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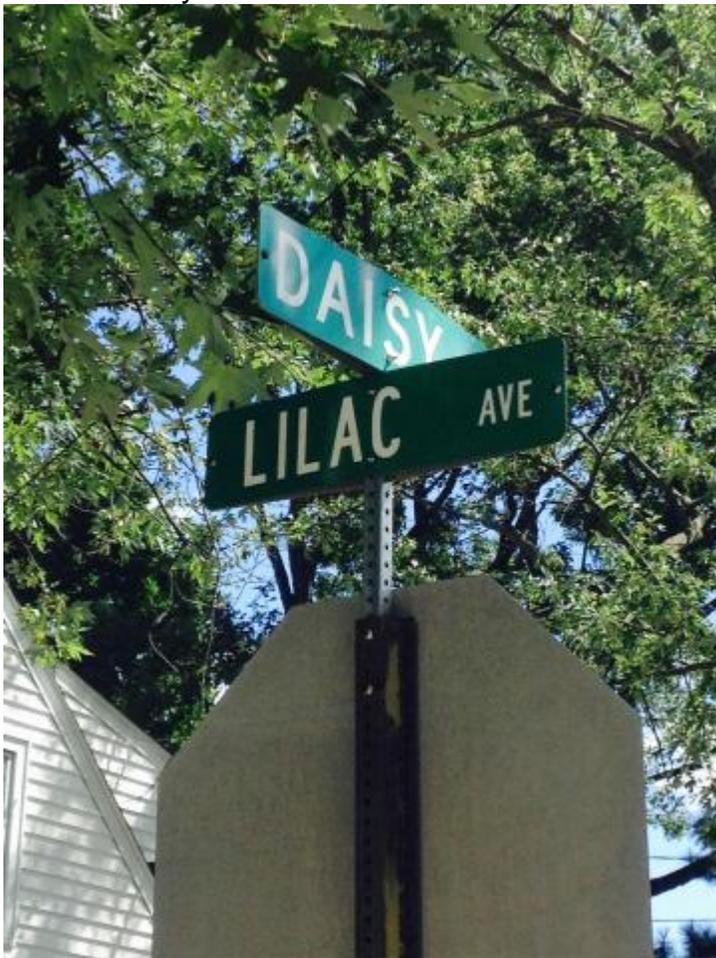
Home > EL Rewind: The Flowerpot Neighborhood

EL Rewind: The Flowerpot Neighborhood ^[1]

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By:

Charlotte Baykian



The Flowerpot Neighborhood, located off of Harrison Road near Trowbridge Road, is an important part of East Lansing's history. Residents within the neighborhood have come from an array of backgrounds and ethnicities. This neighborhood has greatly contributed to building the diverse and accepting qualities so valuable to residents of East Lansing.

In 1911, what is now known as the Flowerpot Neighborhood was a large farm owned by Stephen Henry Hicks and his family. After ten or so years, the family decided to begin subdividing and

selling lots to other families. The subdividing was done by the family rather than any official entity, and the neighborhood got its name from the fact that the streets were all named after flowers, such as Marigold, Lilac, Daisy, Narcissus, and Larkspur. Though there are differing opinions as to who named the streets, it is certain that the namers were members of the Hicks family.

When the Great Depression came, it hit the Hicks Family particularly hard according to *A History of the Red Cedar Neighborhood In East Lansing, Michigan,* by Janet Hicks Ronk. Residents couldn't make the payments on the lots they had bought from the Hickses, taxes were higher because of the subdivision, and the family just barely made it through the Depression without losing everything they had worked for.

The family managed to keep their property and continue building. Once World War II had ended, the houses were being sold much faster and even more were being constructed. Throughout its years, the Flowerpot expanded to include apartment complexes which housed over 5,000 people. The plethora of residents strongly supported Red Cedar Elementary School and Goodrich's Shop-Rite during the second half of the 20th Century.



For a long time, the Flowerpot was not thought of as part of East Lansing because it was technically in Lansing Township, until it was annexed in 1962. The neighborhood had become a very diverse community, as many interracial couples and multiracial families lived there. At the time, East Lansing was very socially segregated. Those who were socially rejected by the college

town found the Flowerpot to be an accepting and open place to live.

The families living in the neighborhood now include gay couples raising foster children, and Muslim families drawn to the area because of the mosque on Harrison Road. The residents of the neighborhood are very proud of how diverse the community is, including long-time local political figure Mark Grebner. "We're just not very white bread," he says.

The Flowerpot neighborhood has gone from acres of farmland, to houses full of people from varied backgrounds. The neighborhood has seen East Lansing transform to become an incredibly diverse area, and the Flowerpot has served as an example of what the community can accomplish in the spirit of inclusiveness and tolerance.

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