

THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

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THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

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COVER PICTURE

Windmills bring to mind the years of early America. They were once a familiar sight on many farms but now are scarce. This one, located on a hill overlooking Yarrow, was once owned by Michael Weber who operated the Yarrow Mill. The photograph was taken by Chris Lowe in October, 1985.



Walter H. Ryle III not only enjoyed teaching, he also enjoyed gardening. He is shown here pollinating a gladiola. See related story on page 14.

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The Porter School was closed in May 1967 when it was made part of the Kirksville School District. The building was sold at an auction for \$450. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)



Marie Turner Harvey was nationally and internationally recognized for her work at Porter School. She travelled all over the country giving lectures about her ideas for rural education. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

The Effect of One Woman

Many people of Northeast Missouri have a special place in their hearts for rural schools. They were a place where their children could be brought into the great world of knowledge yet still feel right at home. One of the schools that was known for its high educational standards in a home-like setting was Porter School when it was under the direction of Mrs. Marie Turner Harvey.

The Porter district was a nine mile square district, three miles west of Kirksville in the Benton Township. The land was donated by John L. Porter. In 1892 the school was built. The cost of the school was \$600. After the school was completed, it was left unattended until Mrs. Harvey came.

Before Mrs. Harvey came, Porter had gained the reputation of being the worst district in the county. Even though it was one of the richest farming communities in the area, it lacked community spirit, involvement, and interest in education. This was partially caused by the lack of a permanent teacher. The district often had two teachers a year, one for the winter session and one for the summer session. When a teacher spends only three to six months in an area, it is hard for them to pull the people together. The people in Porter district also felt that school was a school; if you were looking for involvement you looked to the church. Before Mrs. Harvey came they had no chance to look to the school for community events.

Marie Turner Harvey came upon the Porter School and the community because she heard of their needs. She had been teaching at the Model Rural School on the State Normal School campus, but she wanted to get into a more

realistic setting. She felt that the school on campus was not a good place to practice new theories of rural education because in order to see the real effect they had they must be present in the child's whole life, not just the school day. This wasn't possible at the Model School because the children were transported to town and then sent home at the end of the school day. Because of the children's commuting, the school wasn't a part of their community so what was taught wasn't always a part of their home life.

Mrs. Harvey had learned, through her teaching in the rural St. Louis area and being a pupil herself of a rural school for 12 years, that the school could become the center of the community. But in order to do so, the teacher must be totally devoted to improving the community.

It was with this in mind that in the summer of 1912 Mrs. Harvey went to L. B. Sipple, the county superintendent, and requested that he give her the worst district in the county. When he told her of Porter, she said she would take it provided that she would be given three years there to teach material adapted to the needs of Porter students. She would be allowed to do this without interference from others, provided that it met state standards. She also would have a residence of her own within the community. Both of her requests were granted.

The schoolhouse Mrs. Harvey found waiting for her was not by any means ready for classes. Before classes could begin, she got people of the community together. There were six or seven families that were the core of the community. These families had been waiting for the chance of a better

educational opportunity for their children. Some of the families were already acquainted with Mrs. Harvey through the Model Rural School. They were eager for her to come to their community. Under the leadership of Mrs. Harvey they worked together to obtain their goal of a better education for their children. Others soon followed their lead.

The men of the area dug a basement, and put a foundation under the school since one hadn't been put in when the school was built and now they needed it to put in a furnace. In order to do this, they jacked up the building. Sand needed for the foundation was hauled from Rye Creek. The men also worked together to put a new roof on the building. A new furnace was installed along with a new water system including a pressure tank and drinking fountain. Broken windows and cracking plaster were also repaired. After the work was completed the school was once again in condition to be used. But Mrs. Harvey wanted the school to be a pleasant experience for the children, so the walls were papered, windows were covered with shades, and pictures were hung on the walls. All this was done with funds and labor donated by students and parents. The only thing they didn't pay for was the water system which Mrs. Harvey paid for with her own money.

When classes did start, Mrs. Harvey brought many traditional subjects along with new ideas to her schoolroom. Mrs. Verlie Findling recalls many days of hard work in reading, geography, history, math, and English. But mixed in with these were art, music, and social behavior which included manners and learning respect for others and their property. The students worked until their lessons were correct. Mrs. Harvey's definition of right is different from the one popularly held. To us an "A" given on a report card is the best that can be earned; Mrs. Harvey didn't believe in grades or report cards, so none were given. Her students were advanced when she thought they were ready.

The curriculum taught wasn't just the basics and it wasn't confined to the traditional classroom methods. Mrs. Frances Wright, a former student of Porter School, remembered how the school day started, "Every morning we said the Pledge to the Flag and then we opened all of the windows and marched around the room to 'Washington's Post March.' No matter how cold it was, that was our morning ritual." The day ended when the students went home in the wagon Mrs. Harvey bought to transport the children from outlying farms. The wagon was driven by patrons and pulled by their horses. All of these activities were done to promote a sense of community patriotism.

Not everything taught at Porter was directed toward the goal of improving the community; although they did in the end. Some subjects were taught to improve the person or the family. Such things as art, music, and penmanship were used to improve self-worth. If the student could draw, sing, or write something that pleased someone, it improved self-worth.

The eighth grade class of 1926: Glenn Conner, Nell Fish, Lorene Gruln, Mary Lee Ingraham, Mike Tomich, Pauline Green, Mrs. Marie Turner Harvey, Laura Harth, Victoria Tomich, Gordon Ingraham, Norma Meyers, and (seated) Geneva Summers. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Verlie Findling and Mrs. Frances Wright)

Students were also taught skills to help them in family life, both in their present and future lives. They had some economics, gardening, and manners. The value of the first two is evident. These are skills needed to run a home, but manners and respect for others were very important, too. These gave the rural child the ability to be put in situations foreign to rural life and still feel comfortable, for the students knew how to act. They would be able to pass these skills on to their children, bringing some sophistication to country life.

Holidays were looked forward to at Porter School. There were many ways Mrs. Harvey found to celebrate. Arbor Day called for planting trees outside. A variety of items were planted including trees and flowers; tulip bulbs were planted annually. Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays were often celebrated with plays that were incorporated into history lessons. Christmas pageants were outstanding; every student was involved and members of the community also took part. There would always be a play; sometimes it would be Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." At the end of the festive evening Mrs. Elizabeth Link remembered singing "Up on the House Top" while Santa came in to pass out the presents. Each child received a book or two every Christmas. They were given by Mrs. Harvey and other patrons of the school. Some were used for studies, such as geography. Others were good, solid fiction meant to be read again and again.

Birthdays at Porter were a lesson in proper social behavior. The children would take their lunches to the basement where a long table was set up. The table hung from the joists by chains and was long enough to get all the children around it. Sitting around the table, they would use proper etiquette and hold polite dinner conversation. In this way students would feel very grown up, being expected to act like adults, and also learn how to behave at dinner parties.

Mrs. Harvey also loved to take her children on trips. Often they were just into Kirksville to the college to see some event. But even a simple program was more than most children of other districts ever got to see with their school. Mrs. Harvey considered it very important that her pupils should have all the advantages available. They shouldn't be denied because of their rural home; therefore, she took them to everything possible, often arranging rides with the people of the community. She also took some of the older boys to Columbia to Farmers' Week held at the college in January, 1913.

The first trip to Columbia helped develop an awareness of agricultural education. A school farm was developed on seven acres donated by a father of one of the students. The





Mrs. Harvey's home "The Cottage," was the first teacherage in Missouri. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

State Department of Agriculture helped set up a plan for crops and crop rotation for five years. They also started the first short courses ever held by the State College of Agriculture. These became an annual event in the community with as many as 200 people attending. All these people were fed by the Farm Women's Club.

One of the final contributions to the classroom at Porter was the visitors they had. Since Porter School was really a demonstration school, groups from the Teachers College often observed the classroom methods used by Mrs. Harvey. The school and Mrs. Harvey had gained national and international acclaim. People came from all over the world and from the education field to observe her in the classroom. They came so often that Mrs. Harvey had to limit the number of visitors she would have in a year so that they would not interrupt her classes. Two of the most enjoyed visitors were Mr. and Mrs. Waters, Mrs. Harvey's sister and brother-in-

law, who were world travelers. When they returned from a trip, they would come to the school and share their adventures with the children. They would also come at Christmas. They were some of the people who brought books for the children. All the visitors at Porter may have added to the classroom experience but they never distracted from it. The classes were run the same whether people were there or not.

Mrs. Harvey's main contribution to the community outside the school was the organization of community clubs. Even though they were community clubs, many of them had something to do with the school. Some of them were the Farm Women's Club, Porter Farm Club, Porter Pig Club, Poultry Club, Porter Jr. Band, Porter Sr. Band, Parent-Teachers Association, and Interdenominational Sunday School. All of these clubs were of great importance to the community. They provided a gathering point for the adults as well as the children of the community, providing more



The first flag raised over a school in Adair County was raised at Porter School long before it was a law that they be displayed. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

community spirit.

Mrs. Harvey's work at Porter School has long been remembered. It touched many peoples' lives and hearts. She made the residents proud to be a part of the Porter District even after she left there to teach at Kirksville State Teachers College. She was not alone in her work at Porter; she had many assistant teachers. One that was part of the backbone of the community was Miss Margret Crecelius. She came to Porter soon after Mrs. Harvey, and helped in all aspects there. Others who taught there included Mrs. Erma Darr, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Beverly, Mrs. Linder, and Mrs. Mary Novinger.

When Mrs. Harvey left Porter, she left behind many things that weren't there when she came: a sense of community, a love of books, a decent schoolroom, and a knowledge that people could reach their goals. Mrs. Harvey expressed her feelings in a forward she wrote in Mrs. Elizabeth Link's book.

