About the cover: The Holland Area Chamber of Commerce, through 100 years of progress and prosperity.

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Harbor House Publishers, Inc. • 221 Water Street, Boyne City, MI 49712
(800) 491-1760 fax (866) 906-3392 • www.harborhouse.com harbor@harborhouse.com
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Enjoy the celebration

Membership drive launched 1970.
Welcome

2008 is a year of celebration. We’re celebrating the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce’s 100th Anniversary, and we are celebrating the momentum and energy that’s carrying us into our next century. This Centennial publication is being presented to you as a collector’s piece, our way of thanking you for your involvement in the Holland Chamber. We would also like to thank the countless people who, by investing in the Holland Chamber for 100 years, have helped create the lifestyle and sense of community we enjoy today.

Enjoy the journey as you turn the pages of time, learning about our foundation and our vision for tomorrow. We are hosting events throughout the year to celebrate our successes with our 1,250-plus members and the community-at-large.

As one of Michigan’s largest chambers of commerce, we are proud of what we’ve accomplished. Each of our members has been a key contributor to the local economy and to the lives of those who make Holland their home.

Enjoy the celebration. We look forward to partnering with you for the next 100 years.

Jane Clark, President
Holland Area Chamber of Commerce

We look forward to partnering with you for the next 100 years.
When the organization’s early members and trustees gathered, they began to brainstorm on how to bring business to the Holland area.
CATCHING THE VISION
The Chamber’s founding members focus on business development

When the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce’s founding group—the Holland Board of Trade—was formed in 1908, 26 members gathered to pass a constitution and elect officers by ballot.

When the organization’s early members and trustees gathered, they began to brainstorm on how to bring business to the Holland area. Their approach: Creating the financial means to purchase land, recruit businesses to town, and sell them land owned by the Board of Trade, financing the transactions by selling bonds.

Although their purpose centered on boosting business in the Holland area, it’s unlikely that they considered the long-range potential of the meeting, the Chamber’s 100th anniversary in 2008.

The Chamber’s founders were part of the influx of European immigrants who came to the promised land to control their own destinies. The leaders and community members had already hand dug a channel to Lake Michigan, opening Holland to Great Lakes shipping. They had already rebuilt the community after the devastating fire of 1871. Now the hardworking citizens were determined to expand the economic base.

Businesses such as the Holland Rod & Bait Company, the Dearborn Engraving Company, Bowler Sporting Goods Manufacturing
In 1929, the Tulip Time Festival was announced to the world. The unique gathering allows the community to celebrate its heritage and has become a hallmark for the Holland area.
Company of Chicago, and the Michigan Art Carving Company of Grand Rapids formed and relocated to Holland. The Board offered incentives, much like today’s governmental and economic development corporations. The Board also performed background checks on companies before approving financing.

Within a year of forming, trustees met with city council members to discuss a new city hall. For the next several decades, the Board of Trade continued to buy local property and sell it to qualifying businesses. One of its incentive programs focused on the number of jobs created. In 1920, a deed was turned over to the Superior Foundry prior to official pay-off because the company had exceeded contract conditions by paying out more than $180,000 in local salaries during its first five years of operation. The Board’s financial fund became known as the Holland Bonus Fund.

In 1926, the Holland Board of Trade officially became the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce. Its mission: “to advance the commercial, industrial, professional, and civic welfare of the Greater Holland Area, and to cultivate a spirit of cooperation, tolerance, and helpfulness among its residents.”

In 1929, the Tulip Time Festival was announced to the world. The unique gathering allows the community to celebrate its heritage and has become a hallmark for the Holland area.

As the years have passed, the success of the area’s strong manufacturing and commercial base speak of the success of the Chamber’s founders and those who continue to invest their lives in helping the community prosper. Today, the Holland area is one of the largest business, retail, and industrial centers on Michigan’s west coast. It is home to more than a dozen Fortune 500 companies as well as a diverse collection of small- and medium-sized businesses.
Andries Steketee store, south side of 8th Street, early 1900s.

