspapers. He covered the sports world - the Tigers, the Lions, the Pistons, World Series, Super Bowls, Buick Opens and the local football games from Atwood Stadium - you name it he was there. Known as one of the best sportscasters in the state, he has been inducted into the Greater Flint Area Sports Hall of Fame. He passed away in 2004.

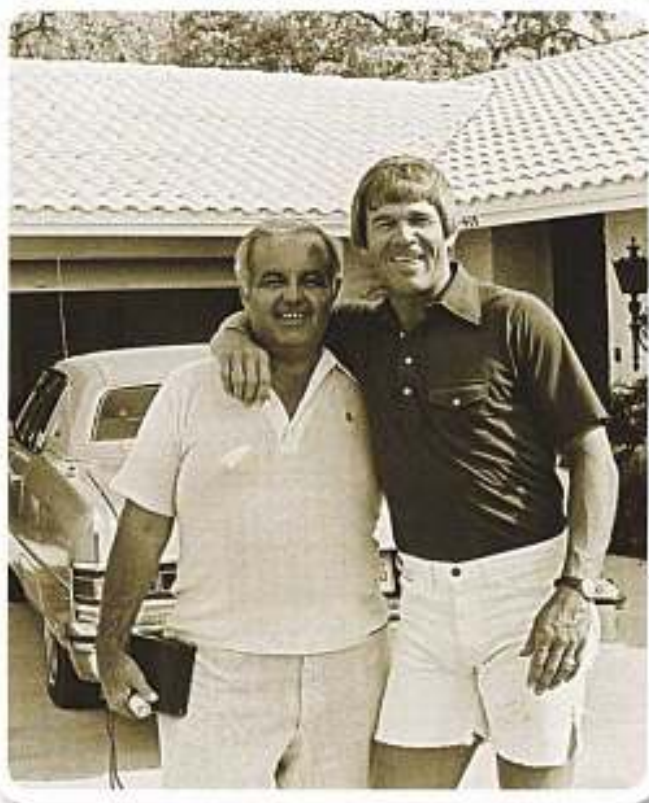
My dad, an only child, was about seven when his parents moved to our house in Mott Park. Uncle Bob Collins lived on Monteith St. In those days of no TV or X-boxes, you listened to the radio for entertainment. Uncle Bob told me when my dad was a kid he wanted to listen to the Notre Dame game. But his dad was a Michigan fan and wouldn't let him. So dad would sneak over to Uncle Bob's to listen to the game.

My dad's family was into tennis. They played on the courts of Mott Park. When "Petey" was too small to play, he'd be the ball boy for the adults. They'd give him a nickel and he'd go over to the golf course to get ice cream. He grew up to make the tennis team at Central. My brothers and I learned to play tennis on those same courts.

My mom, Esther Collins was born on Chevrolet Street, between Woodbridge and Perry. She was the last of nine children. Both of my parents went to Durant Turri Mott, Longfellow and Flint Central. My three brothers and I went to the same schools as our parents and even had some of the same

teachers. (Remember Mr. and Mrs. Cates?) The boundaries changed and we graduated from Northern.

We loved living in Mott Park - what a great place to grow up! (Though some might say I haven't grown up yet). There were four of us boys - Pete Jr., David, Mike and Bobby. There was always so much to do all summer - baseball, basketball, golf, tennis, and exploring down by the Flint River. We would go under the sewer tunnels (probably not a good idea). We really had fun the summer GMI was building the dorm. We'd go play down in the construction site and collect pop bottles for deposit money. One time we got enough money to buy hot dogs and pop and we had a cookout.



IT WAS THE 60's - and Pete Sark was in Florida covering spring training. He has a good laugh with Tiger's great - Mickey Stanley, star Center Fielder.

I was a lucky kid- growing up in my Grandmother's house - the same house that my dad had grown up in. And I still live there - on the corner of Third Avenue and Dickinson. What a great place to grow up! Right across the street from the softball diamonds at GMI (now Kettering University). As a kid we would go over and watch the GMI Fraternities playing fast pitch softball.

We played a lot of ball games on those diamonds. Back in the 60's baseball was the sport we kids played. My cousins, Rick and Bill Collins, who lived around the corner on Frank Street joined in. Our neighborhood was full of good baseball players. Two of the best in the city of Flint - the Pruitt brothers, Ron and Randy. Ron, also inducted into the Greater Flint Area Sports Hall of Fame, went on to play with the Cleveland Indians.

Talk about lucky - not only did we have the GMI diamonds to play on, we had a golf course virtually in our back yard. At the time it was only a nine hole course, we didn't care. With the Junior rate (65 cents for all day play) my brother Dave and I would play 18 holes in the morning; go home for lunch and then back for another nine or maybe 18. And better yet, I had the Detroit Free Press paper route in Mott Park so I always had some money. Lucky kid!

2701 Thomas Street • By Pastor Snogren

Living in the parsonage

The Snogren's experience of Mott Park began in June, 1968 when we were transferred as United Methodist Clergyman from West Branch to Flint. The Flint parsonage is at 2701 Thomas Street. It was a lovely house but for a family of four lively, growing sons it was a little tight, but we adjusted and found Mott Park and surrounding area delightful.

