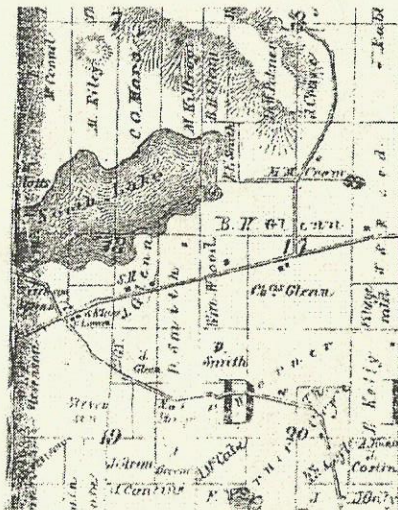
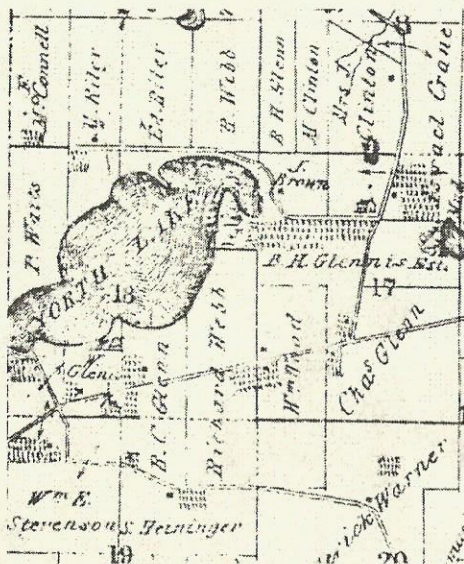


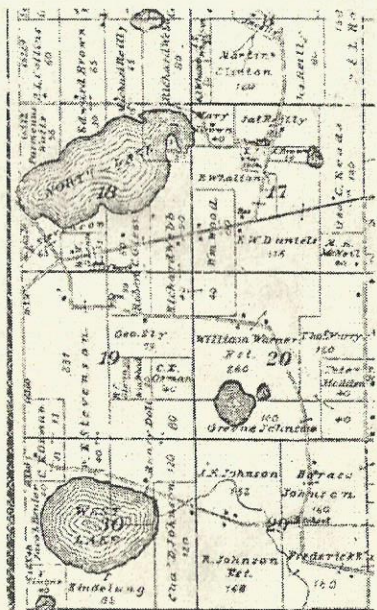
At right: North Lake
plat map from 1856



At left: North Lake
plat map from 1874



At right: North Lake
plat map from 1895



A HISTORY OF THE NORTH LAKE AREA

DEXTER TOWNSHIP
WASHTENAW COUNTY
MICHIGAN

BY SYLVIA GILBERT

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North Lake Band



Schoolhouse

STORIES OF NORTH LAKE

North Lake's original founders, brothers John, Robert, and Charles Glenn Jr., along with their sister, Jane Burkhart, came to the area from Seneca County, New York, in 1833 by steamer through the Erie Canal and to Detroit and by oxen across land to North Lake. The Glenn family had immigrated to the United States in the late 1700s from Ireland, and the land reminded them of their home.

John Glenn received a land grant in 1836 to the 140-acre area that became the family orchard and later the Inverness Country Club. Charles Glenn bought two lots of government land, which were later occupied by the McDaniels family. Charles' son, Benjamin, started the orchard with cousins William and Robert. Third brother Robert settled in Unadilla township, where he was a miller.

In 1858, John Glenn and his wife, Jane, deeded a portion of the land for the construction of what became the North Lake United Methodist Church. Frank Staffan constructed the new church, which is still in use, with several additions.

