

# Artist captures his memories of 1934 Bradley

By John Stewart, Journal writer

Ed Kendzorek Sr. of Bradley says there isn't much left of the Broadway he remembers from his youth.

So, he's drawn a series of pencil sketches of the homes and businesses on Broadway that he remembers from his high school years — 1934 to be exact.

Ray Moon's grocery store on Broadway is one of the few businesses still there. Many of the buildings and businesses have changed names, been torn down or moved. The Bradley Post office, for instance, moved from the north side of the street to the south side — to an empty lot where carnivals and medicine shows used to visit.



Kendzorek

Kendzorek's sketches brought back the good old/bad old days of Bradley's Depression Era so strongly that Mayor Kenneth Hayes mentioned the idea to his village trustees of soliciting a mural based on Kendzorek's drawings.

The son of Polish immigrants, Kendzorek lives in a home he built at 295 S. Wabash Ave., just around the corner from the home he grew up in. Kendzorek has always been something of an artisan. He was trained as a

glass bender and neon light maker. He wishes he stayed in that business now that neon has made a comeback.

He's long tinkered with tape recorders and electronics, taping music and Polish broadcasts of ethnic radio stations from Chicago.

He worked at Bradley Roper factory as a quality controller and volunteered to prepare anniversary cards and other homemade graphics for company parties.

He put some of that artistic talent to work on his drawings of historic Bradley.

Using the railway viaduct at the east end of Broadway as his starting place, he's drawing all the homes and businesses that were located on both the north and south sides of the thoroughfare.

At that time, in 1934, Broadway had a street car line down the middle of it, a railroad passenger depot near the railroad viaduct and a railroad spur on Michigan Avenue, serving a grain elevator among other things.

One of the families living there at the time was the Larry Power family, which moved to Bradley from Chatsworth in 1929 — the year of the stock market crash. Larry Power Sr. ran Power's barbershop, 241 Broadway. Larry Power Jr., now the Bourbonnais Township supervisor, had graduated high school and was working at David Bradley factory, later the Roper plant.

A shave and a hair cut was 25 cents and the barbershop was a hub of male

socializing and local news, says Power. His family lived above the business.

Where the post office now stands, boys played softball in an open field. Groceries were distributed at what is now Old Fair Park to the families of the unemployed. "When you were out of work in the Depression, you were out of work," said Power. There was no unemployment compensation.

Nevertheless, he said "everybody worked together. Bradley has been a town that has come a hard way."

One of the village's major employers was also on Broadway — Bear Brand Hosiery. It was located where the Bradley Municipal Building now stands.

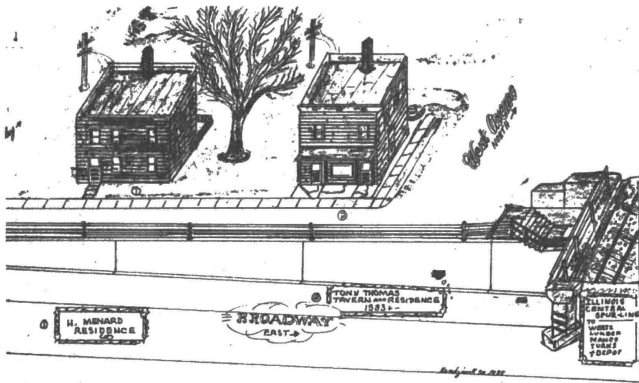
The village hall was located approximately where the fire station now stands. According to Kendzorek's drawing it looked like a rural school house with a bell on top for summoning volunteer firefighters.

Clarence LaGesse, who lived across the from the village hall, was working at Kroehler factory in 1934. He was 28 years old.

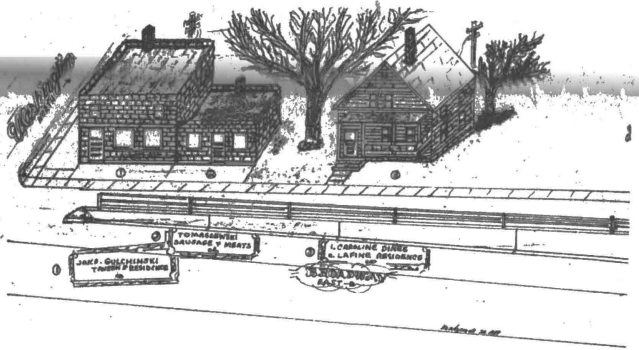
Bradley was a town of many languages. In addition to the traditional French of the original Canadian settlers, Polish, Italian and Slovene languages were spoken there. "All we had were foreigners in this town," he said. "We were all outsiders."

One of the big changes of the last half a century that LaGesse noted was that in the 1930s, there were only six families in the whole village who voted Democratic. Now, the town votes very heavily Democratic.

