The History of the Hotel Frankfort

Nestled on the corner of 3rd Street and Main, at the tail end of the sand drifts, between historic homes and theater, sits The Hotel Frankfort. Originally built in 1869 to house the sailors coming off of Lake Michigan, the hotel has a long history of providing true Northern Michigan hospitality. Popular belief is that the original name of the hotel was the Delbridge House. This was changed just a year later to the Saterlee Hotel. Between the 1870's and the 1920's the hotel changed names twice more, first to The Yeazel House and then to The Inn. In July of 1925, the hotel suffered its second - and final - fire.

The structure that you see now was rebuilt between 1932-1933, by owner Joseph P. Oberlin. It's rumored that Oberlin was a good friend of Al Capone's. Capone controlled the red brick house on the corner of Michigan & Main, on the beach. In true Capone fashion, tunnels were built from the red brick house to many of the businesses in town, including the Hotel Frankfort. These tunnels were also looked at as a Plan B in case Capone and his men needed a quick escape. (Unfortunately, all of the tunnels have been filled in.)

During the summer of 1939, Oberlin sold the hotel to Al Herron, who then changed the name to the Frankfort Inn. Herron operated the hotel until 1958 before selling it to Dale and Florence Herron. (relatives, we believe) Dale and Florence ran the hotel until 1972 when they sold it to Paul A. Corey, who once again renamed the hotel, this time to the PAC Inn.

The hotel changed hands four more times in 1984 (We have the deeds to prove it!). When the smoke finally cleared in the fall of 1984, Kurt Loranz and Scott Powell were the proud owners. Loranz and Powell owned and operated the Hotel Frankfort for 20 years. During their tenure, the two made some major changes to the building's structure. The hotel's wine cellar was hand dug and the soil emptied with five-gallon buckets in the winter of '84. The 1st floor banquet room was also added during this period. In 2005 the hotel was purchased by Lesley Perkins and operated as The Betsie Bay Inn. Then in August of 2014, current owner Judy Remmert purchased the hotel and brought the original The Hotel Frankfort back to life. Constantly improving and forever evolving, as the proud custodians of The Hotel Frankfort, we hope that you enjoy every moment of our unique and historic inn.

'*What about the ghosts*?' you ask? Well, we'll save that for another time….