Holland Board of Trade’s First Trustees

J.G. Van Putten, President
C.M. McClean, Vice President
Austin Harrington, Secretary
G.W. Mokma, Treasurer
Early Members

Baker Furniture
Bouwman’s Services
De Vries & Dornbos
Donnelly Mirrors Inc.
Du Mez Bros.
Dutch Boy Co.
Dyke Construction
Dykstra Funeral Home
Frank Lievense Insurance
Franklin Life Insurance Co.
Fris Office Outfitters, Inc.
Hart & Cooley Mfg.
Heinz North America
Hempel’s Pastries
Holland Awning
Holland Color
The Holland Evening Sentinel
Holland Packaging Corp.
Holland Sheet Metal
Holland Transplanter Co.
Home Furnace Co.
J.C. Penney Co.
Karr Manufacturing
Keppel’s Sons
King Refrigeration
Lievense Insurance
Lokker, Boter, Dalman
Lokker-Rutgers Co.

Louis Padnos Iron & Metal Co.
LSI – Mammoth Division
Marsilje Insurance Agency, Inc.
Mooi Roofing
Morse Hemco Corp.
Nelis Nursery
Notier – Ver Lee – Langeland
Notier Funeral Home
Quality Memorial
Sligh Furniture Co.
Standard Oil
Steketee-Van Huis Printing Co.
Ten Cate – Lawyer
Vaudie VandenBerg
W.J. Bradford Paper
Warm Friend Tavern & Hotel
West Michigan Furniture
Western Michigan Tool Works
Williams Jewelry
Wm. C. VandenBerg
Wooden Shoe Factory
Yost Manufacturing
In 1926, the Holland Board of Trade became the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce. Its mission: “To advance the commercial, industrial, professional, and civic welfare of the Greater Holland Area, and to cultivate a spirit of cooperation, tolerance, and helpfulness among its residents.”
Organizations that have been members of the Holland Chamber for 50 years or more

A.D. Bos Vending Services  
AT&T  
Barber Ford, Inc.  
Bert Reimink Plumbing & Heating  
Bradford Company  
Brewer’s City Dock, Inc.  
Chicago Title  
Crown Motors Cadillac, Buick, Honda, Mazda  
Cunningham Dalman, P.C.  
De Boer, Baumann & Company P.L.C.  
De Nooyer Chevrolet, Inc.  
Tom De Pree Agency  
Elzinga & Volkers, Inc.  
Fifth Third Bank  
Haworth, Inc.  
Holland Board of Public Works  
Holland Christian Schools  
Holland Hitch  
Holland Public Schools  
Holland Ready Roofing Company  
Hope College  
HUB International  
Hydro Automotive Structures NA, Inc.  
Ideal Window Cleaners  
Integrated Fabric Resource  
JQ 99 FM/1260 “The Pledge”  
Kalkman Redi-Mix Company  
MAGNA DONNELLY-Magna Mirrors  
Meijer, Inc.  
Merle Boes, Inc.  
Model Drug Store, Inc.  
Multi Packaging Solutions  
National City Bank  
Nelis’ Dutch Village  
Nichols  
Posts Jewelry & Gift Shop, Inc.  
Progressive AE  
Repco-Lite Paints, Inc.  
Russ’ Restaurants  
SAF-Holland, Inc.  
SEMCO Energy Gas Company  
Skip’s Pharmacy  
Sligh Furniture Company  
Superior Sports Store  
Teerman’s  
Thermotron Industries  
Total Logistic Control  
USF Holland Inc.  
WHTC/WYVN  

Holland’s Wooden Shoe Factory.
As the needs of the business community have changed, the Holland Chamber has also changed.

