

# A Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee

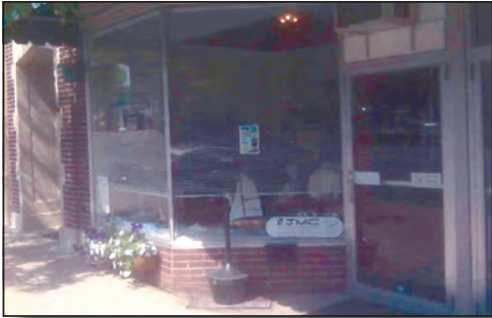
## Historical Visitor's Guide

FREE



A visual “take it with you” handbook to some of the  
historically significant sites of the  
Culver-Culver Academies-Lake Maxinkuckee area





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# Introduction



While every place has its own unique history to share, there are few places in the world quite like Culver, and that heritage lends itself to a startlingly rich and diverse history. Part small-town “Mayberry,” part resort and lake community, part quasi “college” town (even if technically “high school,” due to the presence of Culver Academies), Culver is an unusual but fascinating melting pot today, and its back story is even more fascinating.

How many small, Midwestern communities have been cherished by the likes of Cole Porter, Kurt Vonnegut, James Whitcomb Riley, George Steinbrenner, and “Ben Hur” novelist Lew Wallace, who said in 1905 that “Lake Maxinkuckee is the most beautiful place on earth”? How many have a close connection to the sinking of the Titanic, or are home to the first integrated high school basketball team in Indiana? And that’s not counting the notable alumni of Culver Academies, too many to mention, who consider Culver a “second home.”

That those in the area are proud keepers of their historical heritage is evidenced by the existence of *two* museums here: the Culver Academies Museum & Gift Shop (at 102 S. Main St) and the Center for Culver History, an endeavor of the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver currently located at 107 N. Main, but slated to move in Oct., 2013.

A proliferation of material, thankfully, is now available in print and online (some suggested sources follow this writing), and I hope readers will take advantage of them and read in more depth about the fascinating history of the community. There’s something compelling, however, about “being there,” which is why it’s important not to see this publication as simply a collection of historical facts.

Over the past few years, I was part of a series of historic bicycle tours co-sponsored by the Antiquarian Society and the sadly now-defunct Bike Barn, operated by Don Baker and his wife Janet Halling. To my knowledge, those bicycle rides represented the first time “tours” of the historic sites of the area specifically were offered to the public, and I’d say they were a hit, which added to my sense that there was and is an interest in this sort of endeavor.

This guide is intended to be a more dynamic, “take it with you” guide for the casual visitor to Culver — whether by bicycle, vehicle, boat, or on foot — but interestingly, a number of local or longtime summer residents also expressed a great deal of interest not only in the bicycle tours, but generally in uncovering some of the gems of Culver’s storied past. I think we tend to overlook the treasures in our own back

yards, a situation exacerbated by our present culture’s tendency to foist on us the eternal pursuit of the new, the trendy, and the exciting opportunity over the next hill.

So what follows in these pages is necessarily a mixture of the “must-see” (or even the “sure, why not?”) historical places of the area, for the newcomer or visitor, as well as some of the sites of nostalgic value to generations who frequented the area.

It’s critical to point out that a follow-up publication could be formed from the many places *not* listed in this one, if one wanted to dig deeper. With limited space to work in, some tough decisions had to be made as to some buildings or sites not making it into these pages.

It’s my hope that this publication will continue to be relevant to visitors and locals for some time to come. Perhaps it’s in your back pocket for that walk of bike trip around town or to and around Lake Maxinkuckee, or your glove-box for that Sunday drive through town and around the lake.

I’m indebted to the archives of the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver, as well as the Culver Academies archives, for so much of the information and imagery found in this publication. I’m also indebted to the sponsors and advertisers you see represented here, who made this project possible; their assistance is greatly, greatly appreciated.

And now, with this publication in hand, get out and enjoy Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee!

## Jeff Kenney

**Editor, The Culver Citizen newspaper.**

*If you enjoyed this publication, consider a subscription to The Culver Citizen, Culver’s weekly newspaper of record since 1894, and a source not only of current news, but plenty of ongoing historical content as well. Subscribe via [culver-citizen.com](http://culver-citizen.com) or by emailing [circ@thepilotnews.com](mailto:circ@thepilotnews.com) or calling 1-800-933-0356.*

## Recommended resources (online)

[www.culverahs.com](http://www.culverahs.com) (the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver’s website, which includes an ever-growing gallery of photos and publications).

[www.digitalvault.culver.org](http://www.digitalvault.culver.org) (Culver Academies’ “Digital Vault” with vintage images, postcards, historical articles, and more)

[www.culver.lib.in.us](http://www.culver.lib.in.us) (the Culver Public Library’s website, which contains many images from the Antiquarian Society’s collection).

[www.maxinkuckee.history.pasttracker.com](http://www.maxinkuckee.history.pasttracker.com) (the “Intrigue, History, and Genealogy” of Lake Maxinkuckee and the area)



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*Thanks to Rachel Meade for editing assistance.*

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## Town of Culver

**The Town of Culver** began with the first non-Indian settlers' arrival here in 1836, though the small village known today as Culver was laid out as Union Town in 1844. Just seven years later, at the pressing of Dr. G.A.Durr that the town took on the name Marmont, in honor of one of Napoleon's generals. In October, 1895, by unanimous vote and agreement from the townspeople, the name was changed to Culver in honor of the founder of the military academy on the eastern edge of the town (initially the change was refused by the post office in Washington, DC, until Mr.

Culver himself coaxed the residents of the "other" Culver, in Tippecanoe County, to change their town to Crane, since their name honored a man named Crane Culver).



The original, 1884 depot (ABOVE) burned down in 1920 and was replaced with the current, 1925 building, with brick facade.



### 'Uptown' Culver (northeast section of the town)

#### 1. Vandalia Railroad station - Town Park (819 Lake Shore Drive).

From 1884 to the 1920s, trains brought thousands to Lake Maxinkuckee on the Vandalia Rail line from Terre Haute, Indianapolis, and points north. The 1880s depot burned and was replaced by the present (1925) structure, renovated and preserved by Culver's Lions Club.



A group visits the Vandalia Park lighthouse in 1907.

The Town Park boasts 1893 Chicago World's fair light-posts and 1930s WPA works project architecture (the beach lodge), masonry, and landscaping. The lighthouse is an Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver replica of the 1894-1913 lighthouse used to notify steamboat captains at night that passengers needed transport across the lake, the primary mode of travel in that era.



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**2. Uptown Cinema** (612 Lake Shore Dr). Culver's longest-lived movie theater first opened Christmas Eve, 1921 (during a time when two other theatres operated here!) and was early owned by — and frequently featured onstage — popular Vaudeville entertainer Billy Link, among other acts and live pianists accompanying silent films. By 1935, it was under the ownership of Evert Hoesel and known as The Palms. Hoesel sold it off and on over the next five decades, but always seemed to buy it back until a final sale in 1981, after which it became Lakeside Cinema. It gained its current name under present owner Dan Bickel in 2007.

**3. Culver fire station** (504 E. Lake Shore Drive). Built circa early 1950s, the former International Harvester building became home to Culver's town hall and fire station around 1966. The town hall eventually moved to its present home on Plymouth Street, leaving the fire department to build the new, northern section, dedicated in 2006.



Mr. and Mrs. Carl Eby in front of the root beer stand known today as the Original, circa 1957.

**4. Gladie's Deli/Culver Banquets/Mirar Custom Homes** (415 E. Lake Shore Drive). Dating back to 1905 as Hayes & Son livery stable, and later (1914) the D. W. Miller livery and feed business, for more than a decade this site was home to A. R. McKesson Ford Sales (starting in 1937). Various owners continued to sell Ford vehicles out of the building through the early 1980s (McClure, Wicker, Van Horn, Marshall). Besides being home to an Italian restaurant and temporarily the Culver library, its best known

recent use was as City Tavern (later Diner), an upscale eatery under the direction of Larry Surrissi.

**5. Lakeview Tavern** (618 Lake Shore Dr). Opened in 1936 by Jack Taylor, the Lakeview was — along with the long-standing Corner Tavern on Main St — one of Culver's longest-lived pubs. In fact, it still survives, as the western section of the popular fine dining establishment, The Lakehouse Grille, whose owner, Mark Damore Jr has attempted to retain the historic feel of the place while updating and polishing its appearance.

**6. The Original Root Beer Stand** (824 E. Lake Shore Drive). First moved (physically, on a truck!) to Culver in 1956, the popular drive-in was taken over by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Eby and later their son Jan and his family. More recently Mark Damore Sr. purchased and operates what has likely been the most popular place to grab a root beer or ice cream after a swim in the lake for decades.

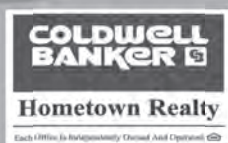
**7. Papa's**, (824 E. Lake Shore Drive). Dating back to the 1950s, the building once known as the House of Treasures



Longtime Culver theater owner Evert Hoesel outside the El Rancho (today's Uptown Cinema) on Lake Shore Drive during a World War II scrap and junk drive in Nov., 1942.



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## Town of Culver

on the west shore of the lake, was later associated with the motel operation to its north. In 1976, the McCormack family took over what had been Jobo's Pizza and offered "Indiana's best pizza," eventually expanding and renovating the structure.

**8. The Historic Bungalow District** (Forest Place). Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and on the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures thanks to the efforts of the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver. Part of the Arts and Crafts movement in architecture around 100 years ago, bungalows have gained a rabid cult following in some circles, though many have deteriorated across the country. The abodes in Culver's bungalow district, though few in number, have retained the natural, artistic charm which has made the genre so popular.

**Downtown Culver Commercial District** (*Main Street at Washington, Jefferson, and Madison*).

*Placed on the National Register of Historic Places, Culver's downtown has retained its quaint, early to mid-20th century charm. With some buildings dating back to the 1890s, the area also boasts a preserved, 1914 Carnegie library (107 N. Main). Just east of Main and Jefferson is the 1935 Colonial Revival US Post Office (which includes a Public Works of Art Project mural of Culver by Jessie Meyer from 1938). Just east of downtown on Jefferson St., at the site of today's Culver Cove Resort (319 East Jefferson) stood the former Medbourn Ice House, which supplied millions of tons of ice across Indiana and beyond circa 1880-1937.*

**9. JMC Engineers** (110 N. Main St.). Built in 1895, the downtown staple building which today houses JMC has been home to a number of businesses (including during years when it was split into multiple store fronts). The once-popular Knights of Pythias, which formed a lodge in Culver (then Marmont) in 1889, erected the building, hence the K of P still engraved in the structure near its roof today. Through the years it has housed the Easterday funeral home (briefly), Solomon's and Kennedy's stores (respectively), the Kelly Shop (1962 to 1982), and (upstairs) the Henry Culver Masonic Lodge, and also upstairs, the long-running "Lion's Den" for Culver's Lions Club, circa 1943 to the early 1980s, when the Lions

rented and now occupy the depot.

