



February 2006 Volume II #8

South Wood County Historical Corp.

Artifacts



Be Mine

Cover photo *circa* 1950 by Don Krohn.

Joan Haasl, 2-3; Gib Endrizzi, 4-5; Gerald Matthews, 6-9; *Biron News*, 10-13; Phil Brown's Den of Antiquity, 14-15; West Grand Avenue, 16-17; Mae and John Natwick, 18-27; *Consolidated News*, 28-29; Justin Isherwood, 30; Don Litzer's "History at McMillan," 31.



Joan Haasl

A Ratting Good Time

My grandfather Staub died in 1902 when my father was at the University of Illinois Engineering School. Grandfather was 57 years old and in the marble business with his brother George. According to the obituary, he remarked to his brother, "I believe my tongue is getting thick" and then went into a coma and died. All the Staubs were in business and this was the last of four businesses my grandfather was in that I know about.

Joseph Platner Staub had been married twice, but I don't think my Dad knew about the first marriage in Ohio. I learned about it from a census form that listed him married to a Margaret Carpenter. Her mother lived with them. They had

no children and his occupation was listed as harness maker. He next turns up fifteen years later in Terre Haute, Ind., where he married my grandmother, Katie Dry, on January 22, 1878. The wedding write-up lists his occupation as owner of a livery stable. My father Joseph Aaron Staub was born in Terre Haute on June 3, 1883.

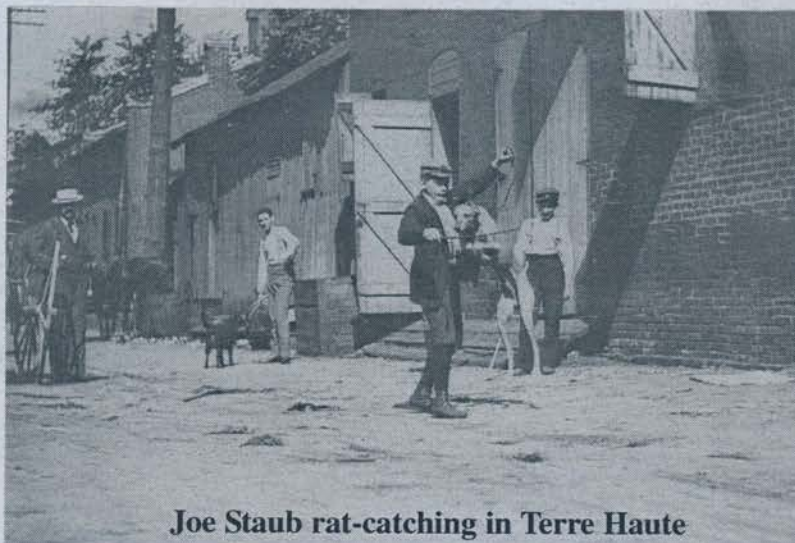
The family was living in Evansville, Ind., when my Dad's brother, Bertie Earl, was accidentally shot to death by a neighbor boy on Christmas Eve. The shooting made headlines in the Evansville newspaper. Old friends have called me Josie since grade school. Never did my father tell me that had been his nickname also. In the

newspaper account of Bertie's death, it says, "little Josie witnessed the shooting."

In Evansville, Joseph Staub owned a Singer Sewing machine store. From there they moved back to Terre Haute where my father graduated from high school and then to Greenville, Ill., where they had many relatives. The cemetery there is full of Staubs. After being widowed, my grandmother moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and

worked for the Singer Company for fifteen years. She then lived with my parents for eleven years until her death three months after I was born in 1928.

My mother said Kate Staub was a devil. My father said his mother was a saint.



Joe Staub rat-catching in Terre Haute

My father often told me stories about his childhood. One was about his Negro mammy. He was very fond of her. But someone told him you "couldn't pound a tack in a nigger's head," no matter how hard you tried. So Dad tried and Mammy screamed and smacked him. He said his mother punished Mammy for hitting him by taking an ivory fan away that the family had given her. I think Dad felt bad about what he had done because he really loved that old black lady.

Another story Dad told was about trapping rats in the Terre Haute livery stable. A group of men and boys would gather in the alley and let the rats

out of the cages so the dogs could chase them. It was called "having a ratting good time."

One of the students who worked summers at the museum here won a four-year college scholarship. When I asked her where, she said, "a little college you never heard of" and I said, "Try me."

She said, "Greenville College in Greenville, Ill."

I told her my grandmother had graduated from there and I had pictures of the college. My great-grandmother Dry was widowed young with three daughters to raise. She sent them to private schools and I have never been able to find out how she managed to do this. I wish I had asked a lot more questions because now I have more questions than answers.

When I think of pea soup, I always think of 1940 and my dad in the upstairs bedroom in the house on Third Street. He had a nosebleed that kept on bleeding - for days! The doctor came every day, packing and re-packing his nose. This had happened before, when I was a year old and the stock market crashed. It was high blood pressure that caused the nose bleeding, the nose acting like a pressure relief valve.

At the store, Dad had his right hand man who did all the motor winding. Dad had kept him going all through the Depression, even when there was virtually no work. So when Irv came to the house to see Dad, we just thought it was a social visit. But it wasn't social at all. Irv told Dad he was quitting and going to Consolidated. Not what a man with high blood pressure should be told and I'm sure it raised the pressure even higher.

Norm Utech came to work as motor-winder, but was much more, a solid man who could be depended on. Dad relied on Norm a lot in the two years before Dad died. Norm then bought the store and ran it for twenty years before he also died too young.

Now to the pea soup. With Dad in bed the whole house revolved around the sick room. No TV in those days, so we all took turns keeping Dad company. With so much extra work, Margaret didn't have time for a lot of cooking so she made a big pot of pea soup. We had pea soup for days. When we objected, Margaret held a contest to see who could eat the most pea soup. I didn't eat any pea soup for years after this marathon soup-eating contest, but now I like it again, and it always reminds me of Dad.



Joe Staub in short pants, left

Gib's This & That

As New Products Manager of "Consoweld," Gilbert Endrizzi helped produce their countertop laminate. At home, he used bits of the plastic-like sheets to invent or duplicate works of art through mosaic.

Now, more than half a century after our first meeting on the banks of the One Mile creek, Gib continues to produce works of significance. Lately, he has embraced the digital technology that makes it possible to scan photos and post them via email to a list of interested persons. With the following, he initiated his first "This & That."

While cruising through my IPhoto file, the photos here caught my attention. Several people I know (maybe even you) might find it of interest.

Such is the case with many of the photos I have accumulated over the years. I would like to share them broadly, but selecting likely interested parties from my address book each and every time I wanted to send a picture would be endlessly time consuming. And so I hit upon the idea of compiling a list of those who might have interest in some of these pictures...

Many of the pictures will probably be family-related, and of no particular interest to those not of the family. Many will be of historical interest. Some will be just plain fun.



Kathryn ("Kay") Kyle Endrizzi, wife of Gilbert
(1923 - 1995)

Kay

Here's another all-time favorite. Needless to say (Kay being 6 months older than I) I didn't take this one. But somehow, it showed up in our high-school annual. I copied it from there. I never cease to be amazed at the resultant quality, as in this case, where the original copy was a screened print only 2" x 3". This was a very young Kay, surrounded by typical Hurley snowbanks. That's St. Mary's school in the background.

Some of you will remember the string to which our mittens were attached and then threaded through our coat sleeves in order to keep them from getting lost. And zippered overshoes — when is the last time you saw a pair?

This picture is one of many I have taped to the walls of my little computer room. It catches my eye a dozen times a day and lifts my heart every time.

Dan

We can only guess at the cause of Dan's distress. Clearly his playmates are of little comfort. In fact, they seem to find varying degrees of pleasure in his discomfort. Whatever the problem, he sets forth a strong appeal to our sympathies. Growing up ain't easy.

Gilbert's son, Dan Endrizzi, center, at landmark waterwheel on Two Mile Avenue, 1956, with (left to right) John Endrizzi, Pat Marsh, Roger Marsh and Mary Endrizzi



Bob & Gib

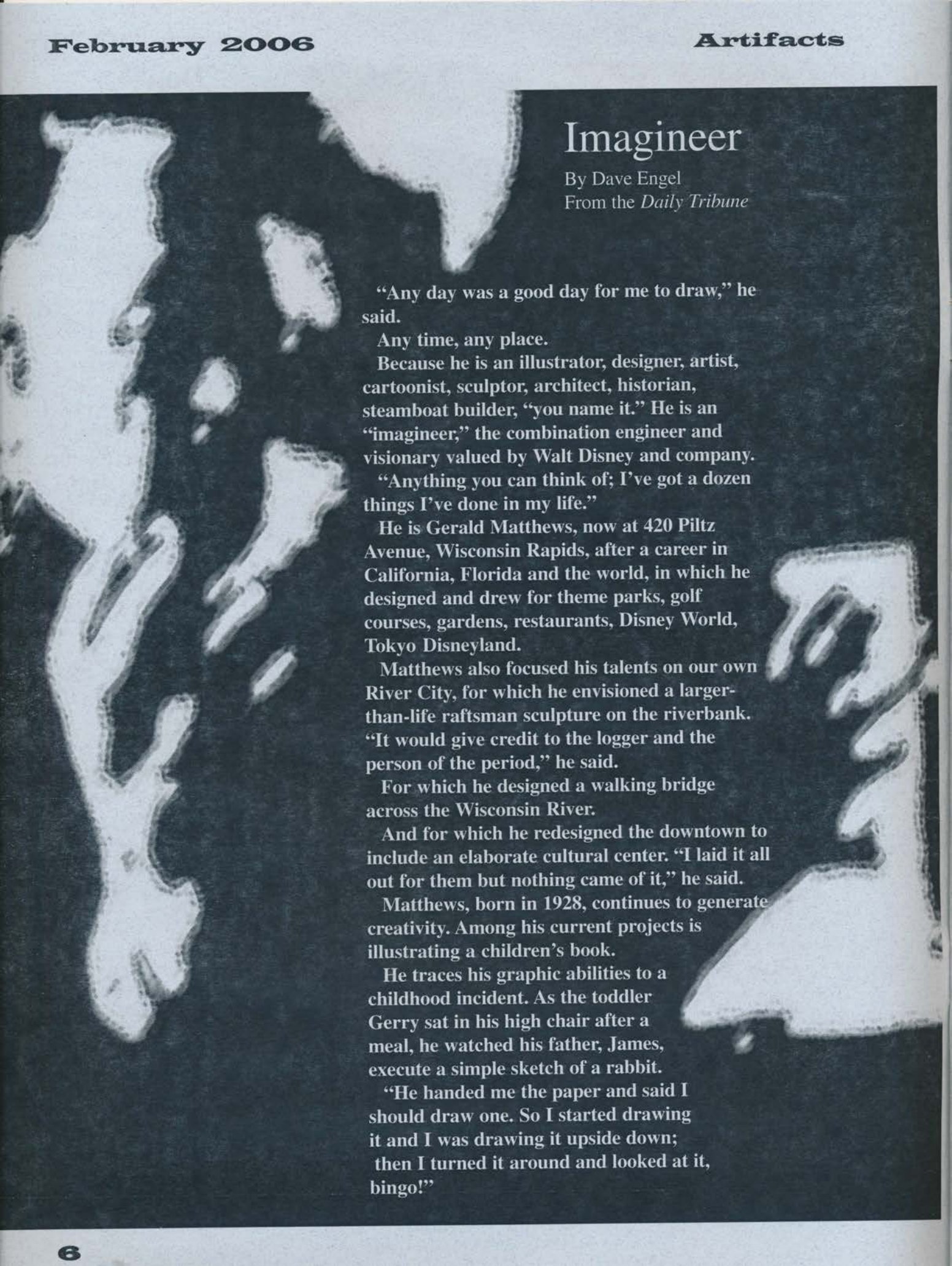
Uncle Ledger had a Fox Terrier bitch named Rita. On this occasion she bore a litter of 5 pups. We were offered our pick of the litter and we chose Ginger. A great choice he was! Smart, loyal, courageous — he was all of that. But he had a fault that was his undoing. It was chasing cars.