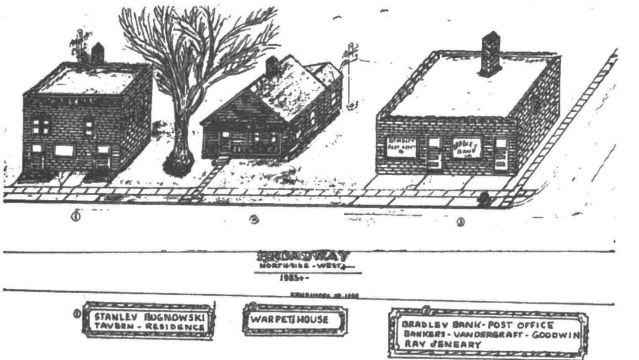
## North side 100-200 W. Broadway South side



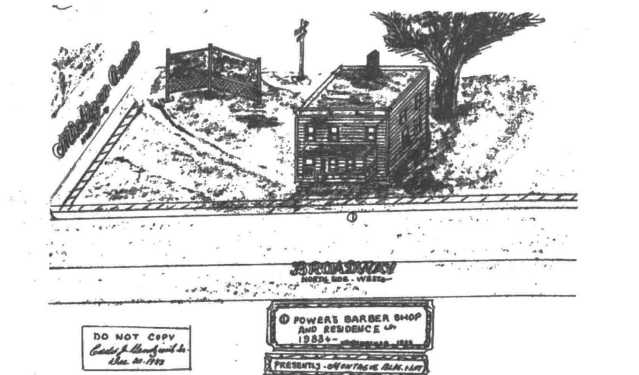
The Tony Thomas Tavern was the first building west of the viaduct on the north side of Broadway in 1934. Across the street was brother John Thomas' tavern. Tony Thomas lived here. Later, it became the Bob Bell store. Next to the tavern was the two-story Harry Menard residence.



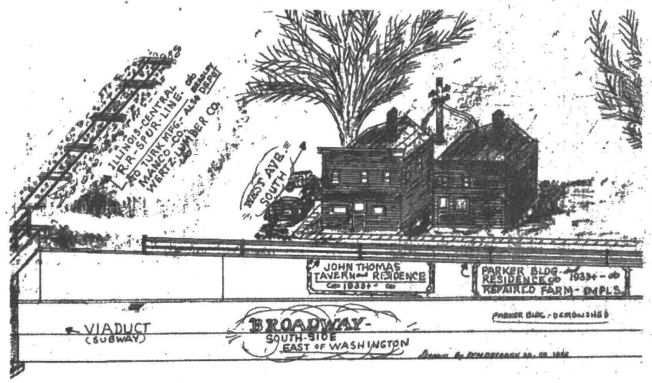
The Caroline Dines residence came next, located near the Tomaszewski Sausage and Meats store and the Jake Gulchinski tavern and residence at the corner of Washington and Broadway.



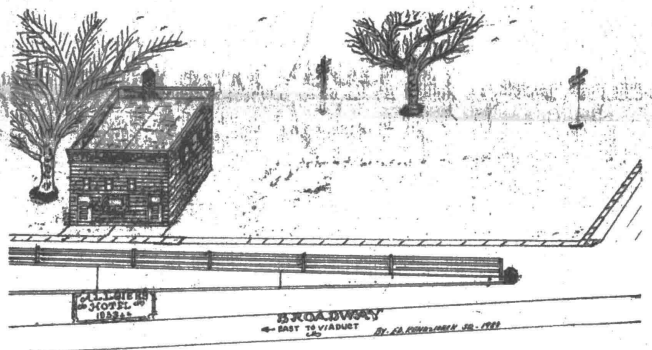
On the next corner stood the brick building that housed the Bradley Bank and U.S. Post Office. Next door was the Warpet family home and the Stanley Bugnowski tavern and home. The building is still a tavern.



The last building before Michigan Avenue was the Power Barber shop and residence. It is now Robert Montague's accountancy office.



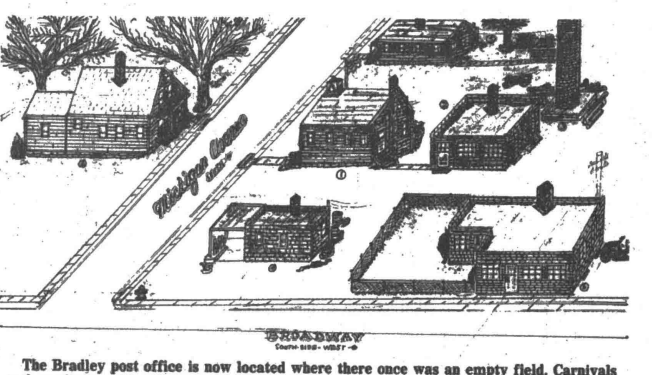
The John Thomas tavern and residence was popular with Kroehler Factory workers including Clarence LaGesse, 82, of Bradley, who has good memories of that establishment. Next door was the John W. Parker home and farm implement repair shop. Ed Kendzorek Sr. of Bradley said Parker invented a wireless corn planter but saw another company win the patent on the invention.



The Algiers ("All-gear") Hotel was a true hotel, not merely a rooming house. It served salesmen and other visitors to the village, home to the David Roper, Kroehler, Bear Brand and Turk Furniture factories.



Beyond Washington Avenue, stood a large two story building that was once a bakery, a wood-working business and a home. The 1935 city directory says the first home on that block, 216 W. Broadway, was occupied by Ralph Klar, Bessie Westfall and Chris Coash. Next to that, Ed Kendzorek Sr. said there was the Pete Anderson home and tavern and the Monhel and Son auto-repair shop. The George Kanvey grocery was also there.



The Bradley post office is now located where there once was an empty field. Carnivals and medicine shows appeared there and there was a pavilion or gazebo for band performances. On the next block, across Michigan Avenue was "village square" including Cliff Coash's gas station, and the Bear Brand Hosiery plant. South of there was the village hall and fire station, the water pumping station and water tower.

DONATED BY FLOYD "LEE" LA GESSE SR. "LEE" EMPLOYED AT KROEHLER PLANT 3 WITH RAY OUTSKEN AT AGE 12 MAY 19