As a committed jogger, I would often leave the house jogging my way through the neighborhood admiring the lovely homes with manicured lawns and ending up at the golf course. What a great place to jog! I was especially delighted when the park installed an exercise path with wooden stations directing the activity.

It was great, I shall never forget the day I was running with my sons who respectfully let me lead. Suddenly, one of the boys yelled out; "Let's see who can get to the corner first." I increased my speed only to have my two older sons pass me. Regardless how hard I tried, I could not catch up. How humbling. For the first time the "old man" could not outrun his sons.

In the winter our family enjoyed the hillside of the golf course. It was a fun place to toboggan. I wonder if my back problems did not begin here? I recall some pretty jarring experiences sitting on the back of the toboggan.

One of our son's schoolmates lived just a few houses from us. We always knew when Chris Lamb was home because of the resounding



REVEREND DORRAINE SNOGREN FAMILY, 1970

sound of drums coming from his bedroom window. His practicing paid off. He is now the principal percussionist in the New York Philharmonic. WOW!

Of course, what established us in the Mott Park area was Calvary United Methodist Church. It was a beautiful well-kept neighborhood church. We were privileged to be a part of it for 22 years. During that time we experienced remarkable physical growth. The day came when the decision was made to expand the building. This meant a new Sanctuary and education area.

The old sanctuary was renovated into a stunning parlor and chapel. The rest of the building was renovated into office spaces, youth center, etc. By now the church had added several

new people to the full time staff. One remarkable thing in the expansion program was the purchase of the entire block of houses surrounding the church. This was accomplished in a few weeks.

The remarkable aspect of Calvary, however is its spiritual growth and the clear evidence that God was at work in the lives of our people.

My wife and I have been away from Mott Park for 18 years, but we still praise God for those glorious years of being involved in such a spiritual awakening of the Holy Spirit in such wonderful fellowship.

For us, living in the Mott Park area was an ideal place to live, raise a family and experience a truly spirit-filled church. Thank you Mott Park.

Mott Park is our family



DON AND MARY ANN take pride in their yard.

1942, the house was deeded to Frank and Daisy Borey who lived and raised a family there for 43 years.

We have had such great neighbors - one of them told us the story of their wedding. Hector Seaton, a single man, built his house on Dickinson Street. Just so happened a girl named Doris lived with her parents in the house behind him. They were married May 3, 1947. Doris told us about how in those days the streets weren't paved and were a sea of mud all spring and fall. Anyways, all they had to do was carry Doris' things through the back yard to Hector's house. Hector passed away in 1995 at the age of 90; followed by Doris in 2002 at age 94.

At one time we were lucky to have two daughters, a sister in law and a couple of nieces and their families all living in Mott Park at the same time. Our daughter Jan and husband John Stieglitz bought their house around the corner on Cartier from the DeAgostino family who lived there for many years. They were well known and well liked in Mott Park. Our three grandsons - Daren, Karl, and Micah - all grew up on Cartier, graduated from Flint Central and went onto college.

We are relative newcomers to Mott Park. (We have only lived here 27 years) When we moved here most of our neighbors had lived here for many more years and most of them were the original buyers of their houses.

We bought our house on March 24, 1981 from Charles and Judith Houser. They bought it from Daisy and Frank Borey in 1976. From the abstract we learned that an "unmarried" woman named Beatrice H. Spenser bought the house from Modern Housing in 1926. A neighbor told us that the house sat empty for a long time and never had a roof on it. It was deeded back to Modern Housing, November 30, 1936. In

We love our home and love Mott Park. We have fine, helpful neighbors and everything is so convient. We are looking forward to the rebirth of downtown Flint and are so proud of the growth of the Flint Institute of Arts, the Flint Symphony, the colleges, and all the exciting things to do around Flint.



THE BRONSON'S were happy when daughter Jan and husband John Stieglitz bought a house on Cartier Street. The three grandsons were popular around the neighborhood - Daren, Karl and Micah.



THE WHITE BRONSON HOUSE - 601 Perry Street - stands out with a blue trim and blue big "B" on the front of their house.

2722 Thomas Street • 2529 Thomas Street • 2554 Nolen Drive • By Bob Giles

Three homes in Mott Park

We purchased the first of our three homes in Mott Park - 2722 Thomas St. in 1972. We signed the papers the day before Thanksgiving and the day the doctor put Kathy on pregnancy leave. We moved in on December 6th. On Christmas Day we had a major leak in the roof caused by an ice dam on the gutter which caused water from a heavy rain to back up under the shingles.

On February 26 our first child was born, Ryan Patrick. In the middle of April we had a fire in our new home. The summer of '75 brought

very heavy rains which causes a river on Thomas Street, most of which seemed to run into our basement window.

That December we moved to 2529 Thomas St. We lived there for over nine years. In 1978 we adopted 14 year old Mary and two years later Emily was born in June. Those were fun years raising our children. There was lots of snow for sledding and we always had a big snow bank in the front yard to put a tree in and keep it till spring.