**10. Former Easterday Funeral Home/Verl's Barber Shop** (108 N. Main St.). Today an annex to JMC Engineering, this historic structure was home to Culver's longest-running funeral home, founded in 1893 by William Easterday (though he moved into this site in 1921). Son William R. Easterday took over the business, with Jim and Rosalie Bonine partnering with him in 1960 there. The Bonine Funeral Home moved north (see Odom Funeral Home) and Verl Shaffer moved his popular barber shop (and incidentally the place to learn all that was going on in Culver) into 108 that same decade, where it remained until 2006, when he retired. Gladie's Deli occupied the spot for a few years before moving to its present Lake Shore Drive locale.



Today a vacant lot, the northeast corner of Main and Jefferson Streets was once home to several prominent businesses, as visible in this 1950s photo of a parade led by Culver's VFW Ladies Auxiliary.

**11. Northeast corner, Main and Jefferson Streets.** A host of beloved businesses occupied the row of stores between 106 and 102 N. Main, today a vacant lot. Among the longest lived:



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## Town of Culver



LEFT: A 1924 parade down Main Street south of Jefferson, on the east side. Note the Wickizer building in the foreground.

LOWER LEFT: The Easter Day, 1957 fire which claimed the top half of Culver's still-existent hardware store.

UPPER RIGHT: The Osborn Hotel, at the northwest corner of Ohio and Jefferson Streets, stood for most of the 20th century where Culver's Farmer's Market is today.

LOWER RIGHT: The Miller Livery predicated what would be the McKessen Ford building, at 415 Lake Shore Drive, circa 1915.



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Ewald's Meat Market (later Gretter's grocery, Rector's Pharmacy (later McKinnis Pharmacy and Kline's TV and Appliances), the Snyder Cafe, and many more.

### 12. Culver Academies Museum & Gift Shop (102 S.

Main). Tracing back prior to the turn of the century, this site was home to various businesses operated by the Saine family. It was also the site of a tragedy: the only local loss of life from a shootout in December, 1920, when a group of bandits robbed the State Exchange Bank across the street and several local businessmen took aim at the robbers (see entry on the bank). In 1932, the Saine building was torn down and a Linco Petroleum station built, which (later as a Marathon station) operated there until Bob and Mary Tanguy erected the current structure in 2000, with Culver Academies taking over in Oct., 2009.

**13. The former Wickizer building (108 S. Main St.).** As far back as the 1920s, generations of Culverites will remember this building as the site of the Wickizer Variety Store (up to 1947). It went through various iterations before becoming the Culver News Agency in 1952, under Bill and Edna Taber. After a few more changes of hand circa 1980, it gained new popularity as the Olde Towne Restaurant under

Allen and Toni Tettenborn, who own it (though it's presently empty). A remodel allowed a smaller shop to be added, which in the early 2000s became the present-day Gail's Shop.

**14. Civvies** (and other establishments, 110, 112, and 114 S. Main St.). The older northernmost building was home to a tin and harness shop in 1914. It later became a barber shop. In 1947 it became the Grill, which would be run by sisters Marcella White and Mildred Ditmire (who in 1959 opened their own restaurant, the M&M, in today's Cafe Max building across the street). It changed hands over the years but starting in 1983 and until 2011 the Mackey family ran it as The Collectors antique store. The smaller structure next door (today's Civvies) was built in 1947 and has housed various businesses, including The Bear End teddy bear boutique, which also closed in 2011.

**15. The Culver Hardware (120 S. Main St.).** Certainly one of the longest continuous entities in Culver, the hardware store dates back to around the turn of the century, though longtime early owner O.T. Goss (whose home at Lake Shore Drive and Main Street is another historic site) took over in 1906. Paul Snyder purchased the store in 1943, expanding

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the store space north into what had been just storage under Goss. On Easter Sunday, 1957, the entire second floor of the building (then an apartment) was lost to fire, though the lower level was saved. Snyder's son Bill took over the store and ran it for some 40 years, selling it in 2007 to present owner Dave Beggs.

**16. Maxinkuckee Auto Supply** (202 S. Main St.). This site was the home of various businesses including H.L. Werner, jeweler, in 1911, though for many years to follow it was a private residence. The present, cinder block structure was built in 1944 to house Charles Ricciardi's dry cleaning establishment, which closed in 1977. In 1992, present owner Steve McDaniel purchased what had, by the early 1980s, become Culver Auto Supply under Rand Healy, renaming it Maxinkuckee Auto Supply.

**17. Main Street Manor** (203 S. Main St). For much of its life a private residence apparently dating back to the turn of the century, this beautiful structure was home to optometrist F.L. Babcock's business in the 1970s and '80s. It was expanded and converted to its present status as bed and breakfast by Dave and Susan Beggs, present owners.

**18. Corndance Cafe** (117 S. Main St). Built in 1910, various businesses called this historic structure home before its long-lived and popular incarnation as The Corner Tavern, starting in 1952. The tavern, an extremely popular watering hole and destination for an assortment of celebrity visitors, closed its doors in 1997. George Pesek, renowned Chicago chef, and wife Tammy opened the Corndance in 1999, helping launch an ongoing era of fine dining in Culver.



Clifford Waite stands in front of his plumbing shop at 115 S. Main Street, the location of the southern portion of today's Cafe Max, circa 1920s.

**19. Cafe Max** (115 and 113 S. Main St). The southernmost section of today's Cafe Max is actually an annex formed by the original, circa 1920 structure, which for decades was a plumbing shop under various owners. By 1952, it was the Culver

City Tavern, and Al Sytsma opened his appliance and electronics shop there in 1965. In 2009, Cafe Max owner Susie Mahler bought it and added it to her existing restaurant at 117, Cafe Max, which she opened in 1985. Dating back to pre-1900, the building had been a grocery under various owners, until circa 1920 when it opened as the Home Theater under John Osborn. The Oberlin appliance store was among the businesses to follow, after which The Grill opened there in 1959. It has remained a restaurant to this day (The Home and the Nan-E-Lou, prior to Mahler's purchase



The Mitchell and Stabenow name is kept alive in the entryway mosaic at Fisher & Co. Clothiers at 111 S. Main Street.

of it).

**20. Fisher and Co. Clothiers** (111 S. Main St.). In 1906, John Mitchell and Otto Stabenow of Chicago opened a fine clothiers at the site. Their names remain immortalized in mosaic tiles in the entryway. The site has remained a clothing store under different owners for over a century—Fred Adams from 1954 to 57', Andy Venum from 57' to 1994,

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and Pam Fisher from 1994 to the present day.

**21. Diva Gifts** (109 and 107 S. Main St). Built circa 1900 in the Italianate style, this building was home to various groceries, including Oberlin's (1920s to 1944), IGA (1944 to 1952), Quality Grocers (1952 through late 1970s). It is well remembered for renting out meat storage lockers for many of those years. It operated as several businesses in the years following, opened by Sue McInturff as Diva in 2007.

The 107 section of the building was built in 1889 and for much of its life was a drug store, early known as Slattery's, later Culver City Drugs, and starting in 1968, as Mr. T's under Ronald Tusing (the business was famous through the decades for its secret chocolate sauce recipe). In 1977, Tusing partnered with fellow pharmacist Robert McKinnis and moved to 806 Academy Road (today Culver Academies' Accounting building) where he operated Mr. T's until his death in 1998. Andy Venum opened the Shoe Stable at 107 S. Main in 1977. Then in 1991 Fred and Judy Karst purchased the building and moved the Citizen there. It became a realty business in the early 2000s, and McInturff expanded Diva there in 2010.

**22. Skyline Builders** (103 S. Main St). Built circa 1920, this structure housed a harness shop, shoe repair business, and starting in the 1980s, Robert Cultice's insurance company.

**23. Heritage Park** (southwest corner, Main and Jefferson Streets). Once part of an old school house and later a private residence. In 1926, a service station (one of some 10 thriving gas and service stations in the Culver area between the 1930s and 1960s) was erected at this site, transitioning through various owners in the years following until, by the early 1950s, it became a Texaco station under Gordon Cultice. In the mid-1990s, by which point the station had been closed for several years, the Antiquarian and Historical Society began cleanup of the property, and by 1996, Heritage Park was underway.



This 1938 mural by Mrs. Henrick Mayer adorns the west wall of the Culver Post Office.

**24. Culver Post Office** (corner of Ohio and Jefferson Streets). Though the existence of a US Post office in Culver dates back to the 19th century, the current, Colonial Revival building was dedicated in 1935 and built by the James I. Barnes construction com-

pany, the precursors to today's Easterday Construction (on Slate Street). Though the post office itself was not technically the result of a Depression relief program, it was certainly seen as a blessing during those difficult times.

Equally notable is the Culver-themed mural on the west wall, "Arrival of the Mail" by Indianapolis artist Mrs. Henrick Mayer, installed in 1938 and the result of a Depression-era US Treasury Department project aimed at giving artists work. Its notable that the artist was a university trained woman, something far less common in those days. She was commissioned to do several more murals through 1941.

**25. Hammer's Garage** (215 W. Jefferson). As early as



A Cloverleaf Dairy milk truck, which would have called 215 W. Jefferson home, in years past.

the 1920s, a creamery operated at this site, but by 1930, the Clover Leaf dairy, one of a handful of Culver operations whose

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locally-filled, glass milk bottles are today collector's items, was in production at 215. It operated there into the mid-1950s. Over the years, it was home to Snyder Motor Sales (1960s and '70s), a feed and garden center, glass shop, and more until longtime local mechanic, the late Larry Mahler opened his own garage there in 1990.



The State Exchange Bank circa late 1940s.

**26. The State Exchange Bank** (today First Farmers Bank and Trust, 101 N. Main St.). First established across the street to the south in 1892, the State Exchange

Bank not only thrived during the Great Depression but had a nationally renowned longtime president, W.O. Osborn. His fame in the business world was such that he was the keynote speaker at the IBM international conference in New York in



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1947.

The bank was also the site of two high-profile and violent robberies: one in 1920, during which businessman Jacob Saine was shot and killed; and again in 1933, when national headlines focused on Culver's thwarting the attempt of Chicago gangsters, one of whom was shot on the scene by Culver businessman

Oliver C. Shilling. Culver Military Academy commandant Col. Robert Rossow led a posse which captured all the bandits. Notably, the 1920 robbers were defended by famed Chicago attorney Clarence Derrow, who went on to international notoriety for his role in the "Scopes monkey trial" centered around evolution.

The bank made state-of-the-art renovations to its Culver branch, becoming a stately center of commerce for the community and region. In 1985, four years after Osborn's death, it merged with Norcen Bank, undergoing several iterations before First Farmers took the helm in 2006.

**27. The Culver-Union Twp. Public Library** (107 N. Main St.). Residents of the town of Culver and the Lake Maxinkuckee community partnered to facilitate a Carnegie library here in 1915, which has been preserved, restored, and renovated since. The original community auditorium, located as was common in Carnegie libraries, in the lower level of the original (southernmost) building, remains intact, as does its ticket and projection windows and stage. Several local churches had their start there, among many notable activities. In 2002, renovations were completed which added the present section at the corner of Washington and Main Streets, updating and greatly expanding the library's space.



The present Odom Funeral Home during its tenure as the O.T. Goss home, 1906-1943.