Shortly after this picture was taken he met his demise under the wheels of a green Buick sedan which then sped eastward out of sight. He was only three years old. It occurred in front of our home, only a few feet from the site of this picture.

Bob and I both witnessed this terribly traumatic experience. It stayed with us for a long time.



Hurley, 1932



Imagineer

By Dave Engel

From the *Daily Tribune*

"Any day was a good day for me to draw," he said.

Any time, any place.

Because he is an illustrator, designer, artist, cartoonist, sculptor, architect, historian, steamboat builder, "you name it." He is an "imagineer," the combination engineer and visionary valued by Walt Disney and company.

"Anything you can think of; I've got a dozen things I've done in my life."

He is Gerald Matthews, now at 420 Piltz Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, after a career in California, Florida and the world, in which he designed and drew for theme parks, golf courses, gardens, restaurants, Disney World, Tokyo Disneyland.

Matthews also focused his talents on our own River City, for which he envisioned a larger-than-life raftsman sculpture on the riverbank. "It would give credit to the logger and the person of the period," he said.

For which he designed a walking bridge across the Wisconsin River.

And for which he redesigned the downtown to include an elaborate cultural center. "I laid it all out for them but nothing came of it," he said.

Matthews, born in 1928, continues to generate creativity. Among his current projects is illustrating a children's book.

He traces his graphic abilities to a childhood incident. As the toddler Gerry sat in his high chair after a meal, he watched his father, James, execute a simple sketch of a rabbit.

"He handed me the paper and said I should draw one. So I started drawing it and I was drawing it upside down; then I turned it around and looked at it, bingo!"



Matthews

Grim Natwick, known best for creating the animated figure Betty Boop, inspired Matthews to further pursue his talent.

During a visit of Natwick's to Rapids, "my grandmother introduced me to him," Matthews said.

"He came at Christmas time. Of course, I ended up with the surprise that he was going to be there."

At Howe school, "The art teacher put me on one end of the stage and he was on the other.

"So I had a little, 'Who's the fastest with a sketch?' and I did pretty well and he was delighted."

Much later, the two met again in California. Natwick was in his last days and Matthews treated him to dinner.

Matthews said he was "well used" during his days at Howe school and at Lincoln high school, where he drew a lot of posters.

During World War II, the Matthews family moved to a farm. Gerry said he rode the bus for a while; then went to a little country school house to "get my classes."

After high school, Matthews entered military service during the Korean conflict. He was trained in California and Florida, before being sent to Anchorage, Alaska.

"I loved it," he said. "This was adventure."

From 1952-56, Matthews, then married, attended the University of Wisconsin on the "GI bill." He moved back to Rapids as a freelancer before being hired by General Electric in Schenectady, N.Y., at a time when Ronald Reagan was company spokesperson.

Besides "Seckatary Hawkins" contests, a popular feature of the time, Matthews had other contacts with the *Daily Tribune*. He helped his father with newspaper deliveries, not so bad except in winter and when dodging dangerous dogs.

Hank Silka, of the Tribune circulation department, also managed Skyway, a ballroom/skating rink near the community's airport on First Street South.

Matthews, on leave from the military in 1949, recalls an evening at Skyway. "The minute I walked in the place, ten or twelve kids that knew me crowded around.

"She was clear down the line somewhere. She kept giving me a big smile."

"She" was Marilyn Westfall, then a senior in high school.

"Once the music was going again," Matthews said, "I kind of walked away and asked her to dance."

They danced and, according to calculations, have been married now about 55 years.



Matthews

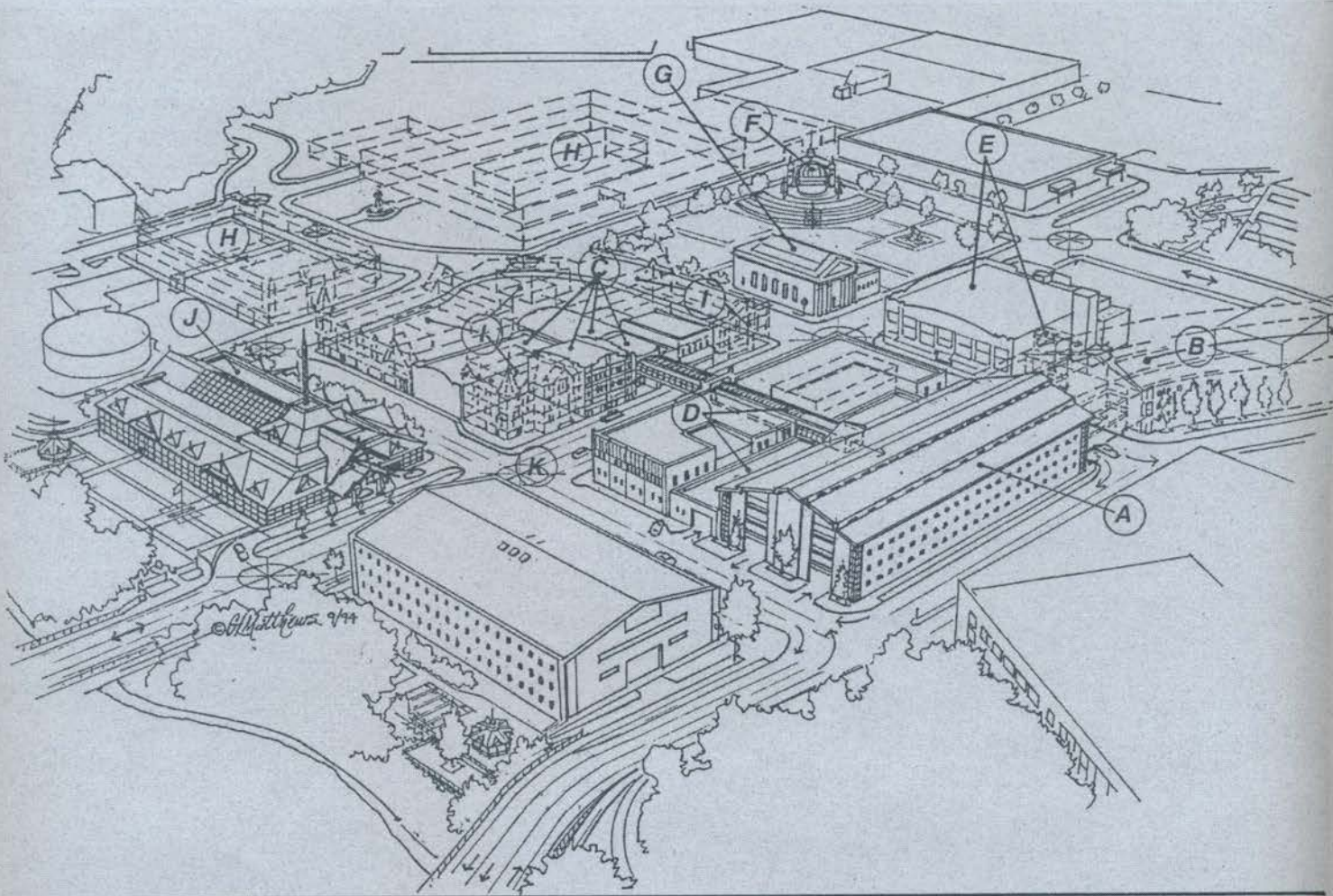
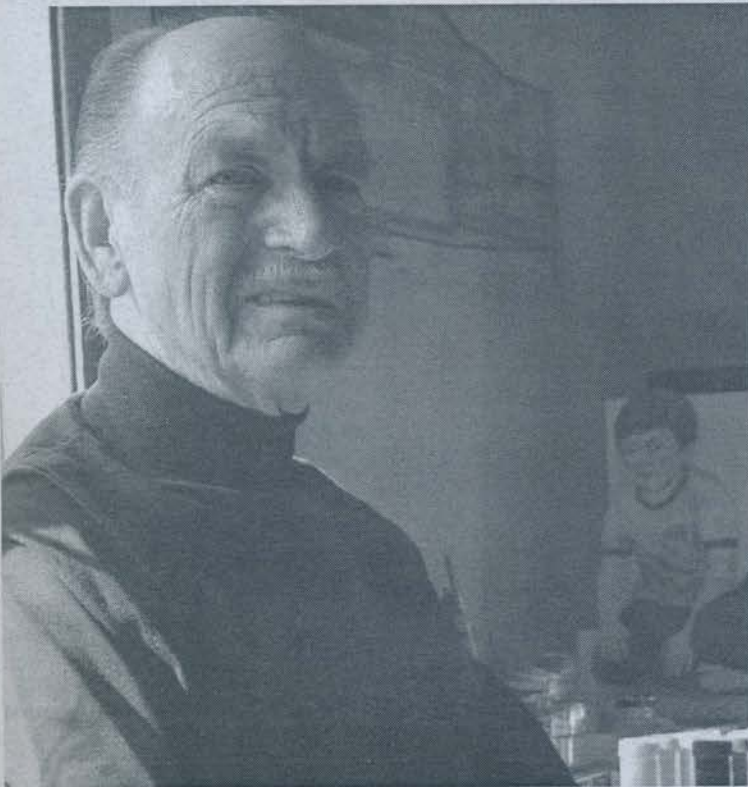


Photo by Dave Engel



Matthews

Rapids native Gerald Matthews conceived grand projects for California, Florida and Wisconsin Dells but he focused enough of his ready talent and creativity on our own River City to create the plans shown here.

