



# Waterfront changes brings new vibrancy to Ludington



BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

One of the biggest changes for the past 50 years is the transformation of Pere Marquette Lake from the shipping center for much of the 20th century to one where smaller recreational craft find refuge in droves.

The Pere Marquette River channel — linking Pere Marquette Lake with the harbor mouth and Lake Michigan — saw its first developments with Crosswinds Condominiums. The condos were constructed on very tip of the Buttersville Peninsula, and the project lies within the city limits. South of the development still is a portion of Pere Marquette Charter Township. Crosswinds began construction in 1980.

In that same year, the vacant land that was once home to the Ludington Mariners professional baseball team was dug out for the Ludington Municipal Marina. The marina opened in May 1981. The marina was described as the first of the major projects to change the landscape of the shores of Pere Marquette Lake.

The marina was just the start, though. For a long time, much of the land along Pere Marquette Lake was zoned industrial to account for businesses such as Star Watch Case and the work of the car ferries. But the factory closed and C&O Railroad abandoned the ferries. It reached a point where the SS Badger was the sole survivor of the fleet, and just barely. For a time, the Badger, too, had its service suspended when the Michigan-Wisconsin Transportation Co. stopped service in 1990.

But in the same year, the city changed its zoning from industrial to water-

front. And with the zoning change, it ushered in immense changes along the Pere Marquette Lake shores between the municipal marina and the final carferry slip.

Demolition of the Star Watch Case building began in 1995, and it paved the way for Harbor View Condominiums to begin construction. Plans, too, were unveiled for Waterfront Park, nestled between the municipal marina and a new marina, Harbor View Marina.

Charles Conrad — who bought the SS Badger and created Lake Michigan Carferry for cross-lake service — also bought the land where Star Watch Case was located and donated it to the city. At the time, it was viewed by the Daily News as “a major milestone in Ludington’s long quest to make the city’s waterfront reach its economic potential as a cornerstone for tourism and recreation.”

Conrad’s son-in-law, Robert Manglitz, formed Ludington West LLC and that’s where the Harbor View Condominiums got their start. He also built the 200-slip Harbor View Marina in 1997.

Alongside the marina, the land between the two marinas was developed into Waterfront Park. The plans for the park were unveiled in 1996, and the park has within it several statues and sculptures depicting the city’s and region’s history.

“The park, with its life-size bronze statues, is considered by most residents and visitors as one of the jewels of the city,” wrote Paul Peterson in his book, “The Story of Ludington.”

Alongside the sculptures and playground is a pavilion that has played host to concerts, candidate forums and more in the intervening years.

# Residents find variety of ways to have good time

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

Entertaining the people of Ludington stretches as far back as the city's founding.

Five or six amusement halls were operating in the 1870s when the city got its start, including the Temperance Hall at the intersection of Ludington Avenue and James Street, the Clark Building on the northwest corner of Ludington Avenue and Robert Street and upper floors of the Masonic and Odd Fellows halls.

Jacob Staffon, the chief clerk of the Pere Marquette Lumber Company built an opera house on South James Street for plays and music. Dancing and card parties also dominated the entertainment scene at that time. Staffon's Opera House was located at 109 N. Robert Street and fulfilled the entertainment needs with music recitals, musicals, dramatic readings, minstrel and vaudeville shows.

Entertainment for residents included bands, and those bands needed bandleaders as the music was largely instrumental in the early 1900s.

The Lyric Theater was a remodeled version of the Ludington Opera House that was constructed in 1884. The renovations took place in 1910 and it became the Lyric Theater in the 1920s, one of two theaters that showed motion pictures in the city. The Lyric was joined by the German Hall and the Guild Hall as destinations.

The foot of Ludington Avenue proved to have a key place for some of the big bands of the 1930s. The Rainbow Gardens Dance Pavilion was located where the Ludington Area Jaycees' Mini-Golf is today. In the 1930s, the pavilion had an extensive dance floor with hanging planters.

A second theater got its start in the city at 115 W. Ludington Ave., and it was dubbed the Eagle. A third, the Kozy, opened for a short time at 123 S. James St. in the 1910s. The original Kozy closed, though, and the Eagle was renamed the Kozy. It then was named the Center Theater in 1942 before closing in 1954.

The movies stayed in Ludington into the early 2000s, but Lyric owner GKC Theatres built a multi-screen complex in Amber Township, shutting down the long-time downtown Ludington theater in 2007. The building served as a church for a short time before it became vacant.

The theater and musical arts continued on in and around the city over the intervening decades. Between performances by students at Ludington High School, the start of the Scottville Clown Band that pleases those who attend the Fourth of July Parade and the cultural attractions at West Shore Community College, the thirst for the arts — including the visual arts — continued to grow. The college began to bring performers in to supplement the artists it was growing through its campus.

WSCC brought in some



A large crowd gathered at Waterfront Park in Ludington for the second Rhythm & Dunes concert featuring Trinity, a Styx, Foreigner and Journey tribute band in 2019.

JEFF KIESSEL | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



The Lyric Theater in November 1975.

RUSS MILLER | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

big names during the course of the years. In the 1980s, stars such as Lee Greenwood, Tammy Wynette and Chet Atkins were brought in. The West Shore Symphony Orchestra, the U.S. Navy band and more have performed.

Today, one of the gems of the WSCC performing arts beyond its music program is its acclaimed productions including most recently, "Footloose."

Fast forward into the early part of this century, and the Ludington Arts Council soon took on the Ludington Area Center for the Arts in the old First Methodist Church on South Harrison Street. LACA proved to be the first move for a cultural hub within the city. Sandcastles Children's Museum occupied the former Elks building in 2010 on the

northwest corner of Harrison Street and Ludington Avenue.

Then came the Mason County Historical Society with its third site in the area by renovating a former bank branch building on the southwest corner of the same intersection in 2022 into its Mason County Research Center. By then, the historical society not only had that building but continued to manage its Historic White Pine Village in Pere Marquette Township and the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum located in the former U.S. Coast Guard Station at the foot of Lakeshore Drive along the Pere Marquette River channel.

And not that far away, the old, historic Ludington Library stood with expansions over the years including the most recent

expansion and renovation in 2011.

The music scene has flourished in the past decades, too. Locations such as LACA, The Sand Bar and The Mitten have attracted acts over the years, and in its heyday, Michael's. The music hasn't always been indoors, either, as Ludrock hosted a two-day event over a weekend in July in the past at Waterfront Park.

The same location has also served as the home of West Shore Bank's Rhythm & Dunes benefit concert series that is in the height of summer.

As much as residents and visitors can view the art around them and at a variety of galleries in the city, Ludington plays host to two art fairs over the course of the summer months: LACA's West Shore Art Fair



Jane Carpenter, who helped curate the women's history art exhibit now on display at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts, talks about a painting in the style of Judith Leyster by local artist Kathleen Barrett. LACA has grown in 15 years to be a hub of artists of multiple disciplines.

