

White Lodge Country Club

PINCKNEY, MICHIGAN

History: 1835 to Present (2011)

White Lodge Owners, Incorporated

Incorporated November 23rd, 1936

Subdivided January 10th, 1926 by Schram Realty

Settled 1835-1837 by James & Ann Cordley

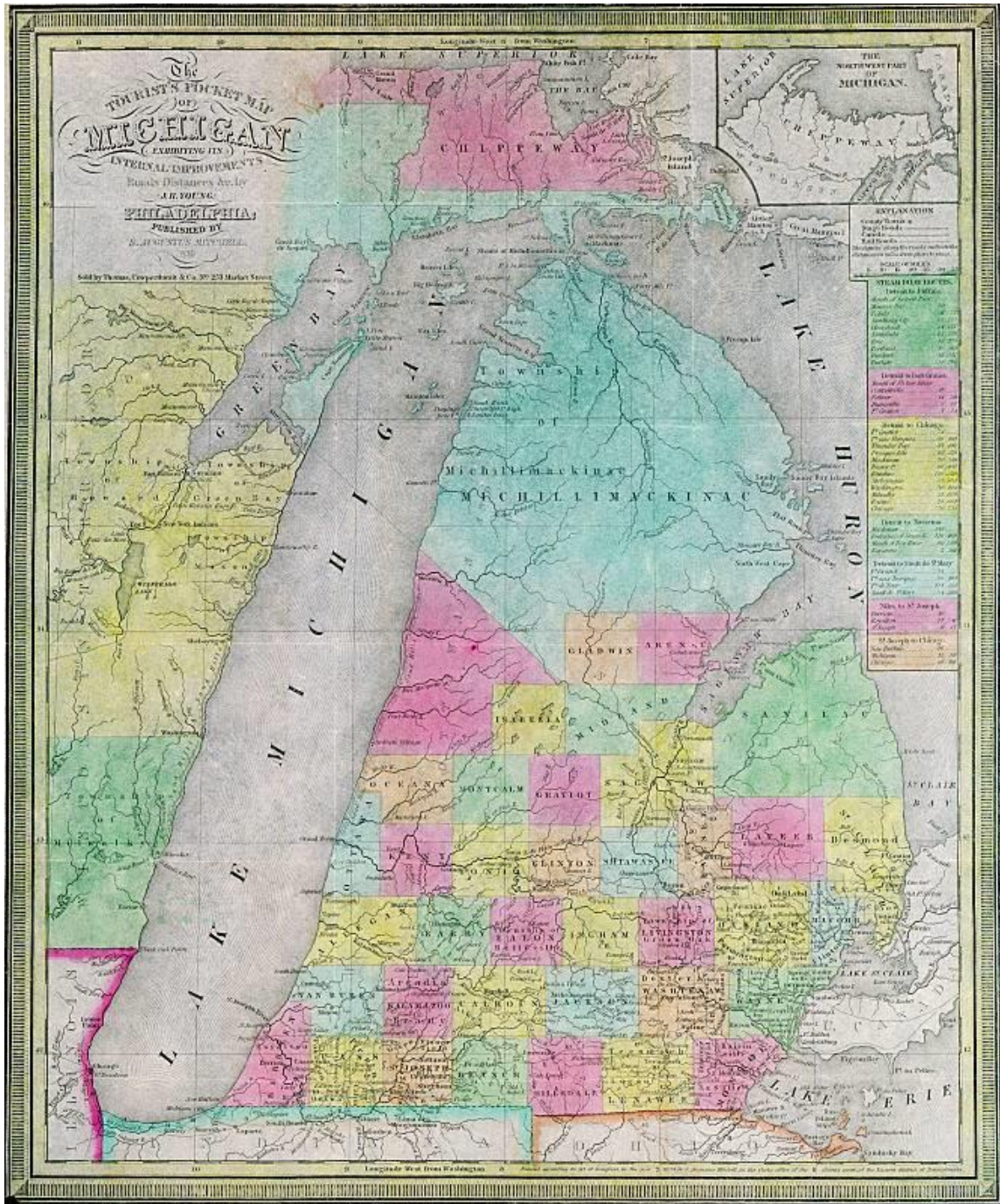
White Lodge Historical Committee

Norbert Rickelman – Chief Historian

Ron Fesl - Editor

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Early History:



Michigan and Livingston County were formed in 1833, the county boundaries were established from parts of Washtenaw and Shiawassee Counties and in 1836 the present organization structure was declared.