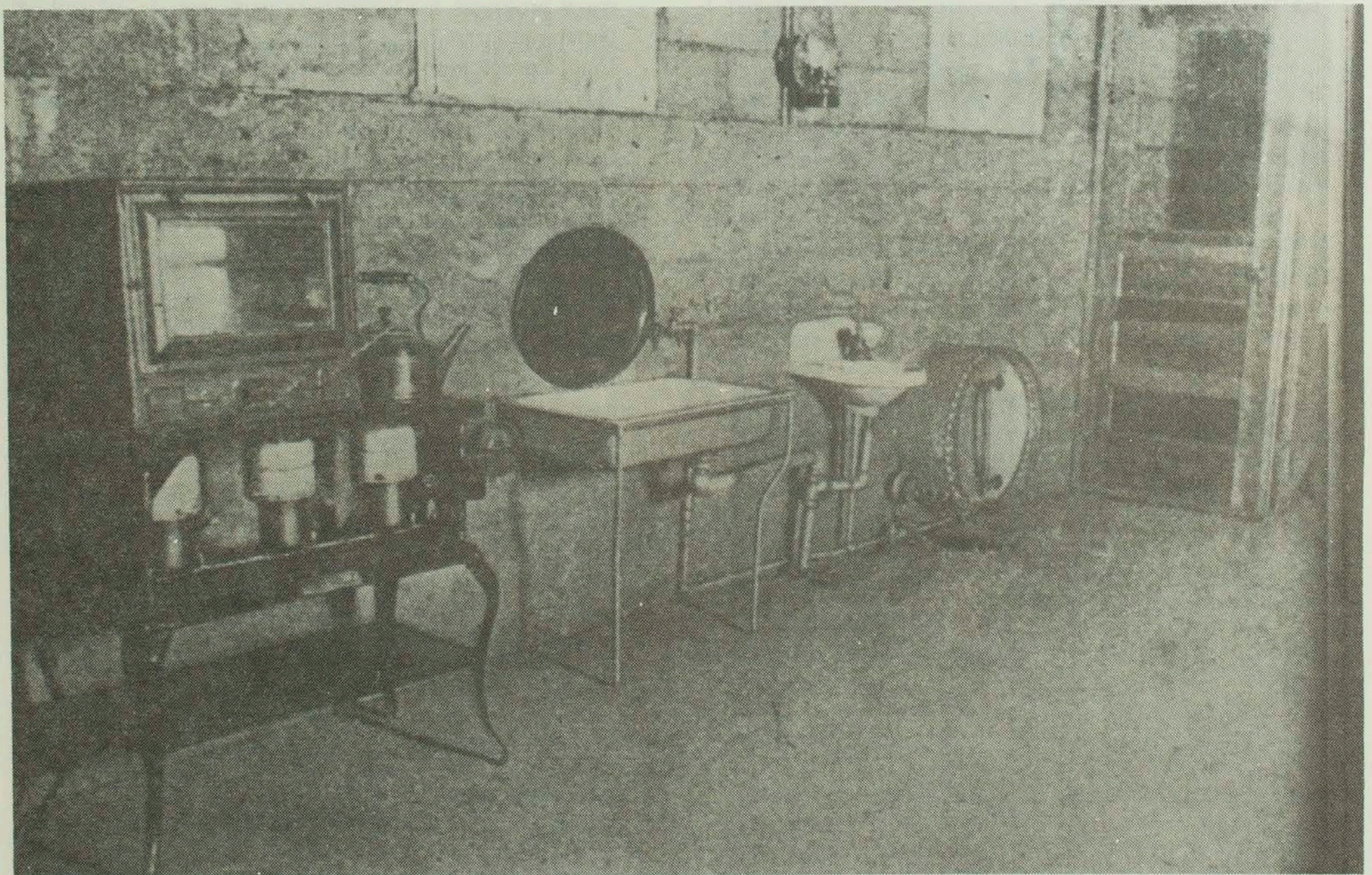
I am hoping this will have deeper meaning to you with passing years, and that it will inspire you to actively "carry on," and make such a community life as will sustain the name "Porter" as symbolical of "service" before the country at large.

Marie Turner Harvey



Young gardeners show off the tulips they grew from bulbs planted the fall before. Miss Crecelius brought many of the flowers and vegetables planted in the garden from southern Missouri where her father was a truck farmer. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

By Renée Wilson



Porter School had running water in 1912. This was made possible through funds provided by Mrs. Harvey. (Photo courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

Waves From The Past

Radio has been a major part of everyone's life. It has brought us weather, news, music, advertisements, public addresses, and emergency reports. It is a major tool of communication.

If asked, "What was the first radio station in Kirksville?" one would probably say KIRX. That would be incorrect because the first radio station started in early November of 1926 when the State Teachers College purchased a radio transmitter from the Kirksville Chamber of Commerce. On December 7, 1926, KFKZ was licensed for operation at 1330 kilohertz, with 15 watts of power, for an unlimited amount of time. The station followed a schedule of broadcasting two hours per week, usually in the early evening of the weekends. The programs consisted of conservative music and addresses by members of the college faculty to the student body and the student body to the community.

One problem the station had with 15 watts of power was that it could only cover a listening area of 50 miles. The college felt this was inadequate. They felt 100 watts of power would better serve the area, so they applied for more power. The application was rejected for reasons unknown. When the station's license expired on July 31, 1929, no renewal application was made. On May 12, 1930, the station no longer existed. Kirksville was without a radio station for 18 years.

Sam Wat Arnold, of Arnold Lumber Company, wanted Kirksville to have another radio station. He discussed it with Sam Burk and together they made it a reality. Opening day ceremonies for KIRX were held at noon on October 17, 1947. The program began with band music and messages

from national, state, and local dignitaries. The station went on the air that day and later that evening aired a college football game; an event they still broadcast today.

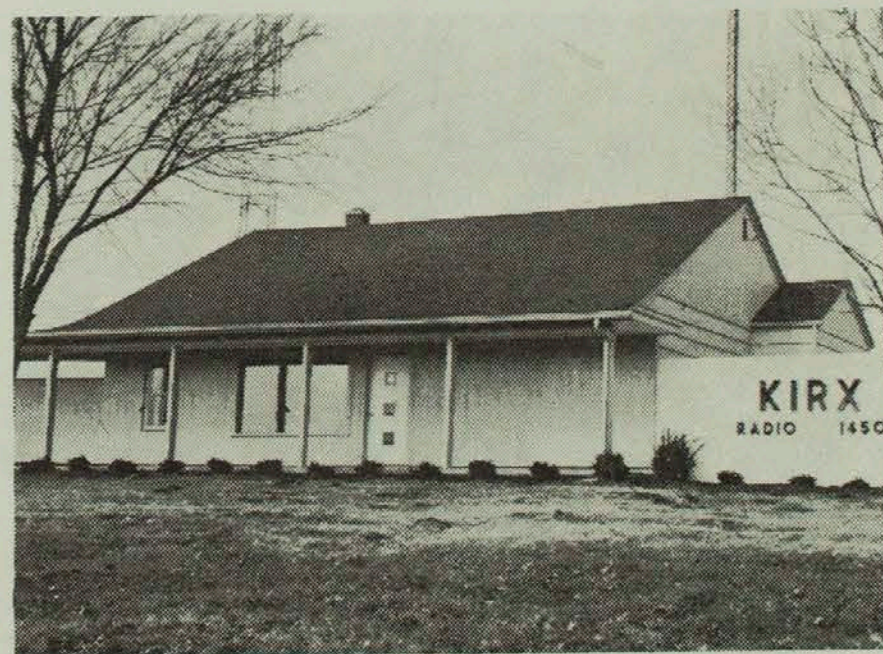
The station has undergone changes in both format and in the physical structure. In 1947, when the station began, it was originally built as a small house. Mrs. Vera Burk, wife of Sam Burk, said, "The station was built as a house in case it failed. Sam Arnold felt that if KIRX went under, we could still rent the house." In 1967 the FM station, KRXL, was introduced and an addition built which included an air raid shelter. The shelter became the FM control room which is located today in the front of the station. With the addition of this shelter, KIRX/KRXL also increased their wattage power.

The format of KIRX has remained the same. Although names of the programs have changed, the station is still geared toward the general community giving news, information, sports, and country and western music. KIRX has many programs for listeners to participate in as well. A popular program in the beginning, as well as now, is Party Line, a program for buying and selling items. This is probably what the program is thought of as, but Mrs. Burk said, "Party Line is also for discussing issues and topics on the radio. Many people still call in and voice their opinions."

Another program KIRX airs is Area Scene. Area Scene, hosted today by Al Holzmeier, grew out of a program that began with KIRX Listen Ladies. Listen Ladies was directed toward women, and gave daily recipes, household hints, news highlights, and interviews. This was Mrs. Burk's first and only program that she hosted. As times changed, Listen



Charlie Porter hosting "Party Line" on KIRX in 1962.



The KIRX building is shown in 1963 before the addition of KRXL.

Ladies gradually lost the "ladies only" format and became Area Scene; a show geared toward the general public with interviews of community people about area events.

KIRX/KRXL has always been an asset to the community, it has accomplished this with many fund-raising activities. One of these was the radio auction held June 22-24, 1955, to raise money for the Kirksville Municipal Swimming Pool election. After three days of auctioning, KIRX raised approximately \$10,000, clearing \$7,500, which they donated toward putting the bill up for election and buying the land for the site.

In 1948 and 1949 the station also held Barn Dances at the Kirksville Armory every Saturday night. These dances featured country and western bands and a weekly talent show. Tickets sold for 50 cents and attendance was as high as 1,800 people. The dances were a very popular form of recreation to the citizens of Kirksville.

KIRX/KRXL has always been a station of innovation. One such example is Sam Burk being the first radio personality to editorialize over the air. This was very unusual at the time, but now is a regular part of the radio's format.