RILEY KELLEY | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



Members of the cast of "Mamma Mia!" perform in 2020 at West Shore Community College.

JEFF KIESSEL | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

in early July and the near 40-year-old Chamber Alliance of Mason County's Gold Coast Artisan Fair in mid-August, both at Rotary Park.

And the city is a bit of a hub for the various cultural trails that were established

by the Cultural Economic Development Task Force. Six distinctive trails were developed — the Agricultural Trail, the Barn Quilt Trail, the Lumber Heritage Trail, the Music Heritage Tour, the Sculpture Trail and the Maritime Heritage Tour.



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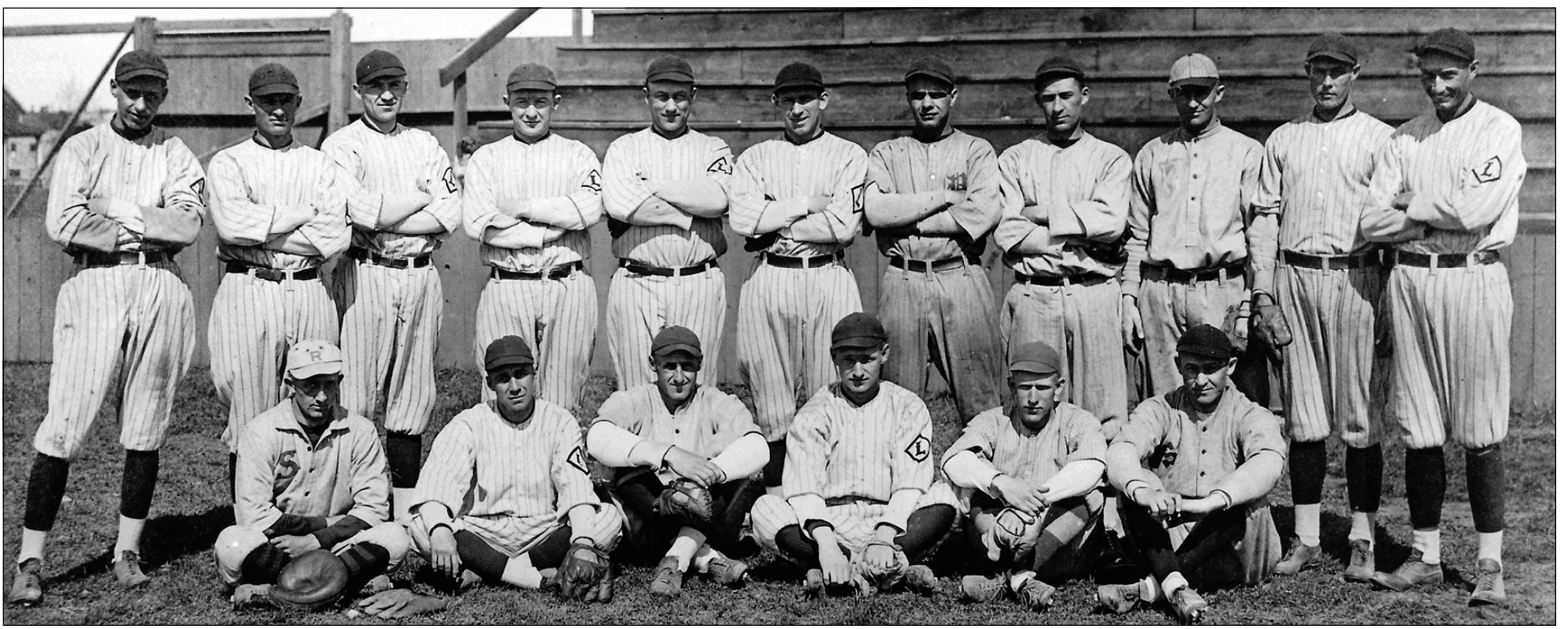


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COURTESY OF BILL ANDERSON

The 1921 Ludington Mariners pose for a team photo at Culver Park in Ludington. The Mariners dominated the Class B Central League that season.

# Athletics makes mark on community through generations

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The roots of sports and athletics reaches more than 100 years in the city.

Ludington was the home of a professional baseball team, the Ludington Mariners. The Mariners played on and off in the early 1900s at Culver Park, a baseball stadium where that was located at today's site of the Ludington Municipal Marina. The Mariners were in the Class B Central League.

Within these professional and semiprofessional teams were two key figures. Larry McPhail played for Ludington in 1908, and he went on to be an executive with the Cincinnati Reds, Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Yankees. He is a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Then came David Claire. Claire, a local, eventually got the call to be the county's first and only Major League Baseball player with the Detroit Tigers.

In September 1935, Oriole Field opened with its first football game, pitting rivals Ludington and Manistee. The Orioles won, 26-0.

Ludington's excellence in running started with Tim Quinn in the early 1930s. Quinn set national high school records in the 880-yard run and mile-run. It is those distances and longer that people in and around Ludington have excelled through the generations.

Basketball caught on in a big way in the 1950s. After Joe Kowatch was named coach, he started a tradition rivaled by few that continues today in both boys and girls basketball. With Kowatch guiding the Orioles, Ludington was the 1953 state runner-up. Kowatch remained on the bench for 17 seasons and picked up 228 wins including 11 league titles in 13 years, 10 district titles and six regional titles.

One of Ludington's first basketball stars was Pete Tillotson. The 6-foot, 6-inch center was one of the finest players in the state, even earning posthumous recognition in the 2000s as a Retro Mr. Basketball as the greatest player during his senior year.

Generations later, Mandy Stowe had essentially the same impact as Tillotson. In girls basketball, the forward/center was a three-time All-Stater and finished with 2,160 points. At the time, she was the seventh-highest leading scorer in the state. She went on to a college basketball career at the University of Michigan and University of Wisconsin-Green Bay before playing professionally in Europe.

Guiding those Orioles was passed on from mentor Joe Kowatch to eventually Gene Shank. Shank coached St. Ignace to a state runner-up finish and guided the Orioles for more than 20 years at both the varsity and junior varsity level. His son, Thad, today guides Ludington's boys basketball team to continue to compete at the highest levels including two trips to the state semifinals in the past six years.

It wasn't just the mix of bruising and grace on the basketball floor that caught Ludington's attention, though. The high school had one of the great sports dynasties in Michigan athletics with its gymnastics



LLOYD WALLACE | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

The 1978 Ludington High School gymnastics team poses for a photo with the MHSAA Class B state championship — the program's fourth consecutive state championship. The gymnastics team at Ludington was one of the most dominant high school programs in the state and most successful at the school.

program. Very quickly after the implementation of Title IX, Ludington's gymnastics program went on an unbeaten streak that lasted 72 consecutive competitions and four state championships. The streak went into 1978.

