



The History of Ottawa Beach

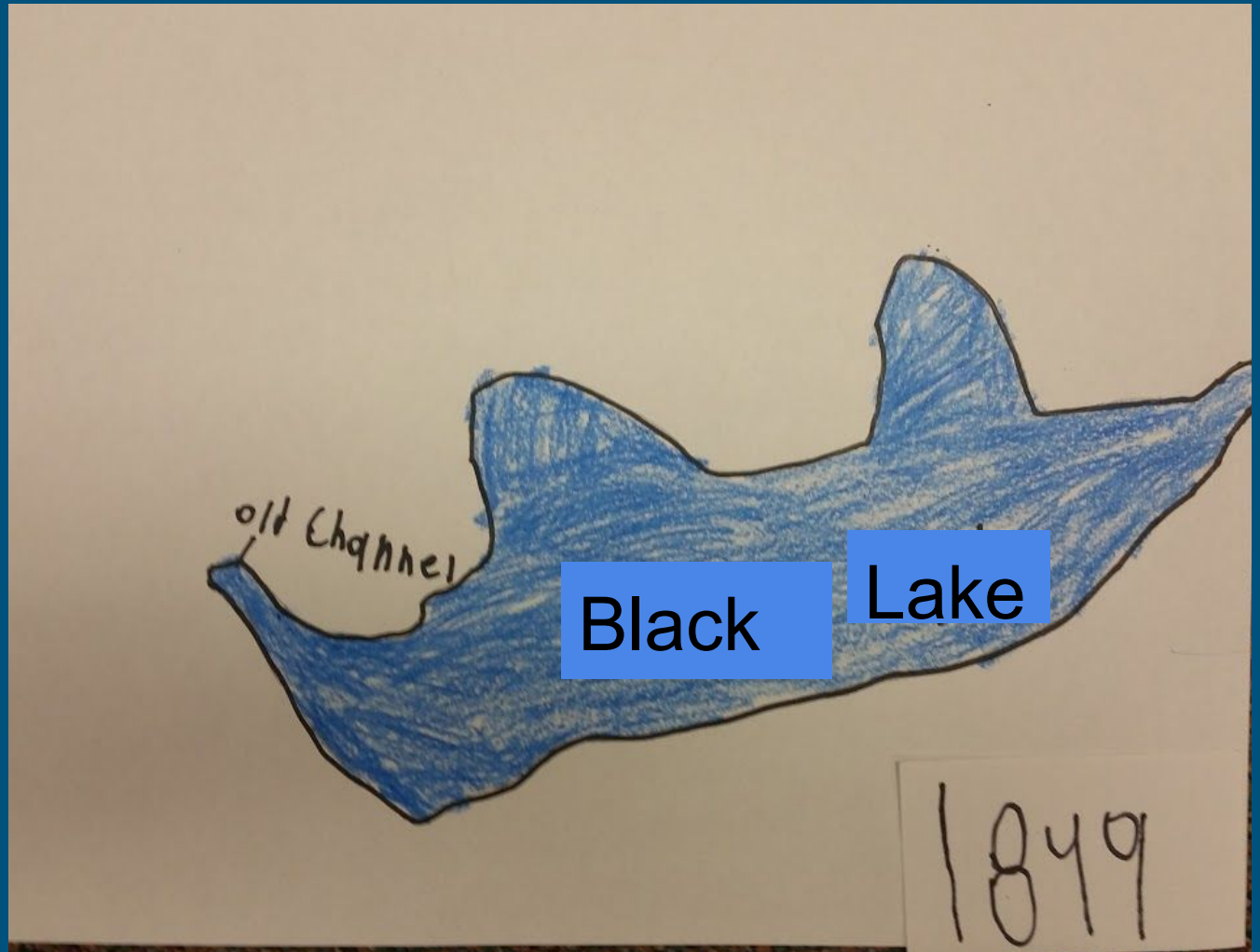
By Students in SAIL



The Channel

By Cabot

In 1849, the Dutch and their leaders wanted to have a better harbor. To make it better, they were going to make a channel. They surveyed the land and found that the channel could be in 2 locations. To afford the channel, C. Van Raalte had to successfully get funds from the government. When they built the original channel, it was unsuitable and work began on the new one. In 1886, the new channel was surveyed and dug from Black Lake (Lake Macatawa) to Lake Michigan.



The Completed Railroad

By Andrew

At the end of the 1850's, the West Michigan and the Chicago Railway connected Holland and Grand Rapid's railways. Then, the visitors could simply get on a steamboat to either Ottawa Beach, or Macatawa Park.



The Fire of 1871

By Andrew

One hot, dry, and windy autumn day during October 1871, three major fires occurred by Lake Michigan at the same time. The Chicago Fire, the Peshtigo Fire, and a fire in Holland, Michigan. The Peshtigo Fire destroyed the town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin, along with 12 other villages. The Holland, Michigan, fire destroyed 2/3 of the city.





Added Acres By Addy

In 1886, the West Michigan Park Association mapped out 54 acres for development. Later they added 20 more acres. This organization still exists to this day. It was bought for Hotel Ottawa and to extend West Michigan Railway.

Windmills and Water

By Erin

Back when the hotel was built in 1886, a windmill was used to get water to Ottawa Beach. The windmill supplied the hotel and cottages with water by wind power. But in the 1920's, several windmills barely even provided enough cold water for the hotel and cottages. The windmill at Ottawa Beach sent water to a wooden reservoir, or a tank.



1886

First Hotel Ottawa

By Lilly

In 1886, when Hotel Ottawa opened, it was very small. There were no bathrooms in the rooms, only down each hall. There was also no electricity, so kerosene lamps were used for light. Back then, breakfast was not prepared. All together, there were very few rooms and the rooms they had were very small. Only 3 or 4 people would fit in each room.





The Post Office By Bomin

Starting from the August of 1886, the neighborhood had its own post office. It was named Ottawa Beach. For a long time, mail was outgoing only.

Unfortunately, the building was destroyed sometime after Ottawa county bought the State Park land.



20 Cottages

By Kenzie

Did you know that during the year that Hotel Ottawa was opening 20 cottages were built in the area? Those cottages were built in 1887 and 1900. At that time, the windmill gave barely enough water for the cottages.

Also, most of the money for the hotel came from the people who bought the cottage lots.

Steamboat Wars By Sami

Long ago, people had to travel by steamboat to get to certain places. There weren't many ways of transportation back then. There was one steamboat named "Macatawa" it was owned by Captain Harrington. He agreed to ship passengers to some places but, he refused to ship passengers to the Ottawa Beach area. This is what started the "Steamboat Wars". The captains wanted more people on their ships so they could make more money. There were many conflicts between the captains of many steamboats. There were numerous arguments spreading around the town. Many pranks were added, captains and their crew would do things that would stop passengers from going on other ships. This was not a good way to solve this issue.



Payment Problems

By Carter



During the 1890 season of Ottawa Beach, it was a very busy season. A lot of visitors came, then left on Sundays, and didn't sleep over at the hotel. Toward the end of the season, the West Michigan Park Association had big problems. They couldn't make their own payments and had to mortgage the fixtures of the hotel.

Adding the Annex

By Evan

In the year of 1890, the Annex was added to the hotel. This huge addition stood on this spot from 1890 until it was accidentally destroyed by fire in the fall of 1923. According to insurance maps from the 1910's photographs of the area, a kiosk is standing just where the Southeast corner of the hotel porch was located.





