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Alcona County Self-Guided Driving Tour A

**Haynes, Alcona and
Caledonia Townships.**



Alcona Historical Society
P.O. Box 174,
Harrisville, MI 48740
www.alconahistoricalsociety.com
2023 Edition

1. Old Bailey School and Museum

(End of Point Road, East of Lake Shore Drive, Haynes Twp)

The schoolhouse was built in 1907, west of Mikado, for the children of the logging crews of C.A. Johnson Logging Camp. (Herb Bailey was one of the builders.) In 1913 logging ceased. The school was moved about one mile north to a site on highway F-30. (Herb Bailey directed the move.) The school remained in service until 1941.



2. Sturgeon Point - Lighthouse and Museum.

(End of Point Road, East of Lake Shore Drive, Haynes Twp)

From Sturgeon Point, a reef juts east about a mile and a half from the point. This shallow reef had long been a hazard to shipping. (There are 27 known shipwreck sites nearby.) Therefore, in 1867, Congress granted an appropriation of \$15,000 to build a lighthouse, construction was begun and the lighthouse was completed and placed into operation in 1870.



3. Mt. Joy Cemetery.

(Alcona Road East of US-23, Haynes Township)

Mt. Joy, now the Haynes Township cemetery, was originally the cemetery for the former Village of Alcona. The earliest tombstone is that of Hannah Johnson who died on July 16, 1855. The second is that of Civil War veteran John London who died on October 18, 1869 at the age of 46. Early settlers interred here include: William Hill, the founder of the village of Alcona. Perley Silverthorn, first keeper of the Sturgeon Point Lighthouse. Newton Edwards, the last mayor of Alcona.



4. Village of Alcona.

(Alcona Road at Lake Shore Drive, Haynes Twp.)

Circa 1855, William Hill established a fishery at a place on the shore called The Cove; Mr. Hill became known as the "Commodore of the Cove." He operated five fishing boats and a lodging house. The settlement became the village of Alcona. In the 1860s and 1870s, Johnston, Haynes & Company built a saw mill here with a railroad for transporting logs from the



west. By the early 1880s, the community included three general stores, three hotels, a lumber dock and a passenger dock. With 1000 residents, Alcona was the largest community in the Huron Shore region.

5. Village of Black River

(Lake Shore Drive at Huron Drive, Alcona Twp.)

William F. "Uncle Billy" Cullings, a former lake boat captain, bought a sail boat in 1835 and headed north. Operating from the AuSable River, he earned a living by fishing seasonally along the Huron shore. He came to know every inch of the shore between Mackinaw and Saginaw Bay. In 1849, he bought a "government forty" and established a fishery at the mouth of the Black River, an ideal harbor.



In 1868, Russell A. Alger and Martin Smith founded Alger, Smith & Company and began lumbering operations in the Black River area. In 1879, the company consolidated all its operations in Black River. By the 1890s, it had surpassed Alcona as the largest community in the region.

6. St. Gabriel Catholic Church

(5570 N. Lake Shore Drive, Black River, Alcona Twp.)

The original settlers in Black River were primarily French Canadian trappers and fisherman. A mission congregation was established by Sacred Heart Church, Au Sable, in about 1883. Father Cornelius Roche visited about twice a year. In 1894 Alger Smith and Company donated an acre of land and St. Gabriel Catholic Church was built, under the direction of Father Julien Doucet.



7. Mountain Inn

(US-23 & Black River Road, Alcona Twp.)

With the Black River lumbering days long gone, Oliver & Rose DeRocher decided to build a bar in 1936 at this corner. Twice the bar burned, once in 1936 and again in 1955. During WWII, it was "the swinging place to go," for card games, dancing and socializing, as well as for meals and refreshments. After 1967, the bar had 10 different owners and had been remodeled several times. It was last remodeled in 2013, and reopened as the Mountain Bar and Grill.



8. Rosa's Lookout Inn

(6808 N. US-23, Spruce, Caledonia Twp.)

In June of 1933, William Gilliland and Archie Mc Intyre purchased 40 acres on the US-23 highway right-of-way to build the **Lookout Inn**. It has continued as a restaurant under several other owners and under different names. Under a previous owner it became Rosa's Ristorante and served fine Italian/American fare.



9. Spruce Presbyterian Church

(6230 Gillard Road, Spruce, Caledonia Township)

In 1888, 67 members, of Scottish and Swedish descent, formed the First Presbyterian Church of Caledonia. The congregation was served by several ministers in the early years but on December 16, 1901, Rev. C.M. Boyce was installed and served, with one interruption, until his death in 1933. He and his successors have since served the "yoked" Presbyterian Churches in Harrisville, Haynes Township and Spruce. The first church burned to the ground in October 1933. The present Gothic-style building was dedicated on September 7, 1936.



10. Spruce Lutheran Church

(1246 E. Spruce Rd., Spruce, Caledonia Twp.)

In 1894, ten Norwegian families began to raise money to build the Norwegian Lutheran Church. The church women held coffee socials, box socials, sock knitting bees, and sales of garden produce. The church men cut trees and milled lumber. In 1900 the new church sanctuary was dedicated by a Reverend Johnson. On Sundays, the minister traveled by train from Alpena to Ossineke and by horse and buggy to Spruce.



11. Churchill Pointe Inn

(5700 Bennett Road, Hubbard Lake, Caledonia Twp.)

Edwin and Margaret Bennett from Jackson, MI built in the Inn 1926 and opened for business in 1927. It was named Bennett's Tavern, even though it served no alcohol. The restaurant was on the first floor,



with thirteen guest rooms and two bathrooms on the second floor. A bell called the guests to breakfast, lunch and dinner. Mrs. Bennett was known as an excellent cook, famous for her "Special Sunday Chicken Dinner" that was served to the public as well as to the guests. The Bennetts operated the Inn for over 25 years.

12. Lost Lake Woods Club

(4243 N. Lost Lake Trail, Lincoln, Alcona Twp.)

In 1926 the Lincoln Land Company began to establish the Lost Lake Woods Club as a "Workingman's Outdoor Club." In 1934, ownership passed from Lincoln Land Company to the club members. The 10,000 acre Club has over 500 private homes. It has a club house, a golf course, hunting land, trails, lakes, beaches and a riding stable. The original clubhouse was destroyed by fire in 1945. For information about entrance to the club, call (989) 736-8197.



13. Johnson School

(Haynes Township Hall) 3930 E. McNeil Road, Harrisville

The original concrete block structure was built in 1910 for \$1500. The present building began to be used as a school in 1927. Several Polish families had farms in Haynes Township. These families spoke no English at home. When their children were enrolled at Johnson School, the teachers had to also teach them English while teaching eight grades of primary school. In 1947, the school closed. In 1963, the township bought the school and remodeled it into Haynes Township Hall.



14. Old Stone Church (Haynes Community Church)

4505 Shaw Rd., Harrisville

In 1880, Alcona Township had 187 houses, 4 schools, 2 churches, a lighthouse, and 3 post offices. Presbyterians living there built their own white frame church, the First Presbyterian Church of Alcona. In 1886, the Church building was moved two miles to the west. In June 1924, sparks from a roof fire at a neighboring farmhouse set the church ablaze. Many of the interior features were saved, but the building was totally destroyed. Volunteers rebuilt the church with native stones. It was reopened on June 6, 1934. In 1969, the church became the present nondenominational community church.

