

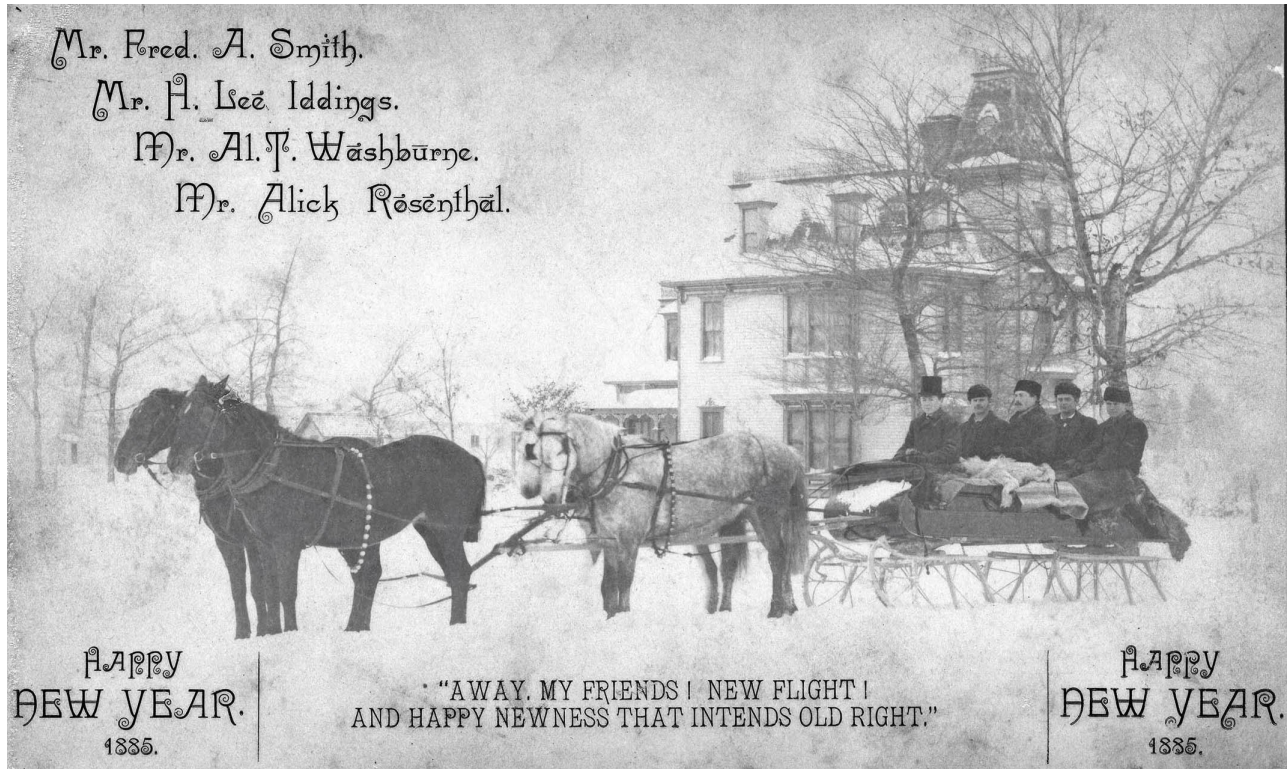
# Looking Back #7

## Memories of Winters Past in Charlevoix

by David L. Miles, Curator

Museum at Harsha House

Charlevoix Historical Society



**Greetings of the Season and a Happy New Year to all from the Charlevoix Historical Society**, with a looking back at some of the town's classic winter scenes drawn from our extensive photo archives!

The above 1885 image was taken on State Street just south of Hurlbut Street, looking northwest. The tall house in the background at the corner of the two streets was built by Adelbert Upright in 1882, after whom the next east-west street south was named.

Hardware merchant Harvey Lee Iddings would become Charlevoix's first mayor in 1905. The driver is unidentified.

# Winter Sports, Charlevoix, Top o' Michigan

*Beautiful in Summer—Dazzling in Winter*



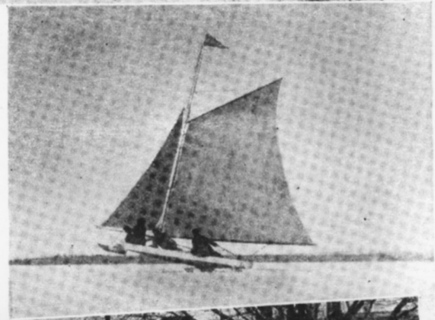
## Winter Sports

are growing in popularity at

### CHARLEVOIX

which promises to become

*The St. Moritz of America*



NATURE has been kind to us here in Charlevoix, giving us in the winter time an ample and beautiful mantle of snow and a temperature which holds it in place for a generous length of time, making conditions ideal for outdoor sports. Our folks take full advantage of this opportunity for a good time, wholesome hilarity and exhilarating exercise. Following an experimental venture in winter sports, which was successfully carried out during the past winter, the Association of Commerce is sponsoring a movement for annual events of this nature

hereafter, and these efforts are being heartily seconded by a number of people from Chicago, St. Louis, and other cities.

If Charlevoix is beautiful in Summer, in Winter it is dazzling. With its countless hills serving as natural toboggan and ski slides, outdoor skating rinks on Pine and Round Lakes with ample room for curling and hockey games, it offers a choice of outdoor Winter recreation difficult to rival.