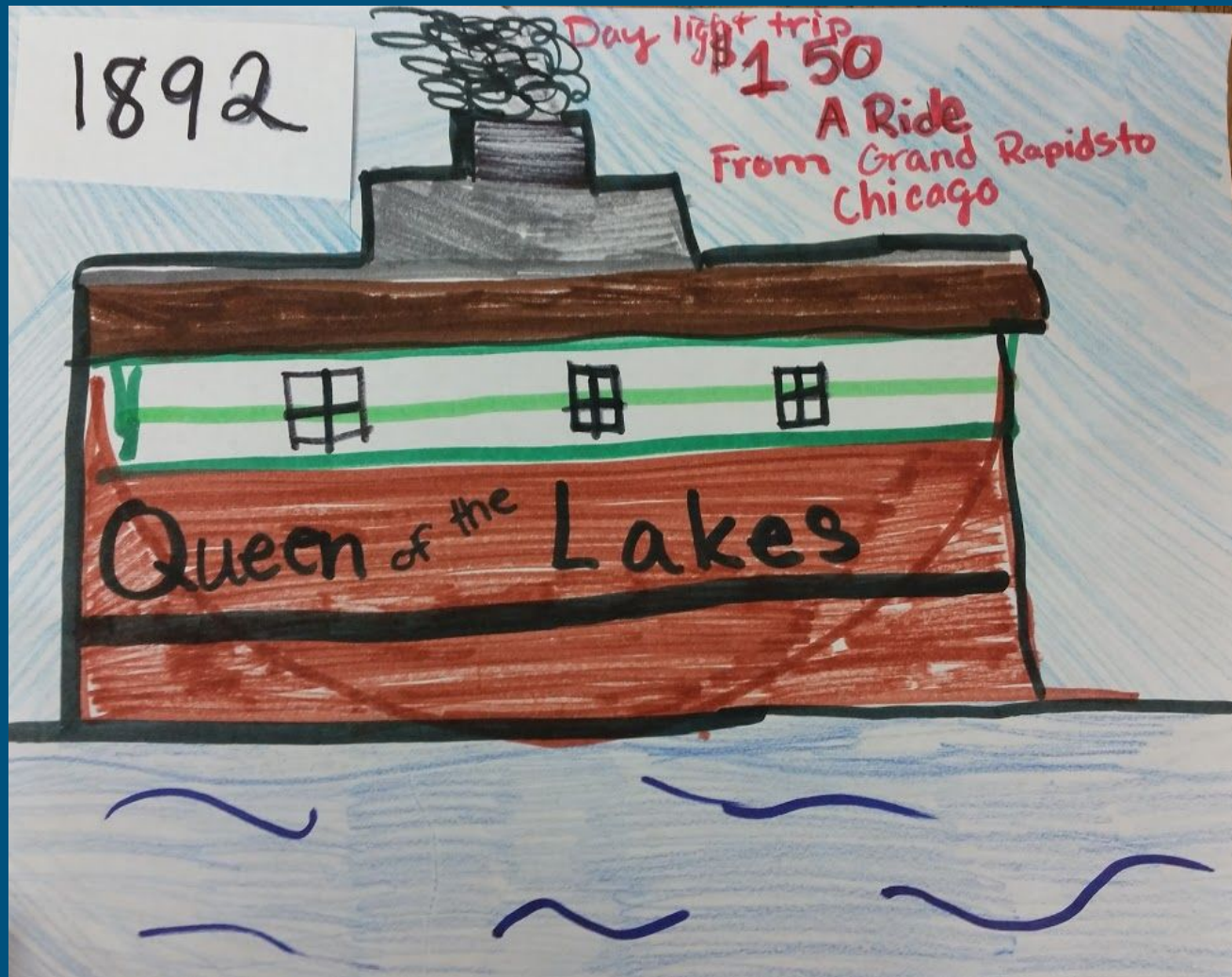
Fun By Landon

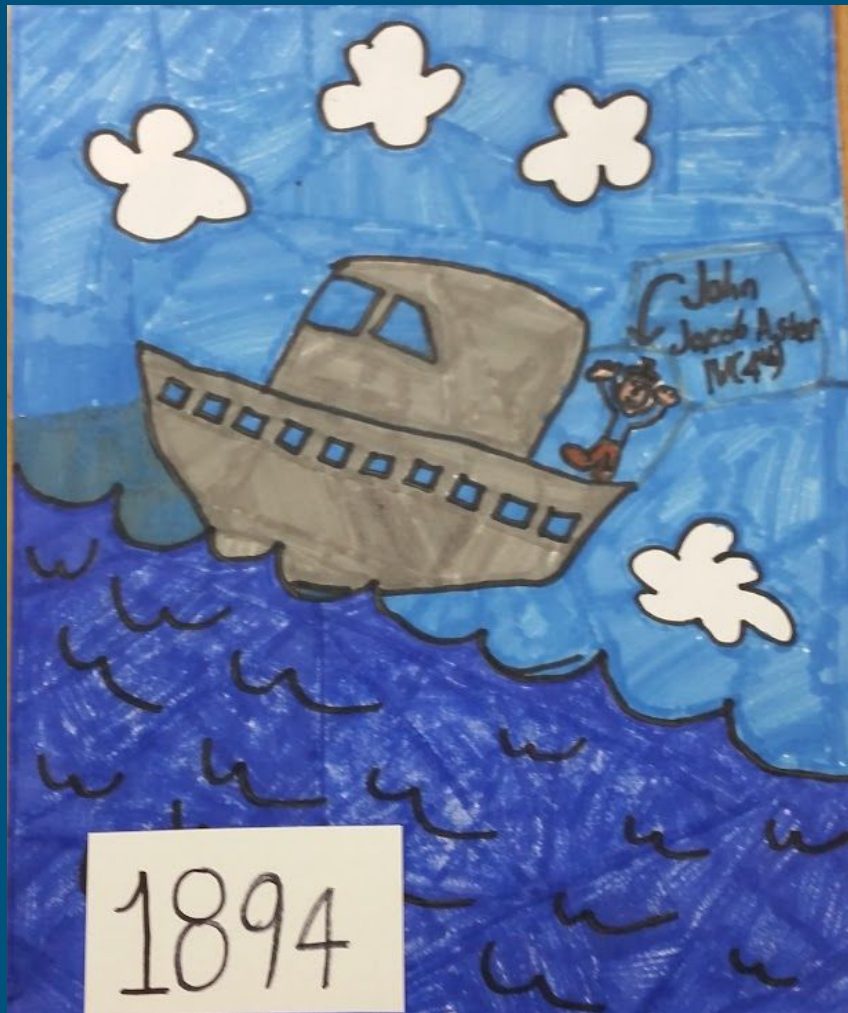
At Hotel Ottawa, in 1891,
entertainment was easy
to find almost anywhere!
On Venetian nights,
sailboats were
decorated. Last, there
was almost always
music playing live inside
or out.

Steamboats

By Rogen

People arrived to Ottawa Beach on steamboats. There were many postcards with steamboats on them. This is how steamboats advertised. They sold postcards on the boat and in the resorts.





