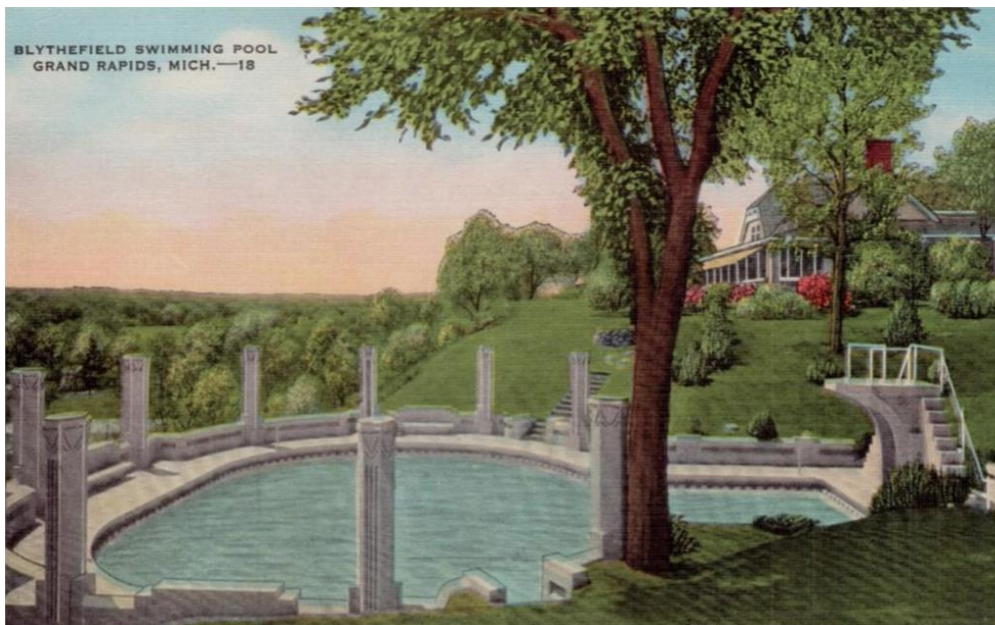


March 2020 – Did You Know SPECIAL EDITION Blythefield's Original Pool

This special edition of DYK is to help you get through the pandemic. The focus is on our first swimming pool. Only a few of our members would have been around to use our original pool, built just before our club was opened. It was replaced with our current pool in the 1960s. The old pool was just down the hill from our current tennis courts. Part of its concrete foundation is still there. Since the trees on the hill have no leaves right now, you can still see the concrete through the trees as you go up Northland Drive. The post card below shows the pool back then (there is a similar postcard in the hall as you enter the clubhouse).



Here's what the Grand Rapids Press had to say about our pool:

July 18, 1936:

Swimmers at Blythefield Country club find in that gorgeous pool, which is known as one of the finest in the country, that there is more truth than poetry in "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." On warm summer days they find a perfect retreat in the sparkling waters of the pool which is located in a setting of natural beauty overlooking the entire length of the Grand river. There are also flood lights to facilitate the used of the pool in the evening.

July 15, 1944:

Known throughout the middle west as an unusually beautiful pool is the one at Blythefield. It was built by the late Joseph H. Brewer in 1928. J. Alex McColl was the architect and Eugene Goebel, former superintendent of city parks, did the landscaping. Originally planned to be round, the shape was changed to save a large tree. Located in a small valley, it is the only tiled pool hereabouts and its water is filtered as it comes from wells on the grounds. An unusual feature is the underwater lighting. Lights are also concealed in pillars topped with flowers and shrubs laced at intervals round the edge. At the deep end is a diving board with a marble diving platform built overhead.

It's a few months until our pool is scheduled to open. Let's hope that our lives get back to normal by then.

Brent

p.s. Now that we are limited in our daily activities, you may find yourself with some extra time. If anyone would like to help with research on Blythefield history, please let me know. Much of this can be done at home, by searching the GR Press remotely from files available on the Kent District Library app.

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