To orient your view of the above aerial sketch, locate the Stora Enso River Block office building at lower left-center.

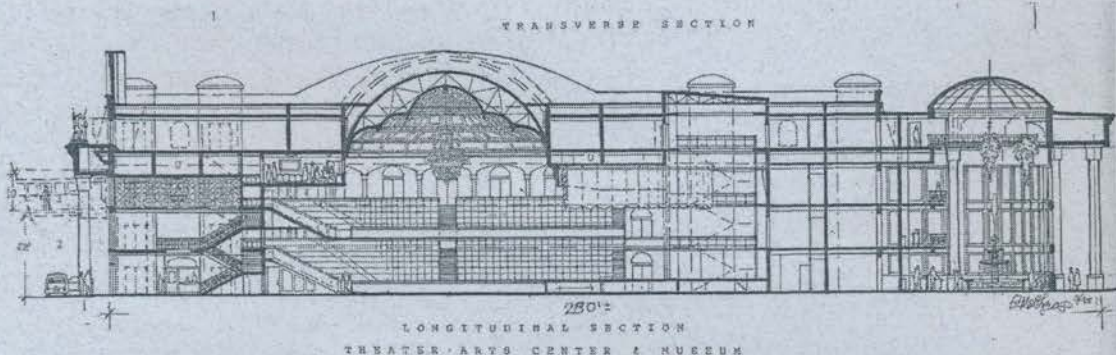
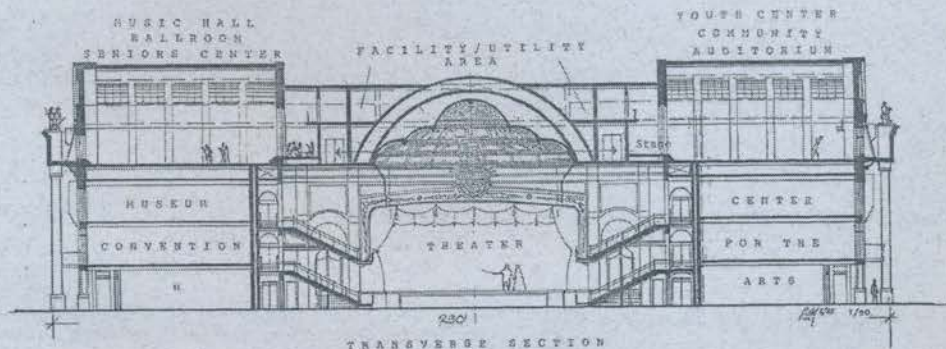
REVITALIZATION PLAN

KEY

- A - New Parking Garage (3-4 Levels)
- B - Future Expansion to the Parking Garage (A).
- C - Theater (w/renovation & added Entertainment & Media Training capability as part of the Arts College (H).
- D - Future 2nd Story Corridor/ Bridge from mid-level of Pkg. Garage (A) & the possibility to shelter the service/Pkg. area behind the Witter Blk. businesses.
- E - Future Campus (H) Performing arts Theater & Work Shops W/ possible tie-in to the future expansion of the Pkg. Garage (B)
- F - Future Campus Park a Band Shell & Fountain or other water feature (to be created) for a variety of community entertainment uses.
- G - A perfect facility & Campus (H) Cultural Center w/ Visual Arts class rooms & Exhibit space... also an appropriate symbol that fits the need architectually.
- H - Site for the future (after Wal-Mart moves) Rapids Fine Arts College W/ education & training in the arts (visual, theater, dance, music, writing & media production & fund raising performances (E & C)
The facility behind the Tribune is an appropriate location for a College "Dorm", College Cafeteria and some parking benienth.

- I - The Theater Block will become the center of the West side business district W/ first level business 2nd & third levels to be offices and some leased housing. This is to be the heart of the downtown day & night community that will bring life back for years to come. This same kind of thought needs to be applied to the East side revitalization efforts as well.
- J - The whole concept of revitalizing any thing, is giving it new life. Therefore this building will be the appealing piece of the new life/image that will bring life (people) into the downtown again. This is to be a 'Bed & Breakfast' Hotel with a first level Parking Garage for 80 cars/guests, shops, a main floor ballroom w/ a stage, meeting rooms & catered meal prep & service. There will be a top floor atrium (glazed), Fine Dining with entertainment, lounge and a large day & nighttime activity area to appeal to young & adult guests or local community visitors, with the latest 'state-of-the-art' individual activities experiences & entertainment 'virtual reality' & electronic Miniature Golf
- K - This indicates areas that can be closed off from traffic for a special event. A 'Streetscape' that becomes pedestrian friendly & is well lighted with people scale area lighting & landscaped, more than other thoroughfares.

Contributed by Gerald Matthews



Keeping Hep With Home

by Dave Engel
From the *Daily Tribune*

"There wasn't anybody immune to the threat of that world. We were worried here in Wisconsin Rapids and Biron about the enemy coming."

So recalled Jack Kahoun, now secure in his Lincoln street home across from the high school he attended during World War II.

"Hitler was bombing England; the next thing was to take over England."

A couple weeks after his 1944 graduation, Kahoun joined the military effort to put an end to Hitler's burgeoning holocaust.

Biron had a small village atmosphere, said Kahoun. It also had a strong sense of patriotism.

Consequently, when World War II came and young people began leaving for service, the village formed the Biron War Service Club (of which Kahoun's father was president).

Wrapping bandages and assembling packages were popular activities. But perhaps most important was *The Biron News*, a correspondence that equally informed service-folk, mostly male, and villagers at home.

The staff consisted of Eudora Beadle, editor, and Dorothy Brandt, Fayth Atwood and Betty Groszklaus, associate editors.

"We can serve them best by sending them messages from home which are laden with the love and devotion we hold for each one of them, whether they are related by blood ties to our members or not," said the *News*. "Each Biron boy is, after all, 'our boy' in the service no matter what his name."

Further, the *News* hoped to "fill the great yearning of the Biron boys, located in the four corners of the earth, for more and yet more news from the home town, which is so solidly behind them in their great contribution to the holy cause for which they are fighting."

In a similar vein, Earl Otto wrote: "We let them know in a very pleasing manner that this is 'our' war, not theirs alone...all doing something to get Hitler's hide."

"We're going to get him and Tojo all stuck up with war stamps, all bound 'round with war bonds. We've told our boys all this and we've told them that we will keep them supplied with news, smokes, cookies, jokes, anything to help get the axis goats."

Most issues of the *News* used purple ink, ditto machine style. Two issues were printed professionally at the *Daily Tribune*.

One version of "Mill Notes" by Granny Weaver counted 95 boys gone to soldiering with more to be leaving soon: Eddie Haydock, Lawrence Kohnen, Eddie Molepski, "Sam" Bodette and Paul Gross.

Meanwhile, "As of old, any noon hour you will find Fred Vidal, Geo. Cumberland, Walter DeKarske and Gus Beatz down in the Store Room playing Sheephead."

Among activities reported from the Biron Community Hall were bowling, basketball, bingo, pot luck suppers, community singing, speeches, dancing, cards and a costumed band that included Warren Beadle and Phil Nobles

A 1943 issue said, "Biron is almost overrun with Rapids kids...They come up just about every Friday night to dance or else to see the various girl friends they have that reside in our big town."

To further the war-conservation effort, at least 8,000 containers of fruit and vegetables were canned at the hall.

Also busy were the Biron swimming pool, the Biron store and "Joe's" where "Nellie" served up her famous "Bar. B. Q."

Of the newsletter, *Daily Tribune* editor, father of a soldier and Biron cranberry marsh owner, William F. Huffman, wrote, "As one newspaper editor to another, you're doing a bang-up job of keeping Biron's men in service hep to what's what in the old home town."

"In fact, so commendable are your efforts that the Biron News has been made required reading for members of the staff of the Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune."



The Biron News

Published monthly at Biron, Wisconsin by the Biron War Service Club in interests of Biron Men in the service of our country.

Editorial Staff

Eudora Beadle Editor
Dorothy Brandt, Fayth Atwood and Betty Groszklaus, Associate Editors

August, 1943

Editorial

America's war effort is approaching the more crucial stage. Every statement from top military commanders, heads of governmental agencies and even from the President indicate that our boys in the armed forces will be meeting greater tests of courage and devotion to the United Nations cause.

Viewing the situation realistically, we now face, in the Biron War Service Club, a greater responsibility to our men in the service. We owe them everything we can provide them in the way of encouragement and support. The Club members have talked this over in recent meetings and have concluded that it is impracticable and impossible to send them gifts and articles of tangible things. We can serve them best by sending them messages from home which are laden with the love and devotion we hold for each one of them, whether they are related by blood ties to our members or not. Each Biron boy is, after all, "our boy" in the service no matter what his name.

It is that message we now send to each one of the men in the service wherever he is. It is the reason why the club has gone forward in producing THE BIRON NEWS in this new form. This newspaper, more complete with pictures and more news than ever before, is a printed and much-to-be-proud of publication that will fill the great yearning of the Biron boys, located in the four corners of the earth, for more and yet more news from the home town, which is so solidly behind them in their great contribution to the holy cause for which they are fighting.

Each Biron resident should feel his own responsibility to back this effort by attending club meetings; taking part in the activities of the club; serving on the various committees and contributing his part in the all-out effort we are undertaking as a War Service Club to be of fullest service to our nation, our servicemen and our community.

Let us work together always!