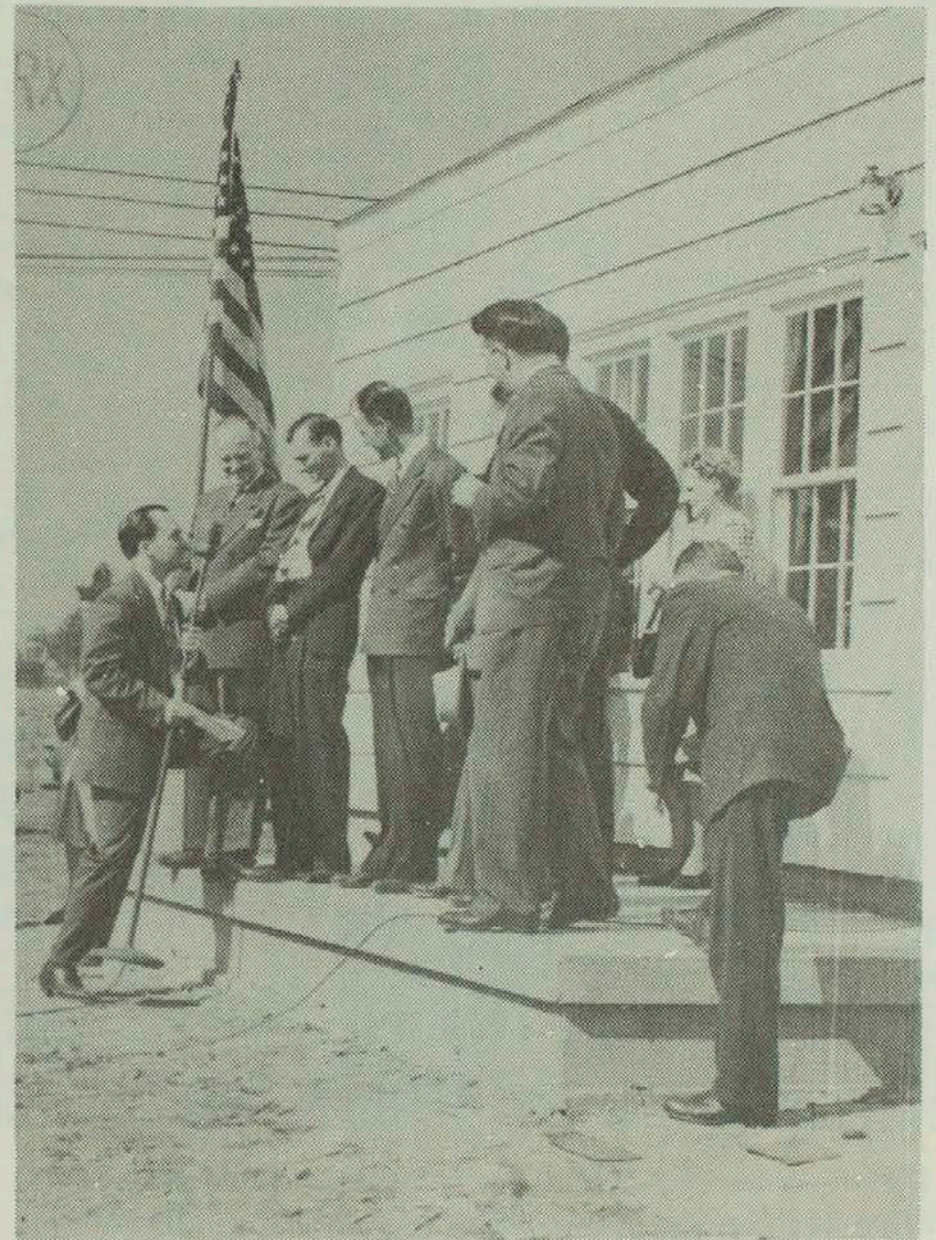
More recently, KIRX/KRXL has had success with fund-raising for the Red Cross Disaster Drive. In April, 1985, Burk Forsythe organized their fund-raiser called the Battle of the Bands. This featured bands from all over Missouri who played in competition for cash prizes. Tickets were \$5 per person; over \$2,000 was raised. The largest percentage of the money for the Red Cross was raised in Kirksville. Burk Forsythe received national recognition for organizing this event.

In October of 1985, Marvin McClanahan received the Country Music Disc Jockey of Small Markets award. He appeared on national television to accept this award.

On October 1, 1985, KIRX/KRXL changed management. Mrs. Burk sold the station to KIRX, Inc., a corporation owned by Alvina Britz and David Nelson. The station has no immediate plans for the future. Miss Britz said, "It will take at least six months to find out what works and what we need to change."

Though the management has changed, the station itself will most likely remain the same. Its intentions always have been and still will be to serve the people of the northeast Missouri area.

By Laura Magruder Kevin Race



Opening day ceremonies for KIRX were held on October 17, 1947. Dick Cannaday (with microphone) is interviewing first-hour visitors.

All Photos Courtesy of KIRX.

KIRX held barn dances every Saturday night in 1948-49 at the Reigor Armory.





The residence of William Thomas Baird was at 304 South Franklin where the Rolston building stands today. This house

was Kirksville's first mansion. (Courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library)

The American Dream

The American dream supplied the framework for this country, but the men and women laid the foundation and made this dream a reality. William Thomas Baird was one such man.

William T. Baird was born in Carroll County, Kentucky, in the early 1830s. He was born the son of Barzilla Adams and Mary M. (Scanland) Baird.

William Thomas was raised on a farm as one of six children. His mother, Mary, died in February, 1846, at the age of 47. His father, Barzilla, remarried Eliza Wright; they had six children.

William received his education at a district school in Carroll County during the winter months while he spent the remainder of the year helping his family on their farm. After leaving the farm in 1856, Mr. Baird taught school in Grant County, Kentucky. Mr. Baird left Grant County with his close friend Professor William P. Nason, a teacher, and headed for Kansas in 1857. Traveling by steamer to La Grange, Missouri, the men traveled on horseback as far as Kirksville, where they stopped due to fierce March weather.

Mr. Baird spent his first two years in Kirksville teaching. The first seven months he taught at Ely's district. The next four months he spent teaching in Wilson Township, and the remaining year he taught with Professor Nason at a school Mr. Nason had built on what is now the northeast corner of Buchanan and Florence Streets.

On August 24, 1858, William Thomas Baird married Martha C. Hannah and they had four children. Frank, the oldest, went into the banking business and became a banker in Helena, Montana. Ella died at the age of two and Aggie Myrtle died at two months. The fourth child, Alta Melone, became a singer and studied at Mission Valley College in Marshall, Missouri.

Before Mr. Baird came to Kirksville, banking was a state-conducted affair; however, the banks could have branches. One of these branches was the first bank to come to Adair County, the Kirksville Branch of the Bank of Saint Louis which opened in November of 1859. The bank was located where Pagliai's Pizza stands today. Mr. Baird held jobs of both clerk and janitor from the opening of the bank until

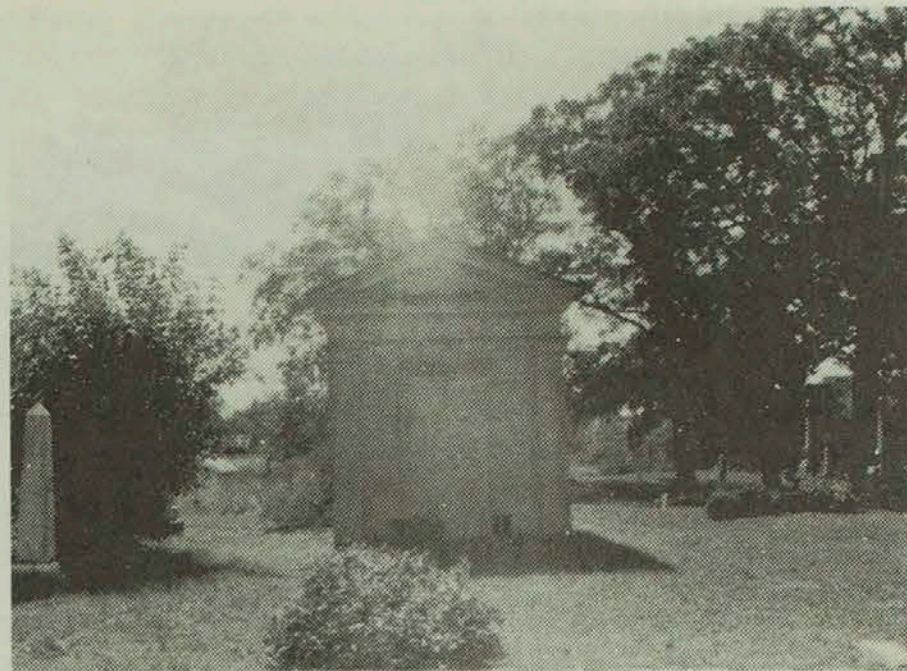
1863. In 1863 he was promoted to cashier, a job he held for two years. On February 15, 1864, the state passed a piece of legislation that eliminated branch banking and in 1865 the branch in Kirksville closed. In 1865 Charles M. Stebbins and Henry Porter bought the fixtures of the Kirksville branch for the Stebbins and Porter bank. Mr. Baird took another step upward when he was named manager of the Stebbins and Porter bank. He held this position until 1867 when Mr. Stebbins and Mr. Porter were forced to sell their bank because both men were from Denver, Colorado, and the laws of Missouri did not allow non-residential ownership of banks. Mr. Baird and Samuel Reed entered into a partnership and bought the Stebbins and Porter firm.

On September 2, 1868, a Mr. Malone and a Mr. Epper-son, both from Macon, bought Mr. Reed's share of the bank. Mr. Reed later formed a rival bank, the name of which is unknown. June of 1878 also marked a major step in Mr. Baird's career when he became the sole owner of a new bank, the Exchange Bank of W.T. Baird. This building, however, was still in the same location. Later the name was changed to the First National Bank and had a capital stock of \$50,000. Mr. Baird was becoming quite successful. He had the town's first mansion built at 304 South Franklin at a cost of \$18,000 in 1893. Mr. Baird sold his interest in 1906 to the Citizens Bank and retired.

William Thomas Baird was involved in church, education, and community betterment activities. He was a very active member of the United Presbyterian and Cumberland Churches. Mr. Baird served as superintendent of the Sunday school for 45 years, an elder for 46 years, and the treasurer and session clerk for 44 years. He donated \$16,000 to the endowment fund of the Missouri Valley College and guided the school as a trustee for 17 years.