A model of the new Chamber building unveiled in 1974. The model was never built, instead the Chamber purchased space in the Warm Friend Hotel. Left to right: Ross Giles, Floyd Folkert and Don Stoltz.
Decades of growth

MEETING CHANGING NEEDS
Keeping the Holland Area Chamber’s thumb on the needs of the business community

Like in this Centennial publication, the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce has turned many pages, in the form of years and decades. The organization’s success has been shown in its continued growth in members, diversification in programming, and positive impact on the region. It has adjusted and remained relevant through changes that were marked by the Great Depression, industrial peaking, international military conflicts, recessions, technological boom, and even today’s shifts in the supply and demand of a new generation of goods amid the knowledge-based economy.

As the needs of the business community have changed, the Holland Chamber has changed.

While the Holland Chamber has remained focused on business, it has also invested in the community, knowing that for business to grow and prosper, the community must be a good place for individuals to live, learn, prosper, and play.

“You and I know that good business and good communities don’t just happen,” said Robert De Young in a 1978 letter he authored for Holland Chamber members. “We’ve got to work at it. It’s not always easy, and it’s not always convenient, but the Chamber makes it easier and more
"The Chamber of today is built upon a solid foundation created by the business community of the Holland area over many years."

Holland Chamber President Lou Hallacy in 1990
convenient. Your Chamber provides a vehicle for the business community to influence the direction of this community—yes, even issues at the state and national level.”

In response to need and changing times, the Holland Chamber has initiated the following programs, which become like puzzle pieces in an overall picture of success and progress:

• Holland Economic Development Corporation (HEDCOR), a nonprofit organization to create economic opportunities that result in new investment and job creation. The organization has successfully developed two industrial parks that are now home to more than 82 firms.

• West Michigan Lakeshore CDC, an organization to facilitate state grants that finance a revolving loan program for businesses. The group is now known as Lakeshore 504 and continues to be part of the Holland Chamber.

• The Business and Industry Expo, now the Business-to-Business Showcase, an annual event to showcase area companies.

• The Holland Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, a nonprofit organization to provide support for educational, cultural, civic, and scientific undertakings in the region.

• Leadership Holland, a program designed to build local leaders by connecting them with various segments of the community while encouraging them to volunteer and create a personal plan for leadership and growth.

• Holland First, a program delivered through eight educational sessions to help residents understand the community through the eyes of diversity.

Holland Chamber event, 1960.
While the Holland Chamber has remained focused on business, it has also invested in the community, knowing that for business to grow and prosper, the community must be a good place for individuals to live, learn, prosper, and play.

The DeZwaan windmill, brought to Holland from the Netherlands in 1964, remains a top tourist attraction.
• West Michigan Chamber Coalition, a partnership with the Grand Haven, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon Chambers to promote the economic vitality of West Michigan through regional collaboration.

• Leadership West Michigan, a program of the West Michigan Chamber Coalition to take the step beyond the individual chamber’s leadership programs in training the region’s leadership.

• Institute for Healing Racism, a program that delivers a powerful method for addressing and confronting racism from both white and non-white perspectives.

• Hamilton Division, a division of the Holland Chamber designed to provide a unifying voice to address the challenges of growth, quality of life, and economic development within Hamilton.

Communication is also an important part of how the Holland Chamber has evolved. It has published a newsletter, launched several websites, and strives to keep Chamber members abreast of the latest developments in technology, legislation, and business practices through Chamber-sponsored seminars, guest speakers, and workshops.

“The Chamber of today is built upon a solid foundation created by the business community of the Holland area over the past 54 years,” said former Holland Chamber President Lou Hallacy in 1990. “Member volunteers are the heartbeat of the Chamber. Their ability to band together in exciting programs affecting the area is responsible for several area advancements. The Chamber takes seriously its commitment to assist in the development of the quality of life in the Holland area.”

Board of Trade is formed.

Meets with city council to discuss a new city hall.

Meets with officials of the Pere Marquette Railroad regarding railway construction.
1915
Invests $5,000 in 9.75 acres of land with Dearborn Engineering Plant.
Hosts its first annual banquet.

1926
Is officially renamed to the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce.
Votes to begin Venetian Night Carnival.
Works out of City Hall to sell shares for Warm Friend Hotel.

