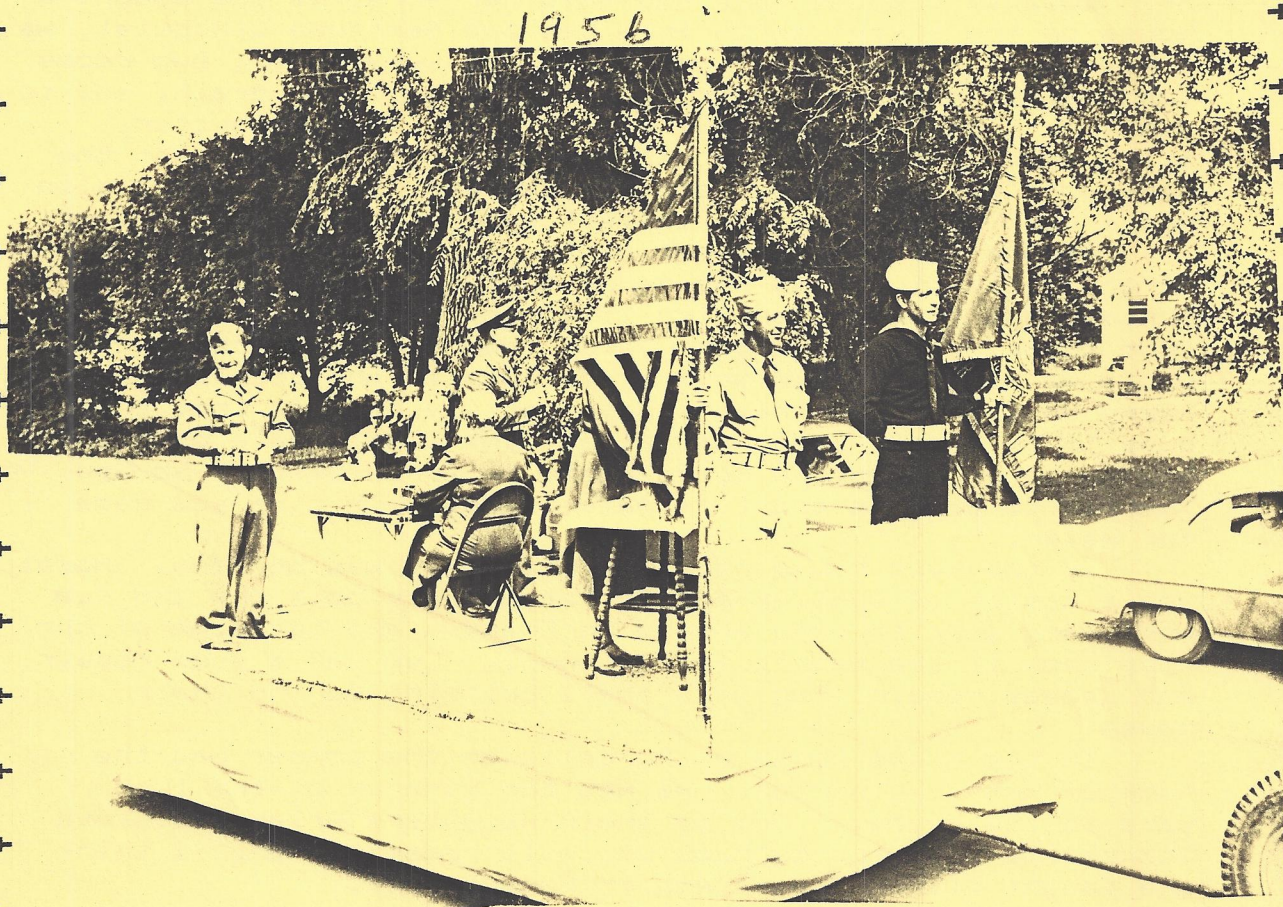


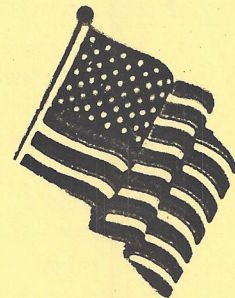
Fertile July
Reminder 1988



Harold Ouverson, Roger Felland, Leslie (Bing) Zobel, and Delton Davis



1956 *Fertile*
Centennial



Martin, and Henry Ouverson, Mrs. Giddings, the old Mrs. Elthon, and Mrs. Erkenberry.

In the rear of the station was a blacksmith shop and repair shop.

Across the street where Larson Plumbing and Heating is now was a big two story building. A family by the name of Wren had a furniture store downstairs and lived on the second floor. The house across the street south on the corner was where Ernie Jones lived. Originally it was a rooming house or hotel where overnite travelers could rent a room.