**28. The Odom Funeral Home** (104 E. Lake Shore)  
As indicated on its Marshall Co. Historical Society Historic Landmark Award, today's funeral home was known for decades as the O.T. Goss house, so named for

the longtime hardware store owner who sold the hardware to the Snyder family, and ceased occupancy of the house, in 1943. It was occupied by hardware store owner Paul Snyder until 1961, when it became the Van Gilder Funeral Home. In 1966, James and Rosalie Bonine moved the former Easterday mortuary (which they had purchased) to the site, which they occupied until 2009, when Gregory Odom and wife Karen took over the business.

## Town of Culver

**East Jefferson Street businesses.** Jefferson Street east of Main was home to a number of thriving businesses over the 20th century, including the Medbourn Ice House (see ice houses entry this issue), where part of the Culver Cove sits today, on the south side of the street, as well as Culver's grain elevator, in another section of the present day Cove.

On the north side of Jefferson, for much of the fore part of the century the Ferrier Lumber Company dominated (in April, 1924, a major fire there almost claimed the entire town, or so it was reckoned, if rain hadn't arrived to douse the flames). The McClane livery (later Chevrolet) operated at 214 E. Jefferson, and Park N. Shop grocery had its start at 115 E. Jefferson, site of today's Culver Wings.

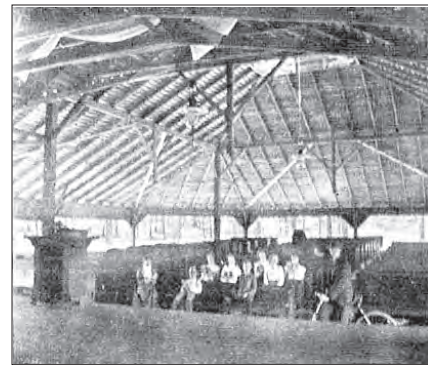
**Culver town hall** (200 E. Washington St.). Starting in 1946, this storied building was home to the Culver Citizen newspaper, which would be unremarkable (since the paper occupied virtually every building in the downtown area at one point or another), except that by the early 1950s, Culver Press Inc. was under way, and the brick building at Washington and Plymouth not only printed the Citizen, but all of Culver Academies' publications and numerous publications from around the country, becoming quite an in-depth operation. In 1967 it became in Plymouth. In 1976, Culver's Town Hall moved there from today's fire station, and outside of an overhaul some years ago to increase space, and addition of the ambulance garage, little has changed in the building.

**Culver VFW Post 6919** (108 E. Washington St). Culver's newly formed VFW Post took over its present building in 1947, when the Culver Citizen moved its operations across the street to today's town hall. Through the years, the third floor of the building was removed, it recovered from extensive fire damage (1969) and the old home to the east of it

was purchased (1972) and razed (1998), its location serving as the extension for the Post (starting 1995). The Post is named the Finney-Shilling Post for Patrick L. Finney, who died at Pearl Harbor, and John Richard Shilling, who was lost during the war itself.

### The Culver Elementary School and former Community Building (401 School St.)

Though the original, 1906 Culver High School was demolished in 1980s, its site is home to the Culver Elementary School, the center portion of which was built in 1952. The longtime, 1929-built Union Township Community Building, which also served as the high school gymnasium and today is the elementary gymnasium, was home to countless community activities, including plays, concerts, holiday events, and many wartime endeavors during the 1940s. The south section was built in 1986, with a major addition in the early 2000s.



**Maxinkuckee Assembly Chautauqua grounds** (Main Street at Davis to West Shore Drive). A large religious revival and cultural and arts assembly — patterned after the famous Lake Chautauqua in New York — drew thou-

Gathering for a lecture at the Tabernacle, sands each summer on the Maxinkuckee Assembly Chautauqua between 1899 and 1905.

1905. It boasted its own lavish hotel, train

station, post office, and outdoor "Tabernacle" structure was renowned for its cultural and educational offerings.

## Culver's African-American community

Owing primarily to the existence of Culver Academies — though also due to lake cottages and other factors — Culver boasted a vibrant, if fairly small, permanent black community through the first half of the 20th century. This led to the town's having the first integrated high school basketball team in Indiana (in 1927), as well as an all-black, touring baseball team (The Comics), an African Methodist Episco-



LEFT: Rollins Chapel, Culver's AME church, circa 1920.

RIGHT: The Comics, an all-African American baseball team operating in Culver in the early years of the 20th century.

pal church (see listing in "Churches"), and generally a level of integration unusual in America during this period. Many second-generation members of this community went on not only to higher education, but many to a degree of prominence again unusual in the culture of the day.





## Churches

**Churches:** From 1836 to the present, more than 54 churches have served Culver and the immediate four township areas. Many original churches have closed due to unification and population and developmental changes. Today, roughly 20 churches or less continue to serve the area.

The first church in Marshall County was a Jesuit chapel built for the Potawatomi Indians at Twin Lakes, some miles north of Culver. In 1850, east of Marmont (on today's State Road 10), the Poplar Grove Methodist Church had its beginning as an outgrowth of Sunday School studies. The church building, one of the oldest in the area, still stands. In 1851, the St. Mary's Mission began serving Catholics near Monterey.



ABOVE: Culver's Methodist Episcopal Church at Main and Washington Streets, early in its brick facade days (note clock, still intact).

BELOW: Grace Church on Plymouth Street in its early incarnation, circa 1900 (note dirt streets).

opened in 1955. The old parsonage, located across Washington Street at the location of today's BP, served the church from 1906-57.



**The Methodist Church**, originally located at Main and Washington Streets, was first built in 1868 and rebuilt, in brick, in 1898-99, with bell tower and spire with clock. Construction began on the current Wesley United Methodist Church building (School Street and College Avenue) in April, 1954, the old one demolished around the same time. The new building

**Grace Church** (307 N. Plymouth St.). First organized as the Marmont Congregation of the Reformed Church of America in 1885, the church building was completed in the

fall of 1890 and became, along with Culver's Methodist and Evangelical churches, one of the staple churches of the community. Grace was remodeled, enlarged or redecorated on five different occasions (1906, 1912, 1920, 1926 and 1951). In 1957, a national merger shifted its title to the United Church of Christ, rather than Reformed. A June 6, 1969 fire extensively damaged the church's basement into the sanctuary above, where the Chancel, ceiling, furniture and windows were badly marred. Dedication of the new (current)

building took place June 6, 1971.



Emmanuel church on South Main Street, prior to its 1924 renovation.

**The Evangelical Church/Emmanuel** (401 S. Main St.). In 1872, "The Emmanuel Church, of the Evangelical Association" started not far

south of Lost (or Hawk) Lake. The original church edifice, built in 1842, was moved to its present site in Culver in 1899, with an addition which made it about twenty feet longer. It was further improved by being brick veneered and otherwise renovated in 1924. The completed church was dedicated on September 28, 1924, with appropriate dedication day services. A 1946 merger shifted its name to the Emmanuel Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB), and a 1968 merger brought it to its present title, the Emmanuel United Methodist Church.

**St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church** (124 College Ave.).



The first St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church, at Lake Shore Drive and Lake Street, built 1897, burned 1905.

In 1897, St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church was built on a lot at the northeast corner of Lakeview Street and Lake Shore Drive. In September, 1905, the building was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. In 1948, World War II chaplain Fr. Joseph Lenk arrived and set up a Quonset hut church at Plymouth Street and College Avenue. In 1954, fire claimed that structure, and the present church opened in 1955, with St. Thomas More Club in the basement to serve Culver Military Academy Catholic students, who were unable to

## Churches

attend Mass on campus until the 1980s. The Culver eagle and "C" insignia above the Plymouth St. entrance reflect the role of the church for those students.

**The African M. E. Church** (Harding Court - no longer standing). Rollins Chapel, located in a currently-empty lot behind the northwest corner of 415 E. Lake Shore Drive, opened in 1912, joining the A. M. E. Conference about 1917. The church, which served Culver's vibrant African-American community, was a rather small frame building, with an open bell tower. The ground for the church was donated by George Rollins, one of the pioneer African Americans of Culver, who came here with Colonel Fleet from Mexico, Missouri, early in the establishment of Culver Military Academy. Services were listed in *The Culver Citizen* as late as 1968, but the church closed its doors soon thereafter.

**Culver Bible Church** (718 S. Main) dates back to 1951 and the initiation of Culver businessman Joe Boetsma Sr., though it was 1953 when the church gained its first full time pastor. The church purchased the lot on which it sits today in 1955, and was incorporated in 1957, the same year it broke ground for its building, which was completed the following year. In 1972 it was expanded to include a baptistry, class room and pastor's study.

**Trinity Lutheran Church** (430 Academy Rd). Trinity Lu-

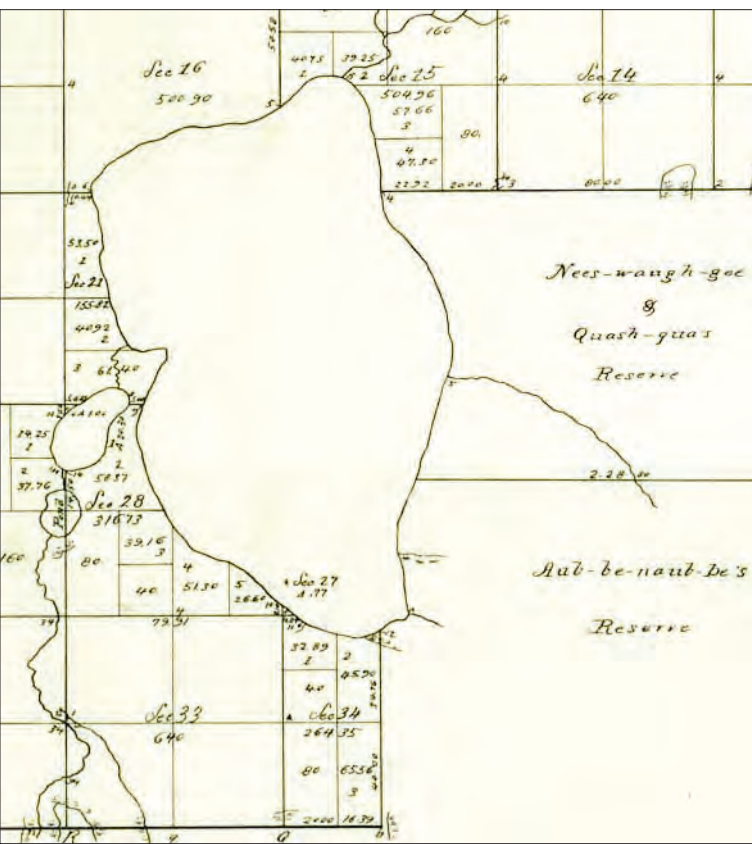


Inside Trinity Lutheran Church on Academy Road in 1971, one year after the first service held there.

theran held its first worship service Nov. 30, 1958 in the basement of the Culver Public Library. The church's charter was signed March 1, 1959. By the end of 1968, the Culver Public Library said it needed more space, and the hunt began for land. In May, 1967,

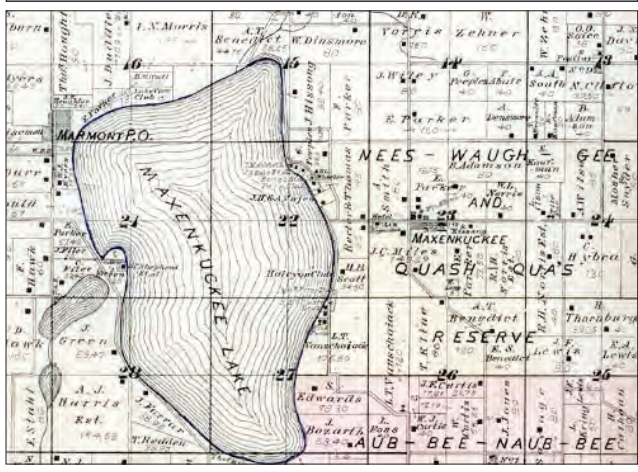
the Academy Rd. land was purchased, with the first service in the newly-built structure taking place Nov. 1, 1970.

