# PAW PAW HIGH SCHOOL EXPANSION

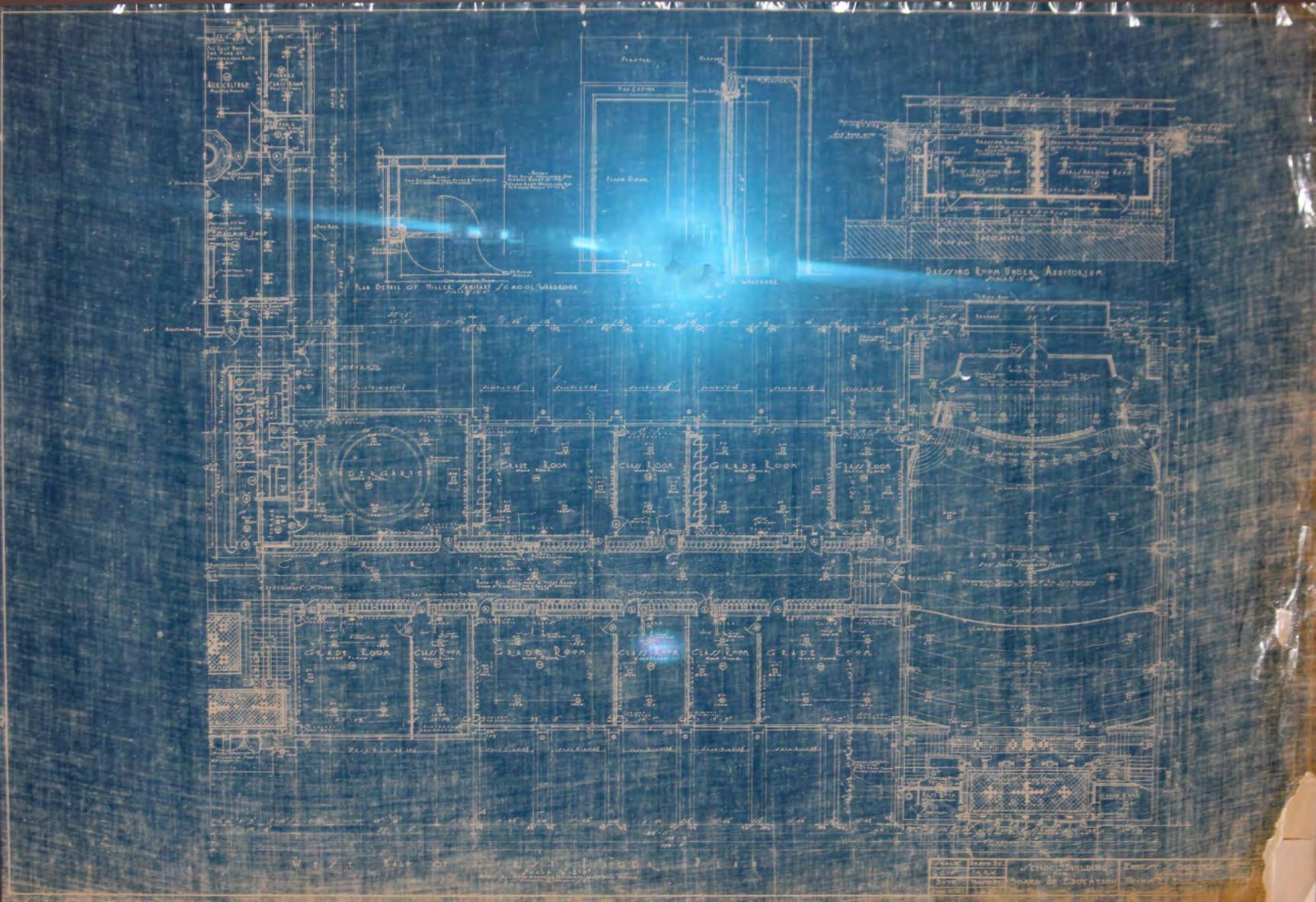


MICHIGAN AVENUE SCHOOL

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## Paw Paw Courier-Northerner 17 August 1923

# WORK ON SCHOOL TO START SOON

Equipment on the Ground.