In 1985 we moved again. This time to 2554 Nolen Drive. Ryan was going into the 7th grade and Emily started kindergarten. It was a great house to raise a family, lots of room to have parties and kids over and we even had a heated swimming pool.

Mott Park was the very best place to raise a family. For 12 of those 27 years we lived in Mott Park, I was president of the Mott Park Association. It took about five hours a week - but it was worth it. The families were very friendly. The mayor's director of neighborhoods told me that other people wished they had an association like ours.

The newsletter started our yearly activities in May announcing what's happening around the neighborhood. The park clean up, summer concerts, golf scramble, family picnic on the tennis courts with a disc jockey, a Halloween party and a hay ride. The association also did a neighborhood crime watch.

We accomplished things over the years such as neighborhood recognition for well kept homes, putting in a soccer field, stick hockey court and winning a \$50,000 grant to re-do the playground.

When our youngest child Emily went off to college, it left us in a very large empty house. It was time to down size. On Memorial Day weekend of 1999 we moved into a town house in Flushing. Living in Mott Park and raising our children there was a blessing. We have so many memories and look here - I am still working with the association.

BOB AND KATHY GILES with their Labrador, Zack in front of their beautiful home. The Giles had three homes in Mott Park and their favorite home is this one on Nolen Drive. (Inside photo) - With their kids, Emily and Ryan.



2546 Nolen Drive • By Nova Leonard Denison

An incredible place to live

Mott Park - what an incredible place to live and raise a family. It was like a small town within the limits of the city of Flint. People watched out for each other and cared for each other. I can attest to a neighborhood of caring people.

Ballenger Park is within walking distance and the hill at Mott Golf Course provided an area for sledding and snowmobiling in the winter right in your front yard. Both parks had ice skating ponds. In the summer - tennis courts and swings on the playground. Everything was available just around the corner. Runners, bikers, and golfers enjoyed the beauty and safety of the neighborhood all summer long.

The immediate Mott Park neighborhood is a place of well-maintained homes - Tudors, Colonials, two-stories, or ranch style. Everyone knew each other and cared about each other. What an area! Colleges, stores, hospitals and churches, it was all there right in our front yard.

Our beautiful house was built by the Modern Housing Corporation, addition No.6., Lot 19 in 1929 at a cost of \$10,000. The first owner was a Mr. Troxel. In 1935, Mr. Troxel deeded the house to the Baptist Minister's Aid Society. In 1937 the Ministers sold the house to the Kretchmar family who sold it to Dr. Hufton and his wife in 1943.

The Huftons lived there for 22 years, selling it to us in 1965. We raised our three children - Bobby, Kim and Michelle in that wonderful house. But one day, everyone was gone, the house was too big for me to care for, I loved it - but it was too much. In 1997 I sold the house to Theron and Gennios Wiggins who fell in love with the house. They have renovated the house, returning it to its original glory. They have put thousands of dollars in the home. They have made it again the showpiece that it was meant to be.



THE HOUSE ON NOLEN DRIVE was Nova (Leonard) Denison's dream house. She decorated her house in the 1965 popular avocado and gold and there was a grand piano in the living room. One thing she wished she could have taken with her was this wall - behind the stairs were marks of the growth of her children.



A HAPPY GRADUATION DAY in 1974 for son Bobby Leonard with sister Kim, Grandma Leonard and sister Michele. A tragic car crash ended Bobby's life in 1975.

816 N. Chevrolet Avenue • By Liz Royer Smith

A Dutch Colonial style home

It was August of 1955 when my parents Harry and Rosalene Royer bought the house at 816 N. Chevrolet Ave. Built in 1920 it was a tall brick to belt three bedroom Dutch Colonial style home.

Ideally located it was three blocks to the south of Chevrolet Manufacturing, and three blocks north of my school St. John Vianney, and three blocks to the west was wonderful Mott Park.

While living on Chevrolet Ave in the 1950's and 1960's I would watch many of my neighbors who worked at Chevrolet Manufacturing, walk to work carrying their metal lunch boxes, wearing their steel toed shoes and short jackets. Our next door neighbor, Mr. Leo Reed was one of the original sit downers, and across the street from us lived Mr. Wilson, the Ivey siblings and other General Motors workers who made their livelihood from Buick and A.C. Spark Plug.

Next door to us lived Mr. James Hagie who, in his 80's at the time, told me that he had bought his home when Chevrolet Ave was just a rutted dirt road. He also talked about when the original street car system was constructed along Chevrolet Ave. It ran down to Civic Park School and then turned around and went back to downtown Flint.

Mott Park just three blocks from my home was a world unto its own. It had very pretty houses, and the big park had swings and slides, tennis courts, the golf course, the sledding off Nolen Drive, and its own shopping center.

The Mott Park Golf Course was used many times by my brother Ron and my dad who taught Ron how to golf on this course.

The park was big enough to accommodate a girl's softball team with many of the St. John Vianney girls participating.

Everyone walked to Nolen Drive and went sledding after school in the winter. The hills were steep and icy, just the way we wanted them to be. We all used wooden toboggans, or our metal flying saucers.

