The Lavin Farm, "Lakeside Homestead", was established in 1842. Martin Lavin was born in 1807 in the parish of Aughamore, County Mayo, Ireland. He married Nancy Cunningham in 1830. Their first children, Bridget and John, were born in Ireland. Their third child, Bernard, was born in Buffalo, New York in 1842 shortly after they arrived in America. Martin worked on the Erie Canal to pay their travel expenses and to save money to purchase land. It is said that they walked from New York to Chicago. They came to the Township of Dover and settled near Eagle Lake. A log cabin was their first residence in 1842.

Nancy passed away in 1847. The Potawatomi Indians still lived along the shores of Eagle Lake and were considered helpful neighbors. Martin built a farmhouse and barns in 1850. The farmhouse is still the family residence and has been home to six generations so far. Martin originally homesteaded eighty acres. His son, Bernard, joined him in farming. He and his wife, Mary Cunningham had nine children, including Bernard Jr. Together they ran six hundred acres. They also established a resort called "The Island" on Eagle Lake. This started out in the 1860's with hunting and fishing cabins. Gradually a hotel, music store, livery stables and boat rental were added. They had dancing every night but Sunday. Families came out from the cities to spend the summers. The resort closed in 1926 or 1927.


Gene and his son, Barney continue to run the family farm, Lakeside Homestead. They raise cattle, hogs, soybeans and corn.

Mary Bridget Lavin Flynn