To Commence Work

at Early Date

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George Lather of the Lather & Sons

Contracting Company arrived Wednesday, accompanied by J. E. Koenig of Traverse City, who will act as superintendent of construction on the new high school building. During the past week a carload of equipment has been received and the work on the building is expected to go forward rapidly.

Mr. Lather announces that the ce-

ment footings and foundations will be installed within the next two weeks and he anticipates having the foundations ready for the brick masons to begin laying the walls before Sept. 15.



HIGH SCHOOL - This is a not-to-recent photo of the Paw Paw High School building on east Main which was built to it was opened in 1924.

replace the "Old Red Brick. It was one of the finest in this part of the state when

# First Paw Paw School Opened To Ten Students Back in 1835

The first village school in Paw That building was used not only average attendance was Paw was taught by Miss Roxanna Acard in the summer of 1835. and, there being no better school house available, Rodney Hinckley's blacksmith-shop was utilized for that purpose. The appointment of that school house consisted principally of a few slab seats.

There were perhaps ten scholars when the attendance was at its best but there were times when not more than four or five would respond to rollcall. The next summer (1836) the village school was taught by Melissa Warner, in a log shanty on the west side of the river, just north of where which was justly the pride of the That school had 15 ar 20 pupils.

During the summer of 1836, Williamson Mason and Joseph Royes built a schoolhouse on Gremps Street, and in the fall it vas occupied. Lorenzo Cate was the first teacher, the first male eacher employed in the village.

as a school-house, but also as a courthouse and on Sundays it became a house of worship.

This was followed by the first Union School, a two-story building constructed on the southeast corner of North Kalamazoo Street. opposite the Presbyterian Church. By 1868 it was badly over crowded and in December, 1868, the district resolved to build a brick school house to cost \$25,000 and to borrow the money required.

The result was an elegant and imposing structure standing at the head of Main Street, and Mason's planing mill later stood. town. The entire cost of ground, building and furniture was \$40,000. It was begun in the winter of 1868-69 and we are need for use in September

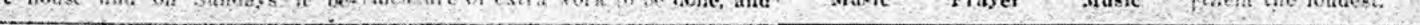
high school, grammer school, two students for coilege or leachers

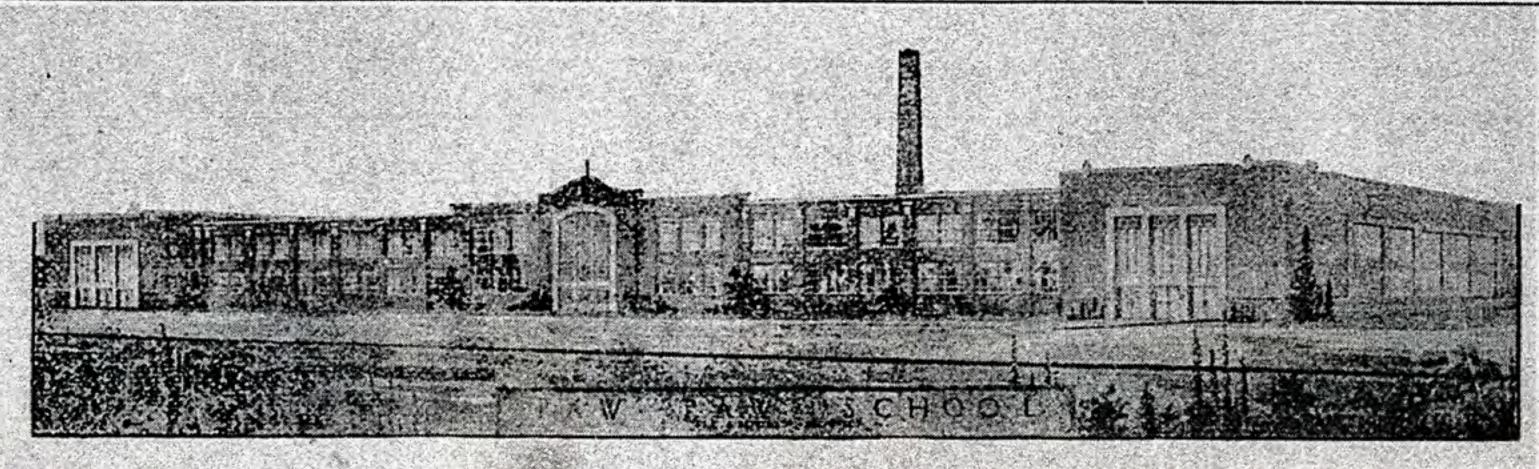
Members of the school board were: E. O. Briggs. Josiah Andrews, G. J. Hudson, Andrew Richards, Aaron Van Auken and George W. Longwell.

