



# Two Harbors Iron Port



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## EAST TWO HARBORS

From LCHS Archives By Mel Sando

2016

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As we work through the archives getting to know our collections I have developed an affection for a part of our community once known as East Two Harbors.

With the Treaty of LaPoint in 1854 the area that would become East Two Harbors was claimed long before the development of the shipping industry in Agate Bay. In 1860 President Buchanan granted 160 acres to Ann Dixon the widow of an Honored Officer and Veteran of the War of 1812, Sauty Dixon. (Some records acknowledge Dixon as a veteran of the Revolution) The 160 acres include a strip of land from what we now call lighthouse point to the present golf course. As the land was in the newly opened Minnesota frontier she warranted the property to Patrick O'Grady. O'Grady would sell the land to Thomas Feigh in 1882. Feigh had most of the land platted at that time. He would sell these lots to other development companies and individuals over time. There was a 22 acre plot he still owned in 1897 that the railroad and city needed for expansion. Eventually, like with the acre of land the lighthouse occupies, the railroad and city's control of this property would be obtained through threat of eminent domain. The map on page 2 details the condemned property.

At one time in the city's history East Two Harbors had a reputation for being a bowery. I believe this was a holdover from when the frontier community used the Skunk Creek Valley north of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue East as the original city dump. Speculation on my part, but this may also have been perpetuated because the Minnesota Iron Company was selling their property in the new additions north of 7th Ave..

The western edge of Feigh's 160 acres borders the county section line that runs from Agate Bay due north up 4<sup>th</sup> Street to eventually become County Road #2. City planners would move over one street to the west and use 5<sup>th</sup> Street as the City's prime meridian, with addresses starting at zero along this north/ south divider. When using Dave Peterson's research about businesses and homes in early Two Harbors we have to "add 4" to the address in order for it to correlate to present postal addresses. In example; the current location of the Moose Lodge was once occupied by the Clifton Hotel at 306 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The Moose Lodge's current address is 709 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Anything east of 5<sup>th</sup> Street would have to include the "east" as part of the address.

Development in East Two Harbors below South Avenue was being dedicated to industry. In addition to D&IR's freight and coal yards there was a sizable stockyard and barn where the old city garage is, the pulpwood storage yard where the water treatment plant is, and the Munford and Woodward sawmill and pulpwood dock where the DNR boat landing is. Also the city owned quarry and rock crushing plant (you walk through it on the Sonju Trail) and the fresh water treatment plant were/are located along the eastern shore.