Paratrooper In Suspense

Bob Kahoun writes that this was the easiest landing he ever made. He says, "The wind carried me into the tree, and all I got was a slight jerk on the harness, although I did brush through the outer branches on the left side of the tree as you see in the picture. I was plenty scared that my canopy would collapse and slide off the tree, but it luckily did not, I stopped about 13 feet off the ground. When this picture was taken I had unsnapped the left side of my reserve chute and was hanging, reminiscing on how to get down as I carried no jump rope. I slipped out of my harness and hanging on to the bottom of it, dropped to the ground, thus having as hard or rather harder landing than if I hit the ground in the first place."

Bob Kahoun,
Camp Mackall,
North Carolina.

Mrs. Beadle, Mrs. Kahoun and Mrs. Sherman spent Tuesday afternoon making bandages at the Red Cross headquarters in the Mead Witter block.

Letters From Biron Boys

June 22, 1943
North Africa.

Dear Club Members,

I received your paper today and was sure glad to get the news from the good old home town. I got Jimmy Newman's address from the paper and wrote a letter to him. I don't think that he is very far from me. I might get a chance to see him I would like to hear from Junior Otto and some of the other boys from Biron. The only one I heard from over here was Chet Prusynski.

There isn't much to write except that I am OK and having a little fun. We sure have a hard time trying to understand the natives and have them understand us. They talk very little English and speak the Arab language. There also are the French who make up the majority of the population in North Africa. Well there isn't much more I can write about so I will have to sign off until next time.

One of the Biron Boys
George Galganski

July 16, 1943

Members of the Biron War Service Club,

I have been receiving your copies of the Biron News. It is a very interesting paper and I am sure it is enjoyed by all the Biron members of the armed forces.

I am stationed at Keesler Field, Mississippi. It's a good camp but the wether is quite miserable.

I am waiting to attend Aviation Mechanics school. The schools specialize in the B-24 (Consolidated Liberator) bombers.

I have met a few Wisconsin Rapids boys. Roger Klappa is also here but I haven't looked him up as yet.

Well I imagine most of you are busy with your victory gardens. I hope you all have good results.

Yours Sincerely,
Arlyn Johnson

John Bengert, Jeff Akey, Ray Aughey Grannie Weaver, Ralph Turner, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Wallock, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pivinski, and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Herms, all attended the Volunteer Fire School at Pittsville Sunday.

The Biron News

Official Publication of the Biron
War Service Club



Volume 1

August, 1943

No. 8

Biron Boy Wins Purple Heart

Jim Newman Is Decorated

Pvt. James W. Newman, son of Mrs. David Newman, Biron, has been awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in action. He was severely wounded while in combat in North Africa last December.

Pvt. Newman is the first Biron man in the armed forces to be decorated in World War II. The Purple Heart is an award bestowed only upon men who have suffered wounds in action. It has been one of the army's most coveted medals since Revolutionary war days, and in this war has also been officially adopted by the navy.

As a matter of record Pvt. Newman was wounded twice, the first time during the initial American invasion of North Africa last November 8. At that time he was taken prisoner.

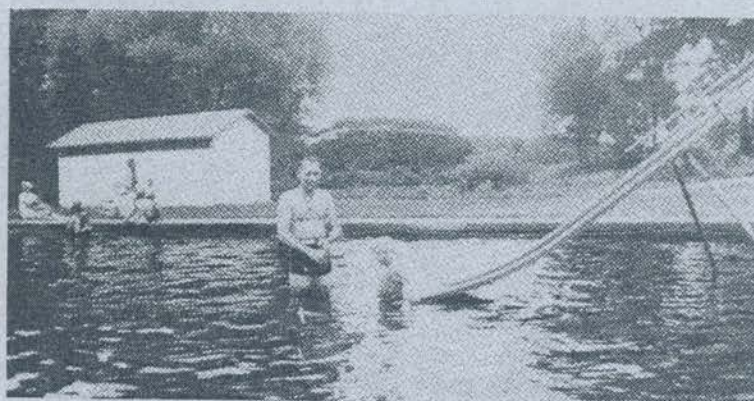


His mother reported that she never did learn how he finally got back to his own group, but assumed that he must have been taken prisoner by the French and was later released when they joined the allies.

PVT. NEWMAN then fought for six weeks before being wounded severely last December.

Pvt. Newman was a bed patient for 25 weeks following his second mishap, but is up and around now. Recently he wrote his mother that he was "very 'ucky, though—luckier than many others," though he will never again have the normal use of his leg.

He is back in the United States again, after being hospitalized in England since last March. His mother received word from him from Massachusetts a few days ago.



Biron Swimming Pool Does Big Hot Weather Business

Biron Swimming Pool has done a land office business this year. This popularity was well deserved because the pool is a well built and well managed place of recreation and one which many a larger community would be envious of. The weather played an important part in the popularity of the pool, too. This has been a very hot summer, as summers in Wisconsin go. For weeks we had a heat spell that really made the pool a most inviting place, especially for the youngsters, many of whom just about lived in the water during the sweltering weather.

Aug. 13 Busy Day

Records indicate that Friday, August 13, which was a real warm day, proved that Biron kids were not superstitious at all because on that date the largest day's business of the season was enjoyed. Ninety swimmers visited the pool that day.

Looking at the records again we find that there was a minimum of accidents at the pool. Jim Akey cut his foot and Harold Oleson suffered a scratch. Jud administered first aid to the casualties in quick order in his efficient way. Also from the records, it shows the warmest temperature of the water in the pool was 80 degrees on August 1st.

No wonder the place to keep cool was the Biron pool.

Slide Gave Way

Worst casualty to the equipment was the caving in of the slide one day when a visiting lady of no light weight nor dainty proportions thought it was a good idea to chute the chutes on our slide. It had to be repaired, needless to say. While that job was being done we went a little further and had the chlorine tank repaired. While Jack Kahoun was still life guard he employed some of his extra ambition to good advantage and painted the inside of the boy's bathhouse.

Just as one would expect, a big flood on the Biron cranberry marsh let go and the pool came in for a flooding too. The end near the diving board went out and the washout had to be repaired.

Still Got Sand Burrs

The final fixing job was the repainting of all the benches a nice bright color.

Just to let everybody know we want to say that the sand burrs are still there, only there are more of 'em.

Taken all in all this has been a very successful season for the ol' swimmin' hole.

BIRON NEWS

VOL. 2 NO. 7

JULY

1944

THIS ISSUE OF THE BIRON NEWS IS DEDICATED TO
 PFC. ROBERT KAHOUN, KILLED IN ACTION
 IN FRANCE, JUNE 19, 1944.

The Village of Biron was greatly shocked and saddened on Thursday July 6, when word reached here that one of our own boys, Pfc. Robert Kahoun, had been called upon to make the Supreme sacrifice on June 19, in Normandy.

Bob enlisted in the Paratroopers in November 1942, and after months of vigorous training received his wings at Fort Benning, Georgia in April, 1943.

He was home on furlough last December, leaving here on Christmas Day and shortly after sailed for England. He was in training there until the invasion.

The information from the War Department was that Bob was killed in action and we who knew him know that it was undoubtedly even beyond his line of duty, for the words "Greater love hath no man than that he give his life for another," truly fitted Bob. The letter he wrote his parents on June 17 fully proves his thoughts were always for others.

Every acquaintance was a friend, for to know him was to love and respect him so even though the Supreme Commanding Officer has called roll, to us he still lives on.

We know that his sentiments would have been:

"Sunset and evening star
 And one clear call for me,
 And let there be no moaning at the bar
 When I put out to sea."



The complete text of the letter, Kahouns received from Bob the same time they received the message from the War Department is as follows:

"Here I am in France and writing at the earliest possible moment, for I know how you must have worried. I can't write much as yet but will, first chance I get. This is just to relieve you and let you know I am well.

We've really got those Krauts on the run. Everywhere they go they leave a trail of clothing and equipment.

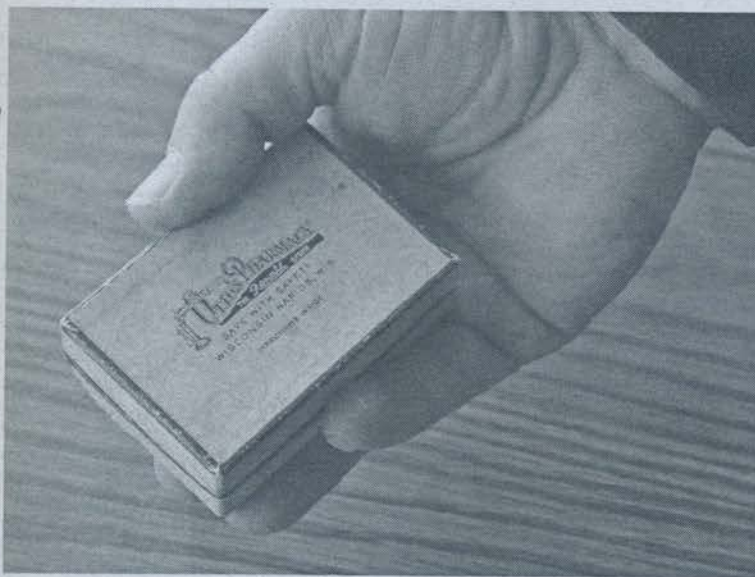
Please keep from worrying as much as possible. Try to forget this thing and before you know it I will be back home again. I worry more about how you feel than anything else. It is good to see these French people smile, as they stand by their ruined homes. They smile as though what was ruined was never there, but when rebuilt will be.

God bless you all and keep you safe and well for my return."



Grand Avenue.
Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Photo by Dave Engel



Box from Otto Pharmacy

Looking West from Grand Avenue Bridge

Consider the differences in these postcard photos and the centerfold on pages 16-17. Note that the name "Wisconsin Rapids" was applied in 1920. "Grand Rapids" was used for the west side, 1900-1920.

- Buildings
- Businesses
- Methods of transportation
- Signs
- Street lighting
- Street surface
- Sidewalks
- Clothing



Photo by Dave Engel



Phil Brown's Den of Antiquity

A regular feature
from a SWCHC
board member, historical collector and
Cranmoor cranberry grower

A souvenir of Otto's Pharmacy





Looking west on West Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, *circa* 1949. Landmarks include the Nash Hardware/Montgomery Ward building at left, the Citizens Bank/Wisconsin Theatre and First National Bank/US Bank. Signs of interest: Wesely's Bar & Grill, Quick Lunch, Winn & Murgatroyd, (Daly) Pianos.