John Jacob Astor IV

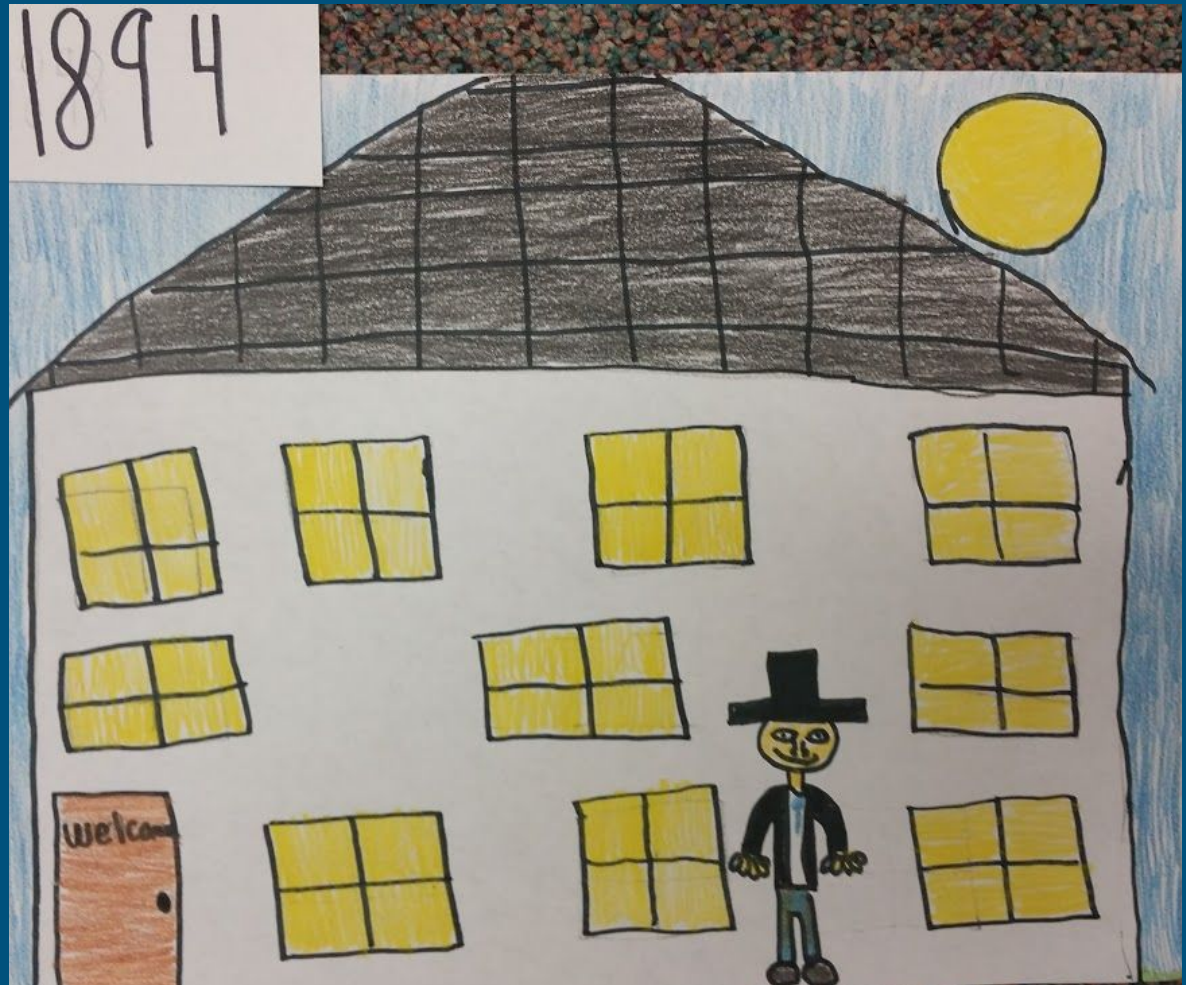
By Sarah

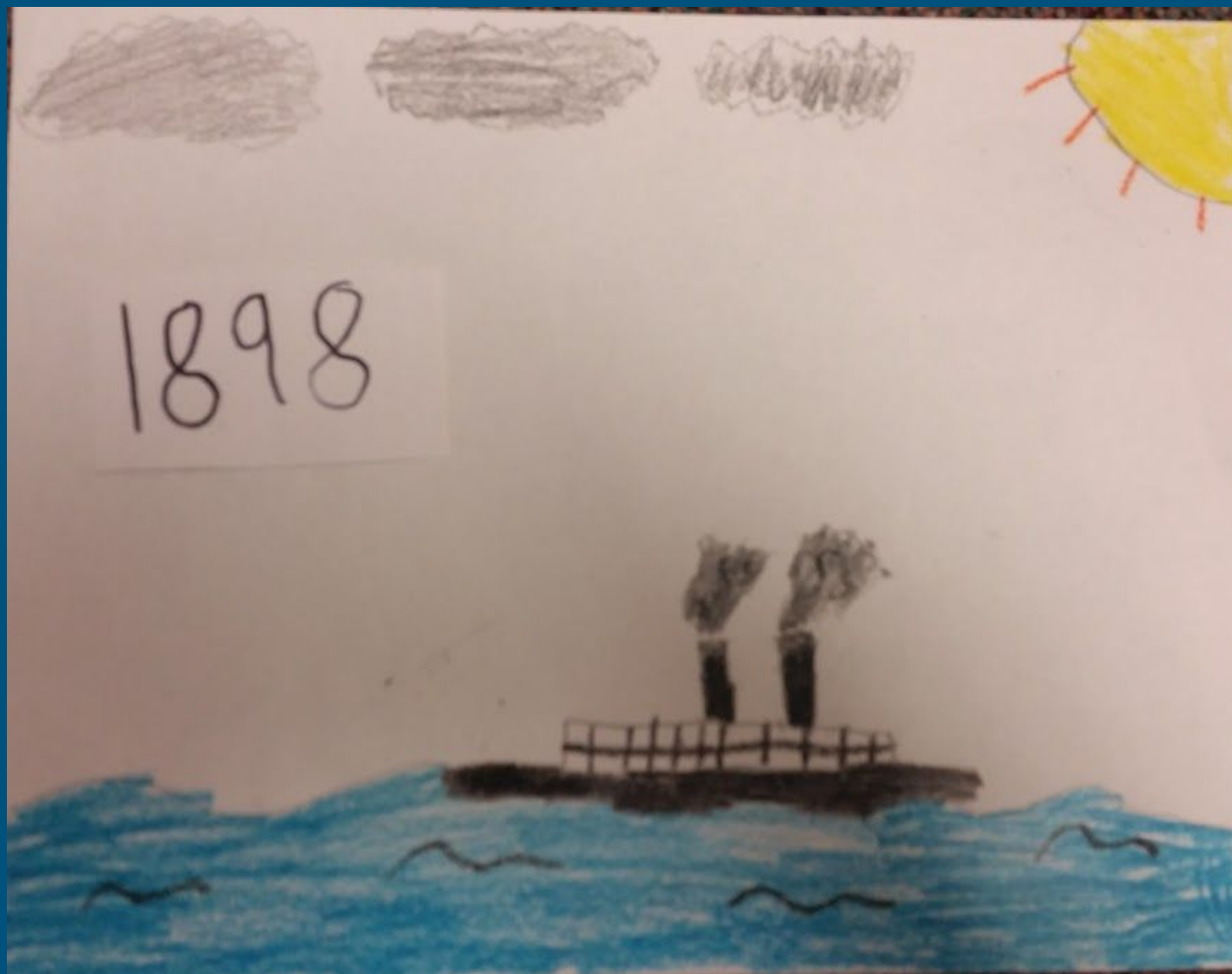
John Jacob Astor IV was the great grandson of the most wealthiest American in the USA. He was a guest at the hotel on September 11, 1894. Unfortunately, Astor died 18 years later in 1912 on the Titanic.

Bad Year for Hotel Ottawa

By Lacey

In 1894, Hotel Ottawa struggled during the recession that started a few years before. A recession is when people reduce spending money. Even though there was a recession, the hotel continued to stay open. Because the hotel stayed open, a notable guest named John Jacob Astor, the great grandson of the wealthiest man in America was able to stay there.





Queen of the Lakes

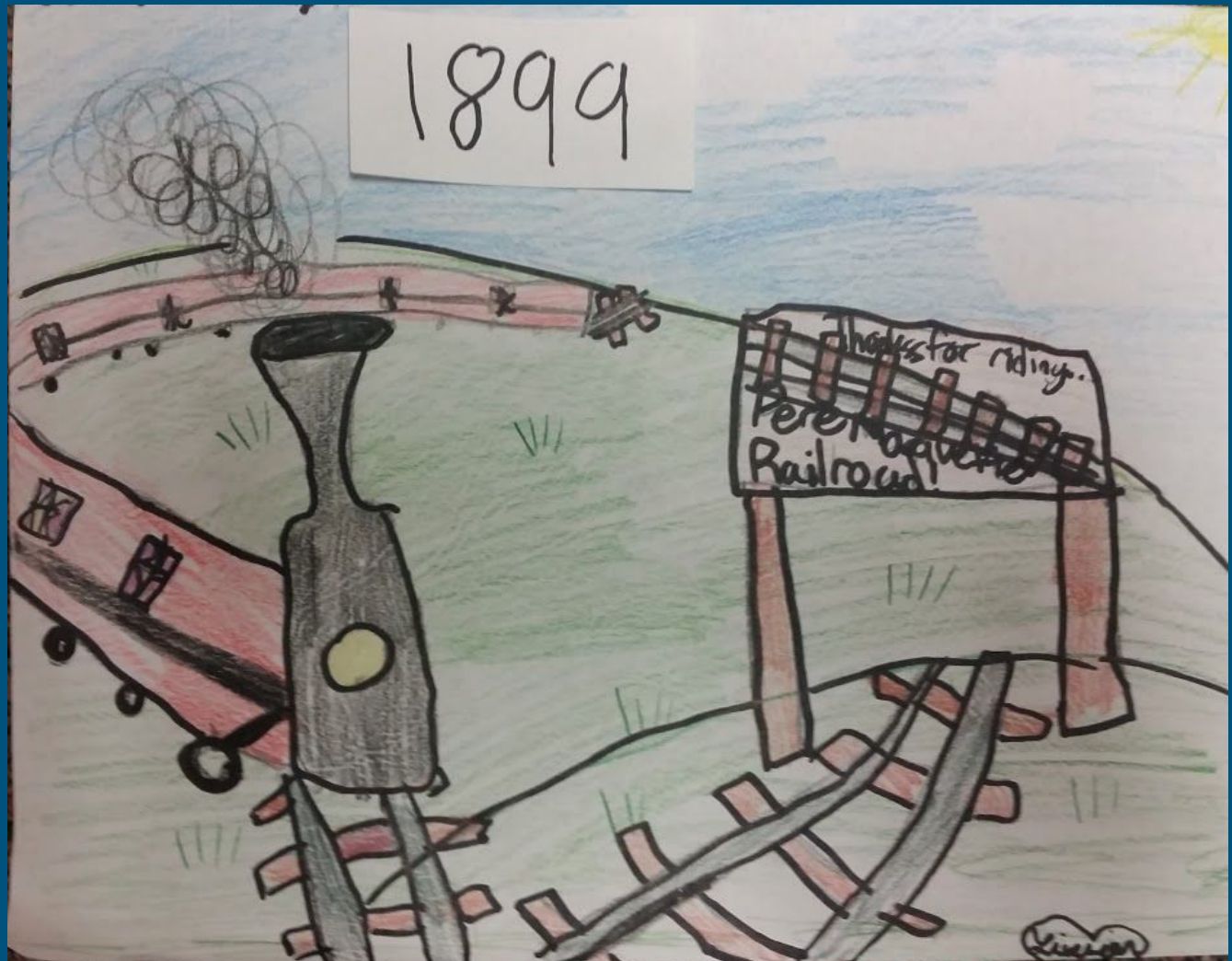
By Dylan

Steamers are normally referred to as one of the biggest boats that can sail. Sometimes they are called Queen of the Lakes. In 1898, Hotel Ottawa had no line to the beach so they had F.L. Johnson be the captain of a ship called Queen of the Lakes..