A Bairdean Literary Society and the Baird-Mitchell chair of Greek were named after him. At the Kirksville State Normal School he was a member of the Board of Regents, serving as treasurer for a number of years. For declamatory contest winners he gave the Baird Medal. The declamation contest was started by Mr. Baird in 1880 and was for the men and women of the sophomore class of the Kirksville State Normal School. In 1889 a special declamation contest was

Pagliari's Pizza, which occupies the old Citizens National Bank building, is located where the Exchange Bank of W.T. Baird stood.



The large Baird family burial vault is located in the Forest-Lewellyn cemetery.

held for men. Then in 1890 the contest was confined to sophomore women. At first, the prize was a \$15 set of English poetry books but later the prize was a \$15 gold medal. The contest was no longer held after 1900. In 1899 Mr. Baird gave \$500 dollars to Kirksville to help the town after a tornado. The tornado struck on the night of April 27, 1899. The storm left 30 people dead, 179 injured, 40 destroyed homes, and many more damaged.

William T. Baird was a charter member and master of Kirksville Lodge No. 105, A.F. & A.M. and he was a charter member of the Caldwell Chapter No. 53 of the Royal Arch Masters. After Mr. Baird's retirement he lived in Kirksville until the time of his death on March 7, 1912. He was buried in a large family vault in the Forest-Lewellyn cemetery.

The life of Mr. Baird was a classic example of the American dream. As a poor farm boy, William Thomas Baird began with hard work, courage, and persistence, he became a wealthy and prominent citizen of the community.

**By Marty Montgomery
K.C. Baird**



The Stickler All-Stars of 1941. Left to right: Dr. R. O. Stickler, Alice Ward, Ann Radosevich, Mary Frkovich, Josephine Buban, Lucille Siegmund, Mildred West, Kathryn Buban, Sarah Rose Maize, LaVeta King, Imogene Pipes,

Marguerite Buban, Mary Jane Phillips, Mary E. Wheeler, and coach G.E. "Shag" Grossnickle. (Photo courtesy of Marguerite Prather)

BATTER UP!

It is the bottom of the ninth inning and the bases are loaded. The batter steps up to the plate, takes a couple of deep breaths and a few practice swings. The pitcher steps up to the mound and concentrates on the catcher's signals, while preparing the ball for the next pitch. The crowd is going wild. The cheering renders conversation impossible. The pitcher releases the ball . . . smack! There goes the ball! It is going . . . going . . . it is gone! Another homerun for West and another win for the team!

This may sound like the World Series Playoffs, but indeed it isn't. You have just experienced a game played by the Girl's All-Stars Softball Team of 1941. That is not all. They were Missouri State Champions vying for the 1941 National Pennant.

Originally there were two teams before 1941. One was the Herman Girls Team and the other, Sherer-Shelton, was formed in 1937. The coaches, Ralph Sherer, Dr. Claude Martin and Dr. Joe Bigsby, became interested in forming an All-Star team and entering them in the Missouri State Softball Tournament. Each coach selected the best players from his team. They combined the talented players into one team that showed amazing power in hitting, pitching, and teamwork that was unmatched. This outstanding team became known as the Kirksville All-Stars.

The lucky and obviously talented group of ladies that were chosen to represent the All-Stars were Marguerite Buban, Wilda Sherer, Mildred West, Josephine Buban, Sarah Rose Maize, Kathryn Buban, Ann Radosevich, Maggie Weber, Lucille Siegmund, Mary Frkovich, Phyllis Tipton, Zola Shearer, Fern Hill, Mary Wheeler, and Lucille Gregory.

The All-Stars won the state championship at St. Joseph, Missouri, during the Labor Day weekend in 1938. The townspeople rallied behind them and sent them to Chicago, Illinois, for the national championships. The Kirksville All-Stars played their first game, which was one of five games being played simultaneously, at Soldier's Field; they were defeated. The girls returned to Kirksville determined to go back to nationals.

Practices were held on a regular basis. The women tried to get together at least every other day, and if possible, more often. Each of the girls had other concerns such as their jobs, schooling, and duties at home. Afternoon and morning practices were routine, but evening practices were not uncommon. When official practices were not held, the four Buban sisters were known to grab their gear and practice in a vacant lot near their home.

When the team did get down to practicing, it was taken very seriously and each individual girl worked toward her own personal potential. Each position was practiced with the utmost care. "We didn't practice every day, but when we did, we were expected to be the very best," said Mrs. Marguerite (Buban) Prather. Soon, softball became a major part of their lives. They were put on diets, practiced on a regular basis, and were sure to get plenty of rest.

The girls received their uniforms and equipment through different area merchants. "Kirksville was on the front and on the back we advertised our donator's business," commented Mrs. Prather. In addition, the ladies were also given traveling suits, on two separate occasions, from the merchants. "They were very nice. I guess you could say they

were fancy," Mrs. Prather said. "The area merchants were all very supportive," added Mrs. Maggie (Weber) Mudd. Mrs. Weber was a member of the All-Star team and recalled several examples of spectator support. "When we played my whole hometown would come to see us play." Huge crowds of the local townspeople would come to the home games and many out-of-town games as well. The gate fee was 10 cents. They played many games at Stickler Field which was one of the newer and nicer ballfields of this area. Stickler Field, built by Dr. R. O. Stickler, was situated on Highway 11 East where Pfeiffer Field is currently located.

The girls played several teams, some from out-of-state: Arizona; Lucas, Iowa, which over 1,000 people attended; and Des Moines, Iowa, who succeeded in attracting over 1,400 spectators. These teams were all subject to the All-Star's wrath. Was it wrath or was it pure team work and determination? The girls worked together as a team. "We all played together and enjoyed playing the game," said Mrs. Prather. "They always said that you never got any arguments out of the Kirksville team. If there were any arguments the coach took care of them. To me that's the best way to be." What made the team so effective? The love and respect for the game and more importantly, each other. The countless days of sweat, conditioning, training, and hard work finally paid off.

The Kirksville All-Stars were again crowned the Women's State Softball Champions on Labor Day, 1941, in Jefferson City, Missouri. That seemed to be the 'frosting on the cake' for the ladies' season, but the coaches had other plans for this gifted group. The National Softball Championships were being held in Detroit, Michigan. That was where these women belonged. That was where they were headed.

The girls had the record to prove they belonged at Nationals. Now all they needed was the money to get there. The girls were determined to go, so they and their coaches pulled together every ounce of imagination into hosting fundraisers. They sponsored ice cream socials at the Kirksville Armory and played in several benefit games for donations, some of which were against men's teams. On one occasion the band didn't appear for a dance so to improvise, one of the attending citizens brought his nickelodeon and created one of the funniest activities that they held. Many area businesses donated to the team as well. "We were lucky enough that people around helped us out," said Mrs. Prather. It was hard work, but exciting also. The women had enough money to get to Detroit!

Many of the Kirksville girls also filled in for other teams that were short of players. On occasion, Mrs. Prather and Mildred West filled in for the St. Joseph, Missouri team. By this time the Kirksville team had changed a bit. St. Joseph, Missouri players, Imogene Pipes, LaVeta King, and Alice

Ward, played for the 1941 Kirksville All-Stars. Maggie Weber, Zola Shearer and Phyllis Tipton left the team and the new players joined such as Louise Buban and Mary Jane Phillips. Many of the original members remained on the team, with G. E. "Shag" Grossnickle as their coach.

The All-Stars left Kirksville on Tuesday, September 9, 1941, in order to arrive in time for the welcoming parade, and the first game on Wednesday. Upon arrival at the welcoming parade, recalled Mrs. Prather, a group of individuals were curious as to whether or not they were going to wear shoes during the parade, since they were from Missouri. "We were poor little country girls to them," said Mrs. Mudd. The team received a bye in the first round, winning their first game automatically. The All-Stars played Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Thursday, September 11. The pitcher of the opposing team was nicknamed the "Strike-Out Queen." That lends itself as to how tough this team was to beat. Coach "Shag" Grossnickle said, "We were defeated in the last inning 1-0. Statistic-wise we played a better ball game, we had nine hits and they had two." He added, "The team that beat us went on to win the National Championships."

The team returned to the Arlington Hotel in Detroit where they stayed. They packed their bags and returned home riding in the automobiles of Mayor Bartlett, Mr. and Mrs. Cory Siegmund, Carl Johnson, and Mr. and Mrs. Goodman.

Even though victory was not theirs, the memories of the good times, and the bad, will be theirs forever. In the words of Mrs. Prather, "We all loved the game and we all got along. We had fun and it was worth it." The story does not end there. The team did dissolve after the tournament. "World War II had begun and we had family and friends tied up in the War, so we had other things to be concerned with," said Mrs. Mudd.

Many still remain in the Missouri area, and still make it a point to keep in touch. Mrs. Prather, Mrs. Mudd, and Sarah Rose (Maize) Grossnickle still live in Kirksville. Lucille (Siegmund) McClain resides in Quincy, Illinois, and Wilda (Sherer) Morris lives in Macon, Missouri. Josephine (Buban) Grider, lives in Richmond, Missouri, and has not ended her career yet at age 62. She is an active member of the Stet women's team, and is currently playing on the same team as her twin daughters, Donna and Debbie. It is not uncommon for her to pitch as many as five games in one weekend and is viewed as one of the most valuable players on the team. They still remain the best of friends, and try to keep up-to-date on each others whereabouts and activities.

Though the candle of victory has long since died out, the memories of their years of triumph as the Women's State Softball Champions and the team that made it all the way to nationals, will burn in their hearts forever.

By Andrea Vorkink Kim Gonnerman



The 1938 All-Stars of Kirksville, Missouri. The girls are in their first official uniforms, donated by Kirksville area merchants. (Photo courtesy of Marguerite Prather)

Scenes From The Past

The concept of osteopathic medicine has brought fame as well as fortune to the city of Kirksville. Some might even say that it has put Kirksville on the map. Whether or not this is true is a matter of opinion, but it is a fact that Kirksville is known as, and prides itself on being, the birthplace of osteopathic medicine.