The earliest recorded settlers of Section 29 (White Lodge Area), Hamburg Township consisted of:

CORDLEY, Ann, buys land in Sec. 29, Hamburg, NW-SE, Mar. 31, 1836, of Liv. Co., Mich. Sells in 1862, of Hamburg.

Charles A., buys land in Sec. 29, Hamburg, NW-SE & NE-SW, Oct. 16, 1867, of ??
Owns in 1880. In census of Hamburg, 1850 & 1860.

James, wife **Ann**, buys land in Sec. 29, Hamburg, NE-SW, July 17, 1835, of Washtenaw Co., Mich. Buys more land in Sec. 29, Hamburg, NW-SE & SW-SE, Nov. 25, 1862, of Hamburg. Sells to **Ann & Charles CORDLEY**, in 1867, of Hamburg. Deceased by 1868. Made will, Oct. 16, 1867, to sons, **Charles, Christopher, James, Richard CORDLEY**, and **Minnie S.**, (dau. of **John CORDLEY**). In census of Hamburg, 1850 & 1860.

John, wife **Margaret**, buy land in Sec. 31, Hamburg, NW-NE, Nov. 25, 1848, of Liv. Co., Mich. Buys land in Sec. 27, Hamburg, Np-NE, Jan. 28, 1850, of ?. Sells in 1851, of Hamburg.

Richard, found in census of Hamburg, 1850, b- England.

James Cordley in 1835 and wife Ann in 1836 (Offspring: Charles, Christopher, James, Richard and Minnie) and James Gallagher in 1837.

In 1837 President Martin VanBuren deeded the property of the present White Lodge to James Cordley, Ann Cordley and James Gallagher. Michigan was granted statehood on Jan. 26, 1837. <http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/mvanburen.html>

A copy of James Cordleys deed is on file at the White Lodge Clubhouse.

CERTIFICATE
No 13763

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

WHEREAS *James Cordley of Washtenaw County Michigan*
had deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at *Detroit*
whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *James Cordley*
according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1890, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for the North East

quarter of the South West quarter and the South West part of the South East fractional quarter
of Section twenty-nine in Township one North of Range five East, in the District of Lands
subject to sale at *Detroit, Michigan, containing seventy-seven Acres*

according to the official plat of the survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tract has been purchased by the said
James Cordley NOW KNOW YE, That the

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in consideration of the Premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress, in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED,
and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said *James Cordley*

and to his heirs, the said tract above described: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances of whatsoever nature, therunto
belonging, unto the said *James Cordley* and to his heirs and assigns forever.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, *Martin Van Buren*

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL
LAND OFFICE do affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the *first* day of *April* in the Year of our
Lord one thousand eight hundred and *thirtyseven* and of the INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES
the *thirtyfirst*

BY THE PRESIDENT:

Louis B. King Acting Recorder OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
Martin Van Buren By *L. Van Buren* ad-intimam

Recorded, Vol 28 Page 384.

1835 – 1915 White Lodge Building & Properties:

We believe the old stone basement of the present Lodge (which is below the lodge entrance, lower bathrooms and office area) was the original James and Ann Cordley home built in that same 1835 era. The fireplace opening faced east instead of the present west.

James Cordley must have died prior to the 1875 plat map. There are no death records for James. According to County records Ann Cordley sold the properties to her son Charles (1839-1889) in 1862 and he is shown owning the property in the 1870 and 1880 census along with wife Esther and 3 children.