Pere Marquette Railroad

By Lily

The Pere Marquette was a railroad company. It belonged to the Chicago and the West Michigan Railway. It was founded in 1899.



Taking Over the Hotel By Sam

In the early 1900s, Boyd Pantlind took over management of the Hotel Ottawa from the Railway. Then in 1913, he purchased it outright. That is how he gained ownership over Hotel Ottawa.



Moving of Hotel Ottawa

By Anna

In 1900 the Hotel Ottawa expanded. It had been moved 400 feet. There were now 185 guest rooms. The Annex was connected to the hotel with a walkway.



1900



Start of Pumphouse

By Dylen

The pumphouse was made in 1901. It made electricity with a boiler and two steam powered generators to make electricity for the Hotel Ottawa that had been made bigger that year.

The Electrical Company

By Adam

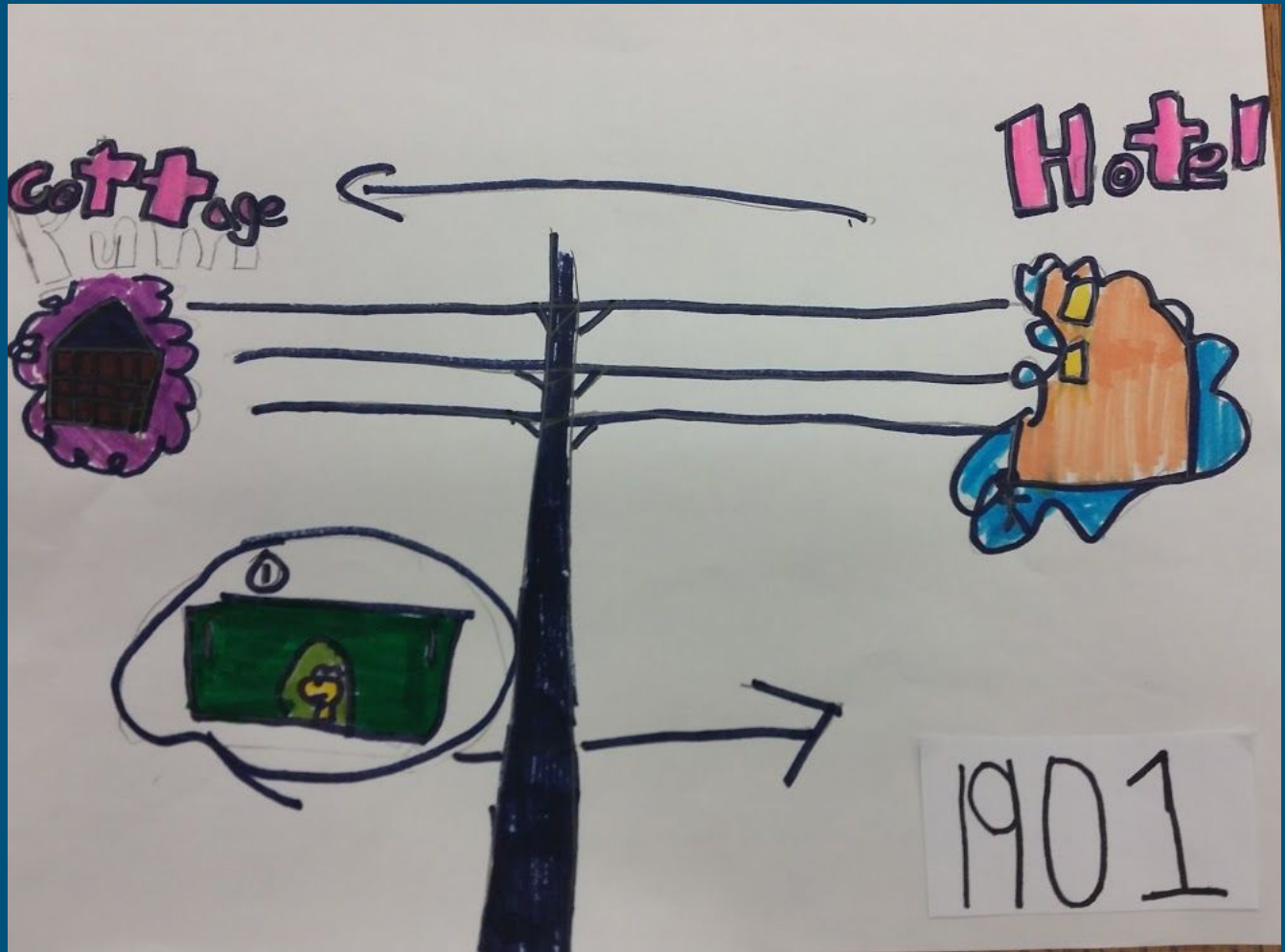
The Edison Electric Light Plant was created to give power to the Hotel Ottawa and the cottages. It was located on the north shore of Black Lake. Currently, the building is on Ottawa Beach Road and is where the Pump House is now, which is west of the US Coast Guard Station.