On the north (right) are Johnson Hills, Mead Witter Block and River Block (location of Stora Enso office building). Signs of interest: Dixon hotel, Anderson Drugs, Western Union, Frank Abel's Clothes Shop, Wilpolt's Restaurant, Gibson Home Furniture.



Dave Engel photo

John and Mae Natwick

Our 20th Century

John and Mae Natwick

March 10, 2005
With Dave Engel
Jim Mason present

Condensed and Edited

Dave Engel: What year were you born?

Mae Natwick: 1918.

DE: And the date?

MN: February 6th.

John Natwick: She's 87.

MN: And John is 92.

JN: Well, will be.

MN: My father died in December 16, 1947, I think it was.

DE: That would be Martin Jacobson?

MN: That's right. My father was a councilman from the third ward. He was program chairman of the Victory Garden and had a canning center downtown. He was also co-chairman of Savings

& Loan, active in the Kiwanis and trustee of the First Congregational Church.

Somehow, in 1934, they were talking about a zoning restriction and my dad said, "My prediction is that if things are going as present, thirty years hence we will see Eighth Street as the business district in Wisconsin Rapids."

My father would build houses all along Elm Street and we'd move into them and then he'd sell them, and we'd move to another one that he'd just built. I don't believe my mother ever got fully unpacked. I can count seven houses on Elm Street that we lived in. The three stucco houses were ordered by Mr. Mead for his new men that were coming in as executives. And the house across the street from where you [Jim Mason] lived was where Mr. Graves, the lawyer lived. We lived in that house first.

While I was growing up, I went to school at the Normal School.

Top to bottom: "Old old" Lincoln high school, Wood County Normal, Witter Vocational Training School



JN: Well, you were in the model school at the Normal School, which was a teacher training school. They taught all grades and were taught by student teachers that were headed up for years and years by a Miss McDermott. They really toed the bar for Miss McDermott. Ran the model school, which was the school for training teachers in the Wood County Normal.

MN: Yes. It was a small class and it held all the classes, first, second, third grade, fourth grade. I went through first and second grade in one year.

Then we went to Florida in 1926, during the boom. My father had contacted somebody and he was going to help build the Florida Keys.

But my mother got sick and we stayed in Orlando for a while and then we moved over to Winter Park. My brother, George, went to Rollins College. My brother, Lester, was in high school and I was supposed to go to third grade, but the only grade opening was in the black area and my mother wouldn't let me go to school. She was very prejudiced.

JN: Well, she was afraid of them.

MN: When we lived in Orlando, we lived in an apartment house and right next door to us lived the midgets from Ringling Brothers Circus, because they had their winter quarters down there.

When I was in fourth grade, I was still in Florida. We were there from October until about June. Then I came back to the Rapids and my father had built the house on Third Street that Lamberts live in now. And that's where we stayed most of the time.

Jim Mason: Lambert's daughter lives there.

So then I came back and went to school. All eighth graders in town had to go to Lowell school. No busing, we walked. Then we walked back up to the high school for cooking and



Martin and Aletta Berg Jacobson

sewing and manual arts, once a week. Miss Roach and Miss Flannigan

DE: So you were how old when you came back to Rapids?

JN: You must have been about eight.

MN: Yeah.

DE: You were in Florida how long?

MN: Just the winter. Mother didn't like Florida. There were too many black people down there. Mother didn't like that.

DE: How about your dad. Did it bother him?

MN: My dad was a kind man that liked everybody. That's why he was so successful in Wisconsin Rapids.

DE: You went to eighth grade at Lowell school.

MN: Lowell School and then we had to walk back.

DE: And back to Lincoln.

MN: And so when I graduated from high school, I was just sixteen.

DE: And what year was that?

MN: 1934.

DE: So you graduated from the new high school.

MN: Yes, the first building was 1931. That was the first graduating class and Helen Murtfeldt is the only one I know in town now.

DE: [Looking at clipping] Hans Berg killed by lightning. In bed?

JN: He had a metal bed.

MN: Honest.

JN: Brass beds, probably one of those brass beds.

DE: June 6, 1896. Did your family know him? Do you know this guy?

MN: No, I never saw him because he died when my mother was a young girl.

DE: How did it come to your attention?

MN: Well...

JN: Don't you think her mother talked about it occasionally?

MN: My mother suffered a nervous breakdown after that happened. She was only twelve and she had to go over to some doctor, someplace over by Amherst for quite awhile.

That's where the Home Furniture is now, on West Grand Avenue. I went in there one day and I said, "I don't know whether I like this place or not."

He looked at me sort of strangely. And I said, "Before you took down that house, that was the house my grandfather lived in and was killed by lightning." It was really a scare in the community when that happened.

DE: So Hans Berg was your grandfather?

MN: Yes.

DE: It was your mother's father?

MN: Yes.

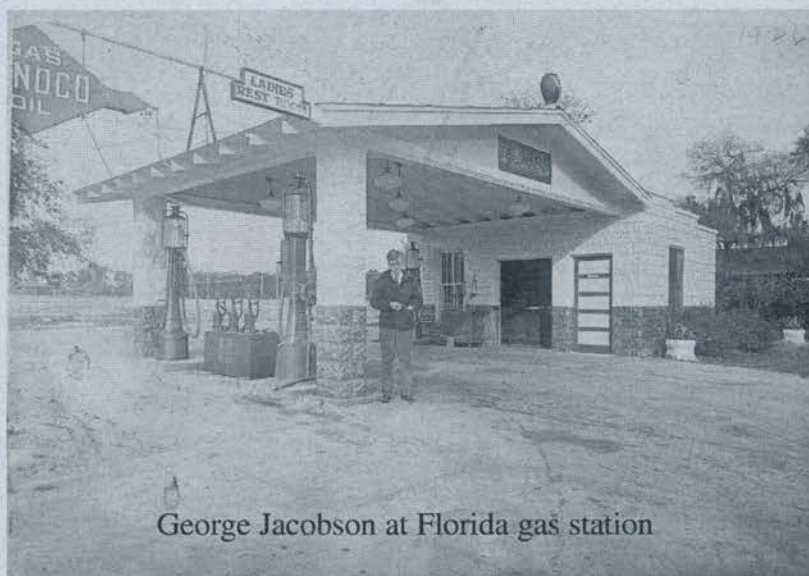
DE: That's why she had the nervous breakdown.

MN: Yes. She saw him all in flames, all fire,

and the fire departments of course didn't come like they do now.

DE: That's quite a story, now that I know who it was.

MN: That was a tale, we as children, we were never allowed to stay on a bed during a



George Jacobson at Florida gas station

lightning storm.

JN: Well, your mother just had to get everybody up.

MN: We had to be up and we had to be sitting where we could get out in a hurry. My



Dave Engel photo

John Natwick

grandmother, I never knew her; she died before I was born. She married Nels Sundet, who was a tailor.

DE: So when you came back from Florida, did you live in the Elm Street area? Where did you live then?

MN: I think we lived there for a little while, and then we moved down to Third Street because my father built that house, across from Joan Haasl.

We lived in that house until my father sold it, again, and then we moved up on Baker Street, on the [northwest] corner of Eighth and Baker, that big house.

Then Judge Conway bought it from us.

We moved again. By then, John and I were married from that house and we've been married now, 67 years this year. We were married in 1938.

MN: George [Jacobson] is my brother. I had two brothers, George and Lester. George served in the Seabees and when he came back he went into the Building & Loan again and served as Justice of the Peace until his health broke him down. Alcoholism and stuff, gleaned from the war, just took its toll on my brothers. He spent his time in the war in service.

John tried to get in, but he couldn't.

JN: In 1942, in the Marines, as a college graduate, I could have been commissioned immediately at that time. But they turned me down for physical reasons and I think I've outlived that doctor quite a bit.

DE: That takes you through high school.

MN: Yes. Then I went to work as payroll clerk at Preway with Mabel Justeson and Dorothy Colby, whose husband was a dentist.

I stayed at Preway until I was married and then I went back again off and on for Al Bark, who was a wonderful man to work for.

MN: I would play jacks on the steps outside our house and Mr. Leonard, the minister would come by and he'd always talk to me and I said to my mother, "I want to go to Sunday school at that church. I like that church, I like that minister."

So I went there. My father was Lutheran and mother was Moravian and so they gave up their church and probably became as active as anybody ever has been in the Congregational Church, all our lifetime that I knew them.

Through my lifetime, up until this last two years, I've been very active in church myself and

What Do You Think?

1934
TODAY: Do You Believe Wisconsin Rapids Should Have a Zoning Ordinance, Restricting Construction of Business and Industrial Establishments in Residential Districts?



John Robert, attorney: I have always been in favor of carefully planned zoning. While it is unfortunate that the zoning ordinance of several years ago failed of passage, we should take up again at this

time the zoning proposition.

George Damitz, fourth ward alderman: We should by all means have a city zoning ordinance, and it should include not only business and industrial establishments but also home building and planning as well.



Martin C. Jacobson, secretary, Building & Loan Ass'n: I believe in an ordinance, but it should be broad enough to take care of future expansion of business. It is my prediction that all things are going

at present, 30 years hence will see Eighth street as the business district of Wisconsin Rapids.

John has been treasurer for thirty-three years, up until a few years ago. Every Sunday afternoon, he'd sit at his desk and count the money. We've made many friends, most of them now are gone.

DE: We're going to find out where John came from. What were your parents' names?

JN: Well, my father was Frank J. Natwick. He was christened Franklin, but he always called himself Frank and most everybody else did, from New Hampshire. My grandmother was Henrietta Lyon, before she married my grandfather. George Hill was her first cousin.

He came to live with the Lyon family, because, I don't know what happened to his parents, but he evidently was an orphan and he came here to live with Mr. and Mrs. Lyon. So, George Hill would be my first cousin, twice removed. He was the one that went in with Johnson.

MN: Ken Hill's grandfather.

JN: Yeah, that would have been Shaw Hill's father. Shaw, by the way, was not his name. Harold Hill, and everybody called him Shaw.

The reason for that was because when he was a kid, our church, which was the Congregational Church, had a minister named Shaw. And apparently he had certain mannerisms that Harold Hill would copy and mock him and his friends started calling him Shaw. And so he was called Shaw Hill for the rest of his life.

JN: Well, anyway, we lived in Peoria, Illinois, until 1925. My father saw a chance to start his own business in Peoria selling Kelvinator refrigerators. Now, electric refrigerators back in those days were just coming in and it's a big job of selling people on the idea of electric refrigerators because we always had ice men coming along chopping off their chunks of ice, every other day or so.