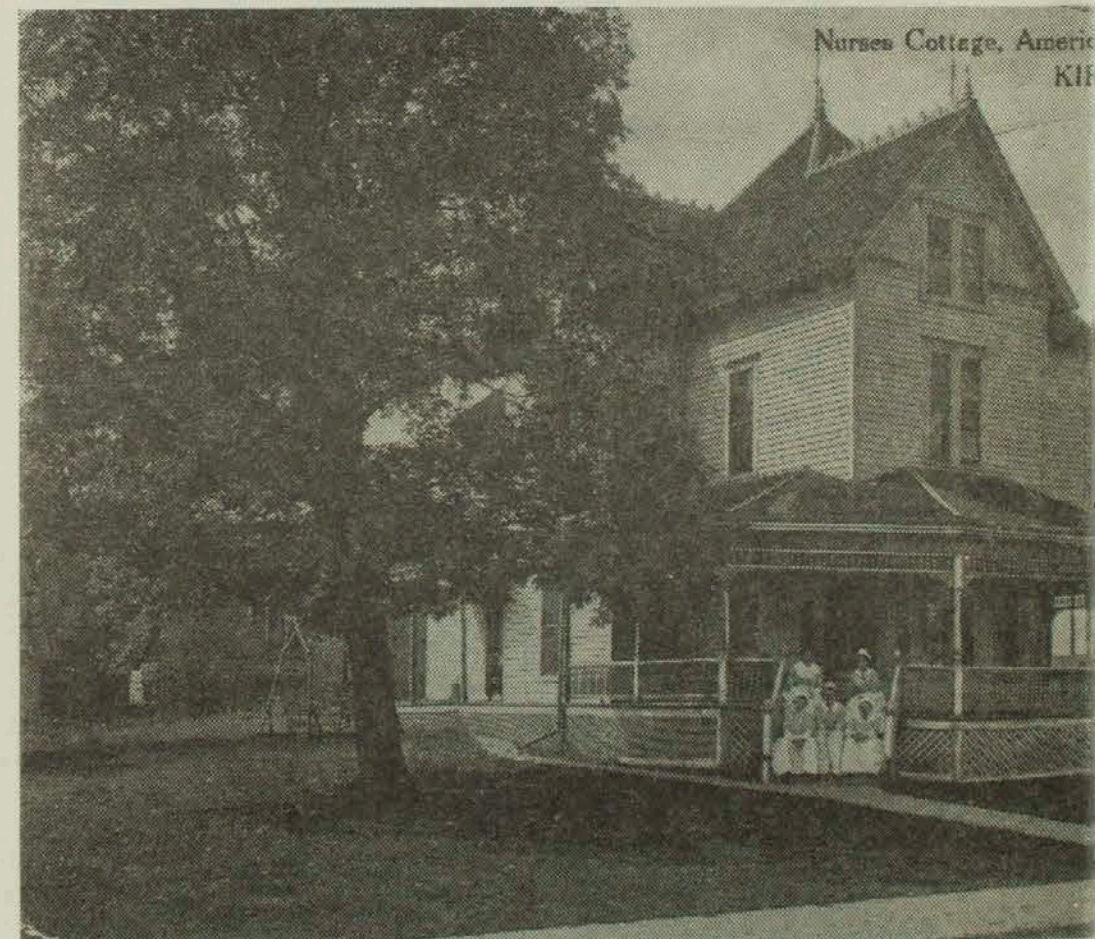
The heart of osteopathic medicine in Kirksville has always been on West Jefferson Street. Not only the medical care centers have been located here but also the osteopathic college. West Jefferson Street as we know it today, is a far cry from the dirt road that Andrew Taylor Still knew or the paved one of the 1950s and 60s.

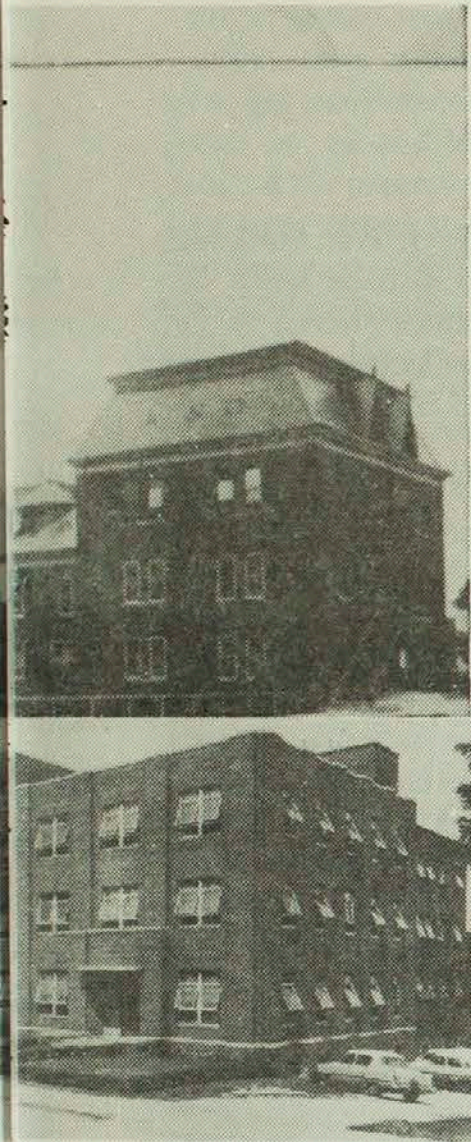
At the far west end of this street was the hospital of the American School of Osteopathy. It was the first osteopathic hospital built to supplement the care of the ASO Infirmary. In the photograph to the right is a picture of this hospital which was built next to the Infirmary. The old hospital was razed in the early 1950s because it did not adhere to the then current hospital standards. Parts of the Infirmary still stands today and were incorporated into the east side of the new structure as shown in the inset to the right.

Across the street from the hospital stood the nurse's cottage. The first structure, as shown in the lower left photo, was a two-story house. Around 1911, the second story was heightened, eventually there was an addition built on the east side of the house to keep up with the growing nursing program. It was later converted into an Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic as shown in the lower right photo. In 1973 this was torn down to build the southern wing of the Kirksville Osteopathic Medical Center.

Two blocks east of the nurse's cottage stood the ASO chapter of the YMCA shown in the upper right photograph. The ASO chapter of the YWCA was located across the street to the north. They provided Christian activities and fellowship for the students as well as being a center for these activities. The YMCA site is now a parking lot.

West Jefferson Street is still dominated by the buildings of osteopathic treatment and learning. These buildings include the Timken-Burnett Building, the southern wing of KOMC, the Gutensohn Health and Wellness Clinic. With these and the projected building of a new state-of-the-art diagnostic center, Kirksville will remain the heart of osteopathic medicine.





The Thirty Year President

Walter Harrington Ryle was born on June 1, 1896, on a farm in Howard County, Missouri, near the village of Yates. His parents, Walter H. Ryle II and Kate Stark Ryle, were descendants of pioneer families of Howard County, and both were to have major influences on their son's life. From his father, young Ryle learned to read, write, and do some math. From his mother he learned to lead a disciplined way of life and he acquired a system based on stern morality. From both he learned a reverence for all nature and all living things, whether plant or animal.

When young Ryle was six years old, he began attending the Ryle School, named after his grandfather and located just over the Randolph County line. The importance young Ryle's family placed on schooling was proved when his father bought his brother John's farm partly because it was near, what he felt, was a better school, the Ryle School. By this



Walter Harrington Ryle in his official 25th anniversary portrait as president of the Northeast Missouri State Teachers College.

time young Ryle had two younger brothers, Ivan Stark and Claude Bradley, both of whom would also be ready for school. Walter Ryle completed the courses offered by the Ryle School in 1912; however, feeling inadequately prepared for college, he spent the year 1912-1913 reading and studying at home.

On September 8, 1913, the 17-year-old farm boy arrived in Kirksville to enroll at the Normal School. During the next three years Ryle was deeply influenced by three great men. To a degree difficult to understand today, President John R. Kirk dominated the school and Walter Ryle soon became one of the president's most loyal friends. It has been said that upon becoming president himself, Ryle consciously at times and perhaps unknowingly at other times, emulated John R. Kirk particularly in Ryle's relationships with the student body. As a student at Kirksville State Normal School, Ryle was greatly influenced by his favorite professor Eugene Morrow Violette. Another history professor who was highly admired by young Ryle was Joseph Lyman Kingsbury who taught ancient history.

Ryle had come to Kirksville intent on preparing himself for the law profession; however, due to the influence of men like Kirk, Violette and Kingsbury, and the atmosphere of the Normal School itself, by December of 1914 he seems to have resolved to study and teach history instead of practicing law. In August 1916, Walter Harrington Ryle III was one of 39 graduates of the First District Normal School to receive the 90-hour diploma which carried with it a lifetime certificate to teach in the public schools of Missouri. He had become deeply attached to the school and said often in later years that John R. Kirk's Kirksville Normal School was one of the better institutions of its kind in the United States.

After completing the Normal School course, Ryle was hired to serve as principal of Clifton Hill High School at a salary of \$55 a month for a nine-month term. Fourteen months later, when the superintendent resigned in December of 1917 to enter the Army, the school board promptly named Ryle superintendent of the Clifton Hill schools. During the summers of 1917 and 1918 he worked on his 120-hour degree at Kirksville; however, he was inducted into the Army in August of 1918 after his second summer session. After being discharged, Ryle returned to Kirksville to finish his Bachelor of Science in Education degree. The Kirksville Normal School was renamed in May of 1919 to Northeast Missouri State Teachers College. Ryle received his B.S. in Education in August 1919.

In September of 1919 Ryle was selected principal of the Palmyra High School at a salary of \$1,100 for nine months. In the fall of 1921 Ryle was appointed the principal of the Holden High School. Upon the resignation of the superintendent, Ryle was elected superintendent and remained until 1927. Except for the summer of 1924, Ryle spent each summer while he was superintendent of the Holden schools in graduate study at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, where he received his Master of Arts degree in

the summer of 1927. In the spring of 1926, President Eugene Fair, who had succeeded John R. Kirk as head of the Northeast Missouri State Teachers College in 1924, offered Ryle a position on the college faculty beginning in the fall of 1928.