The next house west of that where Geneva Haugen lives now was where various doctors lived and had their offices. A few I remember were Dr. Dallagher and later Dr. Van Zanten.

I guess the reason I remember them was that they had kids in school when I was there.

The Mission Hall was the original schoolhouse before the old brick building was built and was moved from the site of the gymnasium to the location where it is now. At first it was divided into two shops with an entrance on the center on the south side. The east half was a cafe run by Evensons. She was Mrs. Mort Haugen's sister. The west half was a shoe store and repair shop, and the upstairs had a couple of apts.

The next building west where Bud Jenkins had an old shop was where Mort Haugen had a butcher shop and also made baloney and wieners in a very primitive shop. Inprinted in my mind was the fact they hung wieners and baloney on old brooms and mops with the brooms and mops still attached when they hung them in the smoke house. Real sanitary I'm sure.

There was a little old frame building where Estalene Sanderson's brick building is now that was called "Popeyes" which was the forerunner of fast food in that it was the teen age hangout and they cooked up hamburgers while you waited and you took them outside to eat along with either orange or grape Nehi pop.

West of them was a general store building now the post office, owned by Groves who was the father of Pete Grove who carried mail and was the drayman who hauled freight from the Hanlontown depot to all of Fertile. The old gentleman was very old when I first remember him and he always sat outside the store on sunny days in a chair and only went in the store when customers came.

Next west of his store was a large rambling building that housed a hardware and machinery business, mainly wagons, seeders, horse equipment, and gas engines. This was owned by Pete Ouverson, Mrs. Larry Ritter's dad, and Carl Sheimo who was an auctioneer.

Next was the bank owned by the Rhodes family who were the original founders of Rhodes Milll, later Putsey, and then Fertile. After the 1929 crash the bank was taken over by an insurance company who hired a man by the name of Slosson who managed all the farms the insurance company had repossessed during the crash. Most of these had loans against them of 500 to 1000 per acre and he rented them to previous owners

store. Also Edna Pederson and Marcella Purcell were clerks.

I do remember they had shoes, overshoes, overalls, and shirts in the basement, dress material, ribbons, jewelry etc. along with groceries on first floor. They also bought chickens in an old barn directly west of the store. Later Clarence Sheimo bought the first livestock truck and hauled hogs to Deckers in Mason City.

Where Charley Nye has his home was another old barn that was used to house school buses and the horse that pulled them. As I recall there was seven routes and they hired farmers that didn't have too many chores to drive them. These men brought us to the schoolhouse and then came to this barn where they housed their horses and fed them. The drivers played cards or read until time to hitch up and take us home at 4 p.m. School was from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with an hour for noon. To start with each student brought their own lunch. About the time I was in 5th or 6th grade they started Home Economics (called Domestic Science), and this class prepared a hot dish each noon. Students participated by paying 3 to 5 cents per day to eat. The menu ranged from vegetable soup to a baked potato or macaroni and cheese, and on a good day a hotdog and bun. This was a great treat after dry sandwiches.

Along with driving a horse drawn school bus, how would you like this schedule? The man who drove my school bus when I started to school, was Rev. Carl Schmidt. They lived where Lloyd and Angie Orcutt lived, and not only was he the minister at The Church of Christ, but was Superintendent of Schools. He also taught a couple of class, farmed sixty acres, and milked 5 or 6 cows. If you told any of the teachers this nowadays, they would not believe you.

In the thirties, another filling station and garage was added when Reuben Rodberg built the building which is now owned by Worsley Electric, and he continued to run this until his death.

Of course the old red mill has been there since anyone lived in Fertile. First an earthen dam built with logs and dirt created the necessary water supply to turn the mill wheel. The Rhodes ground wheat into flour for settlers over a large area. Later they turned to grinding feed for livestock. This earthen dam went out one spring when the water was very high, and for one summer in the late thirties with no dam to hold the water, you could walk across the river and never get your feet wet. About this time, Leo Elthon who had started a limerock quarry directly west of the Fertile Park and had been very successful, was now State Senator and later Lt. Governor of Iowa, teamed up with some of the Oувersons and rebuilt the dam out of concrete. I remember they blocked off the water of the main channel and the water was channeled to the stream on the south side of the park. After the dam was completed and the mill wheel turned again, feed grinding was resumed. Later power for the mill was to electricity as water power during the dry years of the thirties was very undependable. I believe the mill

On the south side of the school street were about 5 or 6 houses including the ones where Bess Rodberg lived and the one that Augie Luther owns.