**St Elizabeth's Episcopal Church** (515 State Street). Culver's Episcopal church had its genesis in 1987, when most worshippers at the Episcopal church in Rochester were driving there from the Culver area. After appeals to the bishop, it was agreed to move the church to Culver in 1990. For the next 16 years, services were held at 820 Academy Road, in part of the building adjacent to the former video rental store Bick's Flicks. When the Academy Road building was purchased, the church was able to purchase its present building,



### A historical tour of Culver, circa 1835

AT LEFT is the earliest known map of Lake Maxinkuckee, dated February, 1835, the year before the first European settlers arrived here. Note the designations for "Nees-waugh-gee and Quash-quas," and "Aub-be-naub-be's" reserves, or Indian villages, on the east and south shores of the lake. BELOW: An 1881 map still shows the reservations, long after the Indians' departure, while also showing the developments in Marmont and other areas.





## Lake Maxinkuckee

**Lake Maxinkuckee** takes its name from the Potawatomi Indians who once occupied its shores. The second largest natural lake in Indiana, it covers some 1,854 acres in area and is fed largely by springs and flowing wells, besides drainage waterways from the surrounding area. It is 2.6 miles long and 1.6 wide and is 89.5 feet deep at its deepest. Its highest ridge is 134 feet above the water level. Settlement here began with arrival of the pioneers in 1836 (the names of those first families are engraved on a boulder at the southeast corner of State Road 10 and Queen Rd), but it was the arrival of the railroad in 1884 which launched the plethora of summer cottagers who settled on the lake (earliest on the east shore), many among them the most prominent in Indiana and the Midwest.

### Lake Maxinkuckee, West and South Shores



ABOVE: The Arlington Hotel on Long Point in 1898. BELOW: The Arlington depot is barely visible in the distance in this 1890s photo of Long Point (at right).



Hoosier ghost stories, that of Pau-Koo-Shuck, whose spirit the early settlers swore they saw dancing on the shores of Long Point (his father, Chief Aubbeenaubbee, occupied much of the land comprising the lake's south shore). It's also the site of the Arlington Hotel (and its accompanying depot), one of dozens of lavish hotels which served as destinations for some of the elite of Indiana during the late 19th and early 20th century.

**Venetian Village** (area of 1090 through 1128 South Shore Drive)

Developed in the late 1950s, this unusual series of channels and canals borders the restored, 80-acre DNR-owned Maxinkuckee Wetland Conservation Area marshland.

**Long Point/Arlington Hotel and station** (area of 700s - 1000s West Shore Drive)  
Tradition holds that this peninsula was a Native American burial ground, and it's also the site of one of the best-known

**Mystic Hills Golf Course**, a Pete Dye creation (16788 20B Road).

This beautiful, 18-hole course was designed by world renowned golf course designer Pete Dye, who has designed courses across the country (including in collaboration with golf legend Jack Nicklaus) and won multiple awards for his achievements. He is also a cottager on Lake Maxinkuckee's east shore.

### Lake Maxinkuckee, East Shore

**The Woodbank cottage** (2738 East Shore Drive). This circa 1894 cottage was long home of the Jacob Wood family of Indianapolis, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Until recently it was occupied by the late Katherine Schnull Rasmussen, a cousin of the late, renowned author Kurt Vonnegut Jr. She was known to



## Lake Maxinkuckee

fondly say of the Vonnegut families who settled on Maxinkuckee's shores, "They came to the wilderness and built tennis courts!"

### The Miller cottage (2044 East Shore Drive)

One of the earliest families to settle along the lake's shore, the Van Schoiack name goes back to the 1860s and their land occupied a large portion of the southern portion of the historic east shore. Their farmhouse is incorporated in the present Miller cottage here; part of the Van Schoiack farm was subdivided as "Sea Beach Place" around 1900.



Today's Gibson cottage, where legendary novelist Booth Tarkington wrote part of "The Gentleman from Indiana."

### The Gibson cottage/ Booth Tarkington "Fish House" (1910

East Shore Drive)  
Pulitzer-prize winning novelist Booth Tarkington summered here and completed his classic novel, "The Gentleman from Indiana" at this former fishing cottage, long owned by one of few Maxinkuckee cottagers of Jewish descent and Clerk of the Indiana Supreme Court, John M. Judah. Tarkington's signature and a sketch he

drew adorn the wood panels of the main room.

### The Maxinkuckee Yacht Club (various cottages housed Commodores)

Dating back to the turn of the 20th century, the MYC saw involvement from some of the lake's longtime families, from Vonnegut to Bliss, Hollowell to Trone and became a beloved Maxinkuckee tradition. Oscar Perine organized a Junior Fleet in 1953, and a Ladies Sailing School was added in 2002.

### The "Glossbrenner" cottage (1650 East Shore Drive)

This circa 1905 four-square style cottage long was home to the family of Alfred Glossbrenner, a renowned Indianapolis printer and legislator whose family wed into the Vonnegut clan. It was home for years to Charles Maull, former editor and publisher of the Culver Citizen newspaper



The July, 1906 "laying of the tennis court" by Coffin family members and friends at the site of today's Maxinkuckee Country Club, then a private court and golf course, part of the Coffin family cottage.

and Assistant Commandant at Culver Military Academy.

### The Maxinkuckee Country Club

(1641 East Shore Drive)

Noted golf course architect William

Langford of Chicago (who also designed the Culver Academies course a few miles north) designed the course from the original, 1906 three-hole course launched by Indianapolis businessman and cottager Charles Coffin. Visible at roadside are the tennis courts, an example of several privately-built courts on the lake in the past century.

Expanded in 1922 and today a nine-hole, regulation length course, it is one of the oldest in Indiana.

### The Hord Cottage (1556 East Shore Drive)

This beautiful cottage was built for Eleanor Young Hord, widow of prominent Terre Haute attorney Francis T. Hord,

in 1901. Five generations of the family have shared the cottage.



The Hendricks-Hollowell cottage prior to 1920.

### The Hendricks-Hollowell cottage (1780

East Shore Drive)

Tommy Hendricks (great-nephew of Vice President Thomas Hendricks) summered at the

lake with his boyhood friend, the great American composer Cole Porter, and both loved the lake, whose steady-throbbing steamboat engines inspired Porter's famous rhythms, wrote Hendricks in his memoir. "Unconsciously," wrote Hendricks, "Cole learned to accommodate his piano playing to the steady, lunging rhythm of the Peerless (steamboat)...Cole hammered out his rhythm by the tempo which that master, Captain Crook, set for that Peerless engine."

### "Portledge" cottage (1480 East Shore Drive)

Indianapolis businessman Charles Coffin was long the owner of this cottage, built in 1905, and from it he launched the golf course and tennis courts which would make up the Maxinkuckee Country Club (south on East Shore Dr.).



## Lake Maxinkuckee



Bigley's Orchard store in the early 1980s.

### The Maxinkuckee Village/Bigley Orchards/The “Ben Hur” house (18B Road east of East Shore Drive).

Not visible from East Shore Drive proper, but easily accessible just off the road on 18B Road are the remnants of the



ABOVE: Once the Guy Bigley store (starting in 1907), this popular store was located on the northwest corner of Maxinkuckee Landing. BELOW: The Allegheny House, where Lew Wallace wrote part of “Ben Hur,” circa 1860.



Maxinkuckee Village, once a thriving community. Here is the 1850s Allegheny house, once a bustling fishing hotel at which Gen. Lew Wallace composed part of his blockbuster novel, “Ben Hur” (Wallace called the lake “the most beautiful place in the world”). Just across the road are remnants of Indiana Homestead Farm, Bigley Orchards, which operated for much of the 20th century as a popular destination for apple-seekers across the Midwest. Bigley’s land was also home to Potawatomi Chief Nees-Wau-Gee, chosen by the local Native Americans as their

spokesman in councils with the federal government to retain their tribal lands. In 1838, he and other area Indians were forced to Kansas on the infamous Trail of Death.

### Maxinkuckee Schoolhouse

This 1938 Culver Citizen article details the sale of the Maxinkuckee school house to John Bigley. According to the article, the school was built around 1908. It still sits today on the corner of 18B and Queen Roads and is being renovated, having been used alternately as a part of the Bigley apple orchard operation and also left empty for many years. It served the once-growing village of Maxinkuckee in the same vicinity.

### The Shirk cottage (1322 East Shore Drive)

Built around 1900 in the elegant Swiss Chalet style, this cottage boasted one of the larger social areas on the lake



The Shirk (now Bramfeld) cottage at 1322 East Shore Drive, in an undated, early photo.

and was home to many events and gatherings. Shirk, a Peru banker, hosted young pianist Cole Porter many times in the cottage, which later was purchased by the late John Bramfeld.

One of the largest houses on the lake, it was designed in the Swiss Chalet style. Milton Shirk was one of the wealthiest men in northern Indiana; president of the First National Bank, Peru. Shirk and his wife, the former Ellen Walker of Peru, had two sons, Joseph and Elbert Shirk, who in fact Porter would follow to Worcester Academy in Massachusetts in 1905 (Ellen Shirk’s father, Joseph Walker, was then President of the school’s Board of Trustees).

Cole Porter traveled in summers with the Shirks to Lake Maxinkuckee and slept at this cottage, while also spending time with Tommy Hendricks at the Hendricks-Hollowell cottage.

### The Marmon-Greenleaf cottage (1100 East Shore Drive)

This pre-1882 cottage is home to a great legacy of Indiana automotive history, as the Marmon family — responsible for the Marmon line of specialty cars, including the Marmon Wasp, which won the very first Indianapolis 500 race in 1911 — have continued into multiple generations here. Today, Marmon granddaughter Anne Greenleaf carries on the tradition, with the help of her own children and grandchildren.



The Marmon-Greenleaf cottage, dating back to the early 1880s.

### Vonnegut orchards (921 East Shore Drive)

Between 1910 and the late 1930’s, Emma Vonnegut was hailed as a “successful and versatile” orchardist (said the Indianapolis Star). She was one of many Vonnegut family

## Lake Maxinkuckee



"The Hollyhocks," the Vonnegut Orchard home, circa 1930.

neguts — along with the Schnulls and Muellers, related by marriage — were prominent German-American families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who contributed greatly to the promotion of culture, arts, and conservation on the lake. The orchard extended east and comprised some 30 acres.