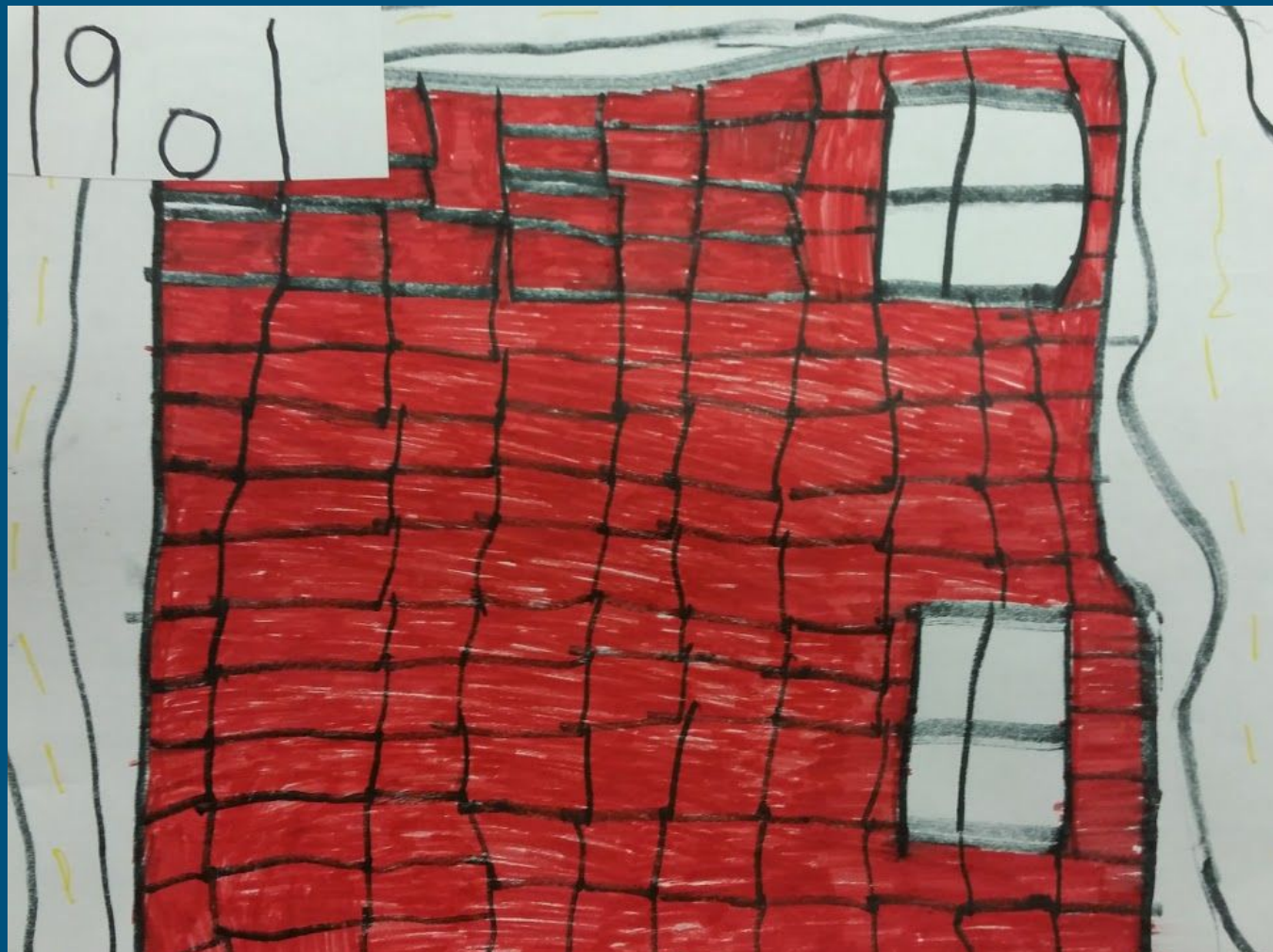


Electricity to Many

By Ruthie

Because of this building many people from cottages can receive light and power from the Edison Electric Light Plant that was in the Pumphouse.

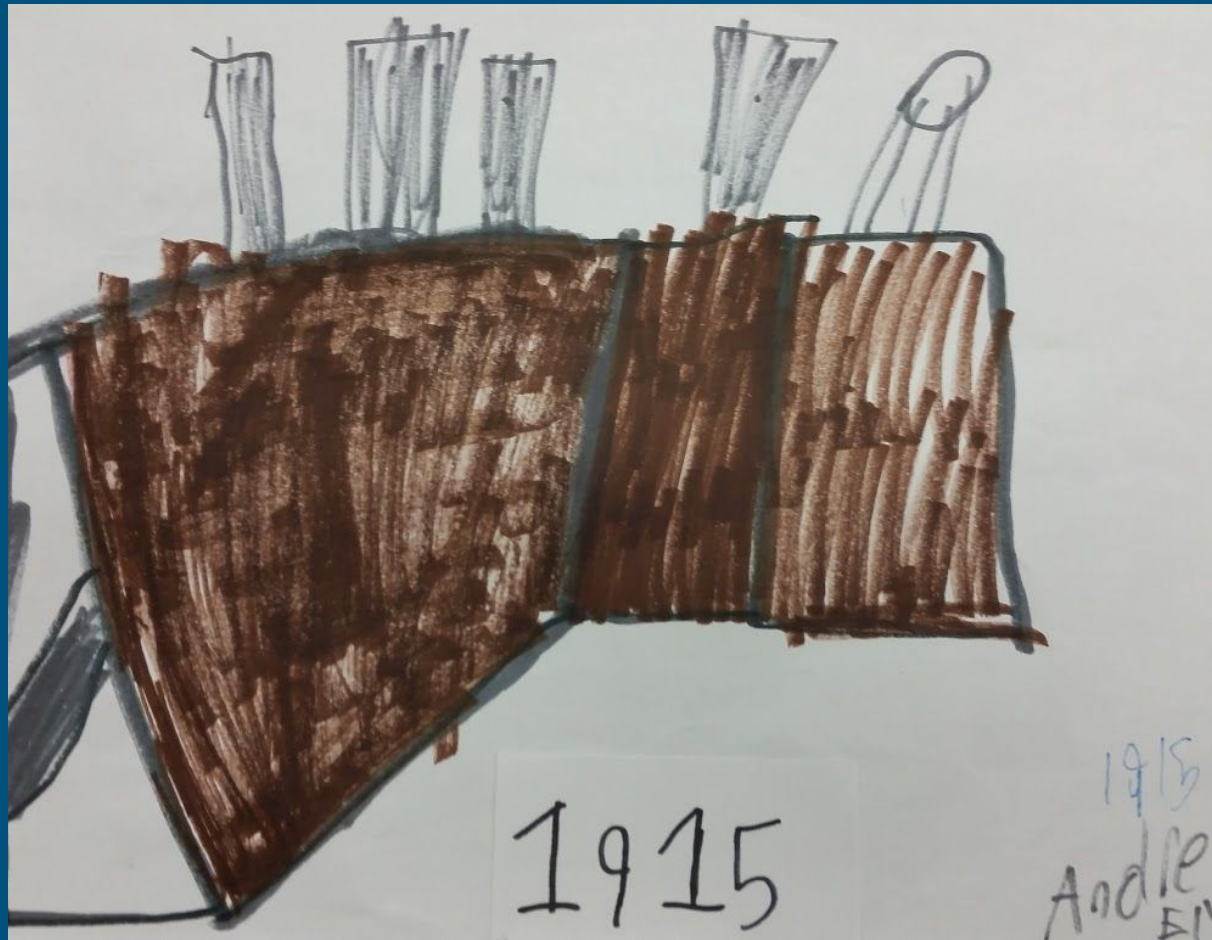




Pumphouse

By Mieke

The Pumphouse is the last remaining building from the Ottawa Beach complex owned by Pere Marquette Railway.



Changes to the Pumphouse

By Andrew E.

The electric plant was still in business in 1915 until the Muskegon Power Company brought power to Ottawa Beach.

Pumping Water

By Isaac

At that time the boiler room was removed from the Pumphouse and a water pump was replaced with it. The water pump was moved in so it could pump water too the Hotel Ottawa.



1923



Pumphouse
By Conor

And that's how
the Pumphouse got
it's name The
Pumphouse.



Bill Murphy

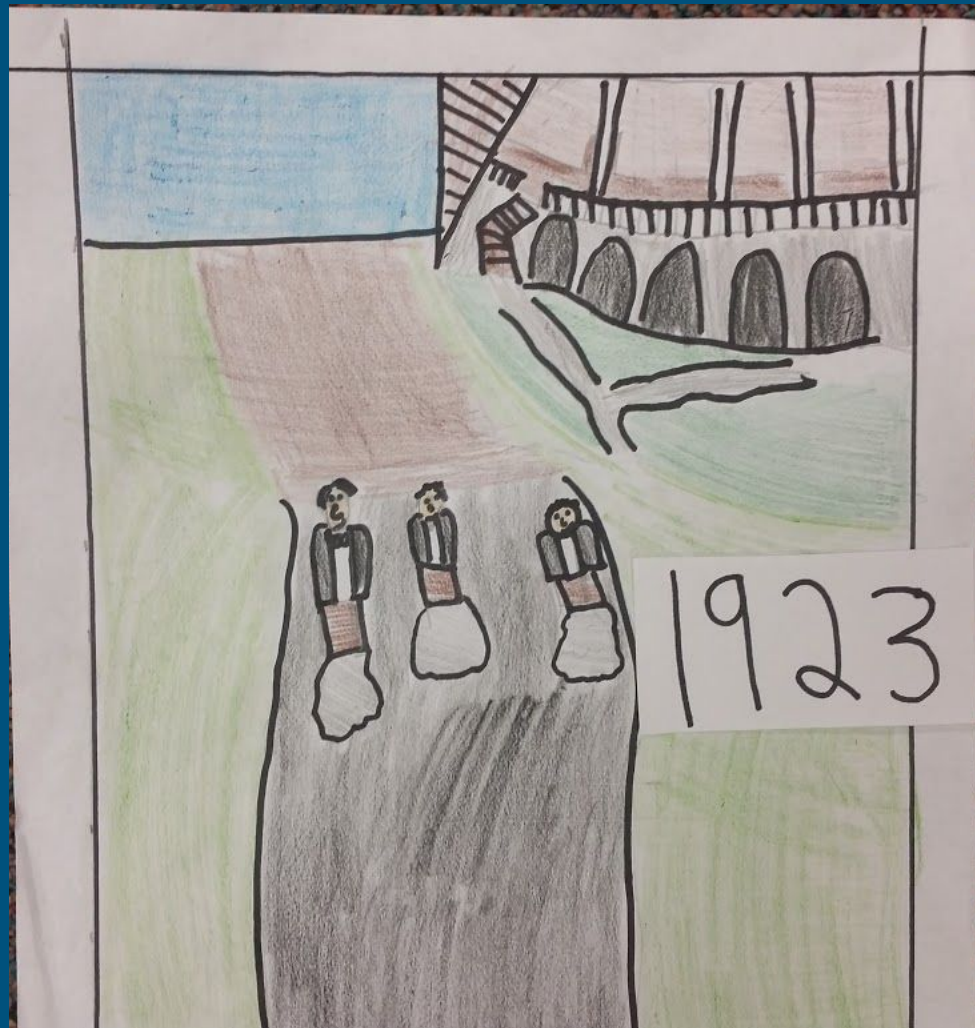
By Lauren

Bill Murphy was an aristocratic person for decades. In the beginning, he was a patrolman/concierge. Later on, when Holland State Park opened, Bill Murphy opened a lunchroom called Bill Murphy's Lunchroom. The lunchroom was contiguous to a casino, and the post office was to the right of it.