Nearly all of these families boarded and housed school teachers as all lady teachers were single and very few men were married as salaries were very low. If I remember right Mr. Lucken who was Supt. when I was a Senior he was courting Miss Moore who taught 7th and 8th grade told me he was paid \$200 per month. They married and moved to Fort Dodge where they still lived after they retired.

I think there were 2 houses west of the Lutheran church the one on the north side where Pat Zobel lives and the one on the hill south where Edith and Helen Ouverson parents lived.

In counting up I believe there was a total of 20 or 21 houses west of the Church of Christ in the 30's so its no wonder those of us who were in highschool thought it was such a long ways from the school house to the stores and restaurant, there was just a lot of wide open spaces.

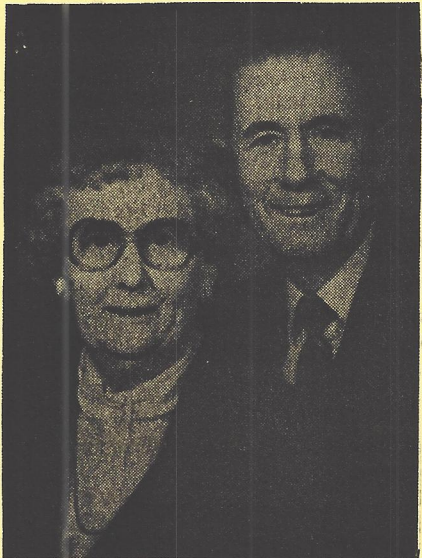
East of the church there was about 15 houses, so I would say there was about 40 houses total.

Although resident population was low, every small town had a large area of rural people they attracted to the businesses. As transportation was slow, roads were very poor and sometimes during the year were impassable so the nearest town was where you did all your trading.

As I remember Fertile on Saturday nights, which was the one night that everyone went to town. The street from the bank east to the Creamery would be jammed with cars. The kids played hide and seek, tag, and etc. until 10 p.m. whenever one headed for home. About this time every small town had free outdoor movies and Fertile's was located west of Eikenbary's and east of the Lime Rock Cafe, with the screen down towards the river. Naturally all of the stores stayed open until the show was over to get the last nickel or dime of business.

Not much changed in Fertile until after the second World War and families started coming home and the road system improved and a way of life that hadn't changed for years changed overnight.

Government commodities will be given out Thursday, July 7th at the Fertile Community Center. Hours are from 1 to 4 o'clock. Milk and honey will be given out.



MR. AND MRS. SHERWOOD PITKIN

Sherwood Pitkin and Marion Olson were married at a candle-light service in Ellington Prairie Lutheran Church near Miller by the Rev. C. B. Gunderson on May 18, 1938. Following the ceremony, a reception was held in the church dining-room for 200 relatives and friends.

Mrs. Pitkin had been teaching rural school. Mr. Pitkin had been farming south-east of Clear Lake where they made their home. In 1943 the couple moved to a farm near Miller, and in 1949 they moved on their farm north of Clear Lake where they have resided since.

On Sunday, June 12th, Sherwood and Marion were honored with an Open House at the Fertile Lutheran Church hosted by their children: Sherril and Susan Pitken of Boise, Idaho, Donna and Jerry Ouverson of Fertile, James and Candace Pitkin of Mason City, and their seven grandchildren.

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Thank You

Our sincere Thanks to everyone who helped to make our Golden Wedding Anniversary Open House a special day. Thank you for the cards, gifts, flowers, and warm wishes.

Sherwood and Marian Pitkin

A Nations Life

I know three things must always be
To keep a nation strong and free;
One is a hearthstone bright and clear,
With busy, happy loved ones near.
One is a ready cordial hand,
To love and serve and keep
the land.
One is a warm and beaten way,
To where the people go to pray.
So long as these are kept alive,
Nations and people will survive.
God keep them always, everywhere,
The Hearth, the Flag, the
Place of Prayer.

* * * * *

Senior Citizen's Menu
July 5: Ham, potatoe salad, three bean salad, baked beans, watermelon, bread, butter, milk and coffee.

July 19: Baked Pork Chop, baked potatoe, string beans, carrot salad, fruit, bread, butter, milk and coffee.

For reservations call Edna Pederson before noon on Monday, 797-2669

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The things the flag stands for were created by the experience of a great people. Everything it stands for was written in their lives.

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Memorial graveside services will be held for Norma Ouverson Van Note at Brush Point Cemetery on Saturday July 2nd, at 2:00 PM.

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Wanted: House Cleaning jobs in the Fertile area, call 797-2716

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GARAGE SALE

CORNER OF MAIN & SPRING ST.

JULY 9th 9:00 a.m.