In high school, the night before the St. John Vianney Homecoming all the students would line up in the parking lot at the school and all join hands and run single file (snake dance) down to Mott Park. We would have a huge bonfire to enkindle school spirit for the up coming important football game.

The mini shopping center located in Mott Park sat on Joliet St, bounded by Woodbridge and Perry St. It consisted of a grocery store called "Woodbridge Market" owned and operated by John Yauch, it was fully stocked grocery store and had a meat counter with the best

**OUR
HOUSE ON
Chevrolet
Avenue built
in 1920.**



hand cuts meats you could imagine. Johnny was always there and knew all his customers by name.

Next in the shopping center was the confectionery store. It was owned and operated by Les Kenny. It had an old fashioned soda fountain counter. Next to Les's confectionery was the barber shop and around the corner on Perry St. was a gas station.

How convenient this whole mini shopping center was to our family. We could walk to the grocery store, get our confectionery items, fill up the car, and the men could get a haircut all within walking distance.

816 Chevrolet is still standing as are all the other homes built by Modern Housing Corporation on that street. In fact just last year it had its original slate roof replaced after 87 years!

Yes, the Mott Park area had it all. It gave wonderful fun filled childhoods and subsequently wonderful memories to many of the children who grew up in this area. May it always be there to enrich future generations.



**MY MOTHER AND
FATHER in our
dining room.**

2010 Cadillac Street • By Barbara Miron Wall

"I never wanted my house to change..."

We moved to our house on Cadillac Street around 1951 when I was about five years old. Later we moved to a bigger house on Ballenger Road and now I live in San Francisco, CA. Growing up in Flint we lived in a typical General Motors house. It had a living room, dining room, a kitchen downstairs. Upstairs there were two bedrooms and one bath. The basement was unfinished and to me was a breeding ground for creepy crawlies.

Mom had a standard wringer - washing machine and clothes were dried outside on the line, except in the winter or bad weather they were hung in the basement. There was also a huge coal burning furnace and a coal bin.

At the side door was a tin lined milk chute - everyone had one. Mother would write a note for what she wanted and rolled it and put it in an empty bottle for

the milk man to pick up. The milkman came in a horse driven wagon, the horses names were Doc and Dexter, and we gave them a carrot or apple. Being a "city slicker" it was a thrill to see a real horse coming down the street. When we replaced them with trucks it was never as much fun.

Our house was between Perry and Woodbridge which made our life line Johnny's Market. Johnny was always smiling and friendly. I loved running errands for my mother because I could pick out some penny candy or an ice cream bar - it was so fun. But I will never forget the time I went to the store to get some dinner with a \$5 bill. That was a lot of money



MY FATHER BOB MIRON washing our Ford Fairlane 500 in front of our house.

back then. But that night I was so excited to be going to my first big teen dance at Ballenger Park.

After picking out the groceries - I couldn't find the money my mother gave me, I traced my steps four or five times. No luck. I finally faced the music and begged and promised it would never happen again. To teach me a lesson, I was not allowed to go to the dance. I had bought a new short outfit. Oh! I knew I would never have a social life for the rest of my life again. I remember it to this day as if it were yesterday.

Mott Park played such a big part in growing up. We went sledding - I had a flexible flyer and also a flying saucer. Another friend brought a toboggan. We'd all pile on and go down the hill screaming all the way. We'd come home all red cheeked with mittens full of little snow balls. There was one area we would go down on skates - it was called "Suicide Hill."

Summer was fun too - tennis, outdoor cooking, international dance classes. It was the Mott Foundation leading. How fortunate we were to have all of those activities - it was a model for the whole country. I couldn't of had a better childhood. I made life long friends. I always hoped the people who bought our house would have as much fun as we did. We left them good vibes.

When I came back to Flint to visit, I went to see my old house. The retaining wall in front of my house seemed so much bigger and the enclosed porch where we would sleep on hot summer nights is gone. It's just a regular porch now. Something in me wanted that house to never change. It was such a big part of my childhood and my friends. I didn't appreciate it at the time how fortunate I was growing up in a historic GM house.



ST. JOHN VIANNEY Halloween dance. L to R - Carol Sanborn, Barbara Miron Wall (me), and Liz Royer Smith. Liz's dress was made from a paper Halloween table cloth.

2536 Tyrone Street • By Janice & Bernie Smith

*It's still a quiet,
desirable neighborhood*



Bernie and I were both born in Flint. We've lived in Flint for most of our lives and for 50 years in Mott Park at 2536 Tyrone St. We raised our sons, Ken and Jim here. We both attended Longfellow as did our sons. Bernie and I graduated from Flint Northern High School as did our son Jim. Ken was "caught" in boundary changes and graduated from Flint Central.

Bernie and I both have childhood memories of Mott Park. Many of our friends lived here in Mott Park, and we played in the park. I played tennis and used to go tobogganing down the hill in the winter. Bernie and friends played football on number one fairway in the fall until they were asked not to play there anymore. In the spring time the river would overflow it's banks and flow across the golf course a quarter way up the hill towards Nolen Drive. This was fun to swim in until we would see dead fish and other undesirable things floating on the surface.

