

THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

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THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

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COVER PICTURE

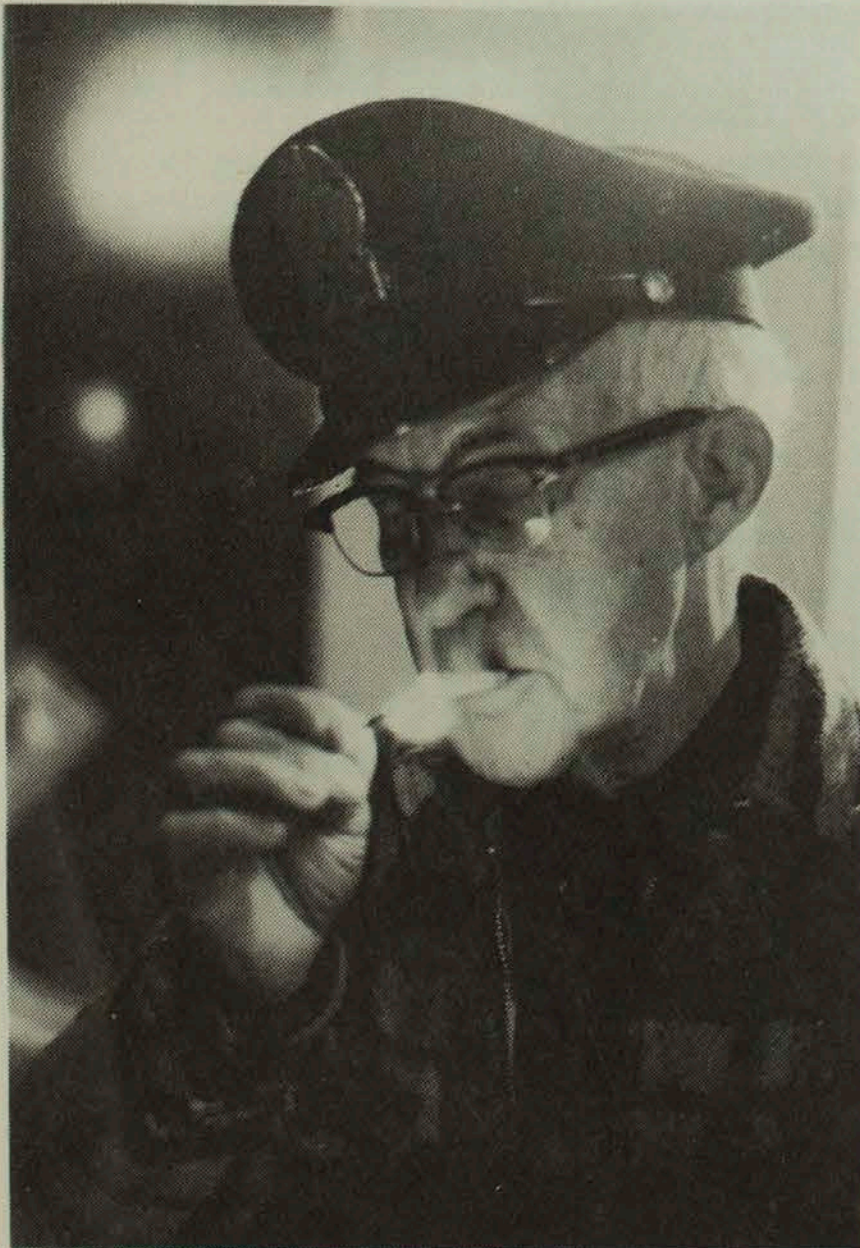
The co-op grain bins in Baring, Missouri, are just one of the marketing exchanges for the farmers' products in the northeast Missouri area. This photograph was taken in March, 1985, by Jon Williams.

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Sharla A. Fox

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Charley "Hoppy" Fox started smoking at the age of four. It was very rare to see him without a cigarette dangling from his thin lips. See related story on page 8. (Photo by Noel Rice, courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)

Mary Immaculate: One of a Kind

The bell rings and students arrive at their classrooms. This scene is common throughout Kirksville. After they arrive, they talk with their friends, gather their books and other materials needed for their classes. An authoritative voice comes from the head of the classroom and says, "Class, please be quiet. Billy, will you please lead us in morning prayer?" All of the students stand next to their desks, bow their heads and recite the "Hail Mary," gesturing the sign of the cross with their right hand after this prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance is then said and thus another day begins at the Mary Immaculate Catholic School in Kirksville.

