

Cherokee Lodge

Attached is the front page of The Montague Observer for June 6, 1940, in which the Cherokee Lodge fire was reported and well as cropped sections of the article from both The Montague Observer and the Whitehall Forum.

memos:
from the Editor's notebook

This writer takes it for granted that the people who, the last few days, have described the weather as "hotter than h...," are merely doing a bit of guesswork, and are not capable of proving their point!

We do agree that it has been plenty warm the past two days, but that's just the sort of weather we need to "make hay in—and believe it, or not, many really "enjoy" the hot weather, and the hotter the better.

Bill Guy, our Turkey King, and "Shorty" Holmes, Soils Conservation staff member, are two fellows who really live when Sol uncorks his thermos jug. Met 'em the other morning while on my way for the mail and we stopped and chatted a spell.

"Gosh!" said Shorty, casting a friendly eye at the blazing sun, "you can enjoy such weather!"

"Yes," Bill agreed. "If this hold I'll have to cut the arms and legs of my red flannels. They're getting a mile too warm for comfort!"

Speaking of h... that's Bill's an Shorty's idea of Michigan winters.

Walter Hunt, prominent and popular (he hopes) young garage proprietor, has been trying to convince all who will listen that he actually shook hands with a bear in Muskegon, Tuesday night, at the Elk's Club. And, despite the fact that he never has really thinks he did.

"Well, maybe he did, at that. I remember bringing three elephants home from a similar party once, and looking them in the dresser drawer. I'd still like to know who let 'em out while I was asleep!"

Paul Vitey, district census taker, verifies our claim that Montague is "coming back" with a report that Montague has increased its population 315 in 10 years.

Gosh, according to that rate, this will be a city of 5,000 in less than 100 years. And where will we all live if they don't get the Franklin House open?

Incidentally, Montague's population as of June 1, was 1,690.

Memo: I must have someone suggest to Pete Lipka, Bill Guy, Fred Anderson, or others who claim pet peaves that as yet our "As Others See It" column is shy of contributions. We never thought we'd have to coax our readers to voice their opinions.

Memo: A good place to stop as we're running short of time and space.

Bible School Opens Monday, June 10th

The White Lake Summer Bible School will begin next Monday morning, with the purpose in view of providing instruction for all young people of school age during vacation time. It is a Bible School, offering a course that is all Bible and non-sectarian. It features Bible study, music, memory work, conduct and character building—all correlated to

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TO REPORT A FIRE, DAY OR NIGHT, JUST CALL NUMBER 217 (Henry Hunt's Greenhouses) And the alarm will be sounded.

To Select Freya Winner Tuesday

Selection of the Freya, to rule at the two-day Mid-Summer Festival, will be made next Tuesday night, at a concert played at the Eagle-Oitawa gym by the Whitehall school band. At this time three out-of-town judges will select the winner from the five highly contestants. Voting will end Saturday evening, when the jars are picked up and the final votes counted.

At present, the five high ranking contestants are: Phyllis Mord, 30,295; Carl Peterson, 27,855; Helen Mickelson, 26,540; Florence Covell, 25,530; and Helen June Seaver, 22,135. All are contestants will take part in the ceremonies Tuesday evening, and will act as the court of honor at the festival.

In addition to the band, musical selections by groups and individuals of the White Lake area will be included on the June 11 program.

Farm Engineering Course Offered to Youths Here

National Foundation Announces Free Scholarships Are Now Available

At least ten free scholarships for the study of farm management and engineering will be awarded to farm youths in this vicinity, according to Bell & Carleton, local firm.

The scholarships, available to young men between the ages of 18 and 25 who are actually engaged in farm work, will consist of a home study course, together with practical training and experience under local farm co-operations. They are provided by the National Farm Youth Foundation, which has been created by the Ferguson-Sherman Manufacturing Corporation of Dearborn, Michigan, with the active co-operation of Henry Ford and Edsel Ford.

"Young men of the farm have not realized their opportunities on the home soil," said Henry Ford in announcing his participation in the Foundation. "As a result, many of them have left the farm.

"The family system of farming has suffered and we want to see it rebuilt. As a matter of fact, the Foundation seeks to help the young man of the farm to realize his aspirations for happiness and prosperity.