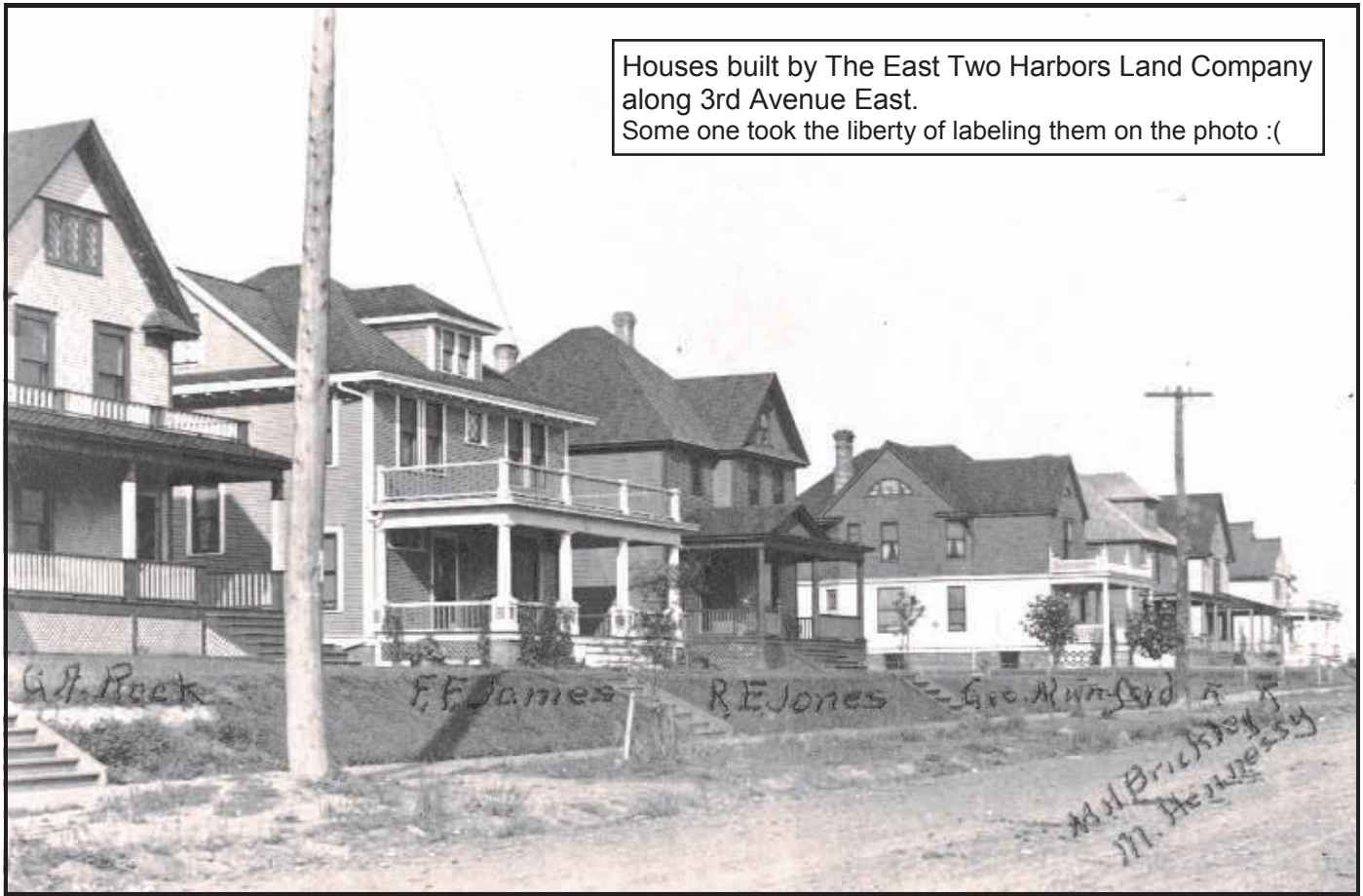
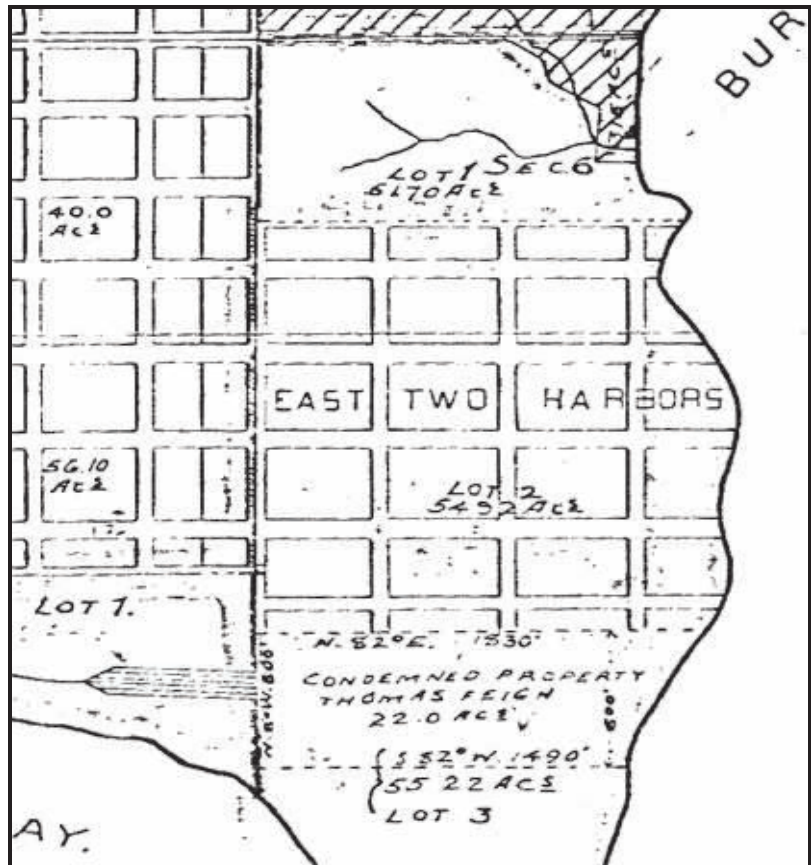
Contrary to local legend most of the homes on South and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue did not originate on Whiskey Row. There are a few, I could only point out one for certain but someone just bulldozed that into the ground last year. As late as the 1940's many of the South and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue lots east of 4<sup>th</sup> Street were undeveloped.