The 1875 Plat Map (survey) of Livingston County created by the F.W. Beers Company and for the Library of Congress shows the southern portion of Cordley Lake, the property which comprises the subdivided portion of White Lodge, and an unnamed road (Colonial?) leading to a home.

A later 1895 Plat Map created by Rand McNally Corporation, shows the White Lodge area owned by Mrs. Esther Cordley (wife of Charles Cordley). According to Livingston County records Charles died in 1889 and Ester died in 1899. No mention is made of the three children (Barbara, Heather & Ann) after the 1870 census.

The portion of Section 29 (64 acres) owned by Jas. Gallagher was later added to White Lodge properties. By 1915 White Lodge had begun to take shape under the ownership of the Terry (T.W.) Brown family who combined the Charles Cordley and Jas. Gallagher properties into what we presently know as White Lodge Owners Inc. property.

Cordley Lake received its name from our original settlers, the Cordley family. None of the Cordley family gravesites are listed in the Livingston County historical records. Has anyone seen the ghosts or graves of the family around the White Lodge area?

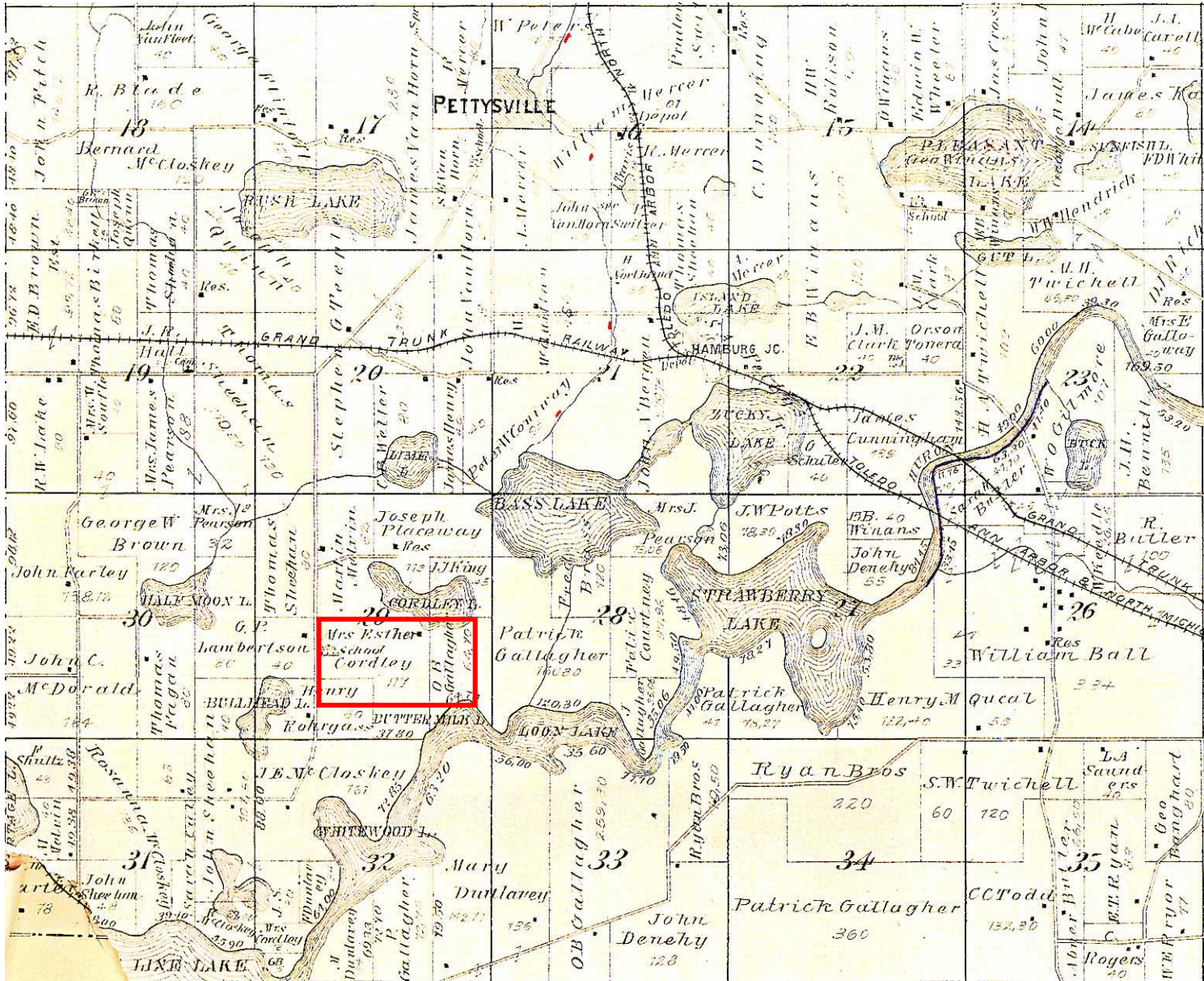
Our present deed still shows the "School House Lot" (Outlot A) that is shown in the 1895 Rand McNally Atlas and 1915 map by Geo. A. Ogle & Company in the S.W. section of our property off of Whitewood Road. On the 1875 map there is a school located on the corner of Sheehan and McGregor Roads but that it is missing from the 1895 and 1915 maps. One could assume that the school was relocated because of a more central location. School House Lot is part of our green belt. There are no records indicating if the school was ever used or who the teachers might have been, we can only assume that it was for the benefit of the Cordleys and other families in Sections 29, 30, 31 and NW portion of 32. There were over a dozen homes in this area at that time. The old foundation of the school is still in existence and can be approached in the SW corner of our property off of Whitewood Rd about 300 feet south of the Colonial entrance to the lodge for those daring enough to venture (long pants and shirt are recommended.) If you have a metal detector you might even find old square nails or hinges. This 1915 map still does not show the present outline of Gallagher Lake or our Island. Loon Lake is now located on the southern backside of the present Gallagher Lake and the large island between.