"I am told that eighty per cent of the graduates of agricultural colleges have been going to the towns and cities for their careers instead of returning to the farm. The remaining 20 per cent are not enough to give the farm the needed leadership in agricultural progress.

"Better farming methods today will mean better farms tomorrow and rural youth will be more inclined to stay close to the soil."

Young men enrolled under these scholarships also will compete for salaried jobs with the sponsoring company and its distributors. One student will be selected from this section to work at the factory for a year at a salary of \$150 a month. He will be given specialized training in the use, application and the maintenance of the tractor and its equipment. Second award in this general area is a job with the distributor at \$125 a month. Additional students will be placed in jobs as quickly as possible, with the eventual aim of giving them training and experience which they may bring to bear on future problems in their own community.

Success for local young men in

BLACK EAGLES TO ELAY N. M. TEAM NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 9

The Whitehall Black Eagles baseball team will play the Hudson Dry Cleaners of North Muskegon, Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p. m., on the Whitehall diamond.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION NOTICE

To the voters of Montague Township School District: I will be at my home to register voters for the July election, until July 6.

This is not a re-registration, but is for those who have, or will have attained their majority by July. Petitions may be obtained from me and must be in my hands by Monday, June 24th. The Election will be July 8th.

Paul Medbery, Secretary
Montague Twp. School Board.

Cherokee Lodge Razed By Fire; \$65,000 Loss

Fire of unknown origin razed White Lake's most picturesque and modern summer hotel, Cherokee Lodge, Sunday night, and dealt a \$65,000 blow to the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fife, to say nothing of the indirect cost to this area's summer resort prestige.

The blaze was discovered by the caretaker, Melvin Woods, about 9:15 p. m., on the third floor, and the alarm was sounded. In spite of the fact that the local department made a fast run, the entire structure was a mass of flames by the time the truck arrived, and the firemen devoted their efforts to protecting the other buildings and keeping the fire from spreading into the woods.

More than 500 cars, many from as far as Hart, Shelby and Muskegon, created a traffic problem on Old Channel Trail as people sped to the scene. It is safe to estimate that more than 1200 spectators witnessed the great hotel being consumed.

Mr. Fife, whose sense of caution and precaution against fire is a byword in this community, could offer no suggestion as to how the fire started. He declared that work had been going on preparatory to opening the hotel for the summer, with a June 10 convention, and that he had been in the building 15 minutes before the blaze was discovered, but had smelled no smoke.

Cherokee Lodge was built in 1920 by Mr. Fife and his father, the late Mac R. Fife. Constructed mainly of brick and wood, to harmonize with the surroundings, this beautiful 68 room summer haven had become known the width and length of the land. During recent years the Fifes have kept pace with changing conditions and have modernized to fit the demands of their trade. Only this Spring the owners added several new baths, installed additional sleeping conveniences, and spent much money remodeling and redecorating. They were exceptionally proud of the reputation Cherokee Lodge had earned.

Although Mr. Fife has made no direct declaration as to his plans for the future, it is feared that he will not attempt to rebuild. It is rumored that the property was covered by less than \$15,000 insurance, due to the extremely high rates resulting from inadequate fire protection.

Mr. and Mrs. Fife have the sincere sympathy of every resident of this community, but all are thankful that this fire occurred before the family, staff and guests were housed in the structure. The loss would then, without a doubt, included human lives.

Also, it is fortunate that the fire had not occurred two or three weeks earlier, during the dry season, for in that event it is most probable that the blaze would have swept the north shore, causing much damage to summer homes located in its path.

Sportsmen Urge Observance Of Dog Quarantine

The White Lake Sportsmen's Club, in cooperation with other such organizations throughout the state, went on record this week as favoring a strict enforcement of the dog quarantine, ordered some time ago as a measure in the fight against the spread of Rabies.

Muskegon County, in connection with 47 other counties of the Lower Peninsula, recently adopted the dog quarantine. Under its restrictions no dog is allowed to run, and no dog shall be allowed off the owner's property unless muzzled and on a leash. So far, little effort has been made to enforce the quarantine to its entirety, due to the fact that in this area no evidence of Rabies has been noticed.