*Continued next page*

At the turn of the last century something very different was taking place along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue East. In lieu of moving "uptown" into the new additions many of the railroad executives and successful business owners began to build large and often elegant Victorian homes in East Two Harbors. Many of these homes were built by George Spurbeck (see story pg 4) and Albert Headley. After officially being granted its charter in 1907 the City would add to the private investment in the neighborhood and create Lakeview Park along the eastern shoreline.

At that time the City also adopted a system of house numbering in the hopes of qualifying for free mail delivery within the city limits. The postal service did not initiate free home delivery at this time. However the oldest phone book we have in our archives (1912) has the residential house numbers originating from Cherry Street (Lakeview Park Road). By 1912 no one lived in East Two Harbors anymore.

*Continued bottom page 3*



Houses built by The East Two Harbors Land Company along 3rd Avenue East. Some one took the liberty of labeling them on the photo :(

### Partial List of Historic Property in East Two Harbors

(modern addresses)

- 402 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. **Metropolitan Opera House** where plays and concerts were held. This later became Leonard Glaser's cabinet shop.
- 403 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Home of **Ed Schreiner**, Merchant, Owner of Schreiner Bro. and Moulton "The Big Store" where the American Legion is now located. Dale Sorenson's house.
- 414 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. The first office building of the **D&IR RR** originally located on the waterfront in what is now Van Hoven. It was first purchased by **John Dwan** who converted it to a duplex for rent. Currently is the Barros House Assisted Living.
- 426 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Budd Hospital, later Burns and Christensen Hospital, and the County Nursing Home. Part of the original attached **residence was moved to 323 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.** The former hospital is an assisted living facility.
- 502 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. **John Shea**, Roadmaster for the D&IR Railroad. Shea came to Agate Bay in 1883 from Iowa at 19 years of age. He came with his Father who was in charge of laying track for the new railroad.
- 508 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Home of **John Dwan**, Attorney, arrived in Two Harbors 1891. Would serve the municipality and county in several different positions throughout his career. Authored the articles of incorporation for the 3M Company.
- 509 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Home of **Thomas Owens**. Arrived in Agate Bay 1883, would rise to become Superintendent of the D&IR. Prominent civic leader in the community, "The First Citizen of Two Harbors". Promoter of the International Highway that became MN 61.
- 517 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Home of **Albert Headley**. Foreman of the car shops. He came to Agate Bay in 1883 from Canada. He would become a contractor in Two Harbors and build many of the homes in town.
- 703 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. **W.D. Lawrence**. Attorney later District Court Judge. First arrives June 10, 1883, operates the sawmill where the brewery is today until he practices law eventually being appointed to the bench. Very influential in the early development of the community. Long time member of local government. This house has been converted to apartments.
- 123 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. The home of **H.S. Bryan**, Master Mechanic for the D&IR. Arrive in Two Harbors 1890. Owned first automobile in town. Served as village President and was active in civic affairs. The home was later owned by Iver Amundson who would develop the Rustic Inn and Cottages along Cherry Street. Don't know who owns it but STAY OFF THE LAWN!
- 202 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. **Charles Falk** Residence built by his father Gust Falk. Charles was the proprietor of Falk's Drug Store. Home is owned by John and Debbie Anderson.
- 205 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of **Andrew Haugen**, merchant. Arrived in Two Harbors in 1900 from the gold fields of Alaska.
- 235 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of **David (D.H.) Lawrence**, attorney, son of Judge Lawrence. Drove the first car into Beaver Bay. Member of the TH Commercial Club.
- 331 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of **George Munford**, Banker, Commercial State Bank. Also involved with several business and land investments.
- 401 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. This house was originally built for **James Shea** a locomotive engineer but was purchased by **Emmet Jones**. County Attorney for many years. His father shared his house. He was an engineer on the D&IR and later fuel supervisor for the railroad.
- 405 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of the **F.F. James** Family. Proprietor of the James Drug Store. Came to TH in 1895.
- 409 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of **George Rock** Family, came to Agate Bay in 1883 and was the telegraph lineman and later became freight and passenger agent for the D&IR.
- 431 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Home of **George Spurbeck**. Came to TH in 1891 to be an Assistant Light Keeper at Government Lighthouse. Quickly saw the potential of the community and invested in land. Was a general contractor that built many of the homes and rail facilities in and around TH.