Clemens Jr. married Emma Schnull, who would become proprietor of the orchard, whose land was purchased by Walter Vonnegut in May, 1910. A 30 acre orchard was planted by the Vonnegut family and for a number of years produced a large crop of apples. When Emma died 1939, the orchard ended.



"Perry's Point" on the east shore.

members to own property on the east shore (others included 844, 814, 782, 762, and 742). Besides their descendant Kurt Vonnegut Jr., the Vonneguts

### Peoples Point/Perry cottage (894 East Shore Drive)

One of the highest points on the lake has long been known as Peoples Point and also boasts the 1929 Perry cottage, an elaborate Spanish Colonial Revival style house representing a departure from the typical East Shore cottage. Norman Perry was the son of Charles Coffin Perry, who, with Daniel Marmon, started the company which would eventually become Indianapolis Power and Light.

### The Mueller Cottage (844 East Shore Drive).

Built in 1907, the cottage — on the highest point on the east shore — occupies space known in the 1880s and 90s as Hilarity Hill, a popular fishing club and destination.



### The House of a Thousand Candles/Hippenhammer cottage (762 East Shore Drive)

Indianapolis writer Meredith Nicholson's 1905 novel "The House of a Thousand Candles,"

The "House of a Thousand Candles" at 762 East Shore Drive.

inspired by this house and set on the shores of a fictionalized Lake Maxinkuckee, was the best-selling novel in America in 1906 and inspired three Hollywood movies. Nicholson was part of Indiana's "golden age" of literature, along with James Whitcomb Riley and Booth Tarkington, who also frequented the lake. Today the home is owned by Creighton and Linda Hippenhammer; he has written and lectured about the history of the house and its literary legacy.



The Lake Maxinkuckee Association was organized in 1897 as The Maxinkuckee Association, and from very early on provided patrolman for the lake. Known today as Lake Patrol, officers utilize police cars and fully equipped boats, and recently transitioned to utilizing fully deputized members of the Marshall County police force. Pictured here in 1958 are Lake Patrol officers James Cox and Herbert Lashbrook.

## The Lake Maxinkuckee Environmental Council and Fund

Lake Maxinkuckee has been more fortunate than many bodies of water due to the impact of the Lake Maxinkuckee Environmental Council and Fund, formed in 1982 in response to warnings about the environmental health of Lake Maxinkuckee. The lake, in the early stages of a eutrophic lake (dead or dying), has been brought to the late stages of oligotrophic (pristine), due in no small part to the efforts of the LMEC, which built the first of Indiana's man-made wetlands in the late 1980s. The lake's three major wetlands (Kline, Curtis, and Wilson) are under its care, among the LMEC's many other activities.

Learn more at [www.culverlmecc.com](http://www.culverlmecc.com) or drop by the LMEC's office at 116 N. Main Street in downtown Culver.



## Cultural figures of Lake Maxinkuckee

Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee have been destinations for a number of renowned figures. Besides the many famous alumni of Culver Academies, one of the earliest famous frequenters to the area was **"Ben Hur" author Lew Wallace** (see Allegheny House on 18B Road), who called Lake Maxinkuckee "the most beautiful place on earth" in a 1905 Chicago American prize-winning novel.



AHS PHOTO/JULIE HOLLOWELL COLLECTION  
A young Cole Porter (left) sails on Lake Maxinkuckee with childhood friend Tommy Hendricks (right) and an unknown companion.

Drive. **Meredith Nicholson** was inspired, in the early 20th century, to write "The House of a Thousand Candles," the best-selling novel of 1906 in the entire U.S., while staying on the east shore (see 762 East Shore Dr.). Legendary "Hoosier Poet" and "Little Orphan Annie" inventor **James Whitcomb Riley** frequented the lake, and wrote a poem, "Life at the Lake," in tribute to it.

Legendary composer **Cole Porter** spent his youthful summers at 1780 East Shore Dr., playing piano to the rhythm of Maxinkuckee steamboats.

Famous "Slaughterhouse Five" novelist **Kurt Vonnegut Jr.**



Still photo from the (silent) Hollywood version of "The House of a Thousand Candles," set on a fictional version of Lake Maxinkuckee. The film is believed to be lost to history.

came from a line of Vonneguts (and their many cousins and other relatives) who first moved here circa 1889, eventually populating a number of the cottages on the east shore and helping cultivate the

culture there. In fact, Kurt made repeated references to the lake in his novels, especially "Slapstick," and spoke eloquently of its impact on his young life in an article in Architectural Digest magazine, calling it his "Aegean Sea."

The **Marmon family**, inventors of the first car to win the Indy 500, continue to occupy 1100 East Shore Drive, more than a century after the first generation moved here (see entry on that cottage).

A number of Indiana and the Midwest's most illustrious have owned, or still own, cottages on the lake, including Indianapolis Colts owner

**Jim Irsay.**

Though not exactly a cultural figure in his own right, the only survivor of the 1912 Titanic disaster, August Wennerstrom, moved to Culver and worked for Culver Academy for many years.

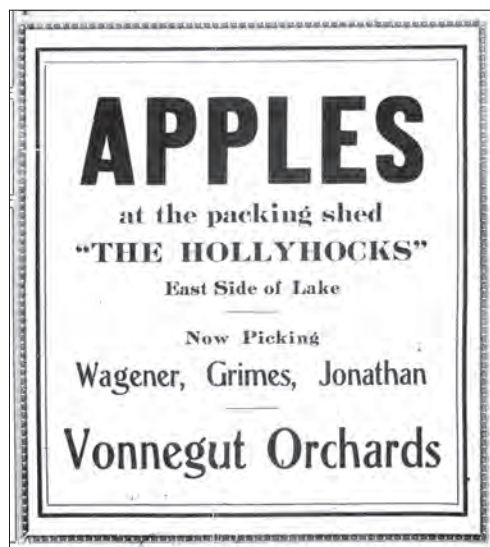
More interesting still, Wennerstrom contacted



Culver Titanic survivor August Wennerstrom.



This drawing adorns the wall of the Gibson cottage on Lake Maxinkuckee's east shore, along with an inscription dated 1897 that "Booth Tarkington drew this head."

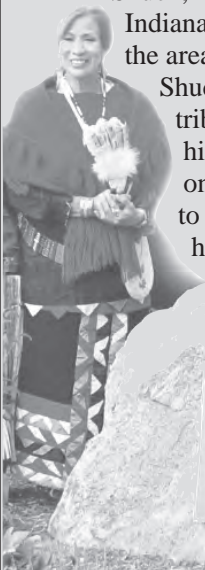


One of many properties on the lake owned by the late novelist Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s family as far back as the 1890s, the Vonnegut orchard thrived here in the 1930s.

Nils Paulson, widower of a woman and her children he had tried to save while the ship sank. Paulson moved to Culver, and, still mourning deeply over the loss of his family, planted four maple trees in the late 1940s, one in honor of each of his deceased children, at the Weaver home at 17015 Thorn Road, just outside Culver. The trees still stand, quietly, as mute reminders of a tragedy half a world away.

## Native American Sites

**Indian sites.** It's no surprise that a lake retaining at least some variation on its original Potawatomi Indian name should be home to several locations of relevance to local Native American history. At least two Potawatomi chiefs had villages on the shores of the lake: Nees-wau-gee on the east shore, where he was said to have a cabin on the Bigley land off 18B Road (a memorial stone was erected to his memory in Culver's town park, though the chief had no residence there); and Chief Aubbeenaubbee on the south shore. The story of Aubbeenaubbee's son, Pau-Koo-Shuck, has been printed in many collections of Indiana and regional ghost stories. Pioneers to the area swore they saw the ghost of Pau-Koo-Shuck, who killed his father, according to tribal law, for Aubbeenaubbee's murder of his own wife. In 1838, Pau-Koo-Shuck was one of 859 area Potawatomi forced to march to Kansas on the Trail of Death. Legend has it that he broke away and re-



Michale Edwards, great, great, great grand-niece of Potawatomi Chief Nas-Waw-Kee, traveled in 2011 from Oklahoma for the dedication of a monument in the chief's honor, located in the east end of the town park.

turned to Long Point on Lake Maxinkuckee, dying in misery shortly thereafter. His ghost was said to have been seen nearby, often paddling across the water, by many a pioneer. Indian trails extended

to Maxinkuckee from nearby Twin Lakes, where the Indians frequently worshipped at the first church in the county, a Jesuit-erected log cabin chapel near the corner of 12th and Peach Roads, just north of the first state-sanctioned monument to an American Indian, the Chief Menominee statue (in honor of the chief of the village at Twin Lakes). That monument was the work of Daniel McDonald, a state senator who owned a Lake Maxinkuckee cottage he dubbed "the wigwam" (McDonald, former editor of the Plymouth Democrat newspaper, was also partially responsible for bringing the railroad to Culver in 1884).

The Jesuit priest who accompanied the Potawatomi on part of their journey west, Fr. Benjamin Petit, died due to an illness he contracted on the trail, and is buried under the replica log cabin chapel at Notre Dame University in South Bend.



Chief Nas-Waw-Kee, of the east shore of Lake Maxinkuckee, was the spokesman for the Potawatomi Indians at the council at which they lost their land.



Chief Menominee's granddaughter (center) was present at the Sept., 1909 dedication of the monument in his honor on Peach Road north of Culver, the first state-sponsored monument to an American Indian. Its creation was the work of Lake Maxinkuckee cottager and state senator Daniel McDonald.

## The thriving 'frozen water trade' near downtown Culver

Beginning in the early 1880s with Indianapolis businessman Sterling Holt's Maxinkuckee Ice Company on South Street, Culver was home to a remarkably prosperous industry harvesting millions of tons of "pure Maxinkuckee ice" from the lake. The first ice house was located north of the outlet, and a second in "the hole" near Wabash and South Streets. The longest-lived and

most successful, however, was situated near the east end of Jefferson Street, approximately at the site of today's Culver Cove. Some 300 men were employed, usually during January, to harvest ice around the clock over the course of



several weeks, shipping out thousands of dollars worth to points across Indiana and beyond. Horse-drawn scraping and scoring, and an elaborate system of moving ice blocks along a conveyer and into waiting train cars, drove the thriving endeavor



through 1937, during which time ice was available all summer to locals. For over 50 years, Culver winters facilitated enough ice to supply thousands of Midwestern "ice boxes."



## The 'golden age' of Maxinkuckee tourism and hotels

In the days before air conditioning and private auto travel, Lake Maxinkuckee was a destination for tens of thousands of Hoosiers and others, who conveniently boarded the Vandalia rail line from multiple points south across the state and frolicked on the shores of the lake.

From the time the railroad was completed in 1884, summer excursionists commonly numbered in the thousands each weekend, disembarking at Vandalia park (today's town park) and awaiting one of the dozens of popular steamboats traversing the lake to carry them — in those days of poor road conditions — to points around the lake, including Culver Military Academy (starting in 1894). The open-air structures located today in each end of the park then provided shelter from the elements, and after sunset, the park's lighthouse (1894-1913) was lit to alert steamboat pilots that passengers had arrived (in 2006, the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver dedicated a somewhat larger replica of that lighthouse, at its original site).

Accommodating the many tourists here were dozens of lavish, stately hotels, all of which eventually burned or were victims of the wrecking ball. Remnants can be seen today of a few, though many remain only in photographs and written accounts. They included:



The Colonnade Hotel on Lake Shore Drive, circa 1900.

