

# Owendale much older than 75 years show

Although the incorporation of Owendale as a village goes back only 75 years -- an event being celebrated July 4-6 -- its history goes back much farther than that.

The first settlers in the area were Chippewa Indians. Some were still living in the area as late as 1874. The first white settler in Brookfield township was An-

drew Hosea Burton, who entered his homestead claim Nov. 25, 1865.

Active in the organization of the township, which occurred two years later, he

was given the honor of naming it after his hometown of Brookfield in New York. Grant township was also organized in 1867.

The area was still far from being settled and the early residents sometimes walked as far as Flint to get supplies.

The first settlement of sorts in Brookfield township was not at Owendale, but at Creel City, one mile south and a half-mile east of Owendale. There, Mrs. George M. Cross operated a store and post office, William Burrows had a blacksmith shop and the District No. 4 school was located.

Another store was located at Wolfton, at the junction of Grant, Oliver, Brookfield and Windsor townships.

Other early settlements in the area included Beuley, on Rescue Road in Grant township, and Grant Center, now called Rescue, on Elkton Road.

In 1882, John G. Owen of Saginaw bought about 1,000 acres of timberland in the Columbia Swamp. The following year, when the Pontiac, Oxford and Northern Railroad was completed, he erected a sawmill near what is now the intersection of Mill and Sixth Streets in Owendale.

Owen was influential in getting the Saginaw Valley

and Lake Huron Railroad built. By 1890, it extended from the sawmill, running seven miles southwest through the Columbia Swamp to within a quarter-mile of Bach.

In 1887, Owen had the site surveyed of what was to be named Owendale in his honor. The town's father had a store built near the sawmill, plus a boarding house and post office, all before 1890.

He dedicated the streets, alleys and parks to the village for their perpetual use.

The boarding house was at the corner of Fifth and Main, store at Fourth and Main and the post office on the south side of Main between Fourth and Fifth Streets.

CREEL CITY LOST THE District No. 4 school in 1895, when it was moved to Owendale.

Erection of the sawmill and other stores meant the demise of Creel City. Mrs. Cross closed her store and Burrows moved his blacksmith shop to Owendale in order to stay in business.

Fire destroyed Owen's sawmill in 1895, but by that time, most of the timber in Columbia Swamp had been cut and farmers were buying the cleared land cheap in order to plant such crops as beans, wheat, oats and corn.

The disadvantage of locat-

ing farms and a town on land which had been a swamp was that each spring, the land would be flooded.

By November, 1901, Charles Montague managed to get the Michigan Central Railway extended to Owendale, so that it could haul sugarbeets to his factory in Caro.

There was a hotel and several stores in Owendale by that time, and Hinkley and Jones had erected a small elevator. It was purchased by the Palmer Brothers in 1904. Nearby were stockyards operated by the Purdy Brothers, who bought livestock from farmers to haul to the city.

OWENDALE WAS INCORPORATED as a village in 1905, with W.J. Duffy as president; Simon Walsh, clerk, and Charles Palmer, C.M. Livingston, A.E. Moore, Wilber Jones and George Zinnicker as trustees.

Businesses in town about that time consisted of two doctors, two general stores, dry goods and groceries, undertaker and shoes, bank, hotel and bar, drug store, blacksmith shop, livery, a hall (presumably rented out) and the aforementioned elevator and stockyards.

The Methodist and Presbyterian churches were both built in 1905, the former

being dedicated Jan. 14, 1906 and the latter, Sept. 22, 1905.

Also in 1905, many new cement walks and crosswalks were constructed and many homes built. The district No. 1 schoolhouse was remodeled and covered with brick.

The Palmer Brothers opened their new and larger elevator in 1905, which had storage capacity for 5,000 bushels, which was a lot back then. In 1908, three individuals bought the elevator, naming it the Owendale Grain and Lumber Co., and built a larger elevator.

The printing office which published the Owendale Herald was established by 1909. The Owendale Independent Telephone Co. began installing poles about that time.

The Evangelical congregation built a church in 1910.

IN 1913, THE TWO-ROOM brick school house was torn down and a new two-story structure built. The Owendale High School building, later Owendale-Gagetown High School, stood until three years ago.

Various additions were built over the years, the last one, in 1978-79, being constructed on the site of the 1913 high school.

Owendale reached its peak in 1914 in number of businesses, when there were 24 of them.

On Dec. 10, 1914, three persons were killed in a fire that destroyed five businesses.

The village's spring flooding problems were greatly eased in 1918, when the Shebeon Creek was dredged to drain the lands in the former Columbia Swamp. The drained farm land allowed increases in acreage in sugar beets and navy beans.

