Significant Date:
Civil War and After (1860-1875)

Registry Year: 2009 **Erected Date:** 2009

Marker Location

Address: 123 East Exchange Street

City: Spring Lake

State: MI   *ZipCode:* 49456

County: Ottawa

Township:

Lat: 43.07558870 / Long: -86.19508266

Web URL:

Front - Title/Description

Winsor McCay

Winsor McCay (c.1867-1934), A pioneer in cartoon animations, first received acclaim for his artwork as a pupil in Spring Lake´s Union School. His blackboard sketch of the 1880 wreck of the SS Alpena inspired a photographer to take a picture of the drawing and sell the prints. As a youth McCay worked at the local Clinker boat works and at a sawmill. Around 1886 he enrolled at Cleary College in Ypsilanti. Instead of attending classes, however, he sketched patrons for money in a Detroit dime museum. Stints in Chicago and Cincinnati preceded the artist´s move to New York to work for the Herald newspaper. In 1911 publishing mogul William Randolph Hearst hired McCay as a cartoonist. Hearst´s New York American promoted McCay as "the Most Brilliant Cartoon Pen on the whole American Scene."

Back - Title/Description

Winsor McCay

Originally from Spring Lake, Winsor McCay (c.1867-1934), was likely the most popular cartoonist of the early twentieth century. In addition to drawing newspaper comic strips such as Little Nemo in Slumberland, McCay had a vaudeville act, for which he drew pictures on a blackboard at lightning speed. In 1911 he introduced a moving Little Nemo cartoon into his act, thuss taking his place among animation pioneers. His 1914 film Gertie the Dinosaur comprised ten thousand drawings and launched the first cartoon "star." The fluid movement and vivid personalities of McCay's characters influenced illustrators Walt Disney and Walter Lantz. In 1972 the international Animated Film Society, ASIFA ~ Hollywood, created the Winsor McCay Award, one of the highest honors given in the animation industry.