1927
Expands the board from nine to 11 members.
Re-establishes the traffic bureau.

As the years have passed, the success of the area’s strong manufacturing and commercial base speak of the success of the Holland Chamber’s founders and those who continue to invest their lives in helping the community prosper.
While the Holland Chamber is working diligently to introduce its members to the clientele beyond its regional borders, it’s also continuing to serve as the centerpiece of the community—connecting business with business, business with community, and the community with its future.

1928  
200 members attend the annual meeting at the Masonic Hall.

1929  
Announces Tulip Time festival to the world.

Chamber aviation committee hosts American Eagle for a good will party.

1930s  
Begins an ad campaign to encourage shopping locally.

1932  
Coordinates a regional effort to commit land to grow sugar beets in preparation for a new processing plant. About 2,000 acres are committed.
The Holland Area Chamber plans for a prosperous community into the next century

Beyond the Board of Trade’s vision, the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce has evolved into a multifaceted organization that serves the community as it serves its members. The forefathers couldn’t possibly foresee the technological advances that have taken manufacturing and communication to today’s level—creating a worldwide marketplace.

The Holland Chamber understands the power of being part of the global marketplace. Because of this, it’s preparing programming for 2009 to help members succeed globally through education, travel, and cultural understanding.

“Success in fulfilling these objectives will provide the cornerstone for my vision of the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce,” said Tony Castillo, 2007-08 Chairman of the Board of the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce. “It is my hope that when anyone speaks of...
Passes new bylaws extending the Board from 11 to 15 elected members.

Runs full-page newspaper ads supporting businesses’ rights to retain “seed” money for equipment and operations during the war.

Runs ads to encourage stewardship with paper supplies.

Acts as custodian of the Merchants Trust Fund.
the Holland Chamber, an image of pride is immediately conjured, due to the cooperation and commitment of its members.”

While the Holland Chamber is working diligently to introduce its members to the clientele beyond its regional borders, it’s also continuing to serve as the centerpiece of the community—connecting business with business, business with community, and the community with its future.

The Holland Chamber is launching a new business magazine, Connected, to address the unique ongoing economic transition to a knowledge-based economy and other issues impacting business in the region. The magazine will publish bi-monthly and contain timely, in-depth, business-based information. Area experts will be involved in the coverage and members are invited to share what kind of coverage will be most beneficial to them. The magazine will be put on the website as well as distributed to 5,000 area businesses.

In addition, the Holland Chamber is improving its website, a choice connection between its 1,250 members and the rest of the world. The website is used locally and by those who are discovering the West Michigan coastline.

“We have big shoes to fill when it comes to our founding fathers who hand dug the channel to create Lake Michigan access for the community,” said Holland Chamber President Jane Clark. “But we’re up to the challenge. We never rest on our laurels, but instead work everyday to stay abreast of the community’s and our members’ needs. We’re looking forward to stepping into the Holland Chamber’s second century and in leading the community to its next level of improvements and innovations.”

1950
Purchases a Dutch costume for the office stenographer for Tulip Time.

1951
Hope College suggests forming a foundation to expand the Community Ambassador Plan.

1952
Congressman Gerald R. Ford accepts an invitation to the second “Cracker Barrel” session.

1953
 Prepares to relocate to the city’s Recreation Building.
1954 Participates in General Electric’s groundbreaking.

1959 Holds its annual twilight cruise aboard the S.S. North American.

1960 Receive a telegram from Gerald R. Ford requesting information to support his testimony before the appropriations committee requesting funding for the Holland Harbor resurvey.
Incorporates HEDCOR as a nonprofit corporation.

Assists six local manufacturers with expansions.

HEDCOR establishes the Southside Industrial Center on 200 acres.

Beechnut Lifesavers becomes the first company to buy land in the industrial center.