Dog owners misunderstand the full purpose of the quarantine. It IS NOT to handicap owners of well bred dogs, but to protect them instead from stray, homeless dogs who in most cases are the cause of the spread of Rabies. If bitten by an infected dog, the saliva, loaded with virus, enters the body of the victim through the bite. The virus travels along the nerves to the brain, causing certain death. All warm-blooded animals are susceptible to the disease, but it is most prevalent in dogs, due to their "roaming" habits.

Sportsmen throughout the state, who own valuable dogs and who have carefully observed the quarantine, are determined to see all dog owners respect the measure by abiding with rules. Especially important is the observance of the quarantine, in all seriousness, for the state recently hinted that unless stricter precaution was shown between now and fall, hunting dogs may not be allowed in the woods this coming season.

There is only one certain way to wipe out Rabies—destroy the half-starved, homeless mongrel which is allowed to wander about the country at will, creating a real threat to the wiping-out of the dreaded disease.

Approximately 250 at Banquet

Approximately 250 former graduates of the class of 1940, and students were present at the annual Alumni Banquet, held last Friday evening in the Montague High school auditorium. The luscious 6:30 dinner was prepared and served by the members of the local PTA.

Following the banquet and a brief dinner program, the guests adjourned to the gymnasium, where dancing to the music of King's orchestra entertained. Highlyly, the program were their show numbers by Ferna Blackburn, Mary Gobdel and Wally Hill.

Another highlight of the affair was the Old Acquaintance Room, especially decorated and arranged for the older graduates. Attractive decorations were featured throughout.

Best represented was the class of 1905, with 9 out of the 17 graduates present. Included in this group were: Mrs. Myrtle Barra of Muskegon, Miss Margaret Whelan of Holland, Mrs. Caroline Oprenski of Mt. Pleasant, Mrs. Katherine Milliken of Muskegon, Mrs. Jessie Heinrich, Dr. Martha Goltz, Mrs. Helen Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. George Mason and Mrs. Nettie Mason. Mrs. Nellie B. Chabole, principal of the school at the time of their graduation, sat with them. Pink and green, the 1905 class colors, were used to decorate the table.

Robert King, president of the Association, announced that he and the committee were well satisfied with this year's affair, although a larger number had been expected. Mr. King will hold office one more term.

CARD OF THANKS

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RALPH A. WANNAMAKER AND MRS. ROSE REEVE OF MUSKEGON, WED JUNE 5

Mrs. Rose Reeve, 469 Erickson street, Muskegon, and Ralph A. Wannamaker, 259 Columbia avenue, Muskegon Heights, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Wannamaker of this city, were married in the presence of about 25 guests, at the home of the bridegroom's parents, Saturday at 4 p. m., with Rev. A. J. Ostling of Whitehall performing the ceremony.

The bride wore powder blue crepe with white accessories and a corsage of yellow roses and sweet peas. Her maid-of-honor, Miss Minnie Marvin, was attired in dusty rose silk with white accessories and wore a corsage of pink, white and orchid sweet peas. Marcell Reeve, bridesmaid, and the

Conservationist To Speak Here

Harry Gaines, well known Grand Rapids sportsman, and the driving power behind the movement of the Michigan United Conservation Congress, will appear at a special meeting at the White Lake Sport Club, Thursday evening, June 15, to tell sportsmen of the work being done, and to be done, in the field of conservation.

Mr. Gaines is probably the best informed man in the state on matters pertaining to conservation, and has proven his ability to lead the parade either in the field or in Lansing, where laws are made. He is truly sincere, believes in fighting for his rights, and is a snacker worth hearing.

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Cherokee Lodge was built in 1920 by Mr. Fife and his father, the late Mac R. Fife. Constructed mainly of logs and wood, to harmonize with the surroundings, this beautiful 60 room summer haven had become known the width and length of the land. During recent years the Fifes have kept pace with changing conditions and have modernized to fit the demands of their trade. Only this Spring the owners added several new baths, installed additional sleeping conveniences, and spent much money remodeling and redecorating. They were exceptionally proud of the reputation Cherokee Lodge had earned.

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Greatest hotel fire disaster wipes out Cherokee; loss \$65,000

Saturday concerts

will begin for the season this week with a "tryout" concert by Ole Olsen's barn dance group, it was announced today by Clarence E. Pitkin, chairman of the committee in charge of arranging for a series of Saturday night concerts sponsored by Whitehall merchants this summer.