The Road

By Hudson

In 1923, the road to the hotel was not very good. So it was made better by putting in concrete. It was called Alpena Road. This was because cars were becoming popular. Henry Ford made cars that were cheap and many people had them. More and more guests came by car. Later on the name Alpena Road was changed to Ottawa Beach Road.



Hotel Burns!

By Lexi

Sadly, in 1923 the hotel burned and the Pumphouse was used only for water that went to the cottages. The hotel was never rebuilt. In 1925, the Pere Marquette Railway Company sold the property to the state.

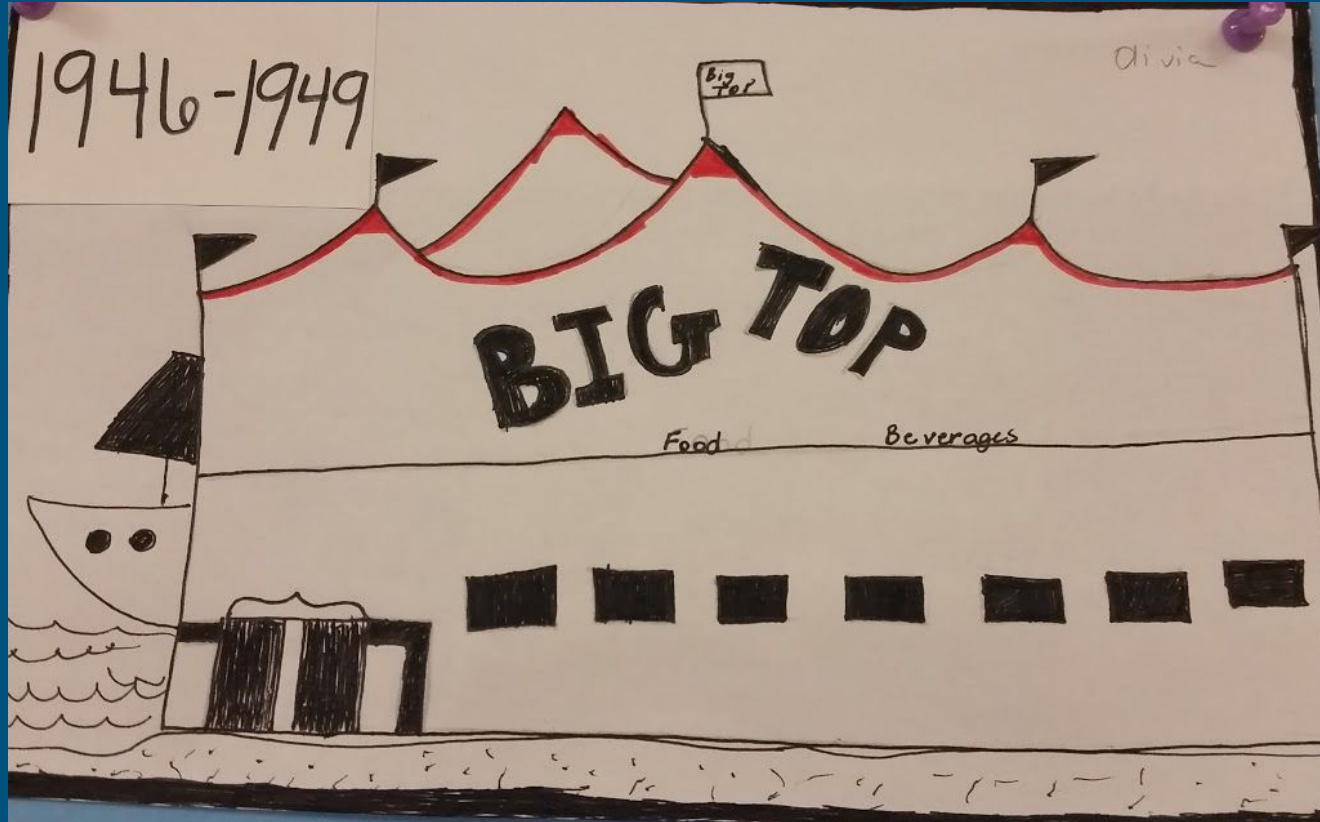


The Holland State Park 1928

By Lauren

Roy Young

By Olivia

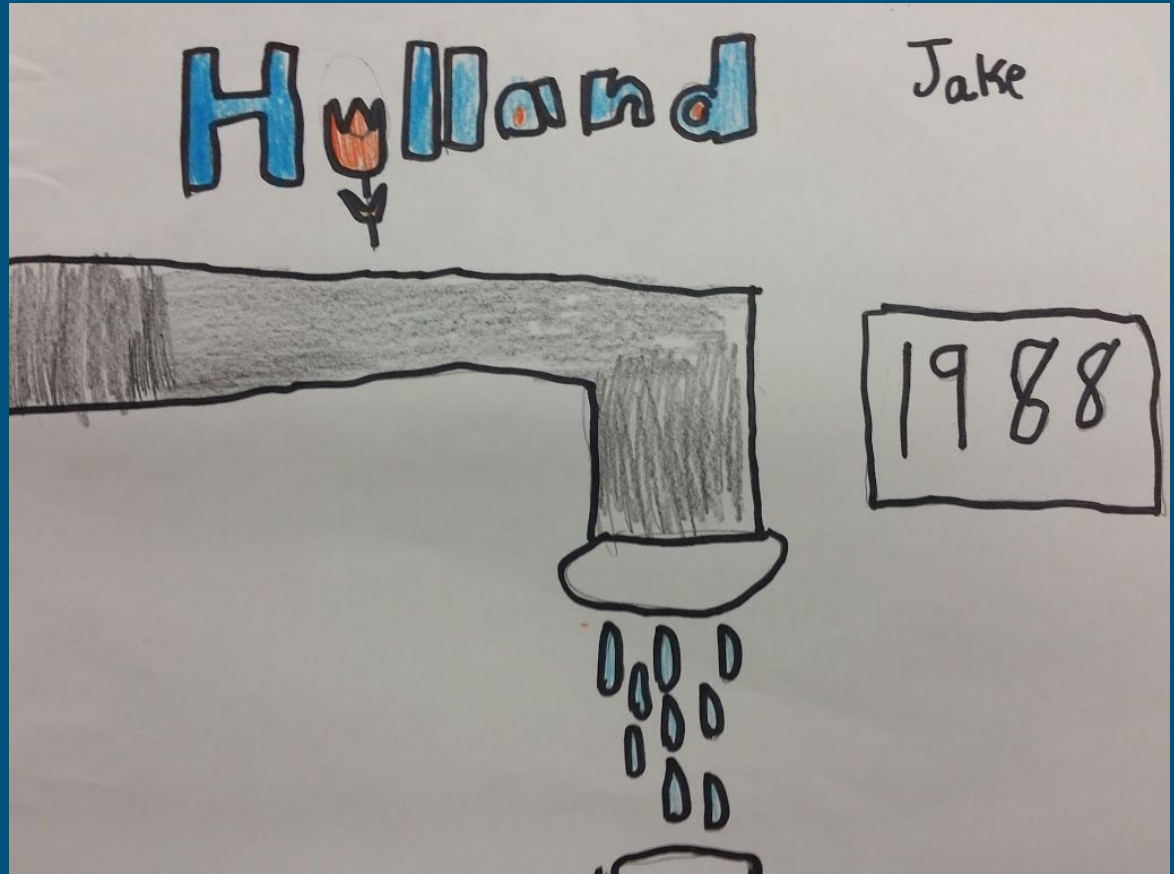


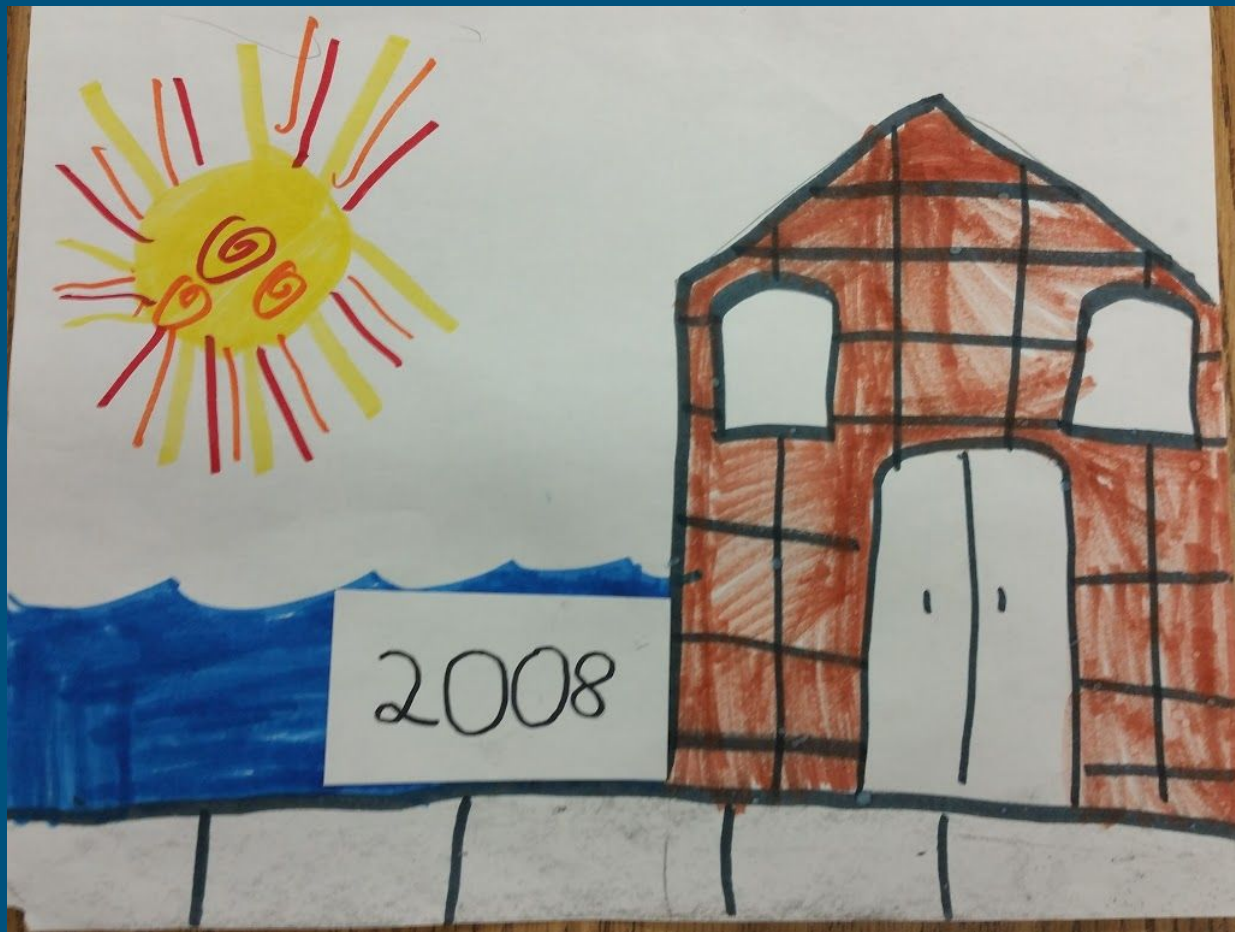
In 1946 after World War II an ex-circus employee named Roy Young purchased a restaurant in the Ottawa area known as Killcare Gardens. He