In all, the Orioles won five state championships, five regional titles, seven league championships and a dual record of 142-3 at one point.

Key gymnasts were a part of the Class of 1978 at Ludington, including Martha Garrett and Deb Hiline. Garrett was a three-time All-State gymnast and Hiline was honored with All-State twice. Garrett went on to compete at Oral Roberts University, placing at national competition.

Grace came with a whole lot of head-bangin' as the rockin' Jensen brothers, Luke and Murphy, won the 1993 French Open title in men's doubles. The pair grew up in Ludington, the son of Pat and Howard Jensen. Pat was a former coach of the gymnastics dynasty of the 1970s and Howard was the longtime and legendary tennis coach for LHS.

While basketball captured the hearts and minds of generations of Ludington folks, another game found its way in that place fairly quickly in the 1990s and continues to today. The international game of soccer grew not only in popularity but also in excellence. The Orioles were a state runner-up in 1994 in boys soccer and both the boys and girls programs continue to have very strong programs.

The program took top flight under the guidance of Fred Horstman.

The love of the game has created a healthy and vibrant youth soccer program that oversees the Bryant Soccer Fields at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Bryant Road.

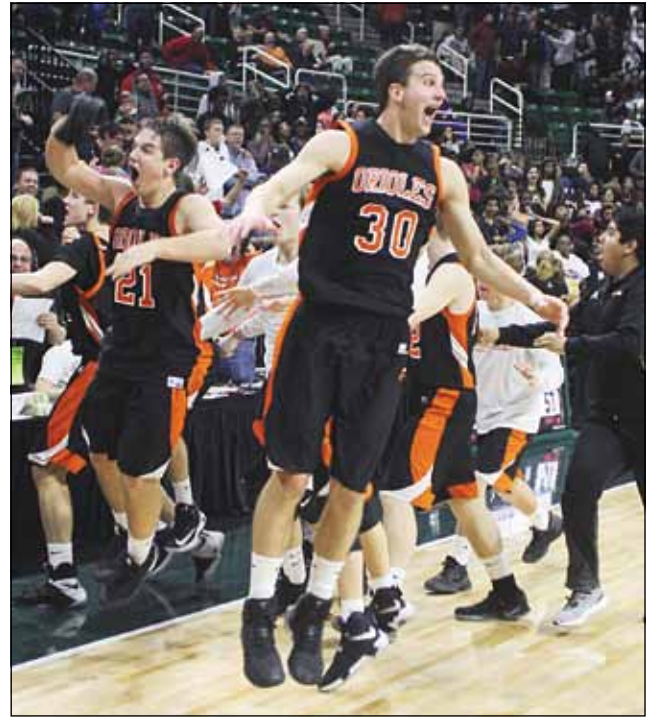
Ludington also had one big-time standout in football. Bob Organ, a two-time All-State player at Ludington, went on to a college career at Michigan State. With Organ, the Orioles had an unbeaten regular season and first-ever playoff berth.

Where many of the sports are played in the comforts of sunshine and warm temperatures, one sportsman warmed people with his exploits on the Iditarod in Alaska. Al Hardman became the first local to not only compete in the sled dog race in 1997, he competed in several of the grueling races.

Internationally speaking,

one standout from the Ludington area competed in the Olympics. Matt Hughes of Pere Marquette Township rowed his way to China, not quite literally, as he competed for the United States in the Summer Games.

Hughes isn't the only one to have a significant role with the Olympic Games. Ludington alumna Kaitlin

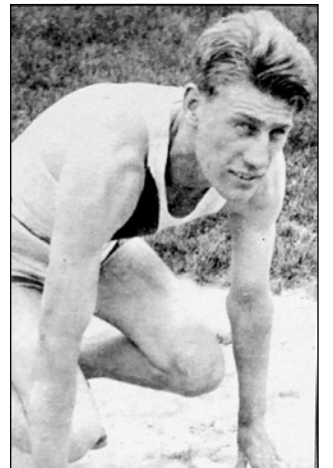


MITCH GALLOWAY | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

The 2017 Ludington Orioles boys basketball team celebrates winning an MHSAA Class B state semifinal game in overtime against River Rouge on a buzzer-beating shot.

Urka not only worked several Olympic Games for NBC Sports, she's earned Emmy Awards for her work as a producer with the network and covered everything from the NHL to Notre Dame football. Urka recently left NBC for ESPN.

Recognizing the history of sports in the area, and its impact, the Mason County Sports Hall of Fame has inducted many of these athletes, individuals and teams since 2005. Those stories can be seen at Historic White Pine Village in Pere Marquette Township and at a kiosk at the Mason County Historical Society Research Center in downtown Ludington.



DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

Tim Quinn poses for a photo. Quinn set national high school records in the 1930s.

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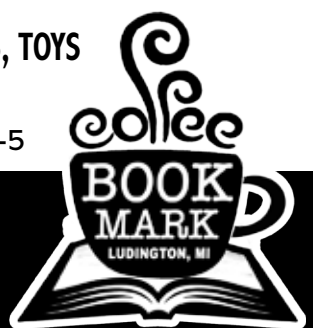
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# Ludington B & B's offer 'Welcome Home' service

Two words come to mind when visitors and vacationers set their sights on Ludington: "Welcome Home."

All year long, and especially during the sun-sational summer season, the Ludington Bed and Breakfast Association reaches out to embrace those who make this peaceful, friendly West Michigan community their home-away-from-home, if even for just a short period of time – especially if it's for just a short period of time.



The Ludington House Bed & Breakfast - Breakfast Room

"It's a setting that's intimate," said Jennifer Hinderer of The Lamplighter Bed and Breakfast. "As innkeepers we get to know people fairly quickly – we connect with them."

"You're in a home that's a much quieter place (versus a hotel)," said Ellen Alderink of The Ludington House. "You have maybe eight to ten rooms, at the most. It's just a more relaxed, quiet setting. There's interaction between the innkeeper and the guest. It's limited only by what the guest wants. If they want quiet and for us to stay away, we do. If they want to chat with us at breakfast we'll join in. We'll take their cue."

The Ludington Historic Bed and Breakfast Association (LHBB) is made up of four historical and immaculate homes-turned-businesses, including The Cartier Mansion and Carriage House; The Lamplighter Bed and Breakfast; The Candlelite Inn Bed and Breakfast and the Ludington House Bed and Breakfast. The association promotes a true "all for one and one for all" spirit " .. exists to promote

warm hospitality, delightful charm, and unique amenities offered at all our association Inns. Guests will enjoy comfortable, one-of-a-kind rooms that are far from ordinary. Each lovely inn offers a delectable full breakfast starting your day off in style."

Bob Alderink, president of the association, and his wife, Ellen, operate The Ludington House.