**The Colonnade** (located on the north side of today's Lake Shore Drive, around the site of today's Bennett's Plumbing

and Heating and the Culver Coffee Company). During its heyday, the Colonnade was frequented by the brightest stars of the stage, and boasted a cavernous indoor skating rink, ballroom, and fountain. Its proprietor set it afire in 1901.

**The Lake View Hotel.** Many of the earliest non-residential structures on the lake were "club houses" for groups from Indianapolis, Plymouth, Peru, and other locales, where hunting, fishing, and relaxation were the norm. The Lake View Club, located at the top of a bluff between today's town park and Culver Academies (best known as the Indian Trails), was the catalyst for the railroad's arrival here, after members petitioned to have a line run from Culver to their hometown of Plymouth. The railroad eventually bought the large club house and converted it to a successful hotel which burned in

1929, around a decade after the auto travel ended the prime years of local tourism.

**The Kreuzberger.** Built circa 1890s, the Kreuzberger still stands at the southern end of State Street, and was primarily a restaurant and "park" (the operation included land stretching west to Coolidge Court, with a grocery and bowling alley), but it also rented rooms and was a popular and quality establishment. Rumors abound as to its less-than-reputable status after it left Kreuzberger hands, in the Prohibition era of the 1920s.

**The Osborn Hotel.** Situated on the northwest corner of Ohio and Jefferson Streets (site of today's Farmer's Market), legend has it that the Osborn was built around part of the first Culver high school. It was a large hotel which housed legendary humorist Will Rogers during his visit to Culver (his son had attended Culver Military Academy, and Rogers appeared on the Academy's WCMA radio station while visiting). It was demolished in 1990.

**The Jungle Hotel.** Located east of the Lake View approximately where today's Culver Academies' hotels sit, the Jungle boasted a large, central inn surrounded by several rustic-themed cottage-cabins. It, too, thrived up to about 1920, but continued to be used for Academy functions well into the 1930s when it fell into disrepair and was eventually demolished.



The Palmer House (future Culver Inn) hotel in the early 1900s.

**The Palmer House - Culver Inn.** One of the earliest and longest-lived of the great hotels, the Palmer House was built in the 1870s on what would later become the Academies campus, close to the site of today's Huffington Library. Over the years, the hotel changed its moniker to the Maxinkuckee Inn and later the Culver Inn, by which name generations of area residents will remember it as one of the few options for fine dining and as an upper scale hotel — not to mention its housing popular Academy student hangout The Shack — through the latter 20th century. It was demolished in 1991.

## Culver Academies

**Culver Academies** was the vision of Henry Harrison Culver, a successful St. Louis businessman who made his fortune selling wrought iron stoves throughout America and beyond. After moving to the northeast shore of Lake Maxinkuckee for health reasons (he had already married a local girl, Emily Jane Hand of nearby Wolf Creek), he tried his hand at an 1889 Chautauqua religious camp experiment. In 1894, his dream of a private school came to fruition and Culver Military Academy was born. Though H.H. Culver died in 1897, his descendants and others carved out a place in the minds of the nation and world for CMA as one of the great prep schools in America, and it gained great prominence, even becoming the site of three Hollywood movies in the 1920s and '30s. With the addition of its popular summer camps starting in 1902, and girls' school beginning in 1971, Culver Academies (as it is known today) has managed to balance a powerful sense of tradition with a flexibility in adapting to the times.

**The Henry Harrison Culver homestead house** (504 East Shore Drive). Two houses adorn this historic property from which the founder of the Culver Academies launched his



ABOVE: The Culver homestead house on East Shore Drive. Note the mound, believed to be an Indian burial or signal mound, at right.

BELOW: For many years, the homestead's pier greeted visitors with a set of whale jawbones imported from Nantucket. Pictured here is an 1889 engraving showing the jawbones and still-existent path to the pier.



vision of a military-structured preparatory school. The earlier "farmhouse" (the northern, one-story building) was the first of the

1880s structures to be built, followed by the beautiful "homestead house" (to the south, built in 1886), which overlooks what has long believed to be a Miami Indian signal or burial mound (west of the house, on the lake side) as well as a lovely dirt path which once served as the only road (for wagons and horses) around the east shore.

By 1884, Henry H. Culver owned 306 acres of land bordering the lake, much of it marshy and unusable. By 1885, he and his workers had laid about nine miles of drain tile.

**Culver Academies Golf Course** (across from 504 East Shore Drive, to the east). Designed by the renowned team of Langford and Moreau, this course — considered one of the finest courses in this part of the country at its debut — opened in 1924 (two years later, golf legend Walter Hagan made history with a 270-yard drive at the fourth hole), with its clubhouse added in 1966.

## Culver Academies campus proper

*Please note that visitors are welcome to enjoy the beauty of Culver Academies' historic campus, but are asked to respect the activities going on there and the privacy of students.*

*You are free to visit the buildings below when they are open and unlocked, though in the case of Main Barrack — and other barracks or student dorms — you are asked to view*

*the building from outside.*



Main Barrack prior to addition of additional floors. Note the guard house near the entrance.

**Main Barrack.** Built on the site of the original Culver Assembly Chautauqua hotel

(opened in 1889), the original wooden hotel first served as Main Barracks when CMA opened in 1894, but burned in early 1895. The present brick and steel building was completed in time for fall classes the same year, with additional floors added in subsequent years.

Noted St Louis architect **Albert Knell** was first hired by the school in 1895, designing a number of the buildings for the next few decades and largely shaping the design strategy the Culver family employed in campus structures.

**The Health Center/Infirmary.** Built in 1907, it is the 27-bed headquarters for all student medical services, served by two physicians.



## Culver Academies

### The Administration Building/Sally Port/Main

**Guard/"The Great Hall."** Built in 1913, this has traditionally been the center of student and visitor ingress and egress to the campus. The Great Hall, located adjacent to Main Guard, includes striking displays pertaining to Culver's



The 1911 banquet dedicating the Academies' Mess Hall, a historic occasion which led to the participation of Culver's famous Black Horse Troop in its first presidential inaugural.

Medal of Honor winners and other military achievements.

### The Lay Dining Center.

Completed in 1911 with seating for up to 1,000, the former "Mess Hall" for decades boasted the

largest unsupported ceiling in the world. Significantly, at its dedication then-Col. L.R. Gignilliat asked visiting Indiana Governor (and presidential hopeful) Thomas Marshall if Culver's Black Horse Troop could escort him, after his victory, in the inaugural parade in Washington, DC. Marshall did become vice president in 1913, and Culver made its first of many inaugural appearances that year. The dining hall



Culver cadets stand at attention as military personnel pass through Logansport Gate, circa 1935.

was renovated 1986, the popular Shack (formerly in The Culver Inn) relocated there. Its lower level was home to the largest student-run model railroad in the world from the 1950s-1986.

**Logansport Gate.** Dedicated in 1914, the gate served as a tribute to Culver from the grateful citizens of Logansport, some 1,000 of whom were dramatically rescued by highly disciplined Culver cadets during the deadly flood of 1913.

**The Recreation Building.** Built in 1924, it was renamed

the Steinbrenner Recreation Building in 2000, after a major renovation spearheaded by Culver alum and late Yankees owner Geoege Steinbrenner. Starting in 1926 and through the early 1930s, WCMA radio station studio was located on the balcony, broadcasting to dozens of states. Look for the athletic hall of fame between this building and the adjacent Fleet Gymnasium..

**Reuben Fleet Gymnasium.** First built in 1902, CMA's gym burned in 1905 and was replaced in 1907. In 1977, it fell victim to arson, and was replaced by the Rueben H. Fleet gym in 1980, named for Culver grad and air mail pioneer and Consolidated Aircraft founder Fleet. The Natatorium/

swimming pool, built in 1917, includes a racing pool and separate diving tank.



The Riding Hall in the background in the days when football games were played in the field to the south, between 1920 and 1950.

### The Jud Little Riding Hall.

Completed in 1918 after the original, 1898-built

riding hall burned in 1917, killing 66 horses (look for a memorial marker stone to those horses northwest of the Memorial Chapel), Culver's riding hall for years included the largest indoor equestrian center in the world. It is home to the famous Black Horse Troop and Equestriennes, known worldwide in part for their regular participation in Presidential Inaugural parades.

**The Armory.** Originally built for Field Artillery guns and caissons in 1917 following the US Army's establishment of Culver's ROTC program the year before. It contained large bays on either side of the arsenal tower to house cannon and caissons, no longer in use today.

**Legion Memorial Building.** Built in 1924 in honor of Culver alums who died in World War I, this stately structure — which for decades housed the campus library — was based on the Hertsmonceau Castle in Sussex, England. It was the last of 22 campus buildings designed by St. Louis architect Albert Knell. In keeping with Culver tradition, students and faculty salute the Gold Star located at each entryway, upon entering or exiting, in honor of the dead (a scene in the 1932 Universal movie, "Tom Brown of Culver," depicts the seriousness of neglecting this tradition). The names of the WW I dead were recorded on a marble tablet in the Gold

## Culver Academies



Culver's Legion Memorial Building.

Star Room off the main balcony (today on the stairway wall). The building is also the site of one of Culver's most hallowed traditions: the annual Veteran's Day ceremony, virtually unchanged since its 1924 debut. When visiting inside, walk down a few of the steps to the basement level, to feel the erosion of the stone by generations of student feet.



The Culver Naval Building.

Summer School Admissions Dept., the Naval Building, modeled after a ship, was designed by Frederick Larson, architect-in-residence at Dartmouth College and the also the designer of the Culver Memorial Chapel and Beason Hall, the First Class Club classroom.

**The Memorial Chapel.** Dedicated in 1951, the chapel is the center of Culver's religious life, and now honors Culver



Interior of the Culver Academies Memorial Chapel.

alumni who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. The tallest church in the area at 156 feet, it is of the Tudor Gothic design. The names of 288 alums killed in WW2 and Korea are carved in the columns in the narthex. The ceiling displays 168 panels with Christian symbols. The 51-bell carillon, one of the finest in the country, was one of the last made by the legendary Gillett and Johnson company of England. Bells range in size from 18 to more than 6,000 pounds. The chapel's pipe organ has 2,837 pipes.

**Eppley Auditorium.** Completed in 1959, the auditorium was the crowning achievement of 1901 CMA alum and hotel magnate Eugene C. Eppley. The elegant building has played host to some of the great cultural performers of the 20th and 21st century, and is home to a regular roster of student theater and dance performances. Recently, the Steinbrenner Performing Arts Center was added, thanks to funding and efforts from the late George Steinbrenner, a 1948 graduate, and his family.

**Huffington Library.** Dedicated in 1991 and the gift of Michael and Arianna Huffington, Culver's library surely boasts one of the most breathtaking interiors — and views of Lake Maxinkuckee — in the area. Built in the Greco-Roman style, the building is a monument to the pursuit of knowledge — right down to the diversity of symbols etched in stone on its south facade — and a number of classical structures of the ancient world.

**Crisp Visual Arts Center.** Formerly the Eppley Hall of Sciences, the northernmost structure in the Gignilliat Academic Quadrangle, this structure was transformed in 2011 into the hub of Culver's rich visual arts programs. Most notable for the visitor, the Center offers a first-class gallery in which some of the treasures of Culver's remarkable art collection are made available for viewing.