The 1895 plat map also shows the Grand Trunk and Toledo Railroads on the north side of Zukey Lake, but that story would require a "road trip" or "boat trip" to Zukey Lake Tavern to see the historical references in the front lobby.

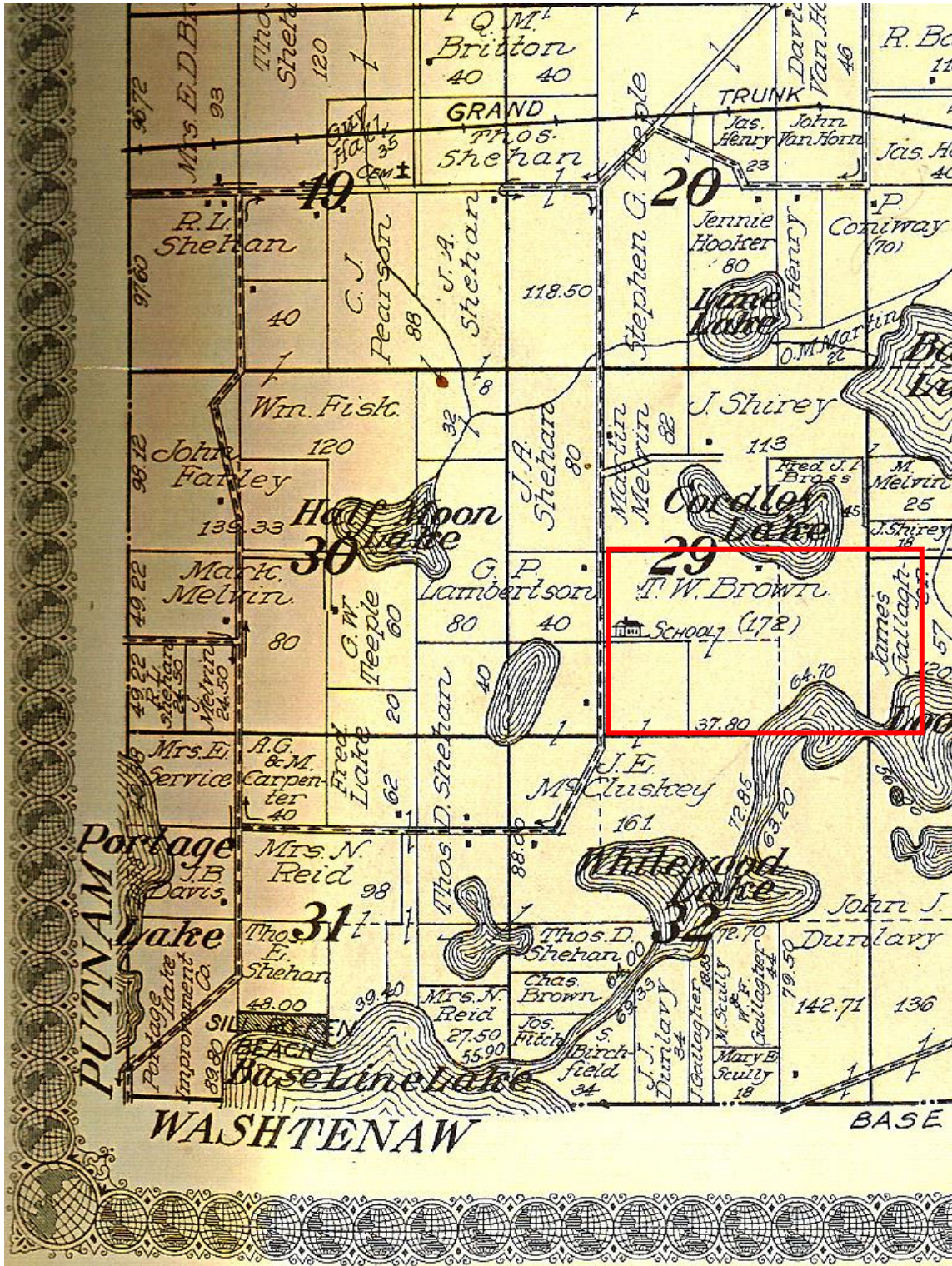
1875 Plat Map by the F.W. Beers Company



1895 Map Rand McNally Corporation, "The New 11 x 14 Atlas of the World"



1915 plat map by Geo. A. Ogle & Company



1915 through 1931:

White lodge began to take shape under the ownership of Terry (T.W.) Brown who combined the Charles Cordley and Jas. Gallagher properties into what we presently know as White Lodge Owners Inc. property as shown in the 1915 Survey and map of the area. The 1915 survey still only showed one residence.

In 1926 Terry (T.W.) Brown sold the property to H L Schram under land contract dated January 10th, 1926. Schram in turn sold the property to Schram Realty (a partnership with his brother) who proposed a “subdivision” and began selling properties. At this time there were only 8 cottages in existence.

The Pinckney Dispatch advertised the property, golf course and clubhouse in its July 4, 1934 edition.

Schramm Realty advertising brochure:

Crowded Out?

A beach so thick with swimmers it looks like a swarm of bees.


A lake or river, perhaps plenteous with fish, but all boats rented so early in the day that you can only look on and wish, not fish.

A golf course with a queue at the first tee like a soup line in the Russian revolution.

Picnic grounds so crowded with nondescript cars and littered with rubbish there is no clean place to spread a lunch.


If you think this exaggerated, get out your car on a hot summer Sunday and try it. If you're already convinced, we'd like to show you how different it is at White Lodge.

This White Lodge Golf and Country Club is dedicated to the spirit of outdoor play. Its founders hold that with rugged nature at his elbow, man will discover real living. White Lodge is designed for those who seek in God's outdoors a fuller, richer life, a retreat nestled among lakes and woods where congestion is unknown.