Once he had finished teaching in public schools and the road to college teaching had been entered, Walter Ryle decided to get married. On the evening of June 7, 1927, at the age of 31, he and Maurine Adell Lea were married at the home of her parents near Clifton Hill. Maurine Ryle was an invaluable helper to her husband in his chosen profession. Her appreciation for thorough human understanding helped balance her husband's qualities.

He began his college teaching career in the fall of 1928 teaching American History. Determined to proceed with his plan to obtain his doctoral degree as quickly as possible, he requested and was granted a leave of absence for the 1929-1930 academic year. In 1930, with the Ph.D. degree in hand, he returned to the college as Professor of Social Science. He divided his time between teaching two classes in geography and one or two in history each quarter. He enjoyed teaching. It was said that "he was stimulating, thorough and energetic in the classroom." He used the syllabus method of organization with its familiar list of sources for each problem outside the basic text. In the next six years Dr. Ryle came to exert considerable influence as an alert and energetic faculty member whose interest was unquestionably in administration and in the formulation of college policy. It was well-known that Dr. Ryle was warmly attached to President Fair and the President to his young faculty member, fresh from graduate school with a Ph.D., then all too rare on the Kirksville campus. Professor Ryle had been involved with an experimental general education program and was named by President Fair as director of a newly created Bureau of Placements in 1934. As early as 1932, Ryle had been influential in Democrat Party politics and had been encourag-

ed by Fair to take upon himself the role of political agent for the college.

On Friday, August 13, 1937, President Fair died of cerebral hemorrhage. The Board of Regents had little trouble in reaching an immediate decision to select Walter Harrington Ryle as the man to succeed Fair. At 5:30 in the afternoon of August 31, 1937, Ryle was notified of his appointment as seventh president of the college. In making the choice the Regents were influenced by many different factors. Dr. Ryle had established the reputation of being one of the college's finest scholars, he had wide acquaintance throughout the state with men of prominence and influence not only in educational courses but in politics and business as well. He had demonstrated his ability to lead, plan, organize, execute, and achieve and few could understand his love for college or his contributions to it. Many of Ryle's supporters petitioned members of the Board of Regents to elect him. His appointment as president, therefore, caused no great surprise in the college or the area served by it.

During the next 30 years, Walter Ryle continued to furnish outstanding leadership and make significant contributions to Northeast Missouri State Teachers College. These were years of spectacular growth. Indeed, the college reached its peak of influence as a teachers college. While he was aware that physical surroundings did not themselves guarantee the greatness of a college, he believed that a plant that was not only adequate but beautiful and attractive was as important to an educational institution as proper clothing to a person. Under his leadership the campus increased from 15 acres to one of approximately one hundred acres. Few men, perhaps no one else who might have been elevated to the presidency, would have been so concerned about beautifying the grounds through an elaborate landscaping program as was Walter H. Ryle. This constituted but one of President Ryle's unique contributions and reflected the reverence

In the University greenhouse, Dr. Ryle checks his prized chrysanthemums.





One of Dr. Ryle's favorite hobbies was duck hunting with his Winchester model 97.

for and of the beauties of nature. The campus became known far and wide for its beauty and visitors were impressed by the dignity and charm of velvety lawn, curving walks, shade trees, and a profusion of blooming plants and shrubs. The president not only planned most of the details of selecting and locating the plants, but supervised their care with loving attention. On numerous occasions, he could be seen on his hands and knees helping set out a new flower or shrub. He was convinced that inspiration came from lovely surroundings and that an attractive campus reflected the way of life which existed there.

Walter Ryle came to be known throughout the state as a master builder and political wizard due to his success at obtaining state appropriations for his ambitious building program. During the 30 years of his presidency, 18 major buildings were built, eight of which were dormitories. In addition to the 18 major building projects, four major additions were added to the campus buildings. The tremendous physical growth of the college from a campus of 13 acres to one of over one hundred and from four buildings to 25 did not keep pace with the even greater increase during the same 30 year period in the number of students enrolled.

Almost from the moment of his arrival as a faculty member, Dr. Ryle had shown interest in recruitment and retention of students. Upon assuming the office of President, he took personal interest in directing a program of recruitment to build up sagging enrollments which had fallen to 668 in the fall of 1937. Furthermore, the college had been rated the lowest among the five teachers colleges. Dr. Ryle knew that to the general public and to the legislators, size represents a rough approximation of the standing of a college, not to mention the critical fact that its appropriations were directly

based on the number of students enrolled. With characteristic determination and drive he established policies which 30 years later in 1967 had produced a fall enrollment of 5,320 students. Northeast Missouri State Teachers College was no longer the smallest of the state schools.

Growth in a more cosmopolitan and international enrollment was promoted by President Ryle. He conceived the idea of bringing students from other countries to Kirksville and between 1937-1967 more than a thousand international students from over 60 different countries of the world studied at NMSTC. His faith in education as a training ground for a democratic society prompted Dr. Ryle to feel that American school might be a nucleus for the spread of American democracy to foreign lands. At the same time he felt that contact between these young people and Americans would enlarge the American vision of the world.

President Ryle led the college through the rocky waters of racial integration without the disruptions that characterized some colleges. President Ryle was quick to announce that for several years prior to *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the Teachers College had denied no one admission because of race or color. He emphatically pointed out that segregation was not an issue for his college and that, in fact, blacks had studied on campus since 1951. He publically stated, "Education recognizes no race or color lines and neither does Missouri's oldest teachers college as it fulfills its task of educating teachers."

When Walter Ryle became president of the college he founded the athletic program, for the last year of his life President Fair had proposed abandonment of intercollegiate athletics. As a student in public school administration Ryle had learned the value of athletic competition as a builder of school spirit and as a means of attracting public attention to the school. Dr. Ryle set about reorganizing the athletic program and mounted a campaign for the revival of the "Old Bulldog Spirit." So important did he consider intercollegiate athletics, that he made a point of attending in person the annual meetings of the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

Buildings, grounds, strong enrollments, school spirit, and athletics were all important to the college, and represent outstanding accomplishments of the Ryle years, but none of the above are as vital as the instructional program. No one understood that more clearly than the college's president. Probably his greatest contributions are to be found in the revitalization of the curriculum and recruitment of an outstanding faculty. The first major shift, President Ryle determined, should be in the freshman and sophomore years where courses of comprehensive scope must be required to give the future teacher an understanding of the continuity of the evolution of humanity and an appreciation of the great spiritual experiences of the human race as recorded in art, music, and literature. To his death, Dr. Ryle took special pride in the fact that he had led the Teachers College into pioneering in the field of general education and made it work. He required all graduates to take 64 hours of general education or liberal arts subjects no matter what the major. He encouraged the adoption of the so-called block system of supervised teaching experiences for student teachers which has become the norm in teacher education facilities the nation over. President Ryle had always argued for a five-year teacher education program with two years of general or liberal art foundation. By 1947 he introduced the fifth year which led to the master of arts degree. By his retirement in

1967, the Teachers College had a fifth year enrollment of 1,269 students. Sharing an equal plane with the curriculum as the object of President Ryle's keenest concern was the hiring of the faculty. One of his greatest contributions was to build up a faculty of dynamic and inspiring teachers, a faculty possessing sound scholarship, a faculty in sympathy with and understanding problems of young men and women. He greatly increased the number of faculty who held doctoral degrees. Teaching ability and scholarship ranked as the first requisites for a notable faculty. Course offerings were expanded. New degree programs such as nursing education were added along with a new Division of Special Programs which was comprised of the area of reading, special education, speech pathology, and audiology. From September 2, 1867, to September 2, 1967, there were 833 regular faculty members, each serving a period of nine months or more. During his presidency Walter Harrington Ryle hired 438 of those or more than half of all professors serving in the first 100 years of the Teachers College.

Another major contribution that Walter Ryle made to the college was an administrative reorganization. His administrative duties during the closing years of Fair's administration convinced him that the college had outgrown its administrative system. He organized the administrative bureaus within newly-created administrative divisions with a head in charge of each division directly responsible to the president, thus, bringing about efficiency and economy, and placing direct responsibility and authority upon the administrative division heads. President Ryle made it clear from the beginning of his administration "that he and he alone" must be the college's representative and spokesman before the Board of Regents, the state legislature, and the general public.

After 30 years Walter Harrington Ryle decided it was time to leave the college. He was at the age where it was necessary to retire. President Ryle decided to decorate and furnish the Student Union building as a "fitting climax to his administration." He retired on June 1, 1966.

By Doug Ryle Denny Smoyer

All Photos Courtesy of NMSU Pickler Library.

President and first lady Ryle relax in the living room of their home close to the time of his retirement.



NOTHING BUT THE BEST

If you've ever driven along Baltimore Street, you've surely noticed the English Tudor-style home in the 1000 block of East Normal Street. Its spacious yard, unique style of architecture, and size is bound to catch the eye of many people.

The house stands out from all the neighboring buildings because it towers over them; very few houses in Kirksville are built in the English Tudor style; and no other house in Kirksville was built so elaborately. Another reason the house stands out is the angle that it sits on the lot. The reason for the odd placement might be for viewing the house from the south and the east, but it is interesting to note that the sun shines through all the front windows around noon everyday.

In the house, it is obvious from the floors, woodwork, and ornate fireplaces that it was built with nothing but the best of materials. "This house was really built well," said Mr. Don Riley, the current owner of the home.

The open stairway in the cozy foyer is the first feature to catch a visitor's eye. It is a prime example of the fine oak of which the house was built. Just to the right of the stairway, through the double doors, is the large living room. Its multi-paned windows and marble fireplace give the room the feeling of a chalet in the mountains. In the kitchen, the breakfast nook is a perfect place to sip a cup of coffee on

a quiet morning as the sun shines through the east window. The house is a beautiful and well-planned combination of formal and comfortable living.

This house was designed and built by Irwin Dunbar and Archie W. Truitt. The plans were started in 1938 and the building began in 1940. Because Mr. Dunbar was so particular, it took the two years to not only plan the structure, but also to ship in the special materials ordered by Mr. Dunbar.

From the blueprints and building specifications of Mr. Dunbar, it is evident that the house was built to last longer than most houses built at that time. Each nail had to be placed precisely to his specification and the materials used were of top quality.