During the second World War, Victory gardens were planted in Mott Park where the Gerholz homes are now, which were built after the war. Thomas, Norbert, Altoona, Tyrone, Paducah, Tiffen and Bagley streets were dead ended.

On the south-east corner of Flushing at Chevrolet Ave. there was a gas station. I recall hearing back in the 1930's on a Sunday afternoon in the summer the gas station blew up, for an unknown cause.

We have enjoyed living in Mott Park, it's still a quiet, desirable neighborhood to have raised a family in and enjoy our retirement.

Bagley St. • By Donna Gardner

Little white bungalow

My wonderful neighbors who were like grandparents to my family were Etta and Ralph Thomas. In 1926 they were newlyweds when they purchased their little white bungalow on Bagley St. in Mott Park. Ralph worked at Chevy in



the Hole and they moved in from Lapeer to be closer to his work. Etta's father built their garage for them as a wedding gift. Ralph always walked back and forth to work.

Ralph and Etta often told stories of the block, neighborhood and the changes throughout the years. There was a field on the corner lot east of them, and a house was built on it in 1929. A narrow gauge railroad ran down the street, hauling dirt from the new basements and filling the wetlands for a golf course. The railroad ran around a large old tree that stood in the middle of the dirt road. The tree was finally cut down when the street was paved.

It seems during the depression of the 1930's several houses on the block were boarded up. People were losing their homes to the banks, much the same as today's situation. Ralph said he called the bank and told them he was having trouble making the \$33.00 a month payment and they let him make smaller payments until the economy got better. They were able to stay in their house and raise their son and daughter.

Ralph passed away and several years later in 1992 Etta died. Their heirs sold the house to the second owner, who lives there currently.

2468 Thomas Street • By Wayne Hatch

"I saw that tunnel of trees and stopped..."



One day in 1969, coming back from a miserable day of golf on the Mott Park course, I was driving down Thomas Street and was struck by the beauty of the tunnel formed by the golden maple leaves. The trees stood tall, guarding the well maintained homes that lined the street. They were different - not the typical cookie cutter homes you would see in the new subdivisions sprouting up around Flint. Each home reflected it's own personality. I thought this would be a beautiful place to live and raise a family.

Suddenly there it was - 2468 Thomas Street. And it was for sale. I hurried home called the Realtor, piled Joni and the kids in the car, and away we went. Twenty-two thousand dollars was a lot of money in 1969, but we tightened our belt and we prevailed.

That house belonged to all four of us. In December, we became a family of five with the birth of Christopher. He was baptized at St. John Vianney where the children all attended school.

Many memories remain with us today outside the beauty of the neighborhood. Jon recalls ball games in the park with his buddies John Vaughan, Danny Wenzel, Tommy Van Orden, catching pockets full of

snakes down by the riverside, and riding the bike trails through the park.

Chris recalls attacking the jungle gym rocket in Mott Park with his buddies Matt Turner and Darrien Knight. It must have inspired him because he is still in the air...flying in helicopters for the United States Coast Guard.

For Joni and myself, we remember the friendships we developed with the neighbors, the block parties and the holiday parties that brought out the "skip & go nude" punch and the New Year Eves we spent at St. John Vianney will always remain in our hearts. This neighborhood characterized Flint during the 60's and 70's.

Hard working people who cared for their neighbors and children, their homes, and the City of Flint - that was Mott Park. They called these homes "GM" homes; homes built to house GM employees. It's paradoxical that these homes still stand tall today while a majority of GM facilities are gone. On the other hand, memories, good memories remain forever.

We will never forget
Mott Park.



THE KIDS - Jon (four children) lives in Chapin, SC where he works for State Farm. Michelle - the California girl works with the Honda Corporation and lives in New Port Beach. Chris (family of four) is an officer with the United States Coast Guard stationed in Washington, DC.



THE HATCH FAMILY - Joan and Wayne are retired to Murphy, NC and winter in Palm Coast, Florida.

2302 Monteith Street • By John Whiteside

“Eat breakfast, then off to the park...”

We moved into Mott Park in 1962 when I was the age of seven. I lived there until 1977 when I moved out on my own. I have many fond memories of the neighborhood. The whole neighborhood seemed like my home. Back then everyone knew everyone and looked out for each other.

The park was the center of activities in those days. The city provided a “park supervisor” in the summer months. The park supervisor planned activities at the park for all to enjoy. Some of those activities were 4-square, crafts, chess, checkers, baseball, softball games or just all around fun with board games. There was even a euchre or pinochle card game being played at times.

The average summer day for many of the Mott Park neighborhood kids consisted of spending the day at the park. It was out of bed, eat breakfast, then it was off to the park. Back home for lunch and then back to the park until dinner time.

Many of us who played baseball down at the diamond on the north end of the park kept stat sheets for home runs and such. The ball diamond now is hardly recognizable as today's kids are busy with computer or video games and the old ball diamond goes unused. There also were tennis courts that were used by many.

The parks recreation program included lessons on how to play tennis, golf and other outside sports and activities. Being outside and enjoying the summer was what was great about the old Mott Park neighborhood. That is now lost as weeds have taken over and replaced the 4-square and tennis courts.