named the restaurant, *The Big Top*. The entire restaurant was circus themed. A unique feature thing that got people interested came from newspaper ads and old flyers from the circus framed on the walls of his restaurant. Three years later, *The Big Top* burned down to the ground. A little after it burned down, the state took the property and designated it as a place for the US Coast Guard Station. As for Roy Young, he moved on with the next chapter in his life.

More Changes

By Jake

In 1988, the city of Holland started providing water for the cottages in the Pumphouse area. After the Pumphouse stopped pumping water, the building was officially owned by Ottawa County.





Improvements

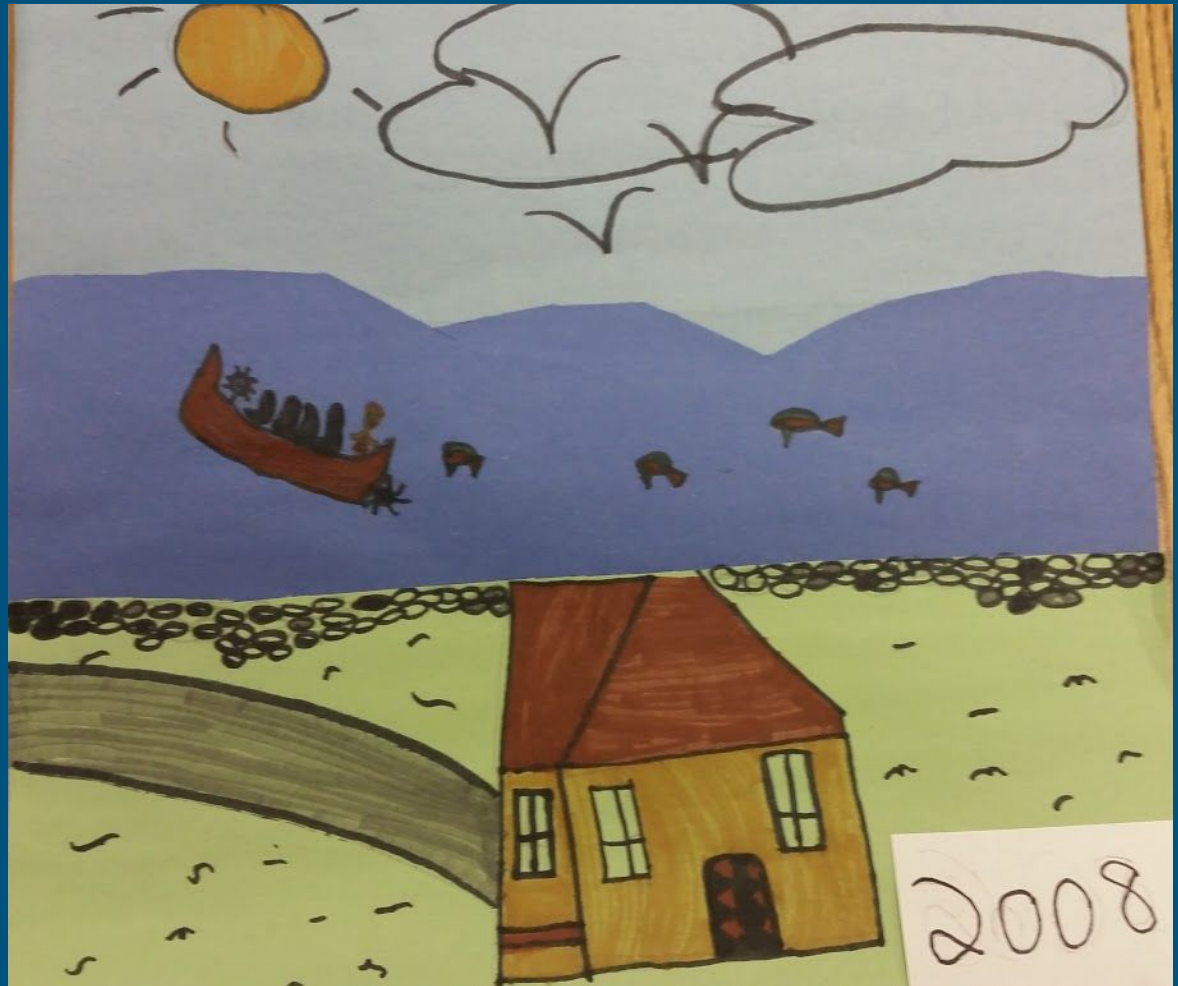
By Lilliana

The Historic Ottawa Beach Society began talking with the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation to change the Pump house into a museum.