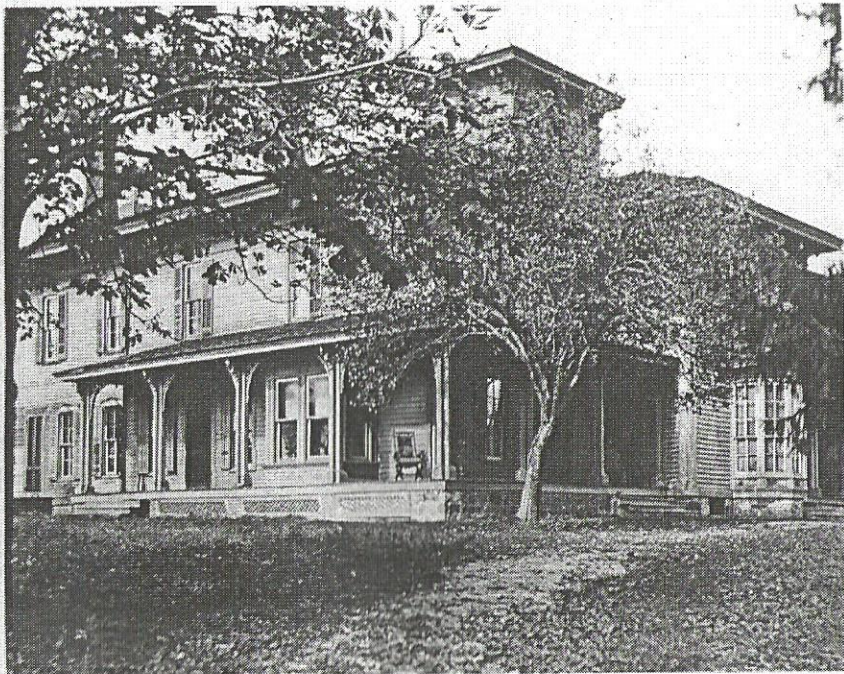
Douglas Fraser, owner of the American Brass and Iron Company in Detroit, bought land in 1916 from Fred Glenn, John Glenn's grandson. In 1920, he moved into the Glenn house, later known as Inverness Country Club. He farmed the land for four years but gave it up, due to allergies. The foundation of one of his barns still exists; in its time, the barn was used for dances. Fraser then subdivided the property and established the Inverness Country Club and Park Lawn Beach subdivision, with streets named to reflect the Fraser's Scottish heritage. Once Fraser had sold the lots at the resort community, he moved his family to Ann Arbor.

Sylvia Gilbert's home originally housed the Glenns' caretaker and was moved from its original location on the property of Inverness Country Club around the corner to Glencoe Drive. It is one of six remaining structures that belonged to the Glenns, three of which face North Territorial Road and two of which are on Hankerd Road. Prior to subdivision, the land was mostly orchard with the exception of five white cottages facing the lake, which Fraser rented out in the summer. The golf course was built after subdivision,

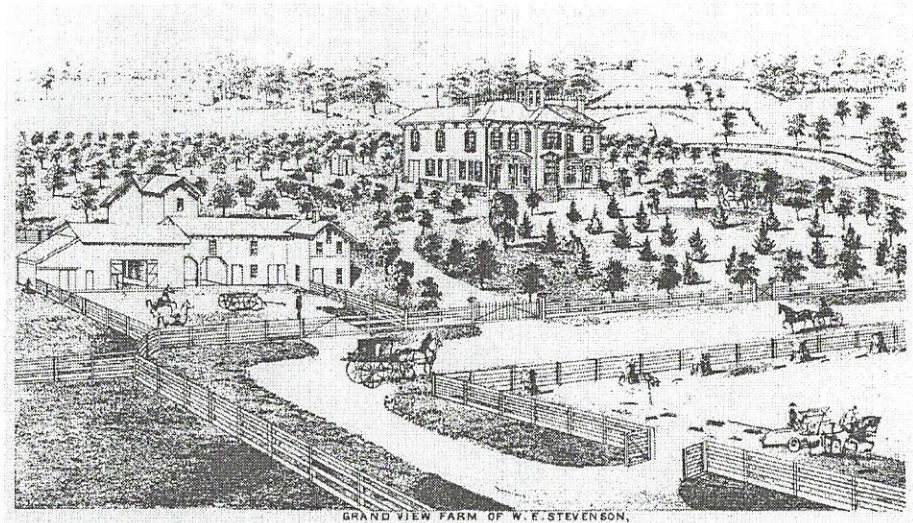
opening for play in 1927. Cabins built to house visitors to the country club was constructed from logs or painted dark brown. Many have been restored to their original state.