Cordley Lake—adjoining club grounds


Golf at White Lodge Golf and Country Club



Nine Holes 3111 Yards Water Hazards Large Greens
No Waiting Meals at Clubhouse

Sports

Man at play needs woods for shade and hunting, open stretches of water for bathing and boating, and fishing—space for golf, baseball, tennis and other sports. . . . White Lodge Golf and Country Club satisfies these needs. Its athletic field borders on the Huron River, where watercraft may explore a dozen lakes along 40



Overlooking Cordley Lake

miles of wooded shores. The golf links overlooks four of these lakes, while the clubhouse, colonial in architecture, faces upon still another water gem, with sandy beach and spring-fed depths where fish delight to hide.

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Seclusion

All this lies just far enough from the main highways to be inaccessible to automobile picknickers and tramp tourists. The Club reserves its privileges for its members and their guests. Here there is a secluded nook where man may enjoy comradeship with his friends and entertain them in comfort and convenience in a clubhouse as modernly appointed as his city home.

Near

This play spot is within an hour and a half's drive of downtown Detroit. Close enough to be accessible, yet distant enough to be natural in its setting, White Lodge, 35 miles from the city limits, is correctly near, correctly remote.



Club Bathing Beach—Cordley Lake

Early records show that our present canal was first dredged in 1926 as a portion of the proposed canal "system." Some of our senior residents remember documents indicating the cost was \$1.00/linear foot and that the canal was 20 feet wide. The actual original subdivision plat map is on file at our clubhouse and showed over 800 sites, present lodge and a large section of multiple canals and bridges that were proposed where our island and 26 acres on Gallagher Lake is located. The original land contract was modified and discounted on December 29th, 1931 to include Schram Realty.

Considerable dredging occurred in the Gallagher Lake area during that time and the placement of the Portage Lake Dam first occurred as an earthen dam created to prevent downstream flooding. The present John Flook Dam was constructed in 1966 by the Army Corp of Engineers as a flood control dam and method of controlling the lake levels.

Our clubhouse is an expansion of the original Cordley home and was constructed in 1926-1927 by Schram Realty (see Schramm Realty sales brochure). There is some mention of a 9 hole golf course in the front SW portion of the property and actually included the property on McCluskey Drive off of Whitewood surrounding Windermere Lake. Signatures of some of the property owners and builders are in the cement poured in the basement just west of the fireplace and south of the present furnaces.

1926 Schram Realty Proposed White Lodge
Note the expanded section of canals and lots North & East of our Island
Original on file in the White Lodge Clubhouse



Schram Realty continued to sell properties until the stock market crash in 1929. Default in the land contract to the Brown family occurred in 1931 and a long court battle ensued as to the actual land ownership and plat. At that time all activities came to a halt until 1936.

1936 & 1937

Schram Realty became delinquent on the property land contract of \$16,079.83. The complete “proposed original White Lodge Golf & Country Club” would never be. After years of court battles the White Lodge properties were re-acquired by the Brown Family in 1936 by order of foreclosure in the Livingston County Courts on the Schram Realty Corporation. The Brown Family took back our existing White Lodge buildings and properties and then sold/re-Incorporated the property into our present White Lodge Owners Inc. Our incorporation occurred on November 23rd, 1936. On December 12th, 1936 the original 55 members received the first 62 shares of stock (lots) in White Lodge Owners, Inc. Each member’s share of capital stock was valued at \$25.00. The Lot numbers, members’ names, and signatures of this original deed are on file at the White Lodge Clubhouse:

<http://sites.google.com/site/whitelodgeowners/historical-documents>

On September 2nd, 1937 the final court ordered decree of ownership was issued. The original members borrowed the money required to purchase all the White Lodge Lands from the Brown family.

We are/were incorporated under the “SUMMER RESORT AND PARK ASSOCIATIONS Act 230 of 1897” as a non-profit.

Our original Articles of Incorporation states our purpose to be:

“To own, operate, and maintain its properties on and around Cordley Lake, Hamburg Township, Livingston County, Michigan, as a resort for the benefit of the members of the Corporation, the property being included in the recorded Plat of White Lodge Country Club Subdivision in Liber 2 of Plats on page 99 in the Register of Deeds Office in the County of Livingston, State of Michigan, and all that remaining in the SE 1/4 of Section 29, TIN R5E Livingston County, State of Michigan.”