Mary Immaculate, Kirksville's only Catholic school, has begun most every school day this way since it opened its doors in 1956. You might ask yourself, "How did the school come about?" According to parishioner Jim Thomas, it was because Catholics have traditionally perceived it as a duty to make sure the children of the parish get a Catholic education. This value on education with a Christian emphasis is the main point of the school today.

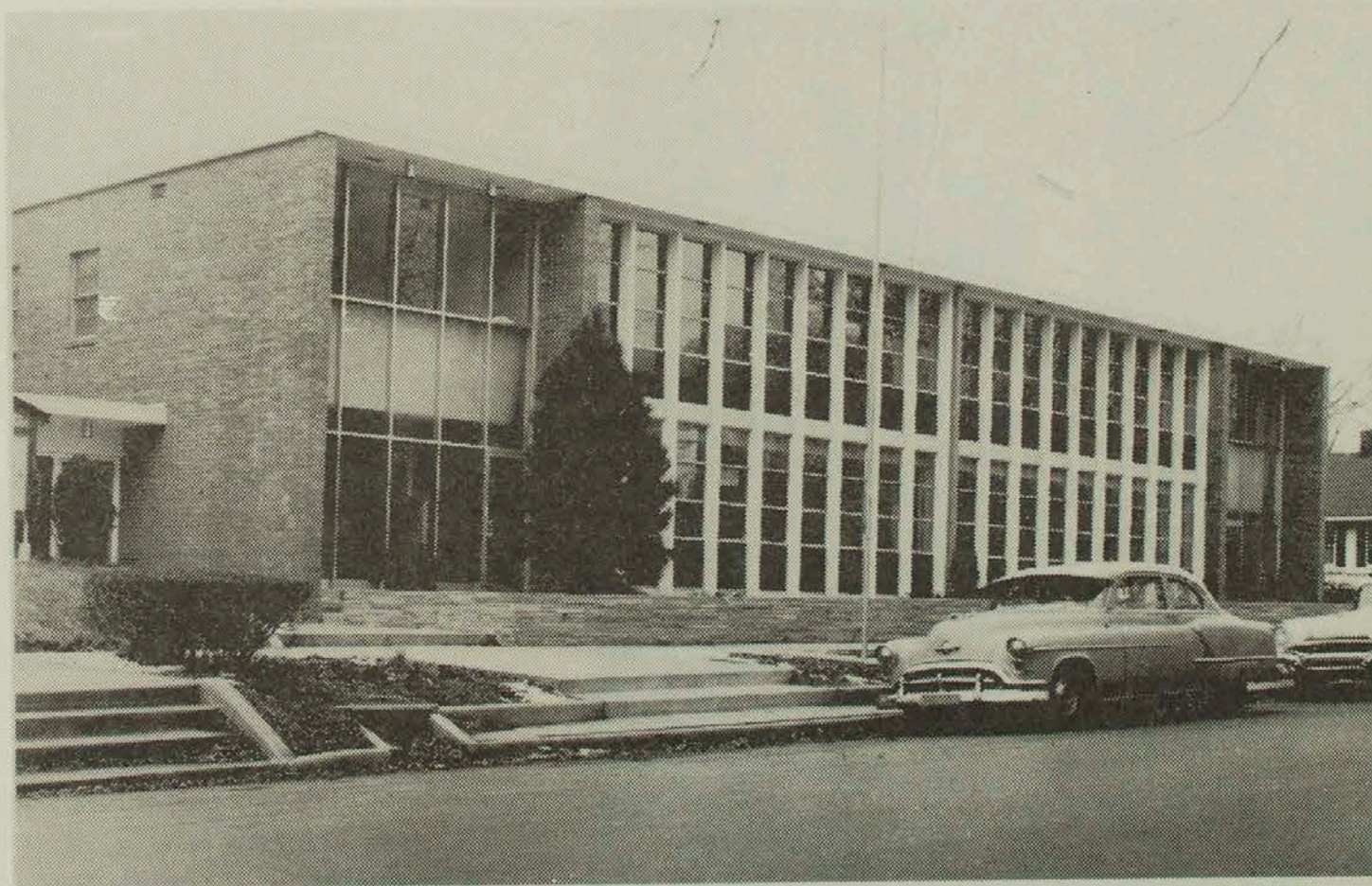
When the parish decided on the need of the school in 1955, construction soon began in the spring of 1956 with Phillip Mihalevich Construction of Kirksville as contractor and architect John Benya of Quincy, Illinois, as sub-contractor. Other sub-contractors included Clyde Kaestner, who did the excavating and grading; Virgil Clay, who provided the footings, the sewer, and water lines; Hayden Concrete Products furnished the concrete and Haydite blocks; and R. J. Lumber Company supplied the