Fifty-three years later on Friday afternoon, the school bell rang for the last time, the "Old Red Brick" was closed, torn down and replaced with the present high school building.

There were at least two private schools in Paw Paw prior to 1900. Miss Abbie Barker's School for young men and women started about 1876. Its purpose was to help students, "catch up" their work when they had been unable to attend school for normal terms. due to harvest, etc.

The Oak Park Seminary started before 1880 and taught "all It contained six departments, branches necessary to prepare intermediate and two panary de to secure certificates for teaching. partments, in which the aggregate Tuition \$5 per 10 week term."





THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION

#### THE NEW SCHOOL HOUSE

Plans and Details of Arrangement as It Will Appear When Ready for Use

ORIN W. KAYE, Superintendent, plans of the new school building, be approximately 950, now under construction, are unanimous in their approval even to the size with that of the auditorium and minutest detail. From an architec- at the east end of the building, the where utility, heating and ventilating room unit. This unit includes a basfeatures, lighting and sanitary condi- ket ball playing floor of regulation tions are considered of vital impor- size with sufficient space on the sides tance, it represents the most recent for the erection of bleachers capable developments in school house con- of seating 600 spectators. A small struction.

cal. Facing the north and extending stairways leading to the shower the demonstration work of the inover a frontage of 398 feet, its ap- rooms which are beneath the south proach from the business section of town is toward the west view of the auditorium unit. This unit is 1021/2 feet, north and south, by 541/2 feet,

the University of Michigan, together might be seated on the main floor, lengths by 37 in width. with many others who have seen the The seating capacity of this unit will

The gymnasium unit is identical in balcony projects over the ticket and Every provision for safety and con- storage rooms which extends 10 feet venience of pupils has been incor- from the entrance and this will have porated in the plans for the structure an additional seating capacity of 150 and is featured by a modern science which, considered in the light of size, people. At the south end of the gym- department layout. This includes a will include over a million cubic feet nasium are offices for physical di-The design is altogether symmetri- rectors for both boys and girls and pupils that they may better observe end of this unit. These shower and are the physical and chemical laboralocker rooms are divided into two sections for boys and girls.

The class room section extends east

east and west. It will include an en- and west between the audiorium and by glass partitions, allowing the in-NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION trance on the north, on either side of gymnasium units and is two stories structor to supervise the typewriting which are check and cloak rooms, be- in height. The east and west dimen- room while conducting classes in low which are rest rooms. The audi- sions are 259 feet while the section bookkeeping and stenography in the torium main floor slopes toward the is 62 feet in width. A corridor 12 adjoining room. south at which end is the stage, be- feet in width extends throughout the fore which is the orchestra pit. The length of this unit on the lower floor, cated on the second floor, where it balcony extends 45 feet over the main while that of the upper floor leads di- will be available for special meetings Officials of the state department of floor and will be supported by steel rectly into the assembly rooms for of smaller groups, class meetings, depublic instruction, members of the I-beams and require no pillars which junior and senior high school stu- bating clubs, glee clubs, school board faculty of the school of education of would obstruct the vision of some who dents, each of which is, 50 feet in meetings, etc.

exact center of the building and the tending 96 feet south of the center of rooms on the first floor are devoted the class room unit. This section will entirely to grades with the exception be 45 feet in width and beneath the of those extending east of the en- same are the boiler rooms, coal bunktural and practical point of view two units being joined by the class trance on the south side, which are ers and fan rooms. to be devoted to the home economics unit.

> This . unit includes a cafeteria, use of the agricultural department. kitchen and sowing room, together school nurse's office.

lecture room with raised desks for structor. On either side of this room tories which will be modern in every respect

The commercial rooms are divided plished.