Free home postal service would not come until 1928. In anticipation of home delivery the City discarded the streets tree names; Cherry, Hazel, Spruce, Willow, Maple, Poplar, Cedar, Pine, and Birch, all were numbered east to west all the way out through Segog.



From *Two Harbors: 1900*  
**George H. Spurbeck**

George H. Spurbeck, a well known contractor and builder, to who's genius, skill, and energy many of the finest residences and business structures of Two Harbors owe their existence, was born in Winnebago County, WI in 1856 amid scenes of rural simplicity where nature's music mingled with a mothers lullaby created a genial disposition as a fit companion for his sturdy manhood. The farm, the flocks, the fields and common schools of Wisconsin occupied his time until he reached a man's estate, at which time he selected

Minnesota as the field of his future labors, and has been a member of that commonwealth for twenty three consecutive years, the first sixteen thereof in the southern part of the state, amid agricultural surroundings.

Coming to Two Harbors in 1891 he served one year as an Assistant Lighthouse Keeper, and then commenced his career as contractor and builder. He has proved himself the peer of any and can point with pride to the fruits of his labor and industry. Always public spirited he has given his full share of valuable time to public interests, serving three years on the village council of Two Harbors, from March of 1897, till March, 1900, the last year of which he served in the capacity of village president, and was one of the chief promoters of the village electric light plant, which was constructed and installed during his administration, and he justly regards this acquisition among those for which he can claim the greatest credit.

His present position as director and vice president of the **East Two Harbors Land Company**, which brings to the village a most valuable tract of fine residence property, enlarges the sphere of his usefulness, and it may well be said that he is of the sort that makes a most valuable and creditable member of any progressive community.



The home of  
 George Spurbeck  
 at 431 3rd Ave.

Note the concrete sidewalk and fire plug. This was not common in 1900. By 1910 most of the streets were paved (gravel) with concrete gutters and sidewalks.

Early homeowners were required by city ordinance to build boardwalks in front of their homes.



## Thank You!

to the **3M Company** for the Grant Award of \$10,000.00 to the Lake County Historical Society for the continued operation of the 3M Museum in Two Harbors.

### From the Director



I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their support and generosity in renewing my contract for three more years.

We are moving ahead with the Depot basement repairs and should have the survey work completed this spring. This will provide the technical information to begin the planning and grant seeking process.

The B&B is open seven days a week this winter and we are seeing increases in occupancy throughout January and February with the mild winter temps.

I am working with Mr. Lindahl to put some fresh exhibits in the Depot Museum, Also we will be putting some kids "play areas" in the Depot Museum and support that effort with a new Family Pass that will admit 2 adults and up to 4 kids to the museum. (this is not a multi pass to all sites).

I am happy to report that we are working in the archives reorganizing and assessing our collections. New shelving upstairs and in the basement and over \$1000.00 in archival supplies to properly care for and store everything.

# Thank You to Our Supporters

JANUARY 2016

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**Thank You  
to everyone  
that has  
renewed their  
Membership!**

## **The Class of 1963**

Downtown Beatification Project

So far they have raised \$1843.00 From: Anonymous, \$481.

Individual Donations from: Two Harbors Re-visioning, John and Barbara Force, Costley and Morris, P.C., Pam Coolidge, THHS Class of 1974, Arlys Anderson, Gloria Anderson, Louise Mielke, and Roger and Shirley Martinson. They have also logged in over one hundred hours of volunteer work from quite a few people.

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