The R.H. Ledbetter's predecessor, the O.W. Fowler, at sail (at right) alongside another long-gone Culver 'ship of the line,' the Yarnell.

**The R.H. Ledbetter.** Built in 1941 by "Bud" Craft of Culver, the school's three-masted square rigger can be seen docked just off the campus throughout the summer. In its initial incarnation as The O.W. Fowler, the boat saw the launch of a Culver tradition: the annual Moonlight Serenade, in which the Naval Band entertains audiences on the shore and in boats, from the decks of the ship. In 1984,



## Culver Academies

the Fowler's masts became part of the replacement boat the Ledbetter, the largest inland boat in Indiana.

**Jens Jensen.** Renowned, Chicago-based landscape architect Jensen made his mark on the Culver campus starting with his first visit in 1915, when he designed the look of the Lake Maxinkuckee shoreline within the school's borders. The designer of the original Class Ring — gift of the class of 1939 and replaced in the 1990s with a nearly identical ring — Jensen was Culver's landscape consultant for many years.



Legendary Boy Scouts pioneer and Woodcraft Camp first director Daniel Carter Beard with campers, circa 1913.

**The Woodcraft Camp.** Developed starting in 1912 by such legends in worldwide scouting and conservation as Sir Robert Baden Powell, Ernest Thompson Seton, and original camp director Daniel Carter Beard, Culver's Woodcraft program has delighted campers aged 9 to 14 for more than a century. The current camp, located east of the rest of the Culver campus



Famous naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton, who helped establish the look and traditions of the Woodcraft Camp, holds court in 1921 at a Council Fire in what is today Culver's Bird Sanctuary.

across State Road 117, is home to dozens of rustic cabins and its own dining center, scouting area, museum and nature center, multipurpose building owing to famous graduate Roger Penske, and more.

### The Bird Sanctuary.

At its initial design in 1930, the sanctuary was unique in the entire U.S. The work of renowned naturalist and outdoorsman W.C. Vogt, it served for years

as an ideal locale for Woodcrafters and others to observe nature.

Today it's home to a state of the art ropes course and climbing

wall, beautiful hiking and riding trails, and the legendary Council Ring, site of Saturday night Council Fires in which Woodcrafters put to use the Indian dance and lore they have learned, in a beloved performance tradition to which the public is welcome.

## Culver Academies in the eyes of the world



From early in its history, Culver Academies has drawn the attention of the world. Besides participation starting in 1913 in Presidential inaugural parades, the school has been the subject of three Hollywood movies in the 1920s and '30s, ("Prep and Pep," "Tom Brown of Culver," and "The Spirit of Culver," the latter starring Jackie Cooper) and several fictional works, including "Tex Rains, Culver Trooper" and "Black Horse of Culver." It has also graduated more famous figures in the arts,

business, sports, politics, and beyond, than could be listed here, including Oscar-nominated actor Hal Holbrook, late NY Yankees owner George Steinbrenner, Broadway and Hollywood producer Josh Logan, and many more.



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## Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee - A Historical Timeline

**1827-30** : Rev. Stephen Badin builds chapel, establishing Twin Lakes Mission. Badin was succeeded by Father De-Seille, 1832-37; and Father Benjamin Marie Pettit, 1837.

**1828** : H.H. Scott becomes resident, Lake Maxinkuckee.

**1836** : July 26, Area settlement began as settlers arrived by ox drawn wagons in Lake Maxinkuckee area, Wolf Creek, Twin Lakes, and Maxinkuckee, the first village platted.

**1837** : July 1, first emigration of Potawatomi tribes from the Lake Maxinkuckee area and Kewanna to Western Osage River Reservation, Kansas.

**1838** : Pioneer Eleazer Thompson builds cabin, becomes first Lake Maxinkuckee cottager.

**1840** : March 1, 17 residents present petition requesting establishment of Union Township, as fifth civil township in Marshall County.

**1844** : Bayliss L. Dickson, who owned farm bordering northwest side of Lake Maxinkuckee, officially filed, on June 8, a 26-acre plat for a village, Union Town. Dickson's log cabin was the only dwelling on the town plat which roughly extends today (Culver) from Mill Street, south to a bit north of Lake Shore Drive; from Lakeview-Plymouth Streets, east to Slate Street, west.

**1851** : Union Town is resurveyed and transferred by Bayliss Dickson to his brother-in-law, Thomas K. Houghton. Upon request of Dr. G.A. Durr name of town changed from Union Town to Marmont, in honor of famed French General.

**1853** : James Boyce established water-powered sawmill along dammed up Maxinkuckee outlet, south of lake.

**1863** : Newly graveled public road East Shore to South Side



The new road along the east shore of Lake Maxinkuckee passed through the Van Schoiack barnyard, pictured above, in 1863, whose gate had to be opened to allow access.

Lake Maxinkuckee opened. The Lake Road passed through Van Schoiack barnyard where gates had to be opened and closed.

**1864** : September, Henry Harrison Culver and Emily J. Hand were married in home of bride, at Wolf Creek, seven miles northeast of Culver.

**1870** : Captain Ed Morris established boat building business near the Palmer House (later Culver Inn).

- Establishment and opening of Allegheny House, Maxinkuckee Village, where part of "Ben Hur" would be written. This was the beginning of Hotel-Wayside Inn era, 1870-1930's in which there were some 23 inns.

**1873** : Establishment of Lake View Club. This was the beginning of club activities, with some 14-20 organizations including Highland House, Indiana Club, Logansport, Peru, Rochester, and Plymouth Clubs, Lake View Club and others. It also led to the coming of the Vandalia Railroad (the Lake View would become the Lake View Hotel, burned 1929).

**1880's** : Development of lake shore summer residences began. Today there are more than 300 homes.

**1880** (circa) : First ice house built in Culver by Sterling Holt of Indianapolis, north of the outlet, launching a huge local industry up to 1937.

**1883** : Vandalia Railroad line, — Logansport-South Bend



Front cover of the 1889 Culver Park Assembly Bulletin, advertising the business venture which would eventually lead to Culver Military Academy.



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## Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee - A Historical Timeline

reaches Culver.

- Henry Harrison Culver spent first summer camping on Lake Maxinkuckee's East Shore, later built cottage. In the fall he purchased the 98-acre Hisson farm. In 1884 he purchased adjoining 208-acre Aubbeenaubbee Bay Farm.

- Beginning of famed steamboat era.

**1889** : July, Culver Park Assembly attracts over 20,000



The bustling steamboat pier in Vandalia Park, circa 1900.

visitors to Evangelistic sessions (the site, owned by H.H. Culver, would be the home of Culver Military Academy five years later)

**1891** : H.H. Culver arranges for Marshall

County Agriculture Fair on Assembly grounds.

- Vandalia (town) Lakeside Park established. Maxinkuckee Ice Company employs 25 to 200 for annual ice harvest.



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**1894** : September 25, first session Culver Military Academy opens, 32 enrolled.

- George Nearpass establishes weekly newspaper, The Marmont Herald (today's Culver Citizen).

**1895** : February, Original CMA Building destroyed by fire. Plan new building for cadets

- October 4, Name of community changed from Marmont to Culver City.

**1896** : October, Missouri Military Academy, Mexico, Missouri, buildings destroyed in fire. Upon invitation, H.H. Culver, M.M.A. joined with CMA

- Arlington Hotel burned, January 30

**1897** : September 26, H.H. Culver passes away.

**1898** : Estimate that nearly 2,000 people live around Lake Maxinkuckee during summer season dwelling in cottages, clubs and hotels.

**1899** : First graduating class, Culver High School

- First annual Maxinkuckee Chautauqua held, 26-acre Assembly Grounds, south side of town.

- July 5, U.S Fish Commission begins 11-year biological study-survey, Lake Maxinkuckee under direction of Everman and Clark. Completed in 1917. Findings subsequently published in 2-volume report.

**1901** : The State Exchange Bank had its origin, August 1, when S.C. Shilling purchased the Exchange Bank of Culver from M.C.McCormick.

**1902** : CMA's first Naval Summer School

**1903** : Culver-Union Twp. Volunteer Fire Department organized January 24.

- July 12, 5,000 excursionists visit Lake Maxinkuckee

- J.H. Koontz, publisher, changes name of Culver



The 1903, debut firefighters of Culver's first volunteer department.

City Herald to Citizen.

**1905** : Assembly Tabernacle destroyed in fire. With foreclosure on mortgage Assembly Grounds

closes, December.

**1906** : Outlet to

Lake Maxinkuckee dammed to control lake level.

- Dedicate new Culver Elementary School Building on School Street

**1907** : CMA establishes Culver Summer Calvary Camp

**1910** : October 20, Central Union Telephone Company completes new trunk line cable to CMA and to Maxinkuckee Exchange. Phone company reports it serves 300 lines.

- Petition town to install three downtown gasoline street lights.

- Harry Saine using generator in his store is first in area to light home with electricity.

## Culver and Lake Maxinkuckee - A Historical Timeline



Brick paving of Lake Shore Drive, circa 1912. Note the glimpse of the railroad wait station visible at right.

- January 10, Medbourn Ice Storage filled to capacity with 500 rail car loads of ice. 200 carloads already shipped to Logansport and Terre Haute.

- May, Walter Vonnegut purchases 160-acre Marks Farm, East side. In cooperation with Purdue University, he announced plans to become an orchard grower.

- CMA announces appointment of General L.R. Gignilliat as superintendent succeeding the late Col. A.F. Fleet.

**1911** : Town to pave section of Main Street with Poster Brick, \$4.60 per lineal ft.

- April 17, CMA dedicates new Mess Hall.

- Town grants Harry Saine 50-year franchise for community electric lighting. County extends franchise to Saine for electricity to Lake cottages.

- Ralston Hotel (former Maxinkuckee Assembly Chautauqua hotel) destroyed by fire.

**1912** : Culver Summer Woodcraft opens for first session with Dan Beard as director.

**1913** : March 13, Rains came Good Friday, starting historic 1913 flood in which CMA joined in Logansport rescue efforts.

**1914** : Culver plans new Main Street Business District  
CMA Logansport Gate dedicated, in appreciation of cadets' flood rescue efforts

- December 3, Announce plans for new Carnegie Public Library

**1916** : October 22, CMA Riding Hall with 66 horses destroyed in fire. Plans for new Riding Hall, 104 x 212 ft. building to house 136 mounts announced.

**1920** : Seven bandits stage hold-up-robbery, The State Exchange Bank, December 29 with Culver's Jacob Saine shot by bandits. Robbery attracted nationwide attention. Apprehended, robbers defended by famed attorney, Clarence Darrow, Sentenced in 1921.

**1923** : Langford & Moreau design CMA Golf Course

**1926** : Radio Station WCMA on air, discontinued in 1932.

**1929** : Dedicate Community Building, Culver 39-Plymouth 28

**1930** : CMA Bird Sanctuary project underway.

**1932** : Culver family heirs transfers CMA assets to Culver Educational Foundation.

- Maintenance of Vandalia Park is turned over to town by Railroad.

