

H.O. ROSE SPARKED ACTIVITY

“Cap’n” Led Commercial Development

While Petoskey’s centennial is hinged on the arrival of Andrew Porter in 1852, the true founder of the community that is now Petoskey didn’t arrive on the scene until 20 years later.

But when Hiram O. Rose settled down in what was then known as Bear River, things began to move – and his name appears in almost every movement.

Mr. Rose wasn’t the community’s first resident. The Ingalls followed the Porters and then came the Jarmans. And the Littles arrived at the same time as Mr. Rose.

But Mr. Rose had a venture-some imagination, backed by solid business judgment. And it was he who started commerce moving in Bear River.

Born in Pekin, New York, November 27, 1830, young Hiram was brought to Michigan by his family four years later. And as soon as he arrived, the boy went to work helping his father clear the farm near Bronson.

When Hiram was 12, the father died and the boy was on his own. He worked to further his education and later became a printer. His typesetting career was interrupted when he took a night off to hear Jenny Lind sing. He went to St. Paul and finally decided to homestead a piece of property near McGregor, Iowa.

It was rough during the winter and Mr. Rose decided to return to Michigan, fully expecting to resume his farm work in the spring.

But he was bitten by the gold bug and took off for California in 1851. Amos Fox, with whom Mr. Rose was later associated in Northern Michigan, accompanied him to the gold fields. When young Rose reached California, he had \$20 in his pocket. When he and Fox decided to leave, two years later, each man had more than \$5,000. Mr. Rose returned to the Midwest, his eyes still on the Iowa farm, but this time the copper mines of the Upper Peninsula beckoned and he took the bait.

Here the weather changes the course of history. Mr. Rose started north and reached the Manitou Islands where boats stopped for a load of wood on their lake trips. A series of storms prevented his going north and after several mishaps he had a look at the area around Northport. Mr. Rose fell in love with it and bought 800 acres, planning to build a dock and sell wood to boats.

Two years later Mr. Fox bought a half interest and the two men expanded their commercial enterprises over a wide area. In 1861 Mr. Fox took charge of the Charlevoix interest of the firm and in 1873 Mr. Rose came to Petoskey.

Mr. Rose built the first dock and he started the first lime kiln. Archibald Buttars joined Fox & Rose and took charge of the trio’s retail enterprise in Petoskey.

Mr. Rose made the original plat of the village of Petoskey in 1874 and he became the first president of the village in 1879.

Associated with the expansion of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, he was one of the contractors, in 1872, who built the extension from Walton Junction to Traverse City.

Officials of the railroad consulted with Mr. Rose when it was known that the Petoskey area was being considered as a location for a camp ground by the Detroit and Michigan Conferences of the Methodist Church.

Mr. Rose and C. J. Pailthorp drafted a pledge agreement and began circulating it among the citizens of the community. The townspeople didn't have any money, but Rose had imagination.

He was the sparkplug that put across the deal whereby the railroad bought the site for Bay View and residents of Petoskey worked out their contributions by aiding in extending the railroad to Bay View.

So the church got its camp ground; the railroad got a lot of new business; and the community gained a neighbor that has proved invaluable both commercially and culturally.

Mr. Rose was called "Captain" by some of the railroad officials with whom he worked and the title stuck. Active to the last in the operation of business interests and civic undertakings, "Cap'n" Rose died January 7, 1911.