The Inverness Country Club was originally the Glenn family mansion. The original structure, after much controversy, was torn down and replaced with a more modern facility. Those who bought property in the Park Lawn Beach Subdivision were entitled to membership in the Inverness Country Club. Once 80 percent of the lots in the subdivision were purchased, the Frasers turned over ownership of the country club to a nonprofit corporation, the Inverness Country Club, established by these homeowners. Fraser and his wife, Laura, deeded the land in 1932, a parcel of 19 acres.

Another large farm in the area belonged to the Stevenson family and was purchased by William Eisenbeiser Sr. and his cousin, Judge John



Stevenson home



Line drawing of Grandview Farm

Aiken in 1915. The house had 23 rooms; the Aikens lived on one side when they came to visit from their regular home in Fort Wayne, Indiana, while the Eisenbeiser family lived on the other side. Called the Grandview Farm, the mansion sat on 360 acres. Later, William Eisenbeiser's wife, Jessie, bought the farm from Aiken. At the time of purchase, the land stretched from Stofer Road in the west to Riker Road in the south-east, north to the North Lake shoreline and south at some points to Island Lake Road. The purchase included the Christmas Seal Camp on the north shore of North Lake as well.

William E. Stevenson, who had lived in North Lake for 74 years, died eight years earlier in 1907. His father, Hay Stevenson, had founded the farm after moving his family from New York to Michigan in 1833. An early account of the area by James Craig, a founder of nearby Unadilla, describes the Stevenson house as having "neither doors nor windows in but quilts and blankets put up," as related in *The Gregory Baptist Church: Its First 150 Years*. South of the lake was orchards, along with several cottages, a swimming area, and a pavilion with picnic tables. The Eisenbeiser family rented the area, known as "the Grove," to clubs from surrounding areas for picnics and baseball games; it also hosted weddings among the willow trees. During the winter, the Eisenbeiser family cut blocks of ice from the lake and loaded them onto a flat stone boat that a team of horses pulled up the hill to the farm. They packed the ice in straw for storage and sold it to neighbors throughout the year.

In 1915, when the Eisenbeisers purchased the farm, the interior of the house was unfinished, and Mrs. Eisenbeiser hired two men for a dollar a day to finish the building with trim made of solid black walnut from trees on the farm. The house originally had been meant to serve as a stopping point for a stagecoach line between Detroit and Lansing along North Territorial Road. Before the house was completed, however, the railroad opened a line that passed less than 10 miles away, putting the stagecoach out of business. At this point, William E. Stevenson bought the house, which he later sold to the Eisenbeisers. In 1970, Robert Thornton purchased the land from William Eisenbeiser's family and subdivided it for housing. The original mansion, however, still exists at the southwest corner of Riker Road and North Territorial Road.

Riker Road is named for the Riker family, which moved from Pontiac, Michigan, to the North Lake area in 1903 after Dr. John Riker traded two apartment houses in Detroit for 320 acres of Land in Dexter Township. The family took a train from Pontiac to Pinckney, where a horse and buggy drove the final stretch. In 1909, the family spent the summer camping in a 20-foot-by-40-foot tent on the property. This was later replaced by a similarly sized building called the "Shack." A stone fire-