1937 through the 60's:

These original owners executed a new mortgage of \$16,079.83 for all corporate owned property in our present White Lodge and re-platted into our existing structure. The 26 acre parcel extending to Gallagher Lake was not included as potentially developed land and is now preserved as wildlife and greenbelt areas. In 1938 electricity was installed in the White Lodge area and clubhouse for \$1,325. In 1938, in order to pay the mortgage and expenses of White Lodge land was again offered for sale. Attached is a copy of the original "offer" provided by the Rickelman family.

The image displays three historical price lists from 1938, detailing property lots and their respective prices. The first list on the left is titled 'PRICE LIST Of lots in White Lodge Country Club Subdivision For 1938'. It lists lots 1 through 50 with prices ranging from \$75.00 to \$300.00. The middle and right lists are similar tables with columns for Lot, Price, and Status (e.g., 'sold', 'not for sale'). The rightmost list includes a note at the bottom: 'Lots not priced are not for sale.'

<http://sites.google.com/site/whitelodgeowners/historical-documents>

An August 19, 1945 photograph (recently restored) shows many of the original owners in front of our clubhouse at the mortgage burning party.

Insert Photo

Residential growth was slow during the 40's due to the war. The lodge building, bathhouse and the original garage (now torn down in favor of the pole barn) were in existence in the 40's when Norb Rickelman used to visit with his father, one of the charter members, Andrew (A.H.) Rickelman and the family for Sunday outings. The Rickelmans sold the property where our existing bathhouse is located to White Lodge in 1954 (purchased it in 1948 at foreclosure) and the members constructed the bathhouse. Prior to then the bathrooms in the Eastern portion of the clubhouse were used during weekend outings.

In the 50's and 60's property sales increased and construction began to the extent that there were as many as 37 buildings in a 1965 geological survey. The road structure was changed and Colonial closed in front of the Lodge prior to this survey. A 1975 aero-logical survey modified the 1965 survey and there was a count of 45 buildings.

A moratorium on the sale of corporate owned lands was imposed in 1979 to help preserve our "Summer Resort and Park" status.

The Growth Years 80's and 90's:

The largest growth occurred during the population explosion of the 1980's and 90's with over 4 homes built per year. This was the same period that Livingston County and especially Hamburg Township became the Rural Mecca that people desired. Because of our Resort atmosphere there were over 80 homes constructed in White Lodge during that period.

2000 to Present:

White Lodge Owners Inc. is an active, vibrant community with 139 members (shareholders), 126 Residential (mostly year-round/full-time residents), 13 additional members own properties but have yet to build in the Lodge area.

There are 353 voting shares (lots) outstanding with the balance of our shares (lots) being held to preserve our "Summer Resort" status, Greenbelt and country atmosphere. Our 240-acre parcel includes waterfront on Cordley Lake, Beach and Bathhouse, Playground, Sports area (Baseball, Tennis, Volleyball), Gallagher Lake frontage with Picnic Area, Thousands of feet of Huron River frontage, private boat launch, miles of Nature Trails on a 26 acre wooded site, private island and our private canal. White Lodge is the perfect area to raise a family.

White Lodge Site and Properties as Subdivided and Incorporated
Yellow area is Corporate Owned for Recreational & Greenbelt



White Lodge Roads as Driven 2010



Credits and Additional Information:

The Livingston County Historical Society:

<http://www.memoriallibrary.com/MI/Livingston/>

CFC Productions, Pam Rietsch:

<http://www.livgenmi.com/> pam@livgenmi.com

Flook Dam History, courtesy of Portage, Base and Whitewood Homeowners Assoc:

<http://www.mlswa.org/PBWOA-105/>

http://www.mlswa.org/PBWOA-105/john_flook_dam_info.htm

White Lodge website is under development at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/whitelodgeowners/Home>