"We all have historic properties, large and small, that in some way had influence or have been a part of Ludington's history, a history related to the lumber industry," Bob said. "Our focus today is in recognizing our 150 years in Ludington. The association is proud to be part of the history as we focus on the history of the place. The association celebrates that, but it also gives us an avenue to work together on projects. The association is built so that we can help each other out as members, as colleagues – it's more of a sense of camaraderie than of competition for us – remembering that high water floats all boats, because working together helps us all and we really like that. It's a great little group. We share what's going on. We're constantly texting and talking to each other and working together."

Melanie Barnard of the Candlelite Inn Bed & Breakfast said she looks forward to guests arriving day after day, year after year.

"I think we are so unique here," Melanie said. "We have the four of us and we're all so close. We can network, help support each other and help support our business. The association has been around from the time our B&Bs were first started back in late 70s, early 80s, so we have some great



Lamplighter Bed & Breakfast - Bedroom Suite

roots, too."

Jenna Simpler, owner/innkeeper of the Cartier Mansion and Carriage House, echoed the association's "team" approach is what makes them so successful.

"I think what makes us really unique is that we focus on our guests, and their experience, when they come and stay with us – it's like having family, and close friends – that's the experience that bed and breakfast have been known to offer, really, for many years," Jenna said. "That's the foundation for who we are, we are bringing people into our home, and our business, so there's a uniqueness there because it's still our private home but we're bringing them in and sharing the history, sharing our hospitality, caring for them, helping them to plan their experience. We want them to come back. We want them to feel like they are home and that they can relax and build relationships with us so that they're not afraid to ask us for things, unlike hotels where you don't have that person there who you can touch base with, or who will check in with you to make sure things are good."

The fact the four bed and breakfast businesses have deep roots to the community's past means a lot to them here and now –



Cartier Mansion - Grand Staircase

individually and collectively. And, when those who stay at either asks for a little historic background, all are only too happy to respond.

And though all four tout their historic pride, all four also remember what it is that makes their guests come back day after day, year after year – the fact they are embracing a "Welcome Home" atmosphere to all who visit.

"We customize experiences for each guest from the food we make for them in the morning, to the activities that are happening around town, and people love that – they love to feel pampered and taken care of when they are on vacation," Jenna said. "I think we do a great job at it, collectively, and individually. We have a common thread, and we help support each other."

Jen shared that it goes beyond the food and accommodations – "we take the time to understand what guests enjoy doing and whenever possible, we point them to Ludington's natural attractions as well." Ellen agreed. "We like to tell guests about our favorite trails in the state park, and are always reminding them not to miss our beautiful sunsets!"



Candlelite Inn Bed & Breakfast - Great Room

To contact the association and the four businesses:

Ludington Historic Bed & Breakfast Association: ludingtonbedandbreakfast.com

Candlelite Inn Bed & Breakfast: candleliteinnludington.com; 231-845-8074

Cartier Mansion: cartiermansion.com; 231-843-0101

The Lamplighter Bed & Breakfast: Ludington-michigan.com; 231-843-9792

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# Our National Historic Landmarks

## Nine of 11 Mason County sites on historic registry in, near City of Ludington History, lore part of Big Sable Point Lighthouse's heritage

BY JANE GRAY  
LUDINGTON DAILY NEWS

It's stood for over 130 years, lighting the way for Lake Michigan sailors. And although modern navigational aids have made the necessity of the light obsolete, the Big Sable Point Lighthouse still has a major place in the history of the area and in the hearts of its admirers.

In 1848 the merchant schooner Neptune sank just off Big Sable Point with the loss of 37 lives and more than \$35,000 in cargo intended for logging camps. Because of this tragedy local officials began requesting a lighthouse at Big Sable Point. In 1855 12 ships wrecked between Big Sable Point and Ludington to the south, taking 48 lives. Congress finally appropriated \$6,000 for the building of

a light at Big Sable Point on Aug. 18, 1856. Subsequent land surveys and land acquisitions had to be made before the actual construction of the structure.

The lighthouse was built in 1866 by order of President Andrew Johnson and was lit for the first time in 1867. The signal was a fixed white, third order Fresnel lens that came from Paris, France, at a cost of \$1,000. The light was burned only during the shipping season, April through November, or as conditions warranted. The Fresnel lens was removed from the tower in 1985, and is now on display at White Pine Village. A 300 mm. plastic Fresnel lens now provides the light in the tower.

Because of the constant battering of wind and sand against the tower and the keeper's quarters, renovations to the structures have

been ongoing throughout the years. Steel cladding was placed on the tower in 1900 to protect the bricks from weathering. The watch room, at the top of the tower, was also clad in steel in 1905.

Wave action necessitated the building of steel bulkheads parallel to the shoreline in 1943, a rare non-military use of the precious metal during war time. Additional jetties were added in 1952 when erosion at the north end of the structure undermined the bulkheads.

In 1949 remodeling of the keeper's quarters included indoor plumbing, bathrooms, electricity to the house and a steam boiler with central heat radiators. Although the house has been restored and modernized in recent

years, it retains the same basic structure and look of the 1940s.

In 1968 the Big Sable Point Lighthouse was automated; the Coast Guard no longer staffed the station. Deterioration of the shoreline by wind and waves continued and was accelerated by a winter storm in 1977 when the 1952 jetties were breached and the shoreline reached within four feet of the tower. The 1952 jetties, the terrace walls and 170 feet of the 1943 bulkhead were lost to the lake. The following March broken concrete was placed north and west of the tower in an attempt to save it.

Although the light station was placed on the Federal Register of Historical Sites in 1983, (and in 1988 was placed on the State Register of Historical

Sites) in 1985 the State of Michigan abandoned the station and its Coast Guard license, citing liability and vandalism. Interest was renewed in the site in October 1986 when the Foundation for Behavioral Research received a 25-year lease to restore and maintain the station as an educational conference center. Restoration began on the vandalized interior quarters. During that time additional broken concrete was used to fill the land west of the tower in the ongoing struggle to keep the lake at bay.

The foundation maintained its lease until the early 1990s when the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association, which was formed in 1987, took over as lease holder. Restoration of the keepers quarters continued, aided by

a grant from the National Lighthouse Historical Restoration Association for the exterior of the light tower. Subsequent grants from the U.S. Department of Interior, the National Parks Service and the Bicentennial Lighthouse Fund have helped the association maintain the integrity of the buildings' structure and enabled restoration to continue.

Today, the Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association continues their work on the lighthouse, the keepers quarters and the grounds. With help from its members, dozens of volunteers and donations from public and private sources, it is maintaining a toehold against the encroachment of wind, water and time.

**THIS STORY** was republished from the May 26, 1999, edition of the Daily News.

## Courthouse third place in county, first in city to be listed on register

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Mason County Courthouse, 300 E. Ludington Ave., became the third location in Mason County to be named to the National Register of Historic Places, making the listing in 1988.