People were satisfied with the fact that they had to get these chunks of ice in and then they'd have to drain, they'd have a pan

underneath the refrigerator to catch the water and you had to be sure to empty that now and then or you'd have it running all over the floor.

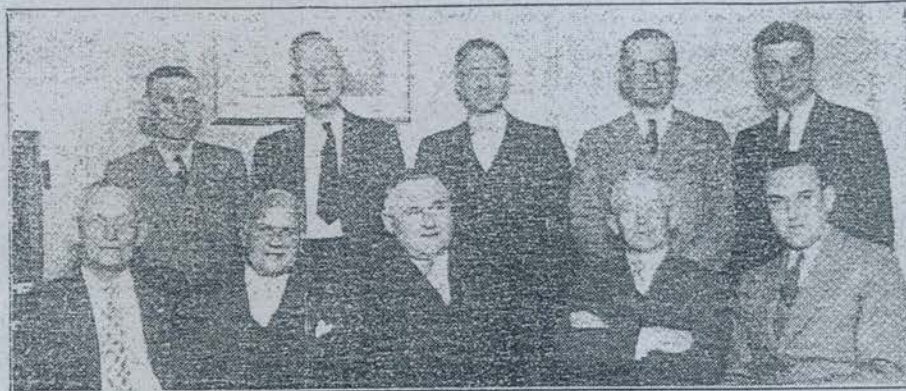
So, when my father went to Pittsburgh, he got financing to start a company to sell Kelvinator refrigerators on the home market. And I remember a lot of the job was, they'd have classes of women come up to the office area, oh, every week or every month or so, and they'd show them what an electric refrigerator could do.

They'd make desserts, frozen deserts and stuff like that.

I guess they sold quite a few refrigerators to women that they demonstrated what an electric refrigerator could do.

We lived there for a while. I went to eighth grade and a couple years of high school there. About that time, my father and mother decided that they couldn't get along so they got divorced and my sister, Barbara, and I came back to Wisconsin, only not to Wisconsin Rapids.

BUILDING AND LOAN OFFICERS GATHER FOR MEET



Retiring officers and members of the state executive committee of the Wisconsin Building and Loan league are shown above as they assembled last night at the Hotel Northland for private sessions before opening of the league's two-day convention here. Front row, left to right: G. A. Karsten, Milwaukee, treasurer; Robert E. Elsner, Milwaukee, Milwaukee league committeeman; A. A. Abrahams, Oshkosh,

Eastern Wisconsin league; J. F. Lefebvre, Green Bay, president; and John E. Mahoney, Milwaukee, vice president; back row, left to right: M. C. Jacobson, Wisconsin Rapids, Northeastern league; Charles M. Fors, Marshfield, executive committeeman; Harrison L. Garner, Madison, Wisconsin Central league; Fred H. Schulz, Racine, Racine-Kenosha league, and Carl Taylor, Milwaukee, secretary.

'Once upon a time . . .'

10 YEARS AGO

Thursday, September 30, 1937

Appointment of Miss Lyda Lesig as itinerant instructor to work with homebound individuals in their homes, teaching them handicraft of all kinds, as a part of the program being launched by the Kiwanis club, was announced at the regular weekly meeting of the club at the Hotel Witter by W. A. Sprice, chairman of the committee in charge of the project. The local vocational school through the state board of vocational education is cooperating with the club in the program.

Martin C. Jacobson, secretary of the Wisconsin Rapids Building and Loan association, left this afternoon for Milwaukee where he will board a special train carrying Wisconsin building and loan executives to California for the national convention of the loan groups to be held at Los Angeles. Jacobson has been secretary of the local association for the past 10 years.

'Once upon a time . . .'

10 YEARS AGO

Friday, February 18, 1938

Martin C. Jacobson, secretary of the Wisconsin Rapids Building and Loan association and real estate broker, today accepted an appointment as chairman of a better housing committee to be organized in Wisconsin Rapids to sponsor a revival of residential construction. His appointment was made by Stewart McDonald, federal housing administrator, Washington, D. C., under provisions of the new federal housing act recently passed by congress.



Narwick

By then, my grandfather, my mother's father, who had started up as principal in the Normal School here, had gotten a job of state librarian for the school system. And it was a much better-paying job, and so on and he kept that job until he retired.

That was in Madison. He had an office in the state capitol. So we moved there, because that was where my mother's family mainly was, and I lived in Madison until I was twenty-one years old, and had finished high school and went to the university. By then it was 1934, right in the midst of the depression. Jobs were probably harder to get then than they are now.

MN: [From a synopsis] Mae graduated from high school at the tender age of sixteen and worked for Preway.

John, having graduated from the University of Wisconsin, gave up his dream to be a lawyer, instead, recognized the realities of the depression, came to Wisconsin to work at Consolidated. He began there in the summer

months where he lived with his grandparents. Later, he put his growing knowledge of the paper industry to work and for a time became an itinerant teacher of paper technology...

DE: So did you work at Consolidated before you came up here or did you start here after college?

JN: Well, not quite. Because, my uncle, Clarence Jackson, being the manager of this division, was in a favorable spot to get me a job.

I worked a couple of summers. I worked in summer up in the core department, taking cores off the machines, piling them up, tying them up and so on. Then I worked in the finishing room in the mill, one or two summers.

There was at least one summer he couldn't get me a job so I worked as a paper boy down in Madison. When I graduated, I graduated as an economics major. In fact, I spent a year in law school, but there weren't

any jobs that I could find or anything. He managed to get me a job starting in the mill.

DE: About what year was that?

JN: 1934.

DE: 1934, the depression.

JN: And I got a nice job, paid \$14 a week. I was actually kind of a supernumerary in the office, that first job.

DE: You were the extra guy in the office.

JN: That's where I worked for, I don't know, might have been three, four months, and then I got into the mill as a tester in the pulp mill.

I remember the biggest item in the first year that I worked for Consolidated, the big flood of 1935 in the spring.

MN: When we lived on Third Street, we had water in our back yard.

JN: Anyway, the flood came because there was an ice jam up above Biron. And the ice jam gave, broke, came lose and broke all the flash boards on the mill at Biron and it all came piling down at the Rapids.

Ice and water and the water was up pretty close to six feet deep in the main floor, in the bottom floor in the main office and it flooded, of course, the ground floor in the mill, the whole thing. The mill must have been down a week from that flood.

It really was the worst thing that happened to the company in all the years that I was there.

That was in the spring of '35. By then I was a pulp tester in the pulp mill. Of course, everything shut down; there wasn't any pulp to test. I worked for a while, helping dry things out for two, three days, anyway.

DE: What's the pulp mill compared to the sulphite mill?

JN: It was the sulphite mill, which there isn't any more.

DE: Was Bill Prebbenow there?

JN: Bill Prebbenow was the superintendent of the sulphite mill when I worked in it...

Anyway, I gradually managed to work up.

I worked for a while in the paper mill as a tester, too. Tester, paper inspector and then they sent me back to the sulphite mill to be pulp

bleach plant foreman. That must have been about the time the war was starting, about 1941.

So I worked as a bleach plant foreman there for quite a few years, fifteen years or so.

DE: So you worked with Larry Murtfeldt, too?

JN: Very definitely. Except my immediate boss as foreman was Prebbenow. But, I got promoted again to Larry's job and Prebbenow didn't get promoted and he was real put out at me.

DE: So you spent quite a few years at the pulp mill?

JN: Yeah, and then I got promoted to be pulp superintendent.

DE: When was that?

JN: That must have been about fifty-one, fifty-two, something like that. So I was in charge of the sulphite mill, the groundwood mill, and we made semi-chemical pulp, then, too. Three types of pulp we made with this mill. That was before the kraft mill ever started. And...

DE: Did you know George Mead?

JN: George Mead worked over there for a while when I was foreman of the bleach plant.

DE: That would be young George.

JN: Well, he, when I was foreman in the bleach plant. George just got out of school. They wanted him, and I suppose he did, too, to get familiar with the various parts of the mill and the production and so on. He spent, maybe, six months over in the pulp mill. And, in a way, I was his boss, but not really. But, you look at a line of progression of people in various jobs, and his job was under mine. But, I didn't give him much in the way of orders.

DE: What was his job?

JN: He was doing various kinds of test work.

DE: Was that his first job at Consolidated?

JN: I believe that was his first job at the mill, yeah. Cause he was over at the Institute of Paper Chemistry in Appleton for a year after he graduated from college somewhere.

DE: When you started at the mill was George "one" in charge?

JN: Oh, yes, very definitely.

DE: What was your relationship with him?

JN: My relationship? When I would see him, I would say "Good Morning Mr. Mead." And

sometimes he might remember my name because my uncle, Clarence Jackson, was always quite a favorite of George Mead's and I'd been introduced to him, of course. And he went to the same church as we did, too.

But, I didn't really have any relationship with George W. Mead Sr.

DE: Did you ever have one over the years, did it develop or...

JN: Oh, no, after I had been pulp superintendent for a number of years, then, they promoted me to assistant manager of the division, probably about, lets see I retired in '78, that was probably about 1965.

DE: Stanton Mead is the one that you would have worked with?

JN: Well, I wouldn't necessarily have worked directly with Stanton because I was assistant manager and the manager would have worked directly for him. I never did get to be manager of the division.

DE: Who was the manager?

JN: My last boss was Don Stein. Before that, it was Max Hughson for a while. I worked under him. Before that, it was Bill Foote. He was my immediate boss and there was a time when we weren't making much money and they fired quite a few people. One of them was Bill Foote, who was a graduate of the Institute of Paper Chemistry. He had a Ph. D.

DE: Let's go back to how you two got together.

MN: Through the Congregational church. John always went there. His grandfather went there every single Sunday. Sat in the same pew every day and that's what John's doing now, I think.

MN: And all the friends that we have made through the years have been wonderful. And to think that I was chosen as Mrs. Wisconsin Rapids was a great honor.

DE: When was that?

MN: 1967. I got a plate in the kitchen that I can show you.

JN: The only Mrs. Wisconsin Rapids that we've ever had.