Following a Plan

By Rilee

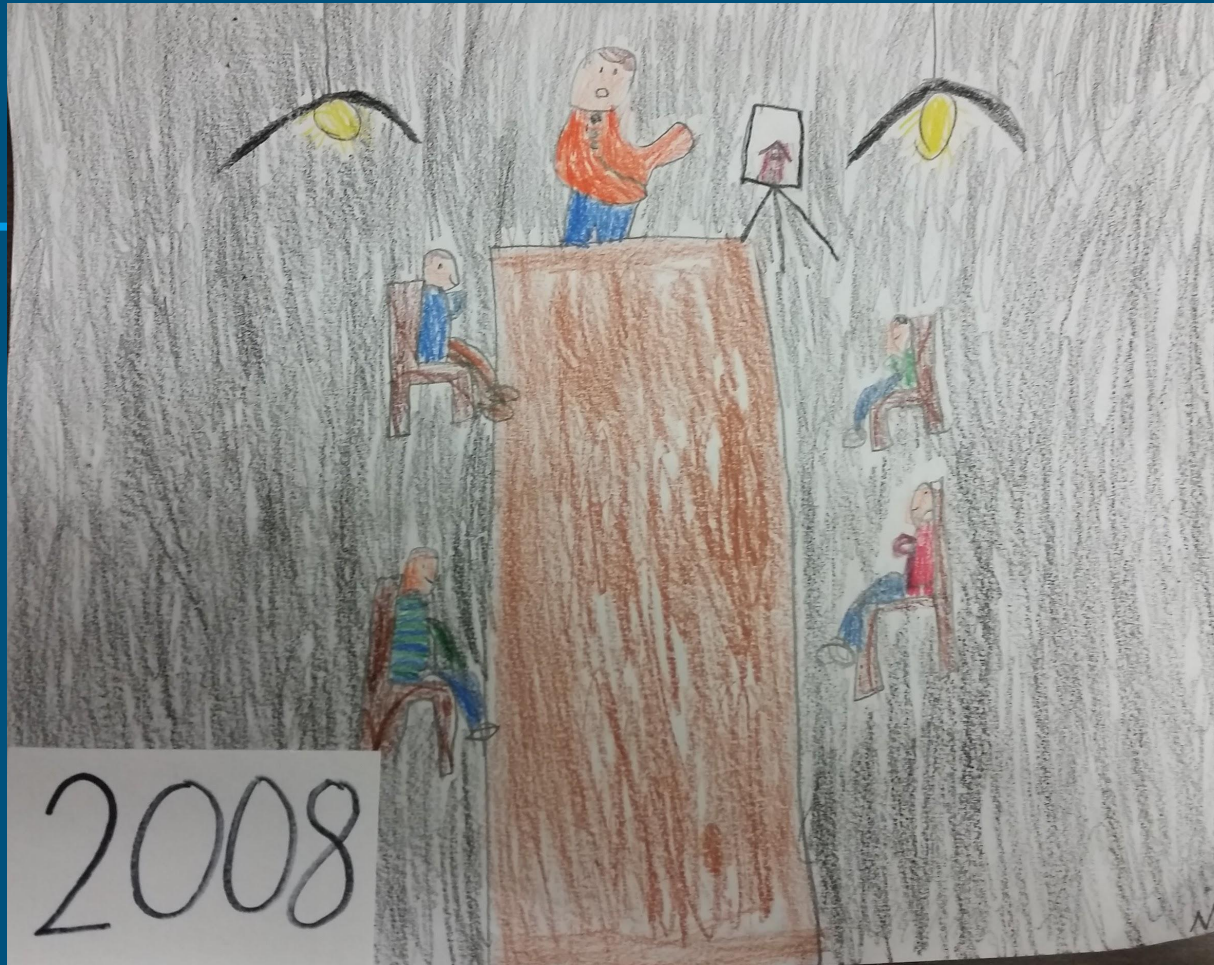
This project will be done in three phases. In the first phase, the groups repaired the building. In the second phase, the groups will put in wood floors and build restrooms. In the final phase, phase three, they will add finishing touches for the museum. They will need your help to do it.



Make It Stronger

By Michael

Historical Ottawa Beach Society (HOBS) and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation (OCPR) worked together to start planning the Pump House Museum. They wanted to make it help save the history, teach people, and make it an interesting place to visit. They also made the building safe and started to make the inside nicer.



Museum Opens
By Camren

They opened the Museum in May, 2015. They put large postcards up. The postcards were from the Ottawa Beach Hotel time period.





Exhibits

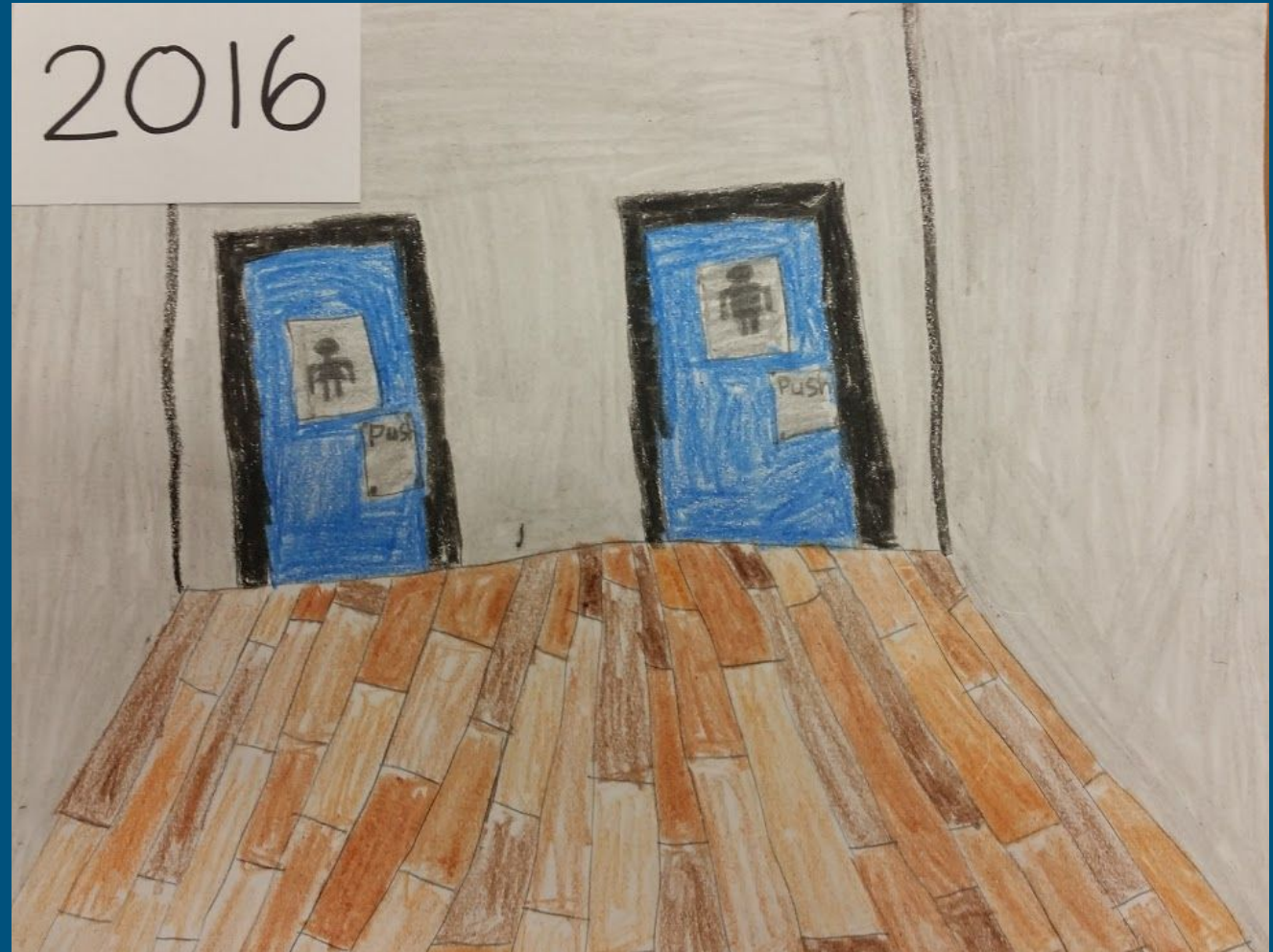
By Teddy

In 2016, HOBS added two exhibits. One of them was temporary. It was about the S.S Michigan steamboat. The other exhibit was two signs. One of the signs was about the water pump. The other sign was all about the history of the water supply in Ottawa Beach.

Future

By Kona

Phase 2 of the Pumhouse museum was started in 2016 and is planned so be finished in 2017. This phase includes adding restrooms, wooden floors and more electricity inside of the Pumhouse.



Field Trip





For further information...

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