

We thank Thee God, for saints in times long past,
For fathers brave who laid foundations strong,
These pilgrims true in living faith held fast,
And blest the wilds with strains of sacred song,
They built their homes, they tilled the virgin soil,
Fair temples raised to Thee, Thou Living God.

Evald Benjamin Lawson



Finnish immigrants founded this little village in 1900. The name "Kaleva" is derived from the Finnish epic poem, "Kalevala". The poem was the source of street names in the original plat. The Evangelical Lutheran Church, known today as Bethany Lutheran, was organized on January 12, 1902. On that same day the Temperance Society "Kalevatar" was organized. The Temperance Hall was built that year and served as a place of worship until 1913 when the church was built, and as community center until 1933. About the same time the Youth Society was organized, and a hall for meetings was built in 1904. The Finns took pride in their cultural heritage, founded a lending library, and instilled in their children a love for music and books, God and Country. In 1901 the Finnish Publishing Company moved here from Brooklyn, N. Y. and the original building still stands.

Among the pioneers arriving in Kaleva in 1900, were the families of John Haksluoto, Jacob Lemponen, Kalle Hendrickson, Matti Kempainen, Antti Myllyla, and John Palomaki. These settlers were mostly farmers and manual laborers. They possessed a distinctive quality of perseverance known as "sisu". Life was a struggle. After arriving here, many were forced to clear land for homes and crops. Most homes had a sauna, and to a Finn, there is nothing comparable for reviving an overworked body and spirit. These pioneers along with people of other ethnic origins contributed considerably to the development of Maple Grove Township, Manistee County, and to the culture and agriculture of Michigan.

Today, Kaleva is a thriving community with profitable businesses and farms, good schools and modern facilities.

LIST OF DONORS TOWARD PURCHASE AND ERECTION OF A HISTORICAL
 MARKER COMMEMORATING THE 1900 ERA SETTLING OF KALEVA
 BY FINNISH IMMIGRANTS

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew I. Brask
 Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Kaskinen
 Taimi Workman
 Mr. and Mrs. Weikko Puustinen
 Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Lemponen
 Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Haksluoto
 Mrs. Eva Densmore
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 Maple Grove Township Board
 Kaleva Diamond Jubilee Fund
 Diamond Jubilee Book Sales
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 Mr. and Mrs. Weikko Pihl
 Raymond Gustafson
 Elmer Leppala
 Mr. and Mrs. William Gustafson
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 Mr. and Mrs. Graden Brann
 Mr. and Mrs. Harold Bigelow
 Mr. and Mrs. George Laaksonen
 Mr. and Mrs. Reino Makinen
 Mr. and Mrs. Harold Perry

PROGRAM

Saturday, September 30, 1978 -- 2 P.M.

National Anthem — — — High School Band
 Flag Raising — VFW Auxiliary Bear Creek Post 6333
 Finnish National Anthem — Trumpeters Robert Tobey
 and Christopher Olson
 Welcome — — — Ferdinand Kaskinen
 Invocation — — — Rev. Leslie Lurvey
 Tribute to Early Pioneers —
 Vieno Haksluoto Hagelberg Kaskinen
 Remarks — — Village President - Robert E. Rengo
 Township Supervisor - Harold Beldo
 County Board of Commissioners Chairman
 Roy C. Howes
 Finnish Song — — — Vieno Sarenius
 Greetings — — Finnish Consul Harri M. Virjo
 Dedication — — Michigan Historical Com-
 mission Representative
 Acceptance — Kaleva Historical Society President,
 Eva Densmore
 Finlandia — — Trumpeters Tobey and Olson
 God Bless America — — High School Band
 Coffee and "Nisua" at Bethany Lutheran Church