The courthouse was constructed in 1893-94, and it serves the same purpose it did more than 100 years ago.

Initially, the roof had slate shingles, but those were replaced with asphalt.

The building did undergo changes, particularly when the initial main entrance on the north-facing side was closed off to be converted into an office. The courthouse originally had a holding cell for prisoners in the southwest corner of the building. A staircase was also constructed

to transport prisoners from the basement level to the top-floor courtroom without passing through the public part of the building.

Four of the main offices are largely where they have always been. The county clerk, the county treasurer, the probate office and register of deeds all remain on the main floor as they traditionally have for over the years.

The courtroom continues to have some of the original furnishings from the 1890s. According to the filing in 1988, the gallery of seating that has wood theater seats with decorative iron stanchions is essentially original, including the iron that has a patent date of Sept. 22, 1885, without a manufacturer. And, the spindle work railing separating the seating from the attorneys and the court is original.



The Mason County Courthouse, 301 E. Ludington Ave., as seen in this file photo. The courthouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988, and it's in a cluster of three locations in the city on the register, including Cartier Mansion and East Ludington Avenue Historic District.

JEFF KISSSEL | DAILY NEWS  
FILE PHOTO

## Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse joins register in 2005



A wave crashes into the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse. The lighthouse was built in 1924.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Ludington North Breakwater Light was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.

The lighthouse is 0.4 miles away from the shore, and it was built in 1924. The lighthouse itself was owned by the U.S. Coast Guard, but it was eventually sold to the City of Ludington. Once the city gained ownership, it opened the lighthouse for tours that are managed by the Sauble Point Lighthouse Keepers Association.

The lighthouse is 57 feet tall, and it is a five-sided irregular polygon.

At the time of its nomination, the lighthouse was essentially the same as it was when it was built. Changes made included just routine maintenance, fixes because of deterioration, rewiring of electric systems and modernizing the light and fog signals.

There was a change that took place, though, in 1994. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in repairing damage at the north breakwater added concrete to the surface deck. By doing this, the wood crib supporting the breakwater settled and it made the lighthouse develop a lean of 3.5 degrees towards the north-northeast.

"This caused the signal beam projected from the lantern's classical fourth order Fresnel lens to be out of focus," the application stated.

The lens was removed in 1995 and replaced with a modern light that is powered by solar power.

While visitors and residents often walk the mile both ways to the end of the breakwater to visit the lighthouse — and the breakwater serves as a popular fishing destination — SPLKA opens the lighthouse for tours in the summer months.

## Ludington hosts five state historical markers within its limits

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

Ludington has within its limits five of the Michigan Historical Markers. Most of the markers commemorate the history of the carferries in the city. Some have two distinctive sides, while others have one — including one mounted on Emanuel Lutheran Church.

**ARMISTICE DAY STORM (ERECTED 1971):** The plaque reads in part, "On November 11, 1940, a severe storm swept the Great Lakes area. As it crossed Lake Michigan, ships and seamen fought to reach safety away from its blinding winds and towering seas. Between Big and Little Points Sable the freighters William B. Davock and Anna C. Minch foundered with the loss of all hands. The crew of the Novadoc, driven aground south of Pentwater, battled icy winds and water for two days before being rescued by local fishermen. At Ludington the carferry City of Flint 32 was driven ashore, her holds flooded to prevent further damage."

**SS PERE MARQUETTE 18 (ERECTED IN**

**1977):** The plaque reads in part, "At least twenty-nine persons died when this vessel sank in Lake Michigan twenty miles off the Wisconsin coast on September 9, 1910. One of the Ludington carferry fleet, the 350-foot S. S. Pere Marquette 18 was traveling from this port to Wisconsin. About midlake a crewman discovered the ship was taking on vast amounts of water. The captain set a direct course for Wisconsin and sent a distress signal by wireless. He and the crew battled for four hours to save the boat but she sank suddenly. All of the officers and many of the crew and passengers perished, among them the first wireless operator to die in active service on the Great Lakes."

**LUDINGTON CAR FERRIES (ERECTED 1977):** The plaque reads in part (with S.S. Badger on the reverse side), "Beginning in 1875 the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad shuttled produce, passengers and freight in wooden steamers between Ludington and ports in Wisconsin. In 1892 railroad car ferries service began on the lakes, eliminating the need to unload and load the cars before and after crossing the lake. Five years later the Pere Marquette, the



The green Michigan State Historical Marker is unveiled on the side of Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church at 501 E. Danaher St. in 1999. The church is one of the oldest in the city.

ANDY KLEVORN | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

first steel railroad car ferry on the Great Lakes, sailed from Ludington.

**S.S. BADGER (ERECTED 1977):** The plaque reads in part (with Ludington Car Ferries on the reverse side), "S.S. Badger is one of fourteen ships that served in the Ludington railroad car ferry fleet. ... Named for the athletic teams of the University of Wisconsin

and Michigan State University, the boats were a vital commercial link between the two states. The ferries joined the fleet begun in 1897 by the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad."

**SWEDISH LUTHERAN CHURCH (ERECTED 1999):** The plaque reads in part, "During the 1870s and 1880s, Ludington Swedes, Danes, and

Norwegians worshiped together as the Scandinavian Lutheran Society. In 1873 the society built a church where all three languages were spoken. The Swedes, who had formed their own congregation on August 3, 1874, assumed sole ownership of the building in 1887."

**MASON COUNTY (ERECTED IN 2000):** The plaque reads in part (with Mason County Courthouse on reverse side), "The first permanent Euro-American settlement in Mason County began in 1847 when New York native Burr Caswell and his family arrived at the mouth of the Pere Marquette River. The Caswells lived in a driftwood cabin near the Ottawa village of Nindebekatunning."

**MASON COUNTY COURTHOUSE (ERECTED IN 2000):** The plaque reads in part (with Mason County on reverse side), "Erected in 1893-94, this is the fourth structure to serve as Mason County's courthouse since the county was established in 1855. Grand Rapids architect Sidney J. Osgood designed the Richardsonian Romanesque structure, which was built of Jacobsville sandstone from the Upper Peninsula."

# Our National Historic Landmarks

## Nine of 11 Mason County sites on historic registry in, near City of Ludington USCG station gets landmark designation in 2010

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The longtime Ludington U.S. Coast Guard Station at 101 S. Lakeshore Drive earned its designation as a place on the National Register of Historic Places on May 17, 2010.

The building was in the midst of being transferred from the federal government to the City of Ludington after the armed service moved into a smaller building.

The Ludington Coast Guard station had roots in 1878, largely in part because of the shipping industry that developed here. At one point, in 1931, the Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory stated Ludington's harbor had the third greater annual tonnage pass through behind Chicago and Milwaukee. The station was constructed in 1933-34.