Mr. Glen Green, who originally painted the house, recalls that the oak used for the floor and downstairs' woodwork was brought to Kirksville from the Appalachian Mountains. "It's the finest oak grown in America," said Mr. Green. The mahogany, which was used for the second-story woodwork, was imported from Honduras and is the finest available. Cyprus was used for the siding and outside posts because it grows in water and never rots. Mr. Green also remembered finishing the wormed chestnut paneling in the



den. Mr. Dunbar wanted each worm hole free of stain or varnish. Mr. Green had to use a toothpick to clean out the many holes. All the precise details were ordered by Mr. Dunbar to give Mr. Truitt the finest house available at that time.

One of the special features of this house is its unique windows. The screens seem to disappear as they roll up on tracks above each window. All of the window panes are held in place by lead, as opposed to putty, and the windows crank out—all state-of-the-art in 1940.

Another feature of the house is the sprinkler system. Two bottles of chemicals are concealed above each doorway. When the bottles come in contact with intense heat, they explode to activate the sprinkler system. Fortunately, its effectiveness hasn't been tested.

The slate roof is also an example of the quality of Mr. Dunbar's work. "It's supposed to be guaranteed for 100 years or a lifetime," said Mr. Riley and has worn well in its 45 years. There are copper pieces jutting from the slate which break up ice as it falls from the roof. The copper also protects the house's gutters. Under the slate there is a layer of copper sheeting which can be seen around the gutters and drains.

Air conditioning and a maid's room, over the garage, were incorporated in the original plans but because of the heating system, the air conditioning was never installed. The maid's room has yet to be finished.

The first residents of the house were Mr. and Mrs. Archie W. Truitt, the builders of the home. Mr. Truitt was originally told that it would cost \$14,000, but an additional

\$6,000 was requested by Mr. Dunbar to finish the house in the fashion Mr. Truitt wanted. Mr. and Mrs. Truitt lived in this house from 1941 to 1966 during which time the house stayed pretty much the same. In 1966 the Truitts traded the house to Kenneth Jackson for a house in Kellwood Hills.

Mr. Jackson built a funeral home next door to the house. For the foyer Mrs. Jackson bought oriental rugs which still remain today. After the death of Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Jackson sold the house and moved to another residence.

Beneath the rugs lies the control to an alarm system. It is unique in that it is the only alarm system in a house that rings at the police station. This system was installed by Eldon Alexander who owned the house from 1974 to 1979.

Mr. Alexander was the owner of Alexander Studios in Kirksville. Along with the alarm system, the Alexanders built a fence that surrounds the property to keep trespassers from walking through the backyard to Lincoln Square Shopping Center. They also built a large utility shed in the back yard.

In 1981 Mr. and Mrs. Don Riley bought the house from the Alexanders and live there now. They bought the house when Mr. Riley's business demanded that he be closer to town. When asked what drew them to this house, Mr. Riley will say that because they had lived on a farm they were used to privacy, "This house has lots of privacy. Besides, Gladys liked the house."

The house has basically remained the same through the years. It is just as beautiful today as it was in 1941 and is just as sturdy and impressive. Proving that it pays to use "nothing but the best."

**By Tiffany Tindall
Christopher Lowe**

The Princess Theatre, shown here in 1956, was located in the 200 block of South Franklin. (Photo courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)



By Julie Major
Adele LoGaglio

FROM *Princess* TO *PALACE*

Sieren's Palace, located at 200-202 South Franklin, holds many mysteries. Many who have gone there have never noticed the heavy chandeliers or the ornate carvings on the walls. Most have never looked up to see the triumph mask gazing over what once was the orchestra pit. Even scrutinizing shoppers don't know about the secret door used to get into the aging balcony. Setting aside a clothing rack, opening the hidden door, and looking up the balcony stairs, the history of the Princess Theatre starts to unfold into the 1980s. Pieces of the past can be viewed, like the yellowing plaster, and chunks of what once were cherub's delicate faces are broken over the floor. The balcony carpet is the original piece installed when the Princess was built in 1914. It was obvious the Princess Theatre had seen many years, but with a little imagination one could be transported back to the Roaring Twenties when life was just beginning for the young theatre.

There were two sects of Presbyterians in Kirksville, the Cumberland and the Presbyterian. Around the turn of the century the two churches decided to start negotiations and in 1912 they merged. Mrs. Pat Severn, a literature teacher at Northeast Missouri State University, believes that the owners of the church sold the unused church to Mrs. Caroline Kennedy, who financed the construction of the Princess Theatre. Irwin Dunbar, a local architect, designed the plans for the theatre. The plaster work designs inside were believed to have been done by St. Louis designers, because the railroad connecting St. Louis and Kirksville made it easy to transport these people at a lower fee. The construction was completed in 1916, and on Tuesday, February 29, 1916, the Princess Theatre officially opened. The opening night play

was "Misleading Lady" in five acts. On Saturday and Sunday vaudeville acts were performed.

Until 1926 the Princess showed only first-run movies. It was that year that Mrs. Kennedy had the Kennedy Theatre built for her son, Sam, to run. The Princess was then used as a second-run theatre, one of the first of its kind in America. It was not unusual for the Kennedy to run through a film and take it to the Princess to be re-run one hour later for cheaper admission.

Many times the Princess would have local acts like magicians and tumblers. On the days the theatre could not find acts to perform, the Kirksville Senior High School would send the Glee Club or the band.

In the Princess Theatre's prime years it was the place for celebrities to be seen. This would be the equivalent of where Vincent Price would go if the theatre was in operation today. Stars of that era, like Ernest Tubb and Jimmy Dickens, visited the Princess and the Kennedy on occasion.

Before "talkies" were introduced to the Princess, silent movies were shown with an organist playing. Between movies the orchestra would perform for a change of pace.

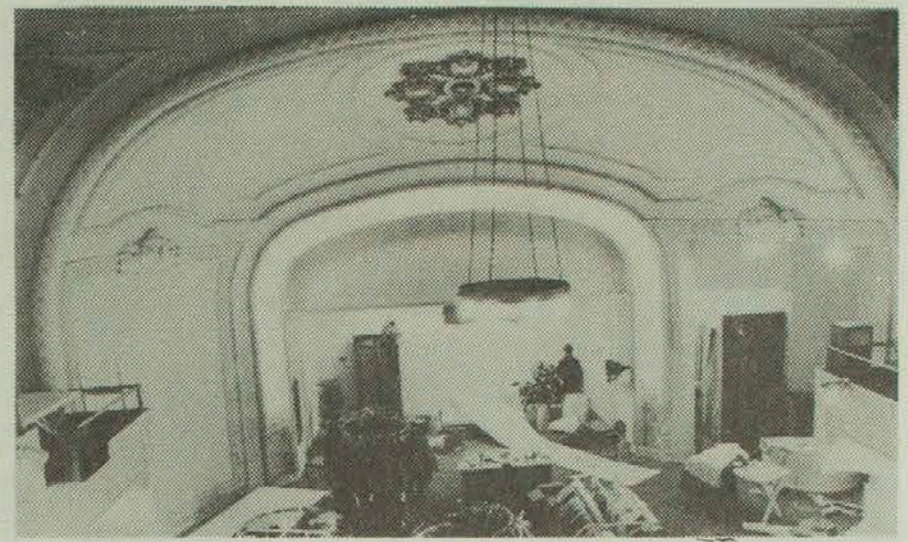
Mrs. Jane Denslow, a long-time resident, recalled her first night out in 1918. She was four years old when her father took her to see Mary Miles Minter, a popular silent screen star of that time.

When Mrs. Denslow went there as a teen in the 1930s, admission was 25 cents. She saw "The Perils of Pauline," a serial that Mrs. Denslow said, "Always ended with Pauline tied to a train track with a train coming. You'd always have to go back next week to see what happened."

Mrs. Erma Auxter, who worked there as an usher from



The last reminder of the theatre, the marquee, was taken down in 1962. (Photo courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)



An inside view of the theatre remodeled as Sieren's Palace. Seen to the extreme left, right, and top of the photo are examples of the detailed plaster work which are still the same today as they were 71 years ago. (Photo courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)

1946 to 1952, remembers the types of shows popular at this time. The B- and C-type movies were shown, as well as westerns, such as *The Cisco Kid* and *Roy Rogers*. A typical theatre venture was going to the Princess after school and on weekends, and when the show was over, everyone met at the White Cabin.

The real hangout, however, was the Kennedy Theatre. It was a nicer theatre than the Princess, for the Princess had become run down. Caroline Kennedy's granddaughter, also named Caroline, was financially unable to remodel the Princess. In the early 1950s the theatre found itself deeper in debt. The plaster began to crack and the velvet curtains needed replacing. Even the stability of the balcony was questioned.

In 1957 the theatre was closed. In 1962 the marquee was taken down because it was deemed a pedestrian hazard. The Princess lay vacant for 16 years, until Mr. Fred Hulse pur-



This beautiful fresco is from inside the theatre. It is made of plaster and horsehair; the horsehair was used as a reinforcement to the plaster. (Photo courtesy of Burt Beard)

chased the building from the Kennedy family and began remodeling. Mr. Hulse saved the detailed ornaments and closed the basement and balcony areas. He put a false floor over the orchestra pit and stage and removed the seats. His store, Tina's Fabrics, flourished until 1973, when Herb Sieren leased the building as a women's dress shop, Sieren's Palace, which is at the present site today.

The theatre is important to describe, because it has changed since 1916. The outside had thick marble columns with small white tiles on the ground around the ticket booth. The marquee was of a triangular design with the name Princess on two sides. Underneath hung the coming attractions. The ticket booth was located outside. One would buy a ticket, give the ticket to a woman dressed in the theatre's colors of red and gold, and find a seat. Two loges on both sides of the theatre were entered by the east side of the theatre. The real use of the loges was for the vaudeville era. Being in a loge was like sitting right on top of the stage in a box seat.

Many intriguing rumors still circulate today, including the reported tunnel connecting the Kennedy and the Princess for actors to travel between theatres between acts to change clothes. Mrs. Severns believes this idea started because steam pipes ran underground from the Princess to the Kennedy. During the time the theatre was built, a popular way to heat was steam. The hole is big enough to crawl through, but no other evidence of a tunnel has been found.