Christmas Seal Camp on North Lake

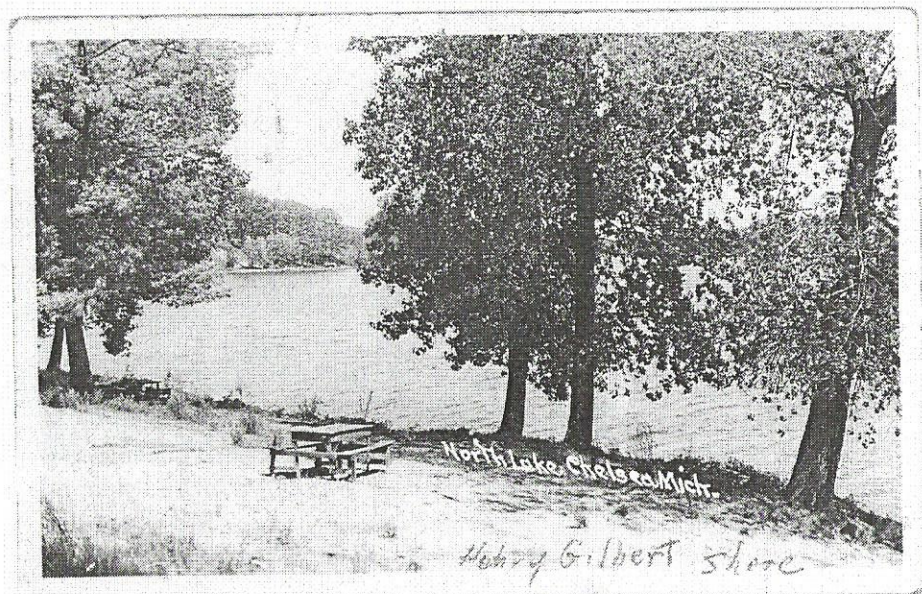


Harvest on the Grandview Farm

place was added to the Shack, half of which was used for ice storage; the chimney survives to this day. Later additions made the Shack into a decent-sized summer home. The Rikers planted apple orchards on the farm, and when electricity came to the area, Detroit Edison asked for permission to cross the property. As a result, the company named a road for the Rikers.

The Floyd and Florence Boyce family, descendants of early North Lake settlers the Noahs, had a cottage at North Lake built in 1921. Floyd Boyce taught at the North Lake School in the early 1920s. In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, the family moved for a time to the farm of Orange P. Noah, great-grandfather of Ellis Boyce and a Civil War veteran. At this time, the farm had no electricity, but that was compensated for by farmland on which to raise cows, chickens, and vegetables. Orange P. Noah's son, Perry E. Noah, owned and operated the North Lake grocery store for 25 years. The Noahs had apple or-

chards and dried the fruit in a building on their farm in the late 1800s. The Noah and Wood families, both early settlers, were joined in marriage. Members of the Noah and Wood families still live on the land, and Floyd Boyce maintains gardens there.



Postcard from North Lake

The Horace Johnson Farm was another major homestead. A Quaker family, Peleg and Abigail Johnson settled in Dexter Township in 1833. Horace was their son and farmed on 360 acres of land.

North Territorial Road was a horse trail, later used by coaches going from Detroit to Jackson. John Glenn's great-granddaughter, Mary Wright, established a trading post at the Inverness Inn in 1907, selling groceries and gasoline. A tavern was added to the site in the 1930s; the tavern closed temporarily, for the first time ever, in 2005 and sold in 2007.

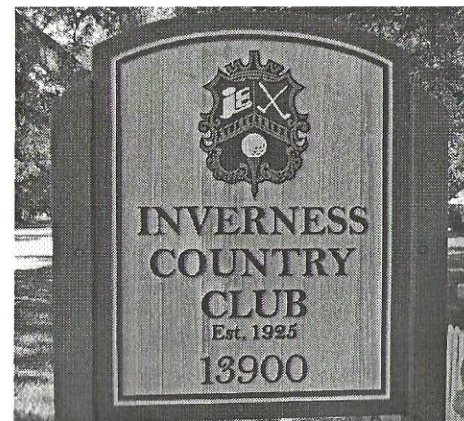
The first teacher at the North Lake School in Dexter Township was Melissa S. Doane, according to Julius Haab, County Commissioner of Schools, as reported in the Records of Meetings of the Washtenaw His-