Secretaries/Presidents

Peter H. Prins ..........1923
E.C. Brooks ..........1927
F. Lievense ..........1928
C.A. Gross ..........1929
Harry F. Wetter ..........1933
Dick Boter ..........1933
Wm. M. Connelly ..........1933
E.P. Stephan .............1938
Wm. H. Vande Water ........1945
Roscoe F. Giles ........1963
Louis Hallacy II ........1980
Chris Byrnes ........2000
Jane Clark ........2004
Conducts study on existing and planned general aviation facilities in the Holland area.

Presents Detroit Tiger catcher Bill Freehan wooden shoes with spikes.

Becomes accredited by the Chamber of Commerce of the U.S., only one of 125 of 4,000 Chambers in the nation.

First trees downtown are planted.

Employment in Southside Industrial Center equals 36 percent of the city’s manufacturing employment.
Past Board Presidents & Chairpersons
(not consistently available prior to 1935)

Arthur W. Wrieden ............1935-1936
Joe Kramer ..................1937
Vaudie Vandenburg ...........1938
Charles Sligh .................1939
Clarence Jalving ..............1940-1944
A.C. Joldersma ..............1945
Chesior Van Tongeren ........1946
Willis A. Diekema ............1947
C.C. Andreasen ..............1948
C.B. McCormick ..............1949
Henry S. Maentz, Sr. ........1950
Arnold W. Hertel .............1951
M.C. Lindeman ...............1952
Clarence Klaasen .............1953
C.C. Wood ..................1954
Henry Ter Haar ..............1955
George Heeringa .............1956
A.G. Sall ..................1957
Jack Plewes ..................1958
W.C. Conner .................1959
Charles Cooper ...............1959-1960
C. Neal Steketee .............1961
Jay H. Petter .................1962
Stuart B. Padnos .............1963
John F. Donnelly .............1964
L.C. Dalman ..................1965
Kenneth Zuverink ............1966
Herman Windemuller ..........1967
William Venhuizen ............1968
James Hallan ................1969
James Bradbury ..............1970
Warren L. Willard ............1971
Donald H. Hann ...............1972
Floyd J. Folkert ..............1973
Donald Stoltz ...............1974
Harvey Buter .................1975-1976
William Smolenski ...........1977
Robert De Young ..............1978
William A. Sikkel ............1979
Terry Wolters ...............1980
Lily Geerts .................1981
Jerrald Redeker ..........1982
Jerome Grysen ...............1983
Donald Skoglund ............1984
Andrew Van Slot .............1985
Morrie Tubergen ............1986
Joyce Kortman ...............1987
David Lake ..................1988
Tom Weber ..................1989
Kris De Pree .................1990
Les Lanser ..................1991
Jeff Elhart .................1992
Mark de Roo .................1993
Thomas G. Bos ...............1994
Lynn Kotecki ...............1995
Jon Van Allsburg ............1996
Mari Martin ................1997
Judson A. Bradford ............1998
Claudia Berry ...............1999
Lee Dell ..................2000
Jim Brown ..................2001
Garth Deur ..................2002
Marcia Bishop ...............2003
Lynn Kobes .................2004
Bret Docter .................2005
Rodger Price ...............2006
Scott Spoelhof ...............2007
Tony Castillo ...............2008

1974
Members are addressed by Jay Van Andel on “Free Enterprise —A Dying Idea?”

1975
Facilitates NBC’s Today Show in its filming of Holland for a Salute to Michigan segment.

1976
Pays the city to offer free parking in designated downtown lots for a year.

Silent Observer Program is launched.
Promotes a comprehensive land use plan to protect the environment.

Launches the Free Enterprise Educational Program, Movin’ On to a Better America. Honors Lou Hallacy for his outstanding community service as mayor.

Names Lou Hallacy as Chamber president.

HEDCOR names Lou Hallacy as president.
HEDCOR begins purchasing downtown property.
Establishes Lakeshore 504 as a separate corporation to promote economic development.

1983

HEDCOR begins purchasing downtown property.
Establishes Lakeshore 504 as a separate corporation to promote economic development.