The importance of Ludington grew to where Coast Guard Group Ludington stretched in overseeing service from Saugatuck to Northport in the late 1940s and 1950s. In the 1970s, though, the station group moved to Muskegon and Ludington became a search-and-rescue station.

The building was abandoned by the Coast Guard in 2004, and it became the Mason County Historical Society's Port of Ludington Maritime Museum in 2015.



JEFF KIESSEL | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

The public takes in the grand opening of the Mason County Historical Society's Port of Ludington Maritime Museum in 2015. The former U.S. Coast Guard Station was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2010.

## Lake Michigan Beach House joins listing in 2013



STEVE BEGNOCHE PHOTO | DAILY NEWS FILE

Several concerts take place at the Lake Michigan Beach House patio at Ludington State Park since the renovations to it took place in the 2010s. The structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.

In 1935, Camp Ludington Civilian Conservation Corps members built the Lake Michigan beach house just north of the Big Sable River outlet using Mason County lumber and repurposed bricks from the old Morton Salt factory in Ludington.

Shortly before being named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2013, the decision was made to repair and restore the historic structure.

Alan Wernette of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, told the Daily News for an insert on the state park that the historical renovation of the Lake Michigan Beach House, completed in 2014, opened up the space in the building, allowing for more programming, displays and exhibits to take place in the building.

The renovations included exhibits and displays highlighting the fisheries of the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Fisheries Trust Fund finance much of the renovation work.

The displays, exhibits and designs

were kept in the upper level of the Lake Michigan Beach House, which underwent a number of upgrades and renovations. Electrical outlets were placed around the building to power the various interactive displays, high definition television screens and tablets.

The concession store was relocated to a much smaller space on the north end of the building's lower level.

The original wood topping of the picnic tables on the beach house's second floor were replaced with customized interpretive graphics relevant to the Great Lakes. Each table top contains a different map or graphic with information on a wide range of topics, including fish, watersheds and invasive species.

The Lake Michigan Beach House is open seasonally.

The work of the CCC plus the recent renovations have stood the test of time, as this beautiful building continues to provide views of Lake Michigan sunsets at the end of the day.

## Cartier Mansion listed on National Register in 2014

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Warren A. and Catherine Cartier House, 409 E. Ludington Ave., was one of 10 Michigan locations added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2014.

Owned by Jenna and Chris Simpler and operated as Cartier Mansion, a bed and breakfast and conference center, the home was built by Warren Cartier over a several-year period about 120 years ago.

Warren Cartier built the yellow, Italian-brick, neo-classical-style structure while he was rumored to have been contemplating a run for governor. He told the builders to spare no ex-

pense and he planned to give his acceptance speech on the balcony overlooking Ludington Avenue. He didn't become governor after all, but he and his family did enjoy living in the home.

In 1950, the Cartiers sold it to Abbie and Genevieve Schoenberger, who owned the Schoenberger's Market in Scottville. Gary and Sue Ann Schnitker were the third owners in 2005, and they sold it to the Simplers in 2020.

The Schnitkers opened portions of the home for historical tours on Sundays during the summer. They give guided tours of the first floor and show visitors the second floor where Warren's Room and Kate's

Room contain collections of the Cartiers' belongings.

Among the items in Kate's Room are her desk, two chairs, a fox fur stole, Kate's opera glasses, pieces of china and photographs. Warren's Room contains his humidor, ashtrays, clocks, and various vignettes with information about Warren, his contributions to the local lumbering industry, and his involvement with the University of Notre Dame.

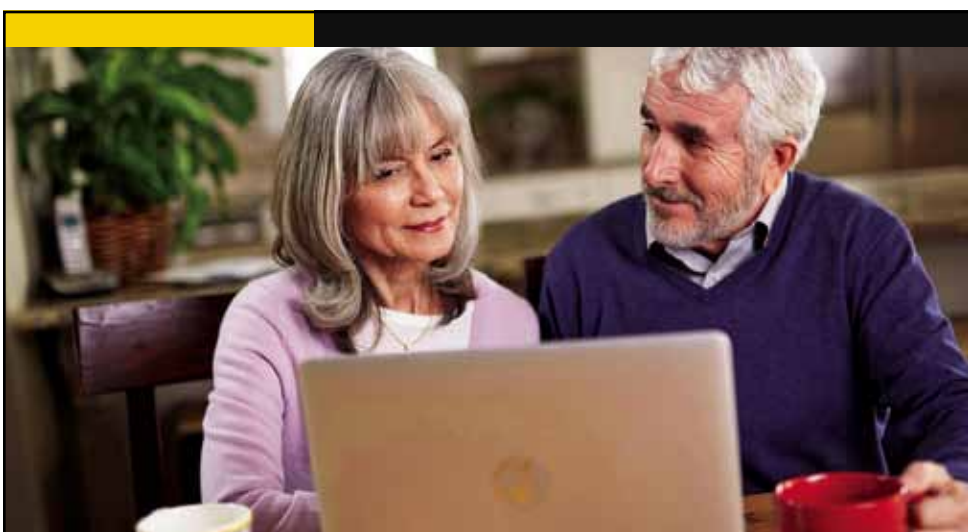
The third floor contains a gymnasium and dark room.

The Simplers converted the Carriage House into four guest suites shortly after purchasing the home and continue to run the Cartier Mansion as a bed and breakfast.



The exterior of the Cartier Mansion on Ludington Avenue in Ludington.

SUE BROWN PHOTO | DAILY NEWS FILE



**Congratulations to the City of Ludington for 150 years!**

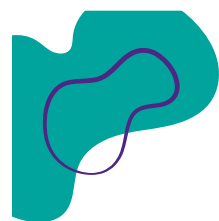
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# Our National Historic Landmarks

## Nine of 11 Mason County sites on historic registry in, near City of Ludington SS Badger began 2016 sailing season as landmark



ANDY KLEVORN | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO  
The SS Badger cruises on Lake Michigan. It earned landmark status in 2016.

BY BRIAN MULHERIN  
LUDINGTON DAILY NEWS

The rain stopped, the clouds parted and the sun shone on the words “A National Historic Landmark” on the stern of the SS Badger as it prepared to depart Ludington Thursday morning.

The sailing marked the end of a tumultuous journey for the cross-lake ferry company, as acknowledged by LMC President and CEO Bob Manglitz, who thanked the employees for weathering storms and leaping hurdles to keep the Badger crossing between Ludington and Manitowoc.

“You are all can-do people,” Manglitz said.

He acknowledged his partners, Jim Anderson — LMC’s first employee under Charles Conrad — and Don Clingan, who took the lead role in trying to obtain the landmark status for the 410-foot ship.