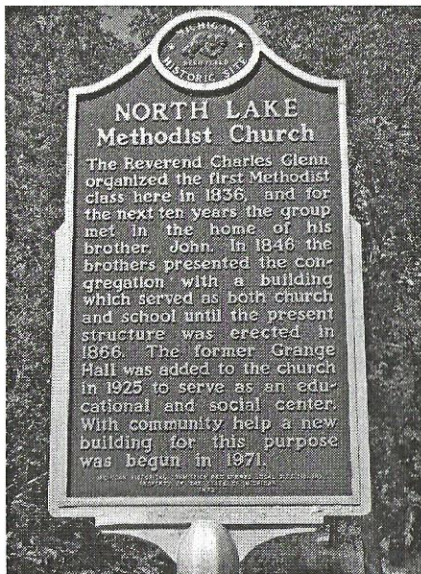
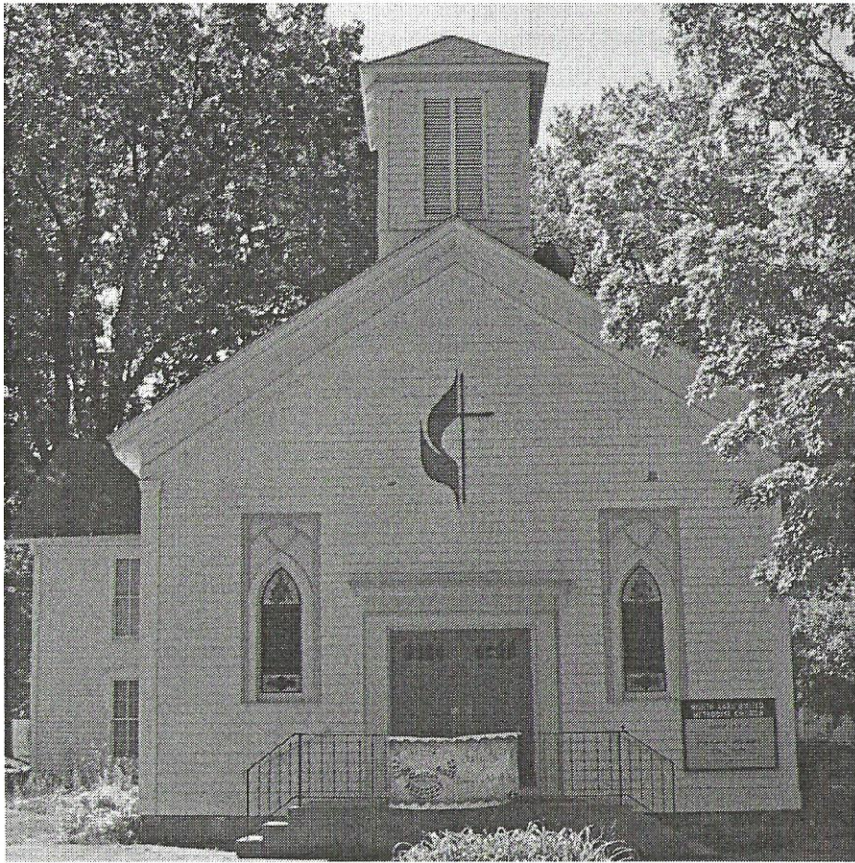
torical Society, 1943. Another teacher who went on to larger fame was Webster Pierce. He later became State Commissioner of Schools.

North Lake itself has been a popular vacation spot, providing recreation including fishing for pickerel, bass, mullet, pike, and trout. Along with this natural abundance, the Glenn orchards produced various types of fruit, primarily apples. According to Norma McAllister, Robert Glenn brought apple seeds from a cider mill and planted them in the area.

The largest orchard in the area was Webb's Orchard, developed starting in 1954 by Dr. Harold Webb with 200 trees as a memorial to his parents. Dr. Webb's daughter, Joyce, and her husband, Lester Graves, expanded the orchard to more than 3,000 trees when they took it over in 1977.

Recreationally, the center of North Lake has long been the Inverness Country Club. At nearby Wild Goose Lake, another resort catered to African-American families. Perry Noah courted trouble when he refused to sign a petition resisting the sale of land to the African-American families, as related in a 2004 *Community Observer* article by Grace Shackman. The Inverness Country Club catered to doctors, businesspeople, and others from Detroit and Ann Arbor, providing employment to many North Lake residents. The Country Club was hit hard by the Depression but survived and continues to exist today. Purchasing a home in the Park Lawn Beach subdivision entitles a family to membership in the club.





North Lake United Methodist Church, above, the original church in the area.

Left: Historical marker commemorating the founding of the church by North Lake settler the Rev. Charles Glenn and his family.