Mr. Pitkin is planning a series of 10 concerts, to be split on alternate weeks between Kolkowski's orchestra and the Olsen group of musicians. The latter, members of whom play for Schiller's barn dances, specialize in Swedish music, square dances, and the like, besides offering novelty numbers.

The concerts will be held from 8 p. m. to 9 p. m. as last year, it was decided by the sponsoring merchants.

Six all-A students

were reported for the year at Montague High School in the final honors report issued this week by Supt. R. R. Oehrli.

Robert Underwood, senior, Elsie Grossman, junior, Joyce Miller, sophomore, and Rosalie Lehman, Gertrude Lohman, and Irene Tutak, freshmen, all were in the perfect group.

Others on the honor roll were: seniors—B's or better—Alberta Cox, Helen Graham, Florence Lehman, Helen June Seaver; B average—Ethel Glassner, Forrest Hoffman, Norma Lindsey, Ed Ramthun, Elizabeth Sikkenga, Bonadean Teichthesen, Ray Van Slyke, Harold Sikkenga; juniors—B's or better—Josephine Converse, Shirley Kinstner, E. L. Newman; B average—Agnes Ackerson, Dorothy Ochs, Phyllis Schultz, Sigurd Stembol, Winfield Studier; sophomores—B's or bet-

Fire, shooting spectacular tongues of flame through the three stories of the huge wooden structure and hundreds of feet into the air, attracting thousands of spectators from many miles around, Sunday night razed to the ground Cherokee Lodge, newest of the White Lake resort hotels and the largest under a single roof. The loss will approximate \$65,000, Richard A. Fife, owner and proprietor estimates, only partially covered by insurance.

The flames, visible for many miles, brought thousands of cars to the scene in less than a half an hour. Autos lined both sides of Old Channel Trail for a mile on each side of the Cherokee entrance and scores of other motorists drove down the various roadways toward the waterfront trying to get nearer the fire. So intense was the heat that spectators standing near the Fife home, several hundred feet from the hotel, were unable to hold their position and were forced to retire.

Cherokee Lodge was three stories in height and contained 60 rooms, the most in any hotel building in this area. It was built in 1920 by Mr. Fife and his father, the late Mac R. Fife.

Origin of the fire was undetermined, but must have been either on the second or third floor. Mr. Fife had been in the building a half hour or so before the flames were noticed, but he heard nothing and saw nothing to indicate that there was anything amiss upstairs. About 9:15 p. m., he said Melvin Woods, caretaker of the place, who lived in the east wing of the hotel, heard a noise as if someone were tapping on the third floor. When he went out to look, he noticed flames coming from the third east wing.

He called Mr. Fife, but as they looked, windows in the third floor blew outwards as though by gas pressure behind them, and the entire building seemed to be-

(Continued on page six)

Fire

(Continued from page one)
come enveloped in fire almost immediately.

Both the Montague and the Montague Township fire trucks responded, but neither had the ghost of a chance to do anything but save the woods and other buildings, Mr. Fife said, the flames having obtained such a start before the fire was discovered that no fire department even then would have had a chance.

Numerous fires kept starting in the pine woods surrounding the hotel and many of the spectators and firemen were kept busy putting them out. Fireman evidenced considerable anxiety during the height of the blaze lest a crown fire start in the pine trees and trap several hundred spectators between the road and the flaming hotel.

Cherokee Lodge had just been renovated and put in condition for the summer business, Mr. Fife said. Linen stock for the summer and much of the canned food supply were stored in the building and were destroyed in the fire.

He had been looking forward this year to his best season since 1929, Mr. Fife said. He had two conventions booked and a number of reservations already lined up for most of the summer. One convention was scheduled for June 10.

His future plans aren't definite as yet, he said. He believes that conditions in the resort industry are changing and that construction of another hotel to replace Cherokee would be a mistake. Among the possibilities he has considered was the constructing of a number of cabins around a main dining and recreation lodge but he plans to take no action without full study of all the possibilities.

We always welcome any pictures or other documents you might have pertaining to the history of the area, even if the subject no longer exists.