Manglitz thanked Bill Warden, who was the first to propose the

Badger for a National Historic Landmark designation, as well as former Mayor John Henderson and his daughter, Brandy, for the “Save Our Ship” campaign. He also singled out Congressman Bill Huizenga, who he said was a “true champion” of the Badger and a friend.

As Manglitz finished his remarks, a crew raised a flag that had flown over the Capitol above the sea gate bearing the ship’s name. The flag was a gift from U.S. Congressman Bill Huizenga, who was unable to attend, but sent remarks along with his district director, Greg Van Woerkom.

Dr. William Anderson said while many communities search for an identity, Ludington’s was fated because of its proximity to Lake Michigan and with this designation and the upcoming 2017 opening of the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum, Ludington’s identity as a maritime community is reinforced.

As he spoke, he called it “our ship.”

“I say ‘our ship,’ because the people of Ludington share a spiritual ownership — it’s our boat and our boat is bigger than your boat,” Anderson said to cheers and applause.

The designation, which officially occurred Feb. 18, recognizes the Badger’s exceptional value and quality in illustrating an aspect of American transportation technology in the mid-20th century.

The SS Badger is the last remaining example of the Great Lakes rail/ferry design that influenced the design of such ferries around the world and is the last Great Lakes car ferry to remain in operation. The first open-water crossing on which railcars were carried onboard occurred on Lake Michigan. For nearly a century, railroad car ferries extended rail lines across three of the Great Lakes, especially Lake Michigan.

**THIS STORY** was republished from the March 7 and May 12, 2016, editions of the Daily News.

# Lofts on Rowe was renovated at landmark building

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

A building that was undergoing a conversion from a factory and warehouse to new housing received its mark in the National Register of Historic Places in 2020.

Today’s Lofts on Rowe received the designation through the National Park Service that year as it was being converted into the housing it contains today.

The building, located at 801 N. Rowe St., was once known as the Haskell Manufacturing Company Building. The building joined the list on Nov. 10, 2020, and it was a part of the Haskelite Company Building and the Tubbs Manufacturing Company Building. For some in Ludington, it’s better known as the Wolverine Building.

The building was donated

ed by Change Parts owners Dawn and Ron Sarto to Third Coast Development and Michigan Community Capital to become the apartments. Michigan Community Capital took on the full project and completed it in October 2022. When the building was donated, the developers sought the designation.

But the history of the building has roots all the way back to the original Manufacturer’s Addition near the start of the city’s founding.

The Haskell Building at one time made the Carrom game boards, housed the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Wolverine Sportswear Company.

Now, the Lofts on Rowe is a 67-unit apartment building with three-bedroom, two-bedroom, one-bedroom and studio apartments. Plus, there is a commercial space in the renovated building.



The exterior of the Wolverine Building is shown in this undated photo. As the former manufacturing plant and warehouse was being renovated for housing, it was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

DAILY NEWS  
FILE PHOTO

# Historic district on East Ludington Avenue made official in 2022



JUSTIN COOPER | DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO  
The Inn at Ludington stands at 701 E. Ludington Ave., in what is the East Ludington Avenue Historic District in July 2022.

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

The historic district on East Ludington Avenue was made official in July 2022, slotting the neighborhood onto the National Register of Historic Places alongside the North Breakwater Light and SS Badger.

The district is the most recent addition to the register for locations in the City of Ludington.

The district consists of homes facing East Ludington Avenue from Delia to Staffon streets, including the homes south of Leveaux Park in the 400-800 blocks of the street.

Prominent figures in Ludington history lived in that neighborhood, which serves as the gateway to the city, and

the homes built there reflected Ludington’s 100-year path from logging settlement, to industrial center, to tourist haven.

Architectural historian Cheri Szcodronski, who helped nominate the district, said the oldest structure in the district is from 1872, and the newest is from 1963.

At a Ludington City Council meeting in May 2022, Szcodronski described the magisterial homes found in the district, many of which are now bed-and-breakfasts. She said the area is “really notable” for its Queen Anne houses, referring to the Victorian architectural style.

“There are very elaborate, very large ... houses just dominating this district,” she said. “They have very ornate

woodwork, definitely a testament to the lumber industry in the city and the skill of local millers and carpenters.”

There are 42 contributing residences, or homes that are still recognizably historic, and 25 contributing out-buildings like carriage houses. The district is “exceptionally tight,” she said at that council meeting, with no vacant lots — something she said she’s never seen in a historic district.

Leveaux Park, originally called East End Park, was established in 1915 as greenspace and recreation became more of a focus, she said. As industry died down and tourism ramped up mid-century, tourist homes were built and two motels went up within the district.

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# Parks, public works mark city's commitment to residents

BY DAVID BOSSICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

Once the Village of Pere Marquette was transformed into the City of Ludington in 1873, it didn't take long for the city itself to ensure the safety and enjoyability of what the residents had around them.

The city had a boost to its public parcels when J.S. Stearns received a parcel of property that became what is Stearns Park.

Shortly afterward, A.E. Cartier made a donation in 1910 of 75 acres that would become Cartier Park. It took more than a decade for the park to see some development, and even then the city considered making it a trailer park. The deed, though, has a restriction that it only be used for public park purposes. Nearly 100 years after the gift by Cartier, improvements began at Cartier Park in 2003.

The city's progress received a big boost in the 1930s through the New Deal. The Works Progress Administration financed the construction of the post office along Ludington Avenue, Oriole Field, the Mason County Airport and original Ludington sewage treatment plant on Lake Street.

City Hall itself went through three structures. The original structure lasted 65 years and was supplanted by a second building in 1948. The current Ludington Municipal Building completed in 2001 is located on the site of the former St. Simon Church near the intersection of Harrison and Foster streets.

A focus on downtown businesses began in the late 1960s with the Central Business District Development Committee — a precursor to the today's Downtown Development Authority. The then-Ludington Area Chamber of Commerce saw the need then to try to keep downtown as a place to shop as folks began to look outside the city's limits.