1984

Celebrates its 50th year of incorporation with the State of Michigan.

1986

HEDCOR sells the first acreage in the Northside Industrial Park to Donnelly.

1987

Launches the Focus on Holland Business and Industry Expo.
Referred to as Michigan’s economic oasis in the Chicago Tribune.

Current Committees
Ambassador
Business Connections
Governmental Affairs
Hamilton Division
Public Policy
Leadership Holland
Small Business

Current Board of Directors Officers
Philip Koning, Chairman
*Macatawa Bank*

Dale Sowders, Chair-Elect/Treasurer
*Holland Hospital*

Robert Ellis, Vice Chair
*RVE, Inc.*

David Slikkers, At-Large Executive Committee Member
*Tiara Yachts, Div. of S2 Yachts, Inc.*

Leslie Brown, At-Large Executive Committee Member, *Metal Flow Corporation*

Lynn Smith, Chairman’s Appointment to Executive Committee
*Robert W. Baird & Co.*

Tony Castillo, Past Chair
*McDonald’s – Milagro Six, Inc.*

Scott Spoelhof, Past Chair
*Bayside Capital Management*

Jane Clark, President
*Holland Area Chamber of Commerce*
Moved into current building at 272 East 8th Street.

Celebrates President Lou Hallacy being selected President of the Association of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

Sponsors the publishing of “The Holland Area: Warm Friends and Wooden Shoes, An Illustrated History.”

Michigan Secretary of State Richard Austin applauds Holland region’s strong economy.

Begins Leadership Holland class.

An early Leadership Holland class enjoys one of many Chamber events.
Current Directors

Chris Antrup  
*Boar’s Head Provisions Co., Inc.*

Gwen Auwerda  
*Johnson Controls, Inc.*

Joe Bardowski  

Jack Bouman  
*Coldwell Banker Woodland Schmidt*

Peter Esser  
*The Holland Sentinel/Flashes Publishers*

Anthony Ho  
*Lotus Corporation*

Ruben Juarez  
*Workforce Management, LLC*

Skip Keeter  
*Trips & Treasures*

Patricia Koeze  
*West Ottawa Public Schools*

Haans Mulder  
*Cunningham Dalman, P.C.*

Jeff Mulder  
*ODL, Inc.*

Shawn Pacanowski  
*CapTrust Financial Advisors*

Debra Quade  
*Magna Mirrors America, Inc.*

Jonathan Steiner  
*Mercantile Bank*

Ned Timmer  
*T² Communications*

Brett Vander Kamp  
*New Holland Brewing Company*

Ella Weymon  
*ACCT – Now, Div. of Weymon & Associates, Inc.*

Willis Driesenga, Ex-Officio Director  
*Holland Charter Township*

Sue Higgins, Ex-Officio Director  
*Macatawa Area Coordinating Council*

Randy Thelen, Ex-Officio Director  
*Lakeshore Advantage*

Stuart Visser, Ex-Officio Director  
*Park Township Office*

Soren Wolff, Ex-Officio Director  
*City of Holland*

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**1989**
Adds 68 new firms in membership blitz.

Adds award programs that salute small firms and outstanding women.

**1992**
Received the NAM (National Association of Membership Directors) Award of Excellence.

Started Holland First Program.

**1996**
Takes the Holland Chamber global by launching the website.

**2003**
Celebrates 40 years of progress with HEDCOR.
Jane Clark promoted to Holland Chamber President.

Launchs public policy committee to help advocate for its members.

Starts the Hamilton Division.

Celebrates the 40th anniversary of the golf outing.

Celebrates its 100th anniversary.
“We have big shoes to fill when it comes to our founding fathers who hand dug the channel to create Lake Michigan access for the community,” said Holland Chamber President Jane Clark. “But we’re up to the challenge. We never rest on our laurels, but instead work every day to stay abreast of the community’s and our members’ needs. We’re looking forward to stepping into the Holland Chamber’s second century and in leading the community to its next level of improvements and innovations.”