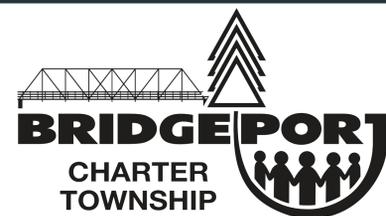


Cass River Water Trail



History of Bridgeport Charter Township



Bridgeport Charter Township is one of the oldest in the State of Michigan receiving its charter in 1848. Bridgeport was known as the "Bend in the Cass" or "Cass Bend" due to the sharp turns the Cass River takes in the Township.



European fur traders and trappers began settling the area around 1830, mostly from England, Scotland, and Germany, came to Bridgeport by way of the Overland Trail from Detroit. Traveling through Flint they forded the Cass River where the Dixie Highway now crosses. They set up a trading post, "Brown's Camp" to conduct business with local Native Americans, and welcome travelers.

In 1835 Mr. Auri Compau built the first log house in the township, and the first post office was started in 1836 by Mr. Sidney S. Campbell.

A hotel called "The Center House" was built in 1842 by Mr. Charles Lull. It contained a saloon and small store along with accommodations for travelers. This growth led to Bridgeport's development. In 1847 a bridge was built where the Dixie Highway now crosses the River.



Hotel at Bridgeport, Mich. The Center house the hotel on the corner of State & Dixie Hwy. Built in about 1842 burnt around 1913. Post cards made about 1912.



In 1849 a saw mill was built, along with Jesse Hoyt obtaining a charter for a plank road to be built from the Cass River to the county line and joined a turnpike connecting with one that already existed from Flint. It was finished in 1852. This gave Bridgeport its first real road – which is now Dixie Highway.



In 1851, a 2nd post office was started, a phenom that lasted until 1904. Samuel C. Munson was the first postmaster listed here.

In the early 1900's the construction of the Interurban line between Flint and Saginaw was constructed and the township took on a new lease on life for a time. The Interurban line ran through Bridgeport and had a junction that went to Frankenmuth. Two railroads bisected Bridgeport, the Pere Marquette Railroad – which is now CSX and the Michigan Railway Company – which is now Grand Trunk Railroad.

Bridgeport was a typical country village with farming, and logging. Bridgeport also boasted four brickyards, a shingle mill, lumber mill, flour mill, grist mill, salt well, blacksmith shop, ice houses, general store, drug store, cider mill, cheese factory and butter and ice cream made by Mr. John Hannay in a small downtown section until the 1920's.



Bridgeport Mills, Bridgeport, Mich.

Residential growth in Saginaw pushed the city's limits to Bridgeport, while industrial and commercial growth expanded and the automobile made it possible to live in Bridgeport and work anywhere. Land changed from agricultural to residential through the 1970's. The Township continued to expand its services and infrastructure such as public water, police protection, and fire protection (Bridgeport's fire department was established in 1941).

In the 1960's, the I-75 Interstate Freeway was constructed and the exit stimulated growth along the interchange. Bridgeport Spaulding Community School District built its first High School in 1961.

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