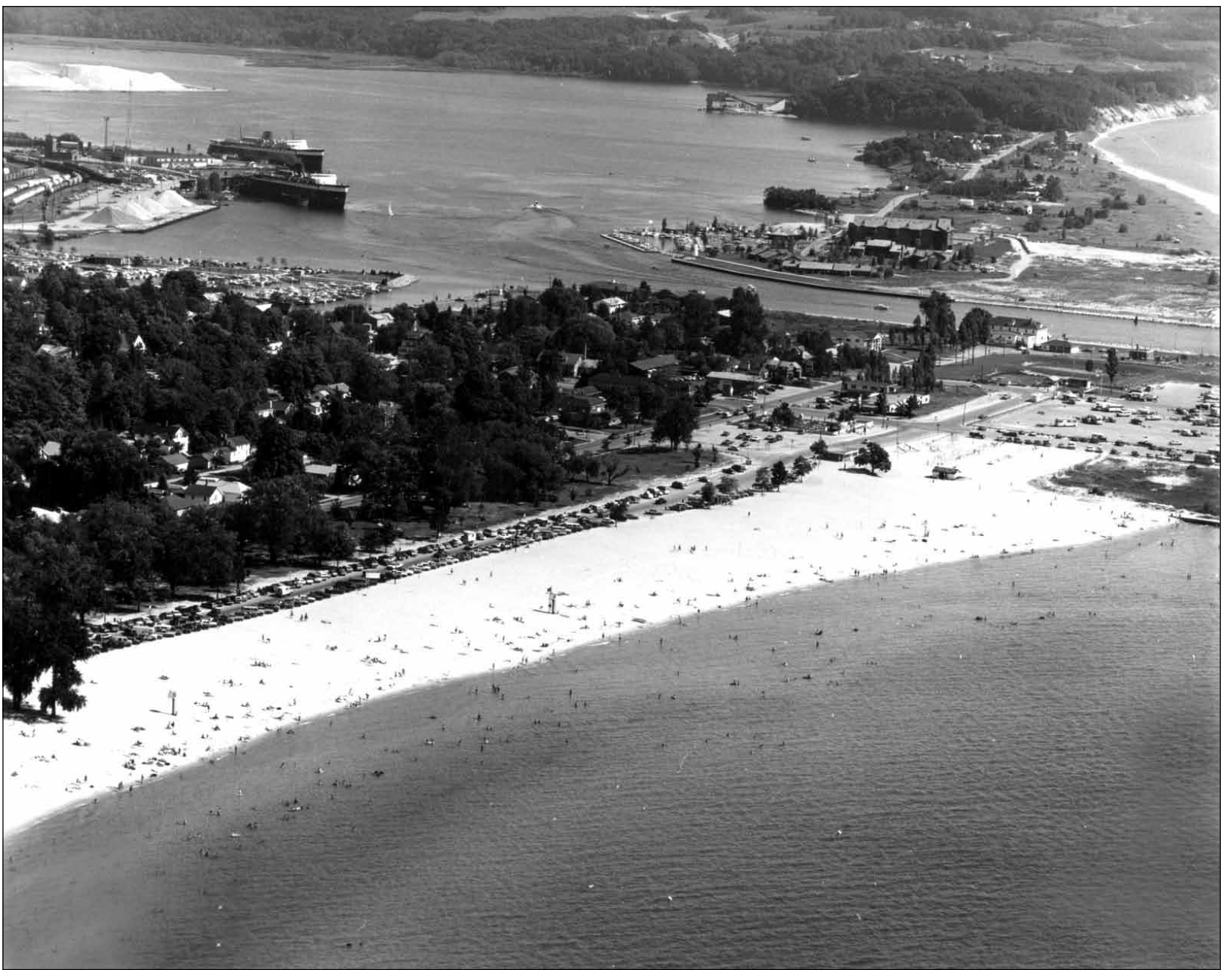
A water filtration plant was dedicated in 1969 and the waster water treatment plant on Sixth Street was a joint project between the city and Pere Marquette Township in 1973. Those plants stood the test of time and recently went through major renovations.

Serving its citizens — particularly those who were much more experienced in life — started to take a much more tangible form in the 1980s with the creating of the Ludington Area Senior Center. It's a mix of recreation and service for those residents of the city and beyond to stay active and more.

Not all of the beautification efforts of the city were done by city staff. Volunteers led by Ellery Sabin in the 1980s created the Petunia Parade, a summer-long planting and caring for red, white and blue petunias planted from the eastern city limits by the hospital and stretching to the intersection of Ludington Avenue and Lakeshore Drive. The flowers also were planted alongside the municipal marina, too.

Another longstanding group that's assisted in beautification efforts in the city is the Mason County Garden Club. At tiny Leveaux Park, along Ludington Avenue between Madison and Staffon streets, the club has planted and maintained geraniums and alyssum. The group has its annual plant sales there, too.

The city didn't stand pat, though. Changes came from the city in a variety of places. The first announced plan was for the closing of James Street between Court Street and Ludington Avenue to convert it into a plaza. Fund-raising for a new plaza streetscape began in 1991, and over the years, some additions took place. The final major transformation of what is now Legacy Plaza took place in July 2021.



Stearns Park Beach was full of sunbathers and swimmers in this undated aerial photo.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



The City of Ludington's Water Plant on Lakeshore Drive in this undated photo.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



A view of the fountain area at the center of what was called City Park. Today, it's Rotary Park along Ludington Avenue.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



The City of Ludington's street sweeper pushes the sand back toward the beach at Stearns Park in this undated photo.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



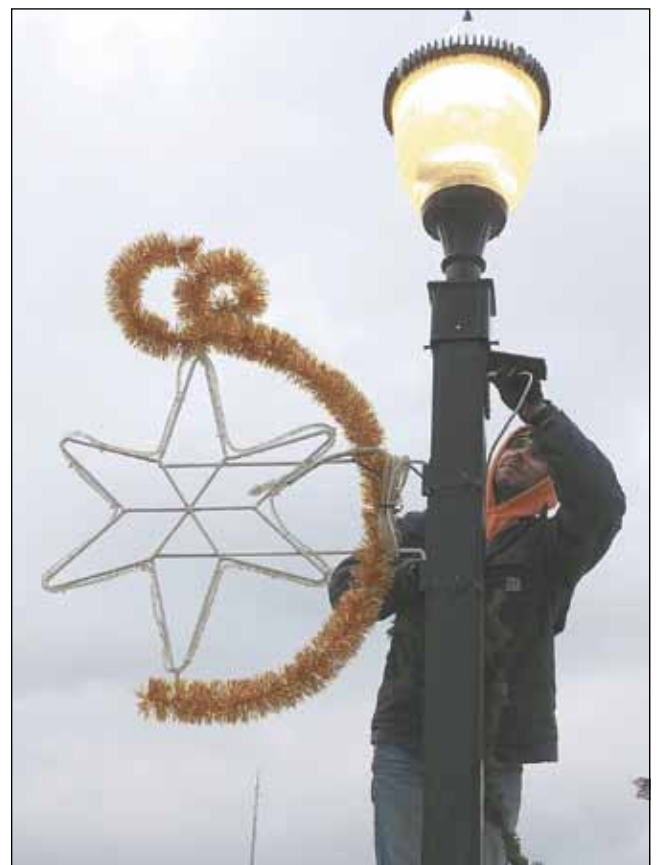
It was bring your own seat for this concert at the Rotary Park bandshell in this undated photo.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



The first Ludington city hall stands tall in this undated image.

DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO



Ludington Department of Public Works employee Landon Engel was putting up the holiday decorations near the Ludington Post Office in this 2018 photo.

JEFF KIESSEL | DAILY NEWS