



Quarterly Newsletter

October–December 2025

MISSION

The Mission of the Lakeville Area Historical Society is to document, collect, preserve, and share the history of the Lakeville Area Minnesota Municipal Commission to order a merger of the two communities.

Six decades have passed since Lakeville went through one of the most turbulent times in its history with its battles over the border wars with the neighboring communities of Apple Valley and Farmington. For a community of approximately 8 thousand residents, it was an intense period of consternation, uncertainty, anger, frustration and confusion.

Harry “Archie” Clarkson

Although there are many people affected by the events of the tumultuous period in the 1960s and early 1970s, Harry “Archie” Clarkson stands out as one of the individuals with some interesting and unique experiences. Harry was a highly respected community activist with very strong opinions as to what was best for his fellow community neighbors and residents.

Why is Harry a unique and interesting character in Lakeville’s history?

- He lived in 3 different places...but...**never moved!**
- He served the shortest term as an elected council member - **only eight days!**

Let’s take a look at the events of that period to discover how that is possible.

Where was home?

Lakeville Township (1963 – 1966)

Harry and his wife Ellen in 1963 built the fourth house constructed in Valley Park located East of Cedar Avenue, South of County Road 46 (160th Street). The surrounding farmland quickly developed into residential homes with young families seeking a bright future and quality of life.

At that time Valley Park was part of the 47 square mile Lakeville Township; the Village of Lakeville was one square mile located at the southern end of the Township. In 1965, Lakeville Village and Lakeville Township petitioned the Minnesota Municipal Commission to order a merger of the two communities.

Harry's family and neighbors were about to change residency, without moving.

City of Lakeville (1966 – 1971)

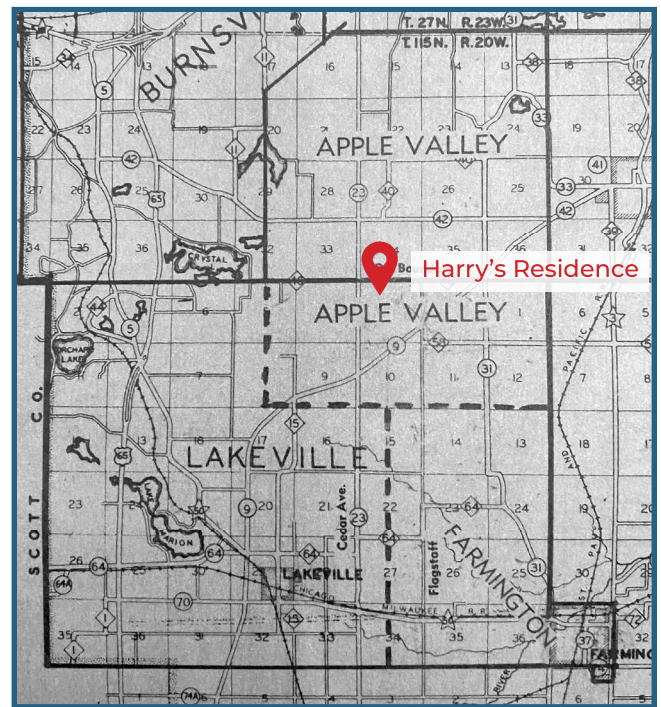
The Minnesota Municipal Commission ordered the merger of the Village and Township on October 20, 1966. The new 48 square mile City begins consolidating ordinances, facilities, equipment, employees, etc. For the next four years, the new City proceeded in an orderly and peaceful manner of serving its residents.

Harry, being a community activist and very popular in the community, decides to run for City Council in 1970. However, peace and tranquility are about to turn to chaos.

Three years earlier, Farmington had appealed to the Lakeville annexation. As a result, the Minnesota Supreme Court directed the Minnesota Municipal Commission (M.M.C.) to reconsider its decision regarding the Lakeville Annexation.

On November 16, 1970, the Minnesota Municipal Commission issued an order (to be effective January 12, 1971) in which:

- a. Farmington would annex 10 square miles from Lakeville.
- b. Apple Valley would annex 9 square miles (Valley Park) from Lakeville, if the residents of Valley Park agreed to being annexed by Apple Valley.
- c. Lakeville was reduced in size from 48 square miles to 29 square miles.





In the meantime, Harry was elected to the Lakeville City Council on December 8, 1970. The election was considered an upset because he had defeated an incumbent. Harry's victory is a testimony to his leadership, persuasiveness and political activism.

Harry took the oath of office on January 4, 1971. However, since he was no longer living in Lakeville effective January 12 because of the M.M.C. annexation order, Harry was removed from office after only serving 8 days in office.

Harry's family and neighbors were about to change residency, without moving...again.

“Disorganized Township” (January 12 – October 1971)

The residents of the 9 square miles, including Valley Park, on January 12, 1971 voted 478 to 377 against becoming a part of the Village of Apple Valley.

Now what? The M.M.C. had ordered the 9 square miles were not part of Lakeville and the residents had voted not to be a part of Apple Valley. They thus became a “Disorganized Township” which is considered a ward of the County. Who will provide services such as police protection, snowplowing, park maintenance.? What laws govern the community? Where does someone go to get a building permit in a rapidly developing Valley Park area?

In the coming months numerous meetings were held to discuss possible solutions. The discussions became very emotional when the Apple Valley Mayor tried to intercede in the process.

Harry, along with 4 other people, went to every single home in the 9 square miles, trying to get residents to sign a petition to have the area annexed by the City of Lakeville. Their efforts came to fruition.

On September 15, 1971, the M.M.C. issued its final order on the Lakeville and Valley Park annexation. The residents of the 9 square miles would be allowed to vote on whether they supported annexation to the City of Lakeville.

On October 7, 1971 the residents voted 420 to 200 in favor of the Lakeville annexation. Thus, the long, expensive nine years of boundary disputes, court battles, social and governmental disruption and personal antagonisms were finally settled.



Subsequent Events

- Harry was re-elected as a council member in 1976 to serve a four-year term.
- Harry served on the Lakeville Fire Department for 21 years, retiring as District Chief.
- Harry and his wife lived in their Lakeville home until his retirement in 2003. They currently enjoy life and family in Minong Wisconsin.

History Resources



Like and follow us on **Facebook**
Search "Lakeville Area Historical Society"



Check out our website at **MNLAHS.org**
Click "Discover History"



Visit our **museum**, located in the Heritage Center
20110 Holyoke Ave., Lakeville | Open Mondays and Thursdays, 9AM-Noon
Or contact us to arrange a tour



Contact Us
952-985-4680 | LAHS1995@gmail.com

Wanted for Museum Displays

We are seeking the following items for our future museum displays. If you would like to donate or loan them, please contact us at LAHS1995@gmail.com.

- Display (mannequin) heads for hat displays
- Old telephones
- Old Lakeville telephone books (ie. Frontier or Central Telephone)