Another unseen and unknown feature is the balcony. Left untouched since the closing of the theatre, it still has the original carpet and movie room. Old movie reels and posters once lay in the back room until they were cleaned out some time in the sixties. There are small holes in the floor where the seats once were connected. Even the color of the walls, a deep lime green, is still on the walls.

The ushers have all gone home now, and the ticket takers have lost their lonely vigil for someone to buy a ticket. But walking into present day Sieren's Palace and envisioning silent movies beaming onto the screen, with organ music being piped into the audience, one can be instantly enveloped into the past of the Princess Theatre.



**By Stephania Snyder
Tammy Barrickman**

Mr. Kachulis came to the United States, from Greece, when he was 12 years old. (Photo courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)

Let's Go To Pete's

Pete's Candyland is a name that brings many long-forgotten, but none the less special, memories back to former customers. Pete's Candyland, located at 108 North Franklin, was owned by Pete Kachulis. It was the favorite soda shop of Kirksville residents from 1931-1963.

The earliest experiences Mr. Kachulis had with the candy business were first as an employee of a candy shop in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and later at a shop in Brooklyn, New York. He then moved to Brookfield, Missouri, and worked in a shop for a couple of years before coming to Kirksville.

In 1931 Mr. Kachulis went into business in Kirksville, Missouri, with Tom Pappas. Their candy shop, named the Olympia, was located at 112 North Franklin, just two doors north of where Pete's Candyland would be located. In 1930 the partnership dissolved and Mr. Kachulis decided to open his own shop in order to make a living and to practice what he loved doing.

What became known as Pete's Candyland was opened in early 1931. Pete's Candyland became the citizens' favorite place to "hang out." The most memorable thing about Pete's Candyland was the homemade candy. Right above the candy shop Mr. Kachulis had a walk-in cooler and huge copper mixing kettles in which the candy was prepared. Up against the wall, next to the mixing kettles were the large wooden spoons used for stirring and mixing the candy. A large marble table used for cutting the candy sat in the middle of the room. The candy was made only at night because Mr.

Kachulis didn't want to leave the shop during the day. Bill, Mr. Kachulis' oldest child, remembers many nights when he, his family, and the employees would work into the early hours of the morning making candy. Candy was not made every night but there were always the finishing touches to do. Much of the candy (such as the chocolate-covered cherries and candy that contained nuts) took more than one day to make. For example one night the cherries would be prepared and the next night they would be dipped in chocolate. Also, the nuts would be dipped in chocolate two or three nights in a row until the right thickness was achieved. Steve Hunt, a former customer, stated that the thing he remembers most about the candy was, "Each one of his pieces of chocolate candy you could look at it and tell by swirl on top what was inside of it. While the chocolate was still wet, Mr. Kachulis took his finger and swirled each one a certain way, one meant strawberry, one meant lemon, and one meant caramel or peanut and if you knew his code you could tell what it was." Besides all the chocolate covered candies, Pete's Candyland sold English toffee, peanut and coconut brittles, candy canes, and divinity.

All the candy could be bought in gift boxes. These were especially popular around Christmas, Valentine's Day and other holidays. The everyday candy box was very plain with just the logo "Pete's Candyland" on the lid, but the boxes for the holidays were very fancy. Clea Rose, a former employee, remembers receiving the most gorgeously decorated boxes from the Kachulises. The candy was sold

for \$1.25 per pound and was well worth it. Mr. Kachulis stressed quality and achieved his goal of making the finest candies. Bill Kachulis stated, "the secret to good quality chocolate was the amount of chocolate on the product."

The candy was not the only handmade item. During the early years all the ice cream was handmade. Former employees, Les and Clea Rose remember Heavenly Hash and the Helen Special as being the two most popular treats with the customers. "The Helen Special was started by a girl who liked to eat her ice cream fixed that way but I can't remember her last name," recalled Mrs. Rose. Jacquelin Harrison, a former customer, remembers never being able to walk by Pete's without going in and getting a Helen Special. Heavenly Hash was made with two scoops of vanilla ice cream and strawberries with marshmallow and ground peanuts on the strawberries. The Helen Special sold for 35 cents and was made of chocolate ice cream, chocolate syrup, and peanuts. Another popular ice cream was the Tin Roof. Bill Kachulis stated, "People were mad over it." It was made with chocolate ice cream, chocolate syrup, and real marshmallow with peanuts on top. One of Mr. Kachulis' own inventions was the process of making soft chocolate ice cream. This process was called Sana Freeze. This process was a secret of Mr. Kachulis and was unknown to those outside of the family. The ice cream became very popular with the customers. Another popular item still in demand today, was the banana split which sold for 25 cents. Some choices of topping were pineapple, strawberries, cherries, nuts, and chocolate. All the fruit toppings were preserves made by his wife, Mary. In the later years Mr. Kachulis quit making his own ice cream and bought it from the Palace Bakery which was also located in Kirksville.

Pete's Candyland was also the first shop to have popcorn. In late 1951 or early 1952 Pete's came out with fresh buttered popcorn which was sold in boxes. It was a first for Kirksville and therefore, was a big hit.

The soda fountain was located along the south side of the wall. It received a lot of use by the teens who would come in after school and sit and sip on a cherry coke or a lemon phosphate. Green River, which was equivalent to the present day lemon-lime drink, was also a favorite of the teens. Limeade was popular with everyone. It was freshly squeezed every day and sweetened with glucose instead of



Judy (Stanley) Maffitt, left and Annie (Marts) Hall, center, stand next to the soda fountain at Pete's Candyland during the holidays of 1957, while Joy (Williams) Cook waits on customers. (Photo courtesy of Judy Maffitt)

granulated sugar. Vanilla and chocolate cokes were also sold. There were always two or three malt machines working. Zada (Stanley) Lindquist, a former employee, stated, "They were extra thick and creamy and you could get any flavor you wanted."

In the back of the store, booths lined the walls. The teens would dance to popular songs coming from the nickelodeon. Les Rose remembers the tunes of Guy Lombardo. He commented that Lombardo's music was, "the most beautiful music this side of Heaven and his saxophones had the sweetest sounds." During the 1950s Ms. Lindquist remembers the teen listening to the Ames Brothers' "You You You" and the tunes of Eddy Fisher. Elvis Presley tunes were also very popular during the 1950s and early 1960s.

As well as the sweets, Pete's Candyland had a luncheonette with homemade sandwiches and soup. Pete's tunafish sandwiches were the favorite of the business customers that came in. They were said to be fantastic on plain white bread and even better when they were grilled. Some other sandwiches that were sold were the ham salad sandwich and the grilled Spam sandwich. Mary Jane Valuck, a former customer, remembers going to Pete's Candyland during her lunch break, "I would order a grilled Spam sandwich, chips, and a Coke. The sandwiches were so yummy and crispy and good. Pete used mayonnaise containing black pepper which made it so good."

"Working for the Kachulises was a pleasure," said Mr. and Mrs. Rose. "They took us under their wing and treated us just like family." Ms. Lindquist commented that they really cared about their employees, "Every night after work they would take us home, and that is something today's employers wouldn't even be concerned with." As well as hiring help, the whole Kachulis family worked in the shop with each doing their own specific job as well as helping with the making of the candy. Another thing that employees remember about working for Mr. Kachulis was how clean he required it. If an employee wasn't waiting on someone there were always tables to be wiped or glasses to be shined. The place was cleaned each and every night before going home, not the next morning.

There was always a time of day Mr. Kachulis and his employees knew would be the busiest. Students poured in after the schools let out at three o'clock. Anna Bell Miller,



Bill Kachulis helped his father serve customers and make candies. (Photo courtesy of Joy Cook)



The owners of Pete's Candyland, Pete and Mary Kachulis, celebrated their golden anniversary in 1972. (Photo courtesy of Georgia Kachulis)

a former employee of Pete's Candyland in the late 1950s, remembers lining cokes up from one end of the counter to the other in anticipation of the crowd. Jeanne Truitt Coy stated, "I went down to Pete's everyday after school for a coke and a Snickers." Also during the school lunch break many teens would go to Pete's to eat. Another busy time was after the movie or a dance had ended. People often stayed until one or two in the morning. Parents knew that Mr. Kachulis ran a tight ship and their children, no matter what time of day, had to behave while they were there. Parents also knew that drinking and foul language were not permitted so they didn't worry about their children being harmed or influenced in the wrong way.

Teenagers were always found at Pete's Candyland, but they were not the only ones that looked forward to going there. Younger children that went with their parents found it an almost bigger treat. Lila Thompson, a former customer, recalled, "I felt very 'big' going where all the teenagers 'hung out'."

Another group of people that could be found at Pete's during the 1950s were the young men from Sublette. They would go there to meet girls and relax before they had to go back to the Air Force base for duty. They felt very much at home at Pete's and Mr. Kachulis would often talk to them and help them with any problems they might have.

In 1963 Mr. Kachulis felt retirement was best for him. His art for making candy was becoming very unprofitable and it was becoming very hard for him to make a living. Making candy without the use of machines was becoming virtually impossible, it was a "dying art." At about the same time Mr. Kachulis received an offer to rent the building to Mode O' Day, a local dress shop. This would give he and his wife a fixed income for their retirement. He accepted the offer and so in the fall of 1963 Pete's Candyland closed. There was no fuss or ceremony. Mr. Kachulis just locked the door.

The townspeople were very unhappy. Ron Miller, a regular customer, summed up his feelings saying that he "would miss the place where he met his buddies and took his girl." To Ms. Lindquist the mere sight of the empty building, even today, gives her an empty feeling inside and reminds her of all the good times that she had.

Today, the ceiling is lowered, the soda fountain and booths are gone. Even the original stairs to the candymaking room have been taken out. The dance floor, once crowded, has aged with the years and upstairs still stands the marble table used for cutting candy. On the door to the old candymaking room is a sign that reads "Pete's Come In." That small building holds many memories even to us almost 20 years later. It is plain to see the joy Mr. Kachulis, his family, and Pete's Candyland gave to the residents of this area.