A large club and music room is lo-

The agriculture and shop depart-The main entrance is located in the ments will occupy a separate unit ex-

> On the south side of this section will be a small propagation room for

The heating will be controlled by with a model dining room and the automatic heat control devices, while the fans are of sufficient size to in-The upper floor is to be devoted sure a complete change of air entirely to high school departments throughout the entire building every four minutes.

> Other features of the building are in keeping with the modern convenlences which have been briefly enumerated. A true conception and appreciation of the wonderful advantages which the building will offer can be gained only by visiting the site and inspecting what is being accom

The public school system has undergone many changes. In 1922 after demolition of the Old Red Brick School, a new school was opened on Michigan Avenue. in 1924 the school was affiliated with Western Michigan University. The Cedar Street Elementary school was completed in 1954 to relieve over-crowding.



Lee School, Paw Paw Twp.

In 1958 nineteen rural schools were invited to become a part of the Paw Paw Public School System. These rural schools were: Lakeview, River Valley, Riverside, Wildey, Gliddenburg, Bartrum, Lyle, Lee, Clapp, Austin, Armstrong, Wolf Lake, Solomon, Palmer, Almena Center, Acorn, Steeple, Richmond and Dayton. A building program was begun immediately and the Black River Elementary was ready for occupancy in November, 1960. The High School opened in 1961. With the closing of the neighborhood schools a chapter on neighborliness was also closed.

Some students have participated in the house building projects and they also built the administrative building on the high school campus in 1978. Some of the students go to Lawrence to the Van Buren County Skill Center for classes the high school can not accommodate. A large fleet of buses transport the stu-

dents.

The Paw Paw high school, housed in what later came to be known as the "old red brick," was begun in 1869 and finished the next year. The first graduate, Mrs. Ella Coleman Thom-som, class of 1870, is still living in Los Angeles, Cal.

In 1923 and completed for classes to start by the autumn of the next year. The new school then became a training unit for Western State Teachers college.



### Mrs. Tyler's memorial is community landmark

By Robert Hindenach

The Tyler Field athletic complex on Liberty Street in Paw Paw became the property of Paw Paw Public Schools when the school district purchased the north one-half of it in 1908. It was named after Paw Paw resident George W. Tyler 10 years later, when Mrs. Tyler donated the south portion of the property in memory her husband, and included provisions for a quarter mile cinder track to be constructed at the location.

In 1933, during the depth of the Great Depression, Paw Paw Schools Superintendent Orin W. Kaye applied to the state Civil Workers Adminstration, suggesting improvements to the field would be exactly the type of work the CWA was attempting to promote – immediate employment for men who otherwise would require aid from the CWA.

The plans, which were approved in November 1933, included reconstruction work at the baseball diamond, new top soil and turf for the football field, and construction of eight cement tennis courts that could be converted to an ice skating venue in the winter. The project also included moving the "Annex" building just west of the school on Michigan Avenue to the Tyler Field location to be used as a boy scout field house.

Another part of the plan would become a local landmark – the fourfoot-tall stone wall that quickly took shape around three-quarters of the property. Area farmers hauled rocks in from their fields, and crews from the Work Projects Administration (WPA) spent many hours constructing this wall, which has been restored recently to it's original beauty.

The facility provided a central location for Paw Paw sporting endeavors for many years. The football field continued to be used until Falan Field was developed in 1985 behind the then-high school at the other end of the village. High school baseball action moved to the new school location around 1970. The track also made the move to the larger Falan Field, but the tennis courts remained open to the public until recently. Men's and women's summer softball leagues remain at the Tyler Field site to this day.

Paw Paw Youth baseball also made use of the facility for several years.

Due to a generous community, the facilities today are in excellent condition, and used a great deal. With a jump start provided by the Tyler Field Restoration Committee, and area service organizations, the field was landscaped and brought back to an attractive appearance. The Paw Paw Washburn family provided donation of funds for a children's playground, the Kid's Paradise, which today offers a pleasant recreation spot for youngsters from toddlers to teens.

The playground was constructed on the site of the former tennis courts by a grand troupe of community volunteers. Paw Paw elementary school children had been tapped by the architects for ideas, and the result shows their great imagination and vision.

