

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



What Happened to the Charles Howell Scout Reservation?

This story is a continuation from our April Trail Tales story. The photos included are of the Charles Howell Scout Reservation from the 1950s.

Our April story also led to another chapter in the history of land developer Charles Howell. Around the same time he purchased the land to develop Brighton Lake, Howell bought 250 acres in Detroit's Brightmoor community area, east of Telegraph Road between Fenkell and Schoolcraft Avenues. He again planned a residential development. However, economic conditions of the 1930s stalled the project.

To reduce his real estate tax burden, Howell donated 138 acres to the City of Detroit in 1936. The deed required the canceling of back taxes against the property and that the land had to be maintained as a public park named Eliza Howell Park in memory of his mother. Mr. Howell's parents were born in England and came to Detroit in 1888. Later Charles added 20 acres to the original site. The park has experienced periods of neglect and underuse. However, recent revitalization efforts have been led by local neighborhood and arts groups.

Today this park in Detroit has over 2 miles of walking trails including sections of crushed limestone pathways accessible to wheelchairs and strollers, rustic woodland paths, a boardwalk crossing a vernal pond and a concrete bridge crossing the river that will lead you to discover a diversity of plants and animals living in the vernal pools, wildflower prairies and hardwood forest canopy.

Through his land purchases and developments in both Brighton and Detroit, Charles Howell left a lasting impression.

(Thanks to Jerry Damon for researching this article.)



Camp Ground, Charles Howell Scout Reservation



The Beach, Charles Howell Scout Reservation