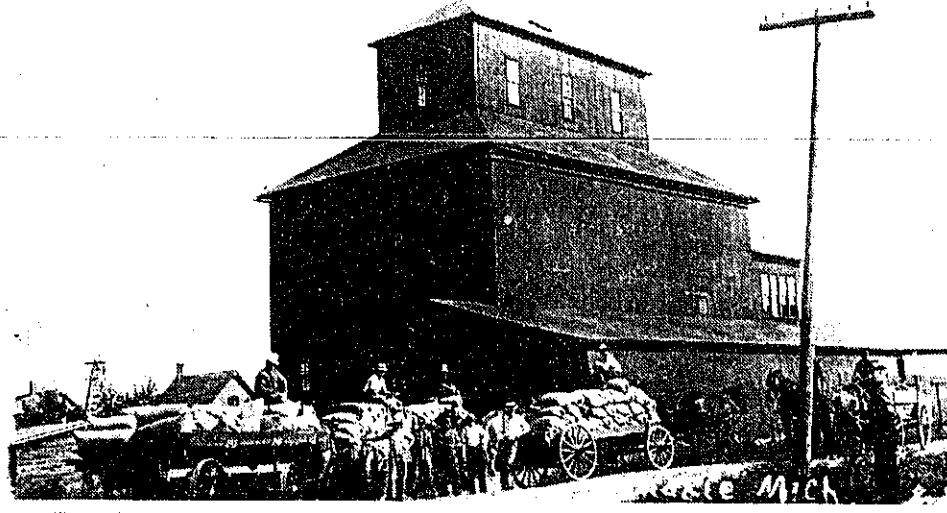
A movie theatre was built in 1921 and stayed in business about five years. Street lights came in the 1920s and a water tower erected, allowing water to be pumped to the homes. The first gas stations were built. The first streets were paved during the '20s.

The stockyards closed in the 1930s, due to farmers trucking their own cattle.

The National Bank Holiday in 1933 resulted in the closing of the original bank, which never reopened.

All the rural school districts in Brookfield township merged in 1940, and used the building in Owendale. The

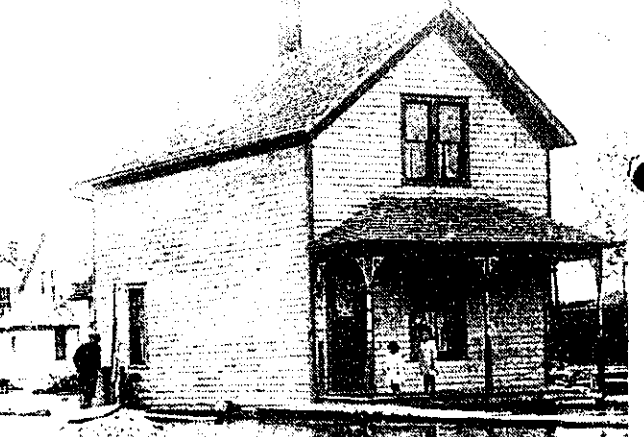
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**RITE OF FALL** -- The Owendale elevator was owned by the Michigan Bean Co. when photo was taken in 1916. This was the third elevator to be built (in about 1908), each one replacing a smaller one. Farmers in the photo were apparently bringing in grain to sell.



**THIS VIEW** of downtown Owendale was taken in 1912. Starting from left are the hotel, shoemaker, barber shop and restaurant and the bank. The site of the bank is now occupied by the service station. (Photos courtesy of Veneta Kling.)



**SPRING FLOODS** -- Until the Shebeon Creek was dredged in 1918, floods like this occurred every spring in Owendale. Veneta Kling, on porch at left, still lives in this house on Park Street, with husband Matt. Next to her is her sister Verena. Photo was taken in 1911, when house was owned by their father, Webb McCullough.

## Big plans for 75th birthday

The village of Owendale will only be 75 years old once and this week end is the time to do the celebrating. Presumably there won't be another celebration like it for another 25 years.

Activities start Friday but are being kept to a minimum so as to not conflict with the July 4th festival in Cass City.

Running all three days of the festival will be the carnival rides and the beer tent, both of which will open about noon each day. Both will be by the football field.

An historical display in the Community Building will be open Saturday from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday from 1-5 p.m. Old photographs will be featured.

Everything at the celebration will be free except for food, beer tent and the carnival rides.

### FRIDAY

The Lions Club pancake and sausage breakfast in the high school cafeteria starts at 7 and will run probably until noon.

At 7 p.m., the senior citizen king and queen, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Good Sr., will be crowned, along with the 75th anniversary queen, who won't be known until then.

Entertainment will follow, including an accordion and guitar player. It and the crowning will take place on the grandstand in front of the football field.