NORTH LAKE CHURCH

Charles, one of the founding Glenn brothers and a Methodist preacher, came with the family from Seneca, NY, in 1833 to the south bank of North Lake. He established the Methodist Episcopal Society of North Lake in 1836 and held services at John Glenn's home for about 10 years, with occasional guidance from a circuit rider preacher. Founding members of the church included:

Clarissa Brown
Elijah Brown
James H. Brown
James E. Crane
Anna Done
John Done
Benjamin H. Glenn
Charles Glenn
Isaac Glenn
Jane Glenn
John Glenn

Mary Ascena Glenn
Joseph Hartsuff
Phoebe Hartsuff
Anna Johnson
Jasper Moore
John Moore
Martha Moore
Sarah Searles
Aaron Vedder
Catherine Vedder
Joseph Whitcomb

The church grew quickly in the first few years, according to a 1943 church history by minister Ronald A. Brunger. The brothers built a new church, which also served as a school, in 1846. The present North Lake United Methodist Church was constructed in 1866, after the original building was destroyed in a fire. By this time, it had more than 50 members. Charles Glenn died in 1876 and was followed as class leader by William Wood, who in turn was succeeded by Mrs. Perry Noah. Thirty years later, a significant renovation included the addition of stained glass, followed by additions in 1925 and 1972.

Part of the church building is the Grange Hall, the community's social center when it was built in the late 1800s. Initially at the corner of Stofer and North Territorial Roads, the Grange Hall was later moved to the back of the church. The North Lake Band played at the hall during its 10-year run from 1897-1906.

Near the church is the North Lake Cemetery, the earliest stone in which commemorates Charles and Mary Glenn's infant daughter, who died in 1839. The cemetery is on land deeded by John Glenn.

FAMILIES NAMES OF NORTH LAKE

Founding generation

Robert Glenn
Charles Glenn Jr. and Mary Ascena Bignall
John Glenn and Jane Hamlin
Jane Glenn and John Burkhart

Second generation

Children of Jane and John Burkhart: Charles Burkhart, Susan Marsh, William Burkhart, Ashley Burkhart, Jane Peterson, John Burkhart, Hillary Burkhart, Dehlia Barber Shratt

Children of John and Jane Glenn: Isaac Glenn, Lucy Wood, Robert Glenn, William Glenn

Children of Charles and Mary Glenn: Benjamin Glenn (from marriage to Eliza Brown), Sabrah Glenn, Mary Glenn

Family names of North Lake residents throughout its history:

	Hudson	Ruckheim
Becker	Hyde	Schmidt
Benton	Kammrath	Shutes
Bignall	Knisely	Spaulding
Boyce	Kruse	Stevenson
Brown	Lane	Sweeney
Burkhart	Larson	Tandy
Daniels	Ludlow	Twamley
Eisenbeiser	Marshall	Vanatter
Faulkner	Martin	Van Blaricum
Fitzsimmons	McDaniels	Washburn
Frasher	McDonald	Watts
Garvey	Mill	Webb
Gilbert	Noah	Whalen
Glenn	Pierce	Winans
Hogge	Pratt	Woods

PARK LAWN BEACH HISTORICAL MARKER

In 2005, the Washtenaw County Historical District Commission, at the urging of Sylvia Gilbert, placed a marker on North Territorial Road to commemorate the early settlers of North Lake. It reads:

“ North Territorial Road was established by the Michigan Territory to direct settlers to the development of the West.

In 1833, John Glenn and his family arrived from New York State and followed the Johnny Appleseed tradition of developing orchards. His family built its homes around North Lake along with other early settlers. John Glenn died in 1867.

Rev. Charles Glenn organized the first Methodist Class in 1836 that met in the home of John Glenn. The Methodist church was built in 1866.

John Glenn's granddaughter, Mary Wright, established a trading post that eventually became a grocery store, gas station, and tavern—later known as the Inverness Inn.

Douglas Fraser bought the land in 1918. Fraser developed Park Lawn Beach with cottages, a golf course, and a beach. He named the streets for his Scottish heritage.

Many of the original pioneers are buried in the North Lake Cemetery on Riker Road.

Descendants of the Glenns and other pioneer families around the lake still live in this area. ” ”