I also remember spending time walking the streets in this wonderful neighborhood. So many of my friends and I would walk up and down the sidewalks talking about many things going on in the world at the time. The whole neighborhood seemed like an extension of our homes.

THE WHITESIDE CHILDREN (Back to front) Don, John, Larry and Janet posing for a photo in 1963.



The story of Knob Hill Market

Back in 1924 my grandfather, John Alex with his wife Mary decided to open up a family grocery store on Glenwood Avenue. They lived on the second floor of the building where they raised five children, John Jr., Charles, Catherine, Ruth and my dad Thomas. All the children grew up working in the family business.

The philosophy of his store was to treat customers with respect, kindness and quality products. He was an honest and hard working man who believed in family and God. He served his customers with canned goods, produce, dairy and meats. He even made home deliveries to people in the neighborhood and to the Miller Road homes. He also provided charge accounts that were paid on a monthly basis. People trusted him enough that they gave him a key to their house. He would not only deliver the groceries, but he put the groceries away in the cupboard or refrigerator.

In 1937 during the Sit Down Strike, John Alex, Sr. extended credit to many of the strikers to feed their families. When the strike was over, every man came to pay what they owed. That was back when men were men and integrity was a way of life. A handshake was all that was required.

It was now 1941 and both my Uncle Charlie and my dad Tom were called to serve our country. After the war Tom returned to the family business, but in 1948, Uncle Charlie bought a building on Flushing Road and opened his own store called, "The Mott Park Superette."

Sadly, Charlie was killed in a plane crash coming back from a fishing and hunting trip in Canada. In 1958, my dad bought the property from

Charlie's wife and named it Knob Hill Market. The store flourished on Flushing Road, always remembering Grandad's philosophy of business.

In 1993, dad closed the store and he and my mother Blanche bought a home in Mott Park. I met and married Jann Correll who grew up on Monteith Street. We are currently living two houses down from where Jann grew up.

In 2008, Jann and I had an opportunity to bring the Knob Hill name back to Flint - we reopened the store at the Flint Farmer's Market. It is our family tradition, to be able to serve old and new customers. So look for us every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in our new store - Knob Hill Meats. We continue to serve the same quality service my father taught me and his father taught him.

My father Thomas Alex passed away on April 18, 2009. He lived his whole life in Flint and cherished everyday that he could be of service to his customers.



TAKING SOME TIME IN THE 60's are Tom Alex, Jr. and Tom Alex, Sr.

BLANCHE AND THOMAS ALEX, Sr. were proud of the Knob Hill Market on Flushing Road that they operated for 35 years.



"The Mott Park Experience"

It was February 1938 when Spencer and Ruth Light gave birth to a set of twins just 16 minutes apart. Before I was born, my sister Judy was born. Back then, they had no ultra sounds, so the doctors didn't have a clue that my mother was carrying twins. Our birth's took place at Hurley Hospital. We were living at 624 Marquette Street and when we were a year and half old, my father bought a house at 808 Marquette Street. He paid \$5,550. I sold the home after my dad passed away in 1988, for \$33,000. My father was an accounting manager at the local GMAC office, my mother was a registered nurse.

In addition to my twin sister, I have another sister who is 4 years older. We all attended Longfellow Junior High School from kindergarten through ninth grade. It was a great time to be alive. Flint was a vibrant town supported by the automobile industry. In 1955, GM celebrated it's 50th anniversary.

Living in Mott Park had many advantages. In the spring, summer and fall we had Mott Park itself which had the greatest swing sets in town, along with the longest teeter totters. Also a small amphitheater that was used for entertainment for the neighborhood. Plays and acts of all kinds. Many a time we would sled into that wall in the winter, "ouch." Then came the tennis courts and last but not least was the tunnel that goes under the street (Nolen Drive) and onto Mott Park Golf Course. We loved to holler and listen to the echo of our voices.

I started playing golf at the age of 12 (1950) and could play all day with our junior card for 65 cents. We played all day and some nights under the moon. In the winter it was sledding and tobogganing. Parents and kids from all over Flint would come to the hill - it would be packed. Besides sledding, we went to a place we called The Bowl, it was flooded for ice skating. The Bowl was part of Dougherty and Weller, at the farthest point North in the park. During the winter vacations we'd



JERRY LIGHT IN 1949, 11 years old, safety patrol.

spend most of the day skating and playing pom-pom. In the spring sometimes the Flint River would overflow and the

river would be as high as Nolen Drive. It was quite a spectacle.

I watched St. John Vianney school being built as well as Gerholz building the subdivision just up the hill from Marquette on Golfside Lane. The experiences while growing up in this area enriched us forever. Friendships are at the top of the list. Across the street from our house was a tiny boulevard, a tree and some shrubs, that allowed us to play Hide and Seek for hours. What fun we had. We never spent time in the house except for dinner. Our world was outdoors. The neighborhood gave us a sense of security in this close knit group of families.

I was standing in my driveway one night in 1953 when the Beecher Tornado came through Coldwater Road and killed I believe 116 people. I never saw the sky turn so yellow and the air so calm on Marquette Street before.