The Winter climate of Northern Michigan is exhilarating—bright sun, snow and clear atmosphere adds zest to outdoor life.

Charlevoix had great ambitions to become "The Saint Moritz of America" in the late 1920s.



## Winter Sports in Charlevoix



Top, left: Ice boating was a big sport in Charlevoix over many winters in the early 20th century. These craft were capable of reaching 90 mph and could sail down Lake Charlevoix to Boyne City in ten minutes.

Top right: Ice skating at the municipal rink beside the high school, now the Charlevoix Public Library parking lot between Mason and Clinton Streets. The small white dots are light bulbs for night skating.

Middle, left: Bobsledding down the frozen south Bridge Street hill in the 1920s. This was such a big sport that downtown was closed off one afternoon a week for the event.

Middle, right: Mt. McSauba ski hill in its opening winter, 1956. Big Rock Point appears in the distance.

The Mt. McSauba area was once the site of a huge winter sports carnival in the 1920s-30s. This run, carved through the trees to end at today's ice skating and hockey rink, was used for ski jumping and toboggan competitions. Here, a jumper raises his arms in victory over not having fallen. Note the number of cars out for the events.



## The Many Moods of Lake Michigan in Winter.

Top left: Frozen solid, in January, c.a. 1940s

Top right: A post-storm wave breaks over the south pier, February, 1935. The temperature was minus two degrees. This became local photographer Bob Miles's signature image. He printed an estimated 1500 of them, hand-color tinted about 500, and they can be found all over the world. (Bob Miles is this writer's father.)

Middle right: An artist's interpretation of the 1935 photo

Above: Lake Michigan freezes to a rare condition, perfectly flat, transparent, and supportive for about a mile out, ca. 1920. Skaters held races between South and North Point, seen beyond the lighthouses.

Right: Lake Michigan coats the lighthouse, late 1930s. Those who wished to emerge onto the end of the pier had to bring hammers and crowbars to knock the ice out from under the elevated room of the structure. They slid out of the tunnel they created, face down, and dropped head first onto the pier.

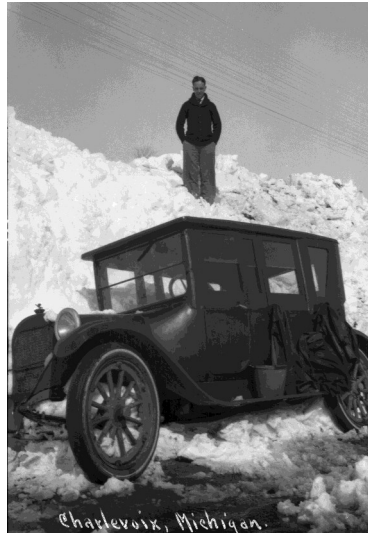


If a confectioner saw this Charlevoix lighthouse encrusted with ice and snow he'd want to put it right in the center of a wedding cake.

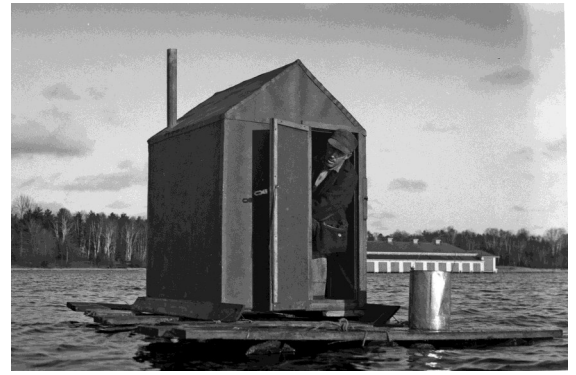
## A Winter Miscellany



Community Christmas tree in the Clinton Street intersection



A typical winter day



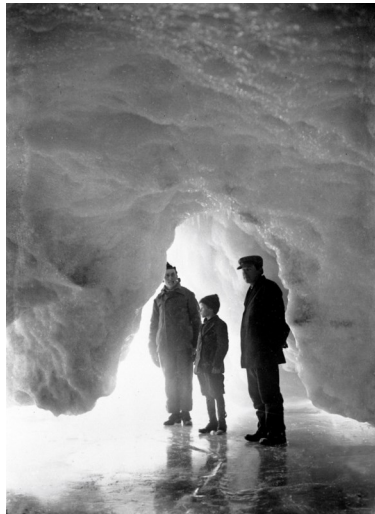
A fish shanty on a raft during the iceless winter of 1932



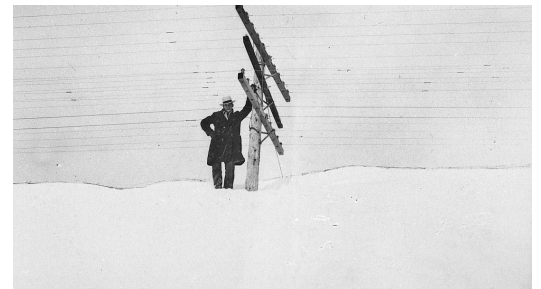
Park Avenue at Antrim Street



Ice fishing shanties on Round Lake



Inside a Lake Michigan Beach ice cave



Yes, it could and did once get this bad.



The phantasmagoric shapes fronting a Lake Michigan Beach ice cave



And yes, this is how they once got the job done, here on U.S. 31 South.