**1933** : May 29, Bandits stage holdup-robbery of State Exchange Bank. Robbers captured west of town.

**1934**: The Culver-Union Township Council of Churches was organized in 1934, and in 1935 over 330 men joined for the first Good Friday luncheon sponsored by the Council of Churches.

**1935** : Town purchases Vandalia Park from Pennsylvania Railroad for \$6,500.

**1937**: Town beach lodge built, WPA project

- Last ice harvest on Lake Maxinkuckee

**1943** : Naval School Band conducts first annual Moonlight Serenade.

**1947** : November 27, Last passenger train trip through Culver.

**1950** : June 7, Maxinkuckee Playhouse opens 1st season presenting "Blithe Spirit"



Culver's beach lodge — a Depression-era WPA project — at its opening in June, 1937

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## Where to eat — dining of historic proportions

*All this history, up close and personal got you hungry or thirsty (or both)? Culver has become a destination for fine and casual dining over the past decade-plus. If you're visiting the area, be prepared to find more of what you already have here: not what you'd expect in a small Indiana town, nestled among the cornfields! In order by geographic area, here are some highlights of Culver's culinary offerings.*

### Downtown area

**Cafe Max, 113 S. Main Street.** In business nearly 30 years, Cafe Max tops this list since you're holding a guide to Culver. It's a veritable museum of area artifacts, images, and lore, covering town, lake, and Academy on its walls. A less expensive dining option than some, offering sidewalk cafe style dining as well as a full bar.

**Corndance Cafe, 117 S. Main Street.** Chef George Pesek was in high demand in Chicago and beyond, but relocated here to offer fine dining with a diverse and metropolitan air. Considered one of Culver's "must try" eateries since its debut.

**Culver Wings, 115 E. Jefferson Street.** A nonsmoking family restaurant specializing in burgers, sandwiches, and of course wings. Kids love to eat in the historic Marshall County school bus, inside!

**Evil Czech Brewery, 530 S. Ohio Street.** Occupying space near and dear to generations of diners (the home of Pinder's restaurant for over 30 years), Evil Czech (the name derives from a playful nickname of Corndance owner George Pesek, who also launched the brewery) is Culver's first full-blown micro brewery, and offers a host of original brews for every taste, with food to accompany.

### Uptown area

**Gladie's Deli, 415 E. Lake Shore Drive.** Specializing in Boar's Head meats, homemade fudge, and offering a wide array of catering options, family-operated Gladie's is a great fit for Culver.

**The Lakehouse Grille, 620 E. Lake Shore Drive.** Another of Culver's "must-try" fine dining establishments, the Lakehouse combines a historic tavern space (its west end) with an upscale menu ranging from seafood to steaks, specializing in fresh produce ingredients.

**Culver Coffee Company, 634 E. Lake Shore Drive.** A warm, inviting atmosphere plays host to original, high quality coffee blends and accompanying menu, with an ice cream cone bar, fireplace, and that giant aquarium!

**Subway (Osborn's Mini-mart), 700 E. Lake Shore Drive.** Another nice fit for the active, outdoorsy world of Culver, Subway offers the healthy and lower-cost options which made the franchise popular nationwide.

**The Original Root Beer Stand, 824 E. Lake Shore Drive.** For nearly 60 years, this nostalgic drive-in has offered mega-popular burgers, ice cream cones, and that ancient, home-made root beer.

**Papa's, 824 E. Lake Shore Drive.** For over 30 years, Papa's has offered fine dining, a remarkably diverse and rarefied selection of spirits, delivery, and "Indiana's best pizza." A Culver institution.

### South shore, Lake Maxinkuckee

**Culver Marina, 3000 East Shore Drive.** A staple Culver business for half a century, the Marina more recently added dining via its Boardwalk Bar and Grille and now on the water itself, where you can dine by boat!



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## Where to eat — in years past

### That was then...

Culver's fine dining "golden age" began in the late 1990s, but several local eateries — most now defunct — are fondly remembered for the quality of their cuisine and atmosphere alike.



One beloved spot was the Three Sisters restaurant, in the building today occupied by Jeff's PWC Repair at

16980 State Road 17. From 1948 to 1963, it was operated by Norma, Dorothy, and

Mary Gass, specializing in walleyed pike and prime steaks, continuing for several years afterwards under new management.

The Culver Inn's restaurant was the site of decades' worth of memorable events for many a local club non-profit, or private party. The stately old Inn on the Culver Academies campus could be counted on as a fine locale for such gatherings, up to its closing and demolition in 1991.

Many Culverites still mourn the final days in 2002 of one of the most endearing restaurants in town, Pinders at 530 Ohio Street, where Ed and Lora Pinder and family began charming diners in 1973. Few will forget the buffets, salad bars, and "everybody knows your name" atmosphere.



Three Sisters restaurant on State Road 17.

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## Events and more

### Plan your trip — Culver events

*The Culver-Lake Maxinkuckee area is host to a plethora of events for all tastes and interests around which to plan a visit, some taking place on "set" dates while some vary slightly. Following is an inevitably incomplete listing of some highlights.*

January: **Winter carnival and ice fishing festival**, sponsored by the Culver Chamber of Commerce

April, third weekend: **Relay for Life**, held at Culver Academies. More than just an event to fight cancer, Relays have been a remarkable unifying force between the various communities within the area, and have made Culver a standout nationally for their success.

April, last weekend: **Town-wide yard sales** (maps available at town hall and Osborn's/Subway)

May, first weekend: Culver Lions Club's "**Spring Fest**," which includes pancake breakfast and popular flea market.

June, Friday mid-month: Annual Culver **Boys & Girls Club auction**, a gala event raising funds for one of Culver's great success stories, its Boys & Girls Club.

June, Saturday mid-month: The **Taste of Culver**, a one-day,



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Chamber-sponsored opportunity to taste the wares of Culver's diverse and popular eateries.

June, last weekend of the month: The **Lake Max Challenge**, a one-day SUP (Stand Up Paddleboarding) event sponsored



Dramatizing the story of the Indian chiefs of Lake Maxinkuckee at the Sat. night Woodcraft Camp Council Fires.

by Sail22.

Late June through late July: Saturday night **Council Fire programs**, a nearly 100-year-old tradition. Culver's summer Woodcraft campers, trained in Indian lore and dance, act out Native American legends and lore in the "mystic circle" in Culver's Bird

Sanctuary forest.

July, full moon weekend:

The **Moonlight Serenade**, a Culver tradition since 1943, in which the Culver Summer Naval Band cruises the lake, serenading residents and boaters from the decks of Indiana's largest inland vessel, the R.H. Ledbetter.

July, third weekend: **Culver**

**Lake Fest**, also a decades-old tradition, weekend-long, ranging from a bike ride, run, popular parade, vendors, games and contests, to a car show and beloved fireworks display over Lake Maxinkuckee.

July, last weekend: Lions Club **corn roast and Culver firemen's festival**. Two popular, family-friendly events combine great food and fun and games.

July, late, through early August: **Maxinkuckee Players** on



'The Wizard of Oz' comes to life onstage via The Maxinkuckee Players.



The Moonlight Serenade in full sail.

stage, a summer tradition for more than 30 years. Usually offering musical a musical comedy, the Players have always packed the house.

September, first weekend:

**L'Max Film Festival** and "Gift of Warmth," a day of movies in the Uptown Cinema and the town park, with live music, food, and all for a good cause

— providing funds and winter wear for needy families in the area.

## Events and more

All summer, monthly: **Historical programs** presented by the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver, at various locations (check culverahs.com).

June through early August, Saturdays: **carillon recitals** performed on the beautiful, 51-bell carillon at Culver Academies Memorial Chapel, another beloved tradition.

Mid-June through early August: Sunday **garrison parades** at Culver Summer Schools and Camps, presented on the parade field in the evening.

## Hotels from page 22



The Lakeview Hotel, built as the Lakeview Club in 1878 and burned in 1929, helped usher the railroad to Culver. Remnants may be seen at the highest point of the Indian Trails.

Long Point was home to two major hotels: **The Arlington**, built in 1896 and closed in 1912 (it burned down in 1917), which was one of few locales to include its own stop and depot on the railroad line, outside of the main depot at the town park; and **Chadwick's Hotel**, built circa 1886 and eventually sold in 1914 as the tourist boom dried up (Chadwick Shores townhouses occupy its approximate location today). Long Point was also notable as an Indian burial site.

Several hotels and inns operated on the shores of Lake Maxinkuckee, though differentiating between an "inn" proper and a cottage outfitted to act as a boarding house, or allowing roomers to rent for the weekend, can be a complicated matter. Among what could be properly called hotels were the **Bay View Place** (site of several properties on the east shore, in the lower 900s address-wise, today), and the Bide-A-Wee, at the end of East Shore Lane.

**The Allegheny House**, on 18B Road, was the first of the hotels-inns serving the lake. Built in 1855, it is one of the oldest still-standing structures in the county, and gained notoriety as the inn at which avid fisherman and Civil War general Lew Wallace penned part of "Ben Hur," the best-selling novel of the 19th century.

Most hotels on the lake shore proper were served by steamboat piers allowing guests to easily move to and from them on the water.

September, third weekend: town-wide **yard sales**.

October, first weekend: Culver Lions Club "**Fall Fest**," with pancake breakfast and flea market.

December, first Friday: Culver town **tree lighting and caroling**, with a visit from Santa.

Throughout the year: concerts and other performances at Culver Academies Eppley Auditorium, gallery exhibits at the Academies' Crisp Center for the Visual Arts. Check culver.org.



"Maxinkuckee Moon" sheet music, 1923.

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The Antiquarian & Historical Society of Culver is dedicated to the preservation & the presentation of the history of Culver, Lake Maxinkuckee, the Culver Academies, & the surrounding communities.

***Interested in becoming a member?***

For **\$35 a year** you can become an exclusive member of the Antiquarian & Historical society of Culver!

***Benefits of becoming a member:***

- A one-year subscription to the Culver Citizen, which includes a quarterly page of AHS material.
- Discounts to AHS hosted events.
- 10% discount at museum gift shop
- Exclusive email updates on upcoming events.
- Membership payments can cover an individual or an entire family.

Contact Email: [historyofculver@gmail.com](mailto:historyofculver@gmail.com)

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at left: Familiar “Coke” truck, circa 1951

below: Coca-Cola route drivers in 1972  
(l to r): Gil Snyder, Max Schuh, Marvin Snyder, Bob Servis, Dennis Stiles, Roger Stiles, Ken Barr, Mike Kelly and Roger Pearson.



### *Coca-Cola slogans over the years*

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1886 - “Drink Coca-Cola.”                 | 1957 - “Sign of good taste.”         |
| 1908 - “Good til the last drop”           | 1963 - “Things go better with Coke.” |
| 1922 - “Thirst knows no season.”          | 1969 - “It’s the real thing.”        |
| 1927 - “Around the corner from anywhere.” | 1979 - “Have a Coke and a smile.”    |
| 1929 - “The pause that refreshes.”        | 1982 - “Coke is it!”                 |
| 1938 - “Thirst asks nothing more.”        | 1993 - “Always Coca-Cola.”           |
| 1952 - “What you want is a Coke.”         | 2001 - “Life tastes Good.”           |
|   | 2006 - “The Coke Side of Life.”      |

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