For activities with our fathers, we joined the Indian Guides, which was a father-son organization similar to the Boy Scouts. We met on Friday nights and prior to our meetings in one of our homes, we would listen to the latest episode of the "Lone Ranger." It didn't get much better than that.

Some of the things I have never forgotten from my childhood is going to Whimpy's for the best hamburgers in town. Soap Box Derby on Cadillac Street, and the trolley buses. Do you remember at Atwood Stadium the Thanksgiving Day football game between Flint Northern and Flint Central? - Would you believe 20,000 people attended?

These are just a few of the places and events that will test the memory and will guarantee a wonderful trip back in time.



THE TWINS - Jerry and Judy about six in this photo taken in the MP House. Jerry and his wife Sandra now live in Grand Blanc. Judy is married to Pete Loder and lives in Flint. Both twin's have three children.

Learning an interesting lesson of "Pay Back..."

I was four years old when my parents, Floyd and Claire Harris built their home in Mott Park. It was 1928 and the second house to be built on Nolen Drive - we were opposite of the 1st fairway of Mott Park Golf Course. We were lucky!

There were three tennis courts down in the valley and we played often. I went on to play tennis for Flint Central - as did others such as Bob Steffen, Pete Sark and my brother Bob who eventually played for MSU. Bob has passed away but my sister, Barbara, lives in San Francisco.

My parents lived in their house on Nolen Drive the rest of their lives. They both passed away when they were 90 years old.

I graduated from U of M in 1945 with an Engineering degree and worked for seven years at Buick. I left to take a position with a parts supplier to the automotive industry and stayed until retirement.

I will never forget when Nolen Drive was just a dirt road. Then a third house was built on our block of Nolen Drive by George Kellogg and the road was paved. Thomas Street was right behind us and was quite built up at that time.

There were kids everywhere in the neighborhood. We were all close and often walked to school together. It wasn't a long walk, only about 15 minutes or so. I remember the Depression and caddying at the golf course. I made 35 cents for nine holes. It was a great thing to have a golf course right in our front yard and tennis courts at the end of our block.



FLOYD HARRIS, a 35 year Buick employee, built the second house on Nolen Drive in 1928. He and his wife lived in the house for the rest of their lives, both passing away in their 90's.

Best of all was how much fun we had together. We all got along together and we supervised ourselves. We played football and baseball on the sandlot. Thanks to the Mott Foundation the school gym was opened in the evenings so we could play basketball at night.

I learned an interesting lesson of "Pay Back." This goes back to WWII when my father, a 35 year Buick employee approached GMI for help in a math solution for heat treating tank engine parts. The school willingly helped by providing Professor McKeechie to assist my dad.

Years later when GMI became a private school, I was named to their Board of Trustees. As a result of this involvement I learned that the school needed to improve the rough conditions of the playing fields - yes on of the same fields that we played on when we were kids. It was "Pay Back" time. Sixty years later, in 2002, my wife and I were in a position to provide funds to rebuild what is now known as "Harris Fields."



THE HARRIS CLAN - grew up in Mott Park. Ed lives in northern Michigan, sister Barbara Monie lives in San Francisco and brother Bob has passed away.

By Kevin Snyder

Those were the days...

The Mott Park neighborhood gave us so many memories and friendships. We grew up together - we went to school together, played together from grade school through eighth grade. I remember it like it happened yesterday. Playing baseball and football in the park with - Tony and Mike Leoni, Bill Davis, Steve Sleva, Eric and Chris Bauer, Chuck Purdy to name a few. We would pick teams and go at it without pads or helmets. We played tackle. Sometimes we played in Purdy's yard - it was at the end of the road on Nalan Drive. We would go anywhere we could find a game.

By the time we could play in the eighth grade, we were a TEAM. We were ready! All those years of neighborhood games would pay off. We played in the Knights of Columbus League for Catholic grade schools and went undefeated, winning the trophy. We were coached by our teacher Stu Cameron who went on to another league and became a head coach.

We had a powerful team and played St. Mary's for the championship game under the lights of Holy Redeemer Field. What a thrilling game - we won 14-12. We only had twenty players so most of us played both offense and defense. Our line included Bill Davis, John Linker (who went on to play at CMU), both of the Leoni's who played at Power's and went onto play for U of M, with Paul LeVielie, Jim Mynesburg, Tom Lindman and little Mike Pougnet. Our backfield was led by Tony Leoni, Steve Sleva, Eric Bauer and me the quarterback.

Almost all of us went onto play high school football. Most of the guys went to Powers, but I chose Flint Northern where both my parents had gone to school. Then went to Albion College, where I was on the baseball and football teams. After college, I went to medical school at MSU. Now, I have a family and sports medicine practice in Flushing.

The atmosphere of growing up in Mott Park was rare - the schools, the friendships created - will be remembered for the rest of our lives. Kids today don't have fun like we did. They play computer games and stay in the house. They will never know the thrill of playing block tag, hide-n-seek, kick ball, water fights - and winning a championship was best of all. Those were the days....we will never forget!