June 6, 1896

SEVERE ELECTRICAL STORM.		Tv
Hans Berg Killed by Lightning and Others Badly Scared.		
The Twin Cities were visited by a severe electrical and rain storm Saturday night at about 9 o'clock.	ca	
The home of Hans Berg, Centralia, was visited by a stroke of lightning at this time and Mr. Berg was killed instantly. The lightning entered the house by the chimney on the north-east corner. It passed downward and into the upper chamber where it broke out opposite of where Mr. and Mrs. Berg were lying in bed killing him instantly and never touching her at all.	Re	
After passing through his body burning his head, face and arm, it continued downward through the bed into the wall again and down into the ground. It set fire to the house but the excessive rain put it out before any damage was done. The other members of the family were badly scared but none of them were injured.	ab	
Mr. Hanson Nelson Berg, was born in Norway, August 28, 1851 and was therefore nearly 45 years of age, was married in 1876, and came to this country in November 1879, three years after. They came direct to Grand Rapids where they resided until 1885 when they moved to Centralia where they have ever since resided. Mr. Berg was a carpenter and builder and was employed by the C. M. & St. P. Ry. Co. and Port Edwards, Centralia & Northern railroad for many years bridge building. The last carpenter work he did was upon the Grand Rapids Pulp & Paper Co's mills at Biron. He leaves a wife and three daughters—Olga 18 years of age; Hilda 16 years of age; and Alta 11 years of age. He also leaves one brother—Ole Berg and one sister Mrs. Dora Martinson, both residents of Centralia.	pr	
Mr. Berg was a hard working man. A kind husband and father and a good citizen. His widow and three daughters have the sympathy of the community in their sudden loss of husband and father. They desire to express their thanks to their friends and neighbors for assistance rendered during the funeral service.	be	
The funeral service was held at the Moravian Church Tuesday morning Rev. A. Peterson officiating.	cit	

BUILDING, LOAN HELPS FINANCE 16 NEW HOMES

IN ADDITION TO SUPPLYING 43 PER CENT OF MONEY FOR NEW HOMES, ASSOCIATION HAS LOANED \$21,000 FOR MODERNIZING.

"The Wisconsin Rapids Building and Loan association has, during 1934 helped finance 16 new homes. The average cost of each home was about \$4,000, making about \$62,500 in new homes for the city. This association furnished approximately 43 per cent of the money to enable these citizens to have a home of their own," M. C. Jacobson, secretary, said in summing up the affairs of the association during 1934.

"In addition to loaning for new homes this lending agency has advanced over \$21,000 for modernizing homes in Wisconsin Rapids. This is in line with President Roosevelt's modernization program.

Dividends Next Week

On December 31 a large number paid-up and installment stockholders will receive their semi-annual dividends. In 1934 over \$28,000 will have been paid out to these stockholders. This is slightly over a 1933 dividend disbursements. Last year the rate was 5 per cent. This year 5.2 per cent.

"The paid-up stock savings for a year are well ahead of last year's. This is a good criterion that people are being able to save more in a last year.

"Considering the number of applications for new loans and those contemplating applying for loans, the 1935 business will be quite a bit ahead of 1934," said Mr. Jacobson. The Federal Housing program would stimulate the building industry and release money to enable the people to modernize their homes. This program will get under way shortly in Wisconsin.

Sees 1935 Improvement

"While not predicting any boom for the coming year," he said, "business in general, stimulated by various federal agencies should forge well ahead of 1934. As to our local conditions, there are about as many working in our factories now as in 1928. Construction work seems to be the only outlet left to put our unemployed to work. Every citizen should boost for a large building program. There is a shortage of good homes for rental purposes. Many traveling

Urges Building



M. C. JACOBSON
Sec'y, B. & L. Assn.

Unemployment can be reduced by construction program in 1935, Mr. Jacobson says in urging building projects.

ty even a larger number would be attracted here." and the effects of the Federal Housing act upon the building industry will be important factors in the improvement of the business of the Frank Gill Paint Co., according to Frank Gill, head of the firm. He stated to The Tribune that he expected 1935 would be more steady in business volume for his concern than either 1933 or 1934. Both of these years were somewhat abnormal because of the CWA activity which brought on a heavy demand for paints during the fall of 1933 and early winter of 1934.

The demand of 1935 for paint products will be on a more normal basis and in all probability will be greater throughout the whole year, Mr. Gill believes.

Make Paints Here

The Gill company manufactures a wide range of paints for home, farm and industrial uses. During the year eight people have been employed in the manufacture of these paints in the local plant.

At Minneapolis the company operates a branch retail store and warehouse where shipments are made into the northwestern territory. Paint is the only product made by the firm, but they do an extensive business in the jobbing of wall paper,

BANNER YEAR FOR BUILDING & LOAN ASS'N.

JACOBSON REPORTS \$40,000 GAIN IN ASSOCIATION'S ASSETS DURING 1937; TOTAL OF \$109,800 LOANED.

"When the books are closed for the year 1937, we will have listed this as one of the banner years of our association," M. C. Jacobson, secretary, said in an interview with The Tribune about the affairs of the Wisconsin Rapids Building & Loan association. "The association will have assets in excess of \$630,000 or a gain of about \$40,000 in the past 12 months," Mr. Jacobson said in pointing to figures on the statement.

The local association has a membership of over 900 persons, in itself a gain along with the financial progress.

Lends Large Sum

Asked about the total loans granted to local people in home building, modernizing and financing, Secretary Jacobson stated that in the year just closing there was loaned the total sum of \$109,800 for these purposes.

Appoints Jacobson Housing Chairman

Martin C. Jacobson, secretary of the Wisconsin Rapids Building and Loan association and real estate broker, today accepted an appointment as chairman of a better housing committee to be organized in Wisconsin Rapids to sponsor a revival of residential construction.

Mr. Jacobson's appointment was made by Stewart McDonald, federal housing administrator, Washington, D. C., in a telegram Thursday afternoon. His appointment was made under provisions of the new federal housing act recently passed by Congress.

All business organizations in Wisconsin Rapids will be called upon to support the residential construction program revival, Mr. Jacobson said today.

Jim Taggart's Family



This is Jim Taggart's family. Jim is an operator at Interlake Bleach Plant.

St. Valentine Party

The party is to be held at the "Bucket of Blood" cafe. The inquisitive reporter has the low down on those invited and wishes to let all in on the secret. Claude Lynn and Leo Barrett are amongst those attending, Claude in the guise of a little school boy bringing his teacher a nice red apple. Leo is going along representing an emblem of safety—he is not taking his car along. Stanley Clapp will be there as Santa Claus. He is always giving something away. Ralph Cole is going in the guise of a bald knight—this will be a dark mystery. Art Madson is going—representing a walking delegate. Ben Heger, Joe Steib and Fred Eberhardt will be singing minstrels. One of their numbers will be IN-VOICE. Jim Plzak is going to give a recitation—"The Shooting of Dan McGrew." Mr. Wake is going to give a paper on the percentage of fallen curves on box car wheels. Walter and Stanton Mead will do some fancy high diving. Mr. Thiele will render a solo—"The Blue Print Paper Blues."

John Wesley will give a paper on "My 50 Years Experience as a Grape Grower"—Alex Bandeline will not be there. Earl Hill will render a whistling solo. Eva Whitman, Irene Laramie, Esther Nye will render a sketch—"Unpublished Remarks on Ediphone Cylinders." Leila Peltier, and Miss Ebbe and Easter Peltier will present the "Dance of Dawn," later in the evening. Clara Kirschling will give an account of her 75 years experience as a switchboard operator. Jack Northan and Brony Gamroth will do some fancy ice skating on a three foot sphere. Bill Franson and Henry Mosher will render a piccolo solo—Bill says he has an old pick at home and Henry will give it the "low down." Miss Reiland, Miss Wagner, and Dot Porter will represent "Flaming Youth." Mrs. Teas will cap the program by filing the proceeds. Vinc. Pavloski will give an account of his miraculous escapades at Stevens Point. Florence Sonnenberg will draw a bill of lading for the menu.

A Real Valentine

Virgil Ray, an 8 pound boy, arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Coulthurst of Biron. Ray operates the Bark press but finds plenty of time to relate the possibilities of this fine lad.

John Janikowski was off duty because of illness a couple weeks last month. John underwent an operation to have his tonsils removed.

Thirteen???



The Interlake Division has no monopoly on Rabbit Stories—there being several pedestrians killed or injured every year at Biron shortly after Bill Hamm predicts the ice safe enough for them to cross over from Rudolph.

The young man on the left in the picture, and note the Safety-First position of the guns, is none other than Ervin Marcoux of the Biron Millwright Crew. He's a thorough sportsman, prouder of his ability with a gun than with the reel. Erv is one of these fellows who is willing to work anytime, overtime, Sundays or Holidays but reserves the right to be missing from the ranks during Chicken season. Erv states that the rabbits, shown in the picture, all met death by crashing out their brains against the building in one of the Rudolph to Biron rushes—at least that's how he accounts for the thirteen dead, the bag limit being five per.

"Between Games"



Harold Sowatzke, son of Charles. Sowatzke, printing room foreman at Ahdawagam. Harold will be remembered by indoor fans as holding down third base for the Bear Cats.

The First Thing To Do In Accidents

Keep cool. Send for a physician.

Move patient to a quiet, airy place.

Keep by-standers at a distance.

Handle patient gently and quietly. Place him in a comfortable position. Unless the head is injured, place it on the same level as the body. Loosen collar, waist band and belt. If patient is nauseated, turn him on one side with head low. Cover and dress all wounds immediately.



Mildred Meinberg, Interlake Division, daughter of Herman Meinberg.

Doctor: "And do you take exercise after your bath?"

Truthful patient: "I generally step on the soap as I get out."

Consolidated Stockholders Meet

President Reviews Company's Rapid Development

On Wednesday, January 26th, the stockholders of Consolidated Water Power & Paper Co. met for their annual meeting at Wisconsin Rapids. Reports were given of the year's progress and plans for the future.

Mr. Mead, President, gave a report of the condition of the Company in a financial way and also listed the outstanding improvements. Briefly he outlined the financial history of the Company which began thirty-three years ago as Consolidated Water Power Co. In 1902 the capital investment of this Company was \$183,000, representing the value of the water power at Wisconsin Rapids. Additional capital has been added and earnings have been reinvested so that now the Company is capitalized with eight millions.

Mr. Mead also called attention to the fact that along with the lower price received the past year for newsprint costs of production have decreased. The Company did not accomplish this by lowering wages. On the contrary, wages have increased. But new machinery and close attention to the old have resulted in increased efficiency of operations. Also, excellent water power throughout the year contributed largely to the decreased costs realized.

