



The Mystery of NOVI's Name...

Many stories on the origin of Novi's name have developed over the last century. Who hasn't heard the tale of Novi being named after the No.VI train station? But what is the true story of how Novi went from being West Farmington to Novi? It is one of Novi's biggest mysteries.

Barbara G. Louie, former member of the Novi Historical Commission, notes "there are at least nine different versions as to what the name really means and from where it originated." Curious yet?

Among these stories is the most popular, and, seemingly most logical, that the sixth township (NoVI) in the southwest portion of Oakland County was adapted by merely writing it out as one word: "NOVI." A similar tale of equal popularity, albeit not as logical, has the town named after TollGate No. VI on Grand River (or the old Detroit-Howell) Road. Unfortunately for this theory, the toll road was not built for another twenty-two years after the town was already named.

Speculation also includes the supposed date of the meeting that may have lent

itself to the name, Nov. 1, as well as the humorous anecdote regarding the blacksmith-preacher whose wife's name was Vivian, or "Vi" ... The blacksmith-preacher was most awfully tight and forever vetoed any spending suggestions from his wife... It was always "No Vi" to anything until his place was referred to by the whole neighborhood as, "down to No Vi's" then as "No Vi's Corners," and then just plain, "Novi."

Finally the latest theory on how the unusual name came about comes from as far away as Yugoslavia. According to this account, the Michigan City was named after the hometown of a woman who came from Yugoslavia in the early 1800's. She was a Moslem girl who broke away from her religious and family ties to marry one of Napoleon's soldiers. Together, they emigrated thousands of miles across land and sea to settle in the wilds of Michigan. Unfortunately, as delightfully romantic as this theory appears, it has yet to be proven conclusively. Research continues on the identities of the elusive couple. Among the

Interested in learning more about Novi's colorful past?

Those looking for a way to spend a little time together can do some investigating in the Local History Room at the Novi Public Library.

The Local History Room was recently renovated to include historical glass etchings. This display includes seven beautifully crafted historical landmarks from around Novi. Local artists, Ryan and Mindy

Trainer, were responsible for creating these pieces. The etchings represent The Methodist



Church (1876), Walled Lake Park (1929), Novi Town Hall (1876), Bassett Home (1845), the Novi Special (1941-1965), and the Train Station (1870). This artwork was made possible through the generous support of the Novi Historical Commission. To view the artwork, please see a Librarian on the 2nd floor of the Library for access to the Local History Room.

The Novi Historical Commission is located



within the Novi Public Library and offers open office hours in the Local History Room on the first and third Mondays of each month. For more information, visit cityofnovi.org.

stumbling blocks is that the word "Novi" in the Yugoslavian language means "new" and that it could refer to countless towns in that country.

Barbara Louie published a book about the history of Novi, *NOVI on the Trail*, which is available to check out at the Novi Public Library to read more about the different theories on the development of Novi's name and Novi's history. Can you uncover the truth about Novi's name?