ST. JOHN VIANNEY Junior Varsity Football Team, Stuart Cameron, Coach

THE CHAMPS OF 1970 - front row: L to R - Steve Sleva, Bill Davis, Paul LaVielle, Eric Bauer, Tom Lindman, Larry Paroff, Chris Bauer (manager). middle row: L to R - Don Mynesberg (manager) UNKNOWN, UNKNOWN, UNKNOWN, Dirk Hogan, Mike Pougnet, UNKNOWN, Jeff Racine, Coach Stuart Cameron. top row: L to R - Coach, Tony Leoni, Kevin Snyder, Jim Mynesberg, Ken Boyd, Mike Leoni, John Linker, UNKNOWN.

2001 Cadillac Street • By Cathy Snyder

"It was love at first sight..."

Try it. Shut your eyes. Can you see it? Your mother's kitchen? There on the left side, a big green and yellow gas range with a couple of steel pots cooking on the stove. Right next to the range there's the ice box with a hunk of ice setting in a little door at the top. The sink is on the other wall, it hangs from the wall. Painted cupboards over the sink, and under the window, a green table and chairs.

My dad built our house on the north end of the street near Industrial Avenue named "Tilden." I remember most of the men in our neighborhood walking to work at the emerging Buick factory, that's where my father worked too.

It was a nice street but we didn't have a park, we played on a gravel parking lot at the Tilden Hall. It was the local entertainment center. The hall was only two blocks from our house. It was an old wood building where every Saturday night there would be a Polish wedding or a party. If you weren't invited, you took front row on the curb and watched the show (TV...what's that?) and if you were dared by your peers, you'd crash the party and walk off with a bottle of orange pop.

In the winter we walked a bunch of miles to Forrest Park to go ice skating. We played games under the street lights and listened to Tiger baseball and saved bubble gum pictures. On the 4th of July, if you went up on the roof you could see the top of the fire works at Flint Park. That's where I grew up!

When I got married we bought a small story and half home that did have a small park on the next block. But, four kids later we went house



THE FOUR LITTLE SNYDERS - (top) Jan and Kevin, (lower) Patti and Keith were caught in a chalk drawing by Jesse Fowler in Bowman's Drug Store in 1969. They all attended St. John Vianney.



THIS STYLE OF A MOTT PARK HOME was not likely built by GM. Cadillac Street is lined with typical GM houses except for the corner lots. This version of Dutch Colonial is at the corner of Perry and Cadillac St.

hunting to 2001 Cadillac Street in Mott Park. Dick Ehrbright and his family were moving out of state. Prior to Dick Ehrbright and his family living in this house, the O'Dea family lived there for many years.

It was 1967, The Ehrbrights were asking a lot of money - \$14,000. I walked in the front door. Saw the big living room, with grand fireplace, and big dining room. It was love at first sight. "We'll take it!" I said. "But you haven't even seen upstairs..." "That's okay, We'll take it."

I shut my eyes and said, "Mom, I'm home."



REMEMBER those big snow days of the 60's? Posing for a picture, the Snyders - Mom Cathy, with Patti and Keith.

Mott Park Chronicles

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By Joan M. Meisler

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Sears Roebuck

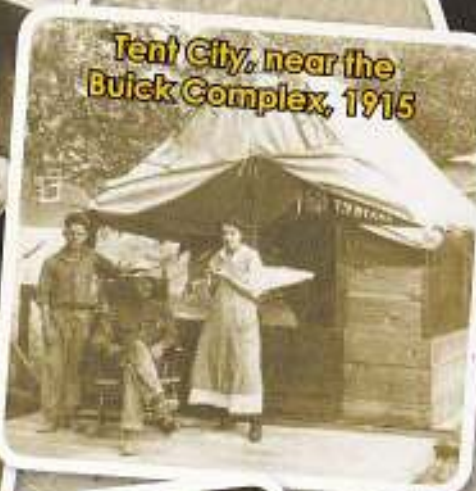
"Rite Way Shoe Rebuilders", 1927



**"Indian Guides" at
Camp Copneconic**



**Tent City, near the
Buick Complex, 1915**



**Boy Scout
Troop #60**



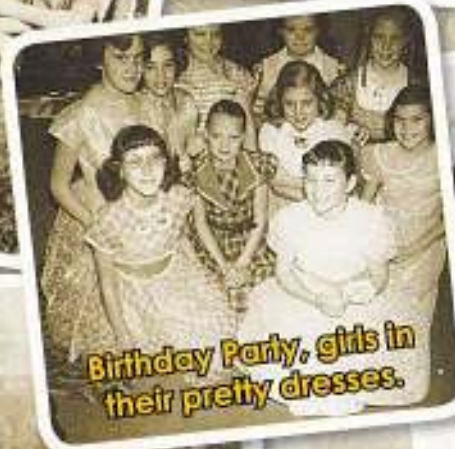
2546 Nolen Drive



Assembly Line



**Birthday Party, girls in
their pretty dresses.**



**A winter pastime ~
Sledding down the hill.**



**The Gazall
Children,
1971**



Perry Street • Photo taken by Bill Gallagher