The football field is now home for

the Paw Paw Rocket Football league teams. With financial support from NFL All-Pro football player Jason Babin, a former Paw Paw student athlete, a press box was built, and and an underground watering system installed, among other improvements.

The Village of Paw Paw has honored former major league baseball player and longtime Paw Paw resident Charlie Maxwell by renaming the revitalized baseball field the Charlie Maxwell Base Ball Diamond. Paw Paw's 1858-style Base Ball team, the Corkers, host a summer schedule of games there.













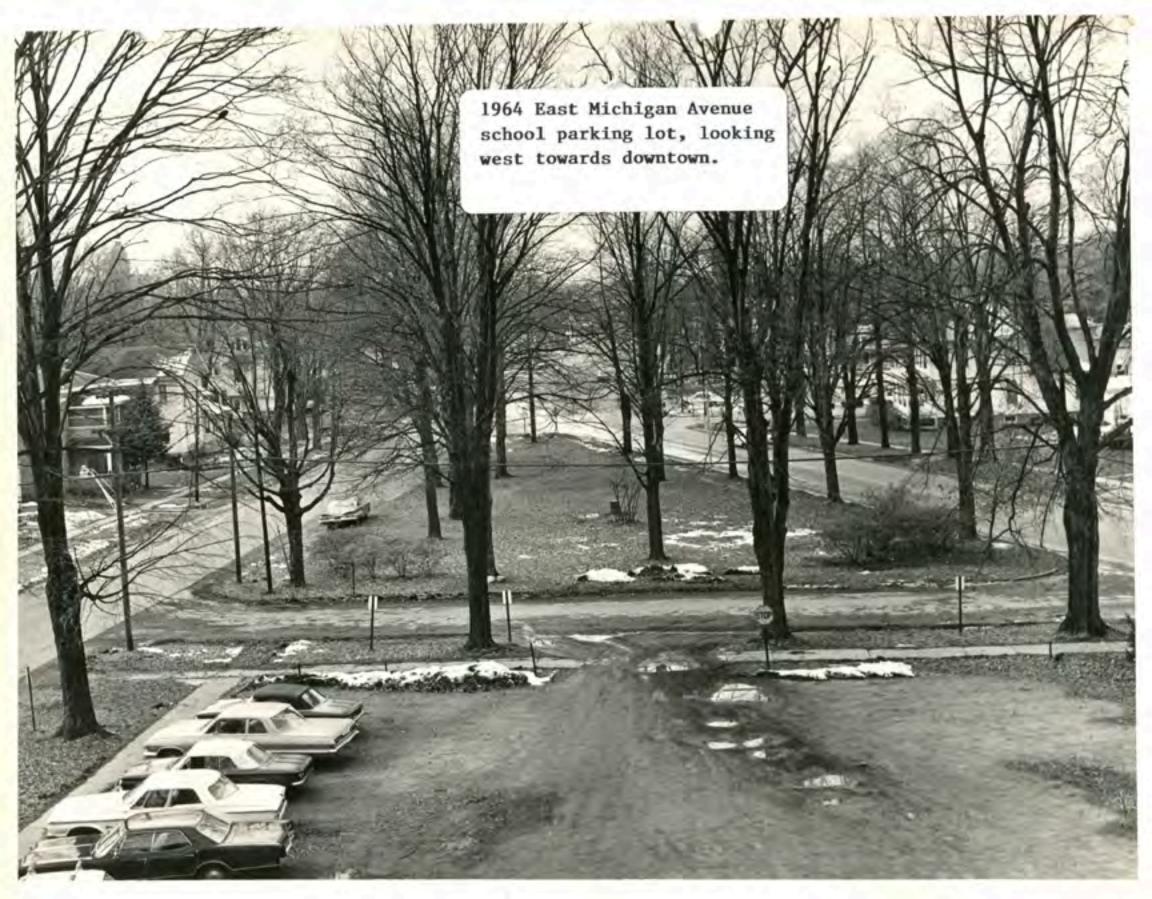












#### DECORATIVE CEMENT FIGURES ALONG THE TOP OF OUTSIDE WALLS MICHIGAN AVENUE SCHOOL (NOW FRESHWATER COMMUNITY CHURCH)