A teen dance on the tennis courts will run in the village park from 8:30-11:30 p.m. Jerry C. and the Travelers will be performing in the beer tent starting at 9 p.m.

### SATURDAY

As of Monday, there were 65 entries for the parade, which starts at 10 a.m. at the football field. The marchers will go from there down Main Street to Eighth Street

to Hartman Street. The parade will end south of town.

Lineup for the parade starts at 9 a.m. "Anything and everything" is wanted in the parade, according to celebration chairman Walt Howard. Although not mandatory, he requests would-be parade entrants to call him at home beforehand.

Following the parade, beard judging will take place by the park. The Tip of the Thumb Square Dancers will be dancing on the park tennis courts.

The chicken barbecue takes place in the cafeteria from 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. At noon in front of the high school, the Owen-Gage High School band will perform.

Children's games will take place on the football field from 1-3 p.m.

Various area fire departments will compete in a waterball contest from 2-5. The competition will take place on Fourth Street by the bank.

Games for adults take place from 5-6 p.m. on the football field.

At 7 p.m., the Tiniiau Tahitians dancers will perform in front of the football field bleachers.

The Three Grand Band from Flint will perform in the beer tent, starting at 9.

### SUNDAY

The hot dog roast at the football field starts at noon and will run until somewhere between 2 and 3 p.m.

Pony pulling competition begins at 2 on the high school track.

Human pulling in the form of a tug of war starts at 4. As of Monday, eight teams had entered. Prospective teams are asked to call event chairman David Peters beforehand to enter.

The final event will be the Whiskey River Band of Saginaw performing in the beer tent starting at 6 p.m.

# SUMMER CLEARANCE



LADIES' MEN'S CHILDREN'S

**SUMMER SHOES and SANDALS**

**25% OFF**

## 25% OFF SALE!

Ladies' and Children's **BATHING SUITS**

LADIES' **SUMMER DRESSES**

Men's and Boys' **TANK TOPS**

LADIES' **SUMMER COATS**

Men's and Boys' **BATHING SUITS**

Men's and Boys' **WALK SHORTS**

LADIES' **SUMMER PURSES**

Ladies' and Children's: **SPORTSWEAR**  
Shorts - Tops - Tank Tops

**ALL 25% OFF**

**THONGS**

FOR LADIES **\$1.47**

**SANDALS**

FOR MEN **\$2.97**

**FEDERATED**  
Cass City

# 'Join The Fun'

## OWENDALE 75th ANNIVERSARY

July 4 - 5 - 6

<p><b>Wright's Service Station</b></p> <p><b>George's Bar</b></p> <p><b>Wickes Agriculture</b></p> <p><b>LaFave Steel</b></p> <p><b>Carl Errer-Garno Corn</b></p> <p><b>Ed's Bar</b></p> <p><b>Sohigro Service Center</b></p>	<p><b>FRIDAY</b> 7:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>8 p.m. - 8:30 - 11:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>SATURDAY</b> 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. 12:00 noon - 1-3 p.m.</p> <p>2-5 p.m. 5-8 p.m. 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>SUNDAY</b> 12 Noon - 2:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Lions Club Pancake &amp; Sausage Breakfast Senior Citizens King &amp; Queen Crowning Owendale 75th Anniversary Queen Crowning Community Choir Concert Additional Entertainment Teen Dance on Tennis Courts in Park Jerry C. &amp; the Travelers Band in Beer Tent</p> <p>Grand Parade Following Parade: Beard Judging Eagles Drum &amp; Bugle Corp Show Chicken Barbecue - High School Cafeteria Owen-Gage High School Band Concert Children's Games High School Football Field Waterball Contest Adult Games Tiniiau Tahitians Dancers - Football Field Three Grand Band in Beer Tent</p> <p>Hot Dog Roast Pony Pull - High School Track Tug of War Whiskey River Band in Beer Tent</p> <p><b>ALL-DAY EVENTS</b> Historical Display - Community Building Saturday: 11:00 - 5:00 Sunday: 1:00 - 5:00 Beer Tent Carnival Rides</p> <p><b>Tiniiau Tahitian Dancers</b></p> <p><b>Whiskey River Band</b></p> <p><b>SUNDAY</b> HOT DOGS BAKED BEANS CAKE POP or COFFEE <b>75¢</b></p>	<p><b>Lucky 13</b></p> <p><b>William Kretzschmer Farms</b></p> <p><b>Janssen's Party Store</b></p> <p><b>Pigeon River Camp Grounds</b></p> <p><b>Dean Ellicott Construction</b></p> <p><b>Owendale Auto Repair</b></p> <p><b>Farmers &amp; Merchants State Bank</b> Owendale-Gagetown Subwing</p>
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