Kroehl Lauds Accounting System

Mr. Howard Kroehl reported on the accounting work of the Company. He explained that we have kept pace with modern improvements of system and machinery for handling accounts so that we now maintain an excellent accounting department. Facts and information necessary to those who must know the financial status are constantly at hand. Reports for the U. S. Government regarding Income Taxes and information for bond holders are always available in complete form.

Mr. Kroehl explained the practice of maintaining a depreciation fund. Buildings and machinery are constantly wearing out or becoming out-of-date and useless. If this were not recognized and allowance were not made, the properties would be carried at values beyond their worth. The Consolidated makes generous allowance for depreciation so that property values on its books are as near correct as possible.

Personnel Policies Outlined

Mr. Walter L. Mead described in his report the Personnel Department and its functions. The Department was instituted as a distinct part of the organization in February, 1926. Its purpose is to recognize men as elements in operation and production distinctly apart from machinery and requiring distinct consideration. He outlined the Company's policy of filling all positions of greater responsibility with men already in the organization. This means that the Company must constantly help its employees to learn its methods and policies so that vacancies can be filled with men already partially trained for the positions. The Company will be stronger in this respect. It also means that the men themselves realize that opportunity is always present for them within the Company.

The Personnel Department is constantly striving to reduce industrial accidents. Mr. Mead explained that all the risk of accidents is assumed by the Company. Accident insurance removes the attention to accident prevention to an outside concern which does not have the personal interest. The Company, that has to pay directly for each accident will do all possible to prevent accidents. In addition to the theoretical gain, actual cost figures show a financial gain, one that is shared by employer and employees.

The vacation plan inaugurated during the year proved eminently successful. It is regarded as progressive and sensible by the managers and by the men.

Thiele Describes New Mill

A report of the operations in Port Arthur was given by Mr. Thiele. Mr. Thiele explained the general plans by the use of blue prints. The geographical position of the mill on Thunder Bay was pointed out on a map. Then the various units of the mill with respect to each other were explained. The mill's excellent position on the Lakes in regard to shipping was emphasized. Also, Mr. Thiele showed that the engineers had taken the opportunity given by level land to arrange the different parts of the mill in a most convenient and efficient manner. Power for running the new mill will be furnished by the government water power company. Spruce wood is available from timber limits granted by the government which afford practically a perpetual supply.

Boyer Paints Bright Future For Interlake

Mr. Boyer presented a forcible argument for improvements on the Interlake sulphite mill. Due to the fact that both the land and the power of the Appleton mill are leased under long term leases instead of being owned, Consolidated has allowed only the absolutely necessary investments and repairs. Mr. Boyer traced the history of the mill which first cooked "Interlake Genuine Mitscherlich Sulphite" in 1891. He concluded the history by saying:

"The Consolidated Management bought the old Interlake mill in 1916 and at once began a modern program by installing a half carload of window glass smashed during a previous labor tornado. A modern acid plant in 1919; a pioneer thick stock bleaching plant in 1923; a water treating plant in 1925; a machine room cost reducing change in 1925; and wood room changes in 1924 and 1926 followed. Your improved mill plus a genuine Consolidated spirited operating organization made the previous banner year of 1925 fall far short of production records in 1926."

Mr. Boyer showed that with old worn-out digesters in old buildings the mill had produced pulp equal both in quality and quantity to that made in its best days. He then pointed out the greater opportunity of having paper machines at Appleton in connection with the production of pulp. Stock which is now dried, loaded, shipped and unloaded into outside mills could run direct to paper machines in wet form with the cost of the other steps completely eliminated. Mr. Boyer concluded:

"Over optimism did not create these figures as such vain ideas die a quick death amid coal dust, sulphur fumes and pale yellowish chlorine gases always present in a sulphite mill. Rather, they are plain facts easily verified and here presented to indicate that out of Interlake's past, there exists a successful present, and that there can and should be an even greater future."

On conclusion of the reports, directors for the ensuing year were elected as follows: G. W. Mead, President; R. L. Kraus, Vice President; E. B. Redford, Secretary; S. W. Mead, Treasurer; T. W. Brazeau.

Farm Kid

By Dave Engel
From the *Daily Tribune*

Last spring, Donald Justin Isherwood showed me the family farm on Isherwood Road, southeast of Plover, Wis. Here, the original farm kid had cows to milk, barns to clean, silos to climb, straw to smoke and cats to launch into orbit with a hearty, "Got 'm!"

The book's narrator is not an exact copy of the young Don, he says. The kid in the book is more astute. "I was a wise child but I had fun. Really wise children do not have fun. Such a sense of liberation. I find it difficult to imagine comparable childhoods now, just being that active and capable of so many choices."

But wasn't it a hard life?

"We were labor-intensive children. I resented it partly but at the same time I was so glad as a kid that I could burn up my energy against something."

Wasn't it lonesome?

"I liked being alone. Maybe there was no choice so I made peace with it. I could take a dog and a .22 and go into the woods and be deeply content, and still can."

"Doing farm chores, it wasn't any big deal to talk to yourself or think to yourself. I learned to sing."

Can the book be read purely for fun?

"The chapters are short, they're quick, they're in and out. You enjoy it that way. I'll send along a roll of toilet paper."

Like his current fascination, "Hank" Thoreau, of Concord, Mass., Isherwood cannot resist his calling as an uncommon commentator.

On the material plane, Isherwood's houses must have towers. And he presently ruminates in an odd structure referred to as "Mid-State Poetry Towers-Plover": no house attached.



Photos by Dave Engel

Justin Isherwood

Left, Mid-State Poetry Towers-Plover
Below, old dairy barn

In the same spirit, "Farmkid" might look like a simple book. But, it comes with towers attached.

When I asked him what questions he would really like to answer, Isherwood offered a transcendental missile.

"What is the quest the narrator's on? Is it Biblical? Is it spiritual? Is it mere curiosity?"

"The narrator is asking the native questions we all ask but we're too afraid or too polite to say out loud."

"What's God? What am I about? What's the difference between me and a frog?"

"They are heathen questions I suppose. Though in truth I am and will always be a seminarian. The right question is whether I'm writing scripture or not and I am."

"The act of understanding life is a continuous strand. When you stop it at a segment saying we have sufficient answers, you do some kind of wrong to spiritual

life; you do wrong to life.

"I am part of that evolution and I take it seriously. But not without a good deal of fun. That probably separates me from true seminarians."

History at McMillan

By Don Litzer
Former Head of Adult Services,
McMillan Memorial Library

Those of us at least of baby-boomer age may dimly remember the twilight of newspaper publishing in Vesper. A full run of the *Vesper State Center* from volume 1, issue 1 on October 5, 1911 to its final issue of July 16, 1964, has survived and has been microfilmed.

For a time, however, there was newspaper competition in Vesper. According to the narrative accompanying the Vesper Photograph Collection on McMillan Library's Local History On-Line courtesy of Marlys Steckler of Wisconsin Rapids (<http://www.mcmillanlibrary.org/history/vesper4.html>), the *Vesper Pioneer* was published by John and Kate Hoeneveld from 1910 to 1920. However, until recently, only a single issue of the *Pioneer*, located by Steckler, had been found.

At this point, a detective story ensued to track down additional copies of the elusive *Pioneer*. Heart of Wisconsin Genealogical Society members Arlene Keehn, Marlys Steckler and Joan Benner learned that a barber at Mr. Image Hairstylists in Wisconsin Rapids had some old Vesper newspapers. When a letter to the establishment yielded no reply, I visited Mr. Image in person for a turn in the chair. Proprietor Tom Schooley (who gave me a pretty good cut, I must say) informed me that I was looking for Dave Zieher, his former partner, who had retired in July 2000.

Dave Zieher no longer lived in the area, but Tom provided me with contact information for Amy Slattery, Dave's daughter. After Amy gave me her father's phone number in Lake

Tomahawk, I called Dave. Dave graciously gave us permission to review and microfilm the old newspapers he had, which had been collected by his father, Nick Zieher. Over the holidays in 2000, a box of newspapers made its way to the Library.

While most of the papers were issues of the *Vesper State Center* and *Pittsville Record*, at the bottom of the box were two extremely yellowed and fragile copies of the *Vesper Pioneer*. Together with the copy Marlys Steckler had previously found, 12/13/1912, 5/14/1913, 11/27/1914 issues have now been located and microfilmed.

Once the collected issues of the *Centralia Enterprise* (125 issues), *Daily Reporter* (1,990), *Wood County Reporter* (18 plus 16 comic supplements), *Nekoosa Port-Edwards Weekly News* (23) and *Vesper Pioneer* (2) had been collected—2,174 issues in all—arrangements were made to deliver them to the Wisconsin Historical Society for microfilming. On August 10, 2001, then-*Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune* reporter Mark Scarborough and I loaded a minivan with the newspapers and made the road trip to Madison. Almost three years later, by May 2004, the last of the newspapers had been microfilmed and copies of the microfilm had been received at McMillan Memorial Library.

For a listing of the newspapers on microfilm owned by McMillan Memorial Library, I invite you to check McMillan's Local Genealogy page on the Web at http://www.mcmillanlibrary.org/local/local_genealogy.html — and thanks for your support in helping SWCHC and McMillan Memorial Library make history.

From the Museum

Thank you to Unifirst Corp. for services rendered. We appreciate what you have done. Also, thank you to the Master Gardeners for the beautiful gardens last year. We are looking forward to working with you again.

This year we will open on Sunday, May 28, and our last day of the season will be Sunday, September 3. We will be open Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-4.

Our staff will be Amy Konietzki, Megan Lobner, and Rebecca Pecher. If we are lucky again this year, John Billings will be in as often as he can be.

We are in the process of installing a new exhibit in the room that held the surveyors' display. This exhibit will contain history of the local area.

In December, we had water damage to the ceiling, walls, and floor in the Front Gallery due to a break in a water pipe on the second floor. We were fortunate that Grim Natwick art work in the room was not damaged.

Finally, a reminder that if you have not paid 2006 dues by the end of March, you will not receive the May issue of *Artifacts*. If you have any questions about your dues, please call the office at 423-1580.

Karen Pecher
Administrator

To My Valentine

Pens are busy, most hearts are gay
Wake up you chump! It's Valentines Day.

Sharpen your wits, scribble a line
No matter how homely, I'm your Valentine.

Consolidated News.



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