lumber products. Hoener Glass Company supplied the glass glazing and the aluminum entrances while Elbert Lewis Plumbing and Heating installed the plumbing and heating. Wright's Tire and Appliance furnished the General Electric kitchen appliances for the cafeteria and the convent; Cook Paints and Wallpaper furnished the paint for the walls and ceilings. The cost of the school was \$175,000 and originally planned to hold approximately 100



Bishop Joseph M. Marling (center) of the newly--formed Jefferson City Diocese is shown coming from the east entrance of the school after blessing the Virgin Mary statue.

Mary Immaculate Catholic School has had few exterior changes since it opened in 1956. The brick wall shown here in front of the school has been replaced and the flag pole has been moved closer to the building.





The dedication of the school was held on December 16, 1956, with many people attending. A banquet was held after the dedication in the school gymnasium.

students. The blueprints had not intended for the school to have any exterior additions, although the convent, located on the second floor of the building, was remodeled for classrooms in 1979. When the school began, the first and second grades were located on the first floor and the convent, chapel, the third and fourth grades were located on the second floor.

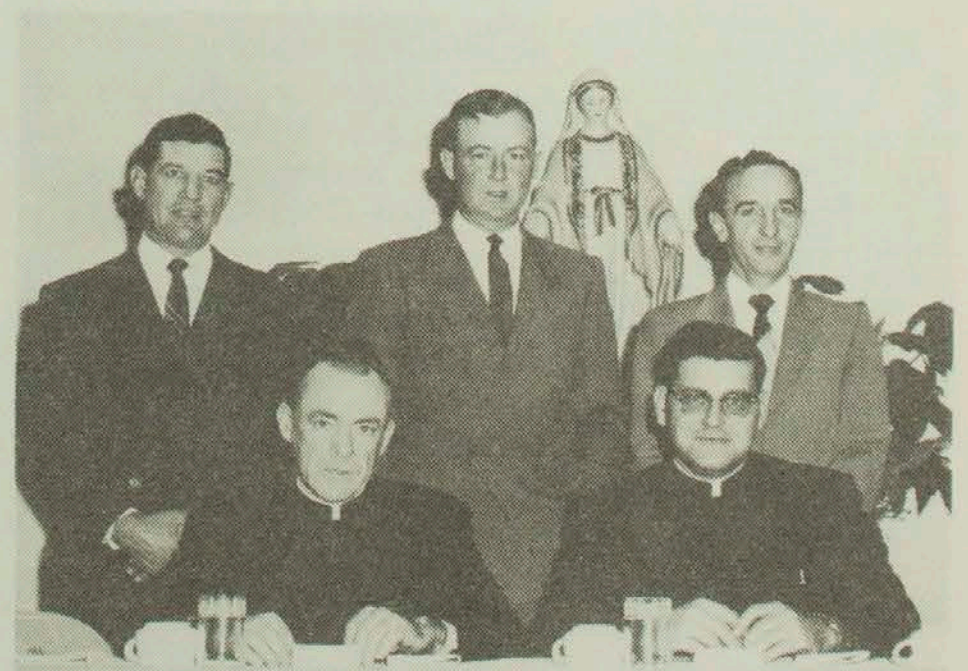
Like most schools, Mary Immaculate is part of a school district. It was built in the same year the Jefferson City Diocese was formed and was the newest school encompassing the diocese at the time.

The school was dedicated on December 16, 1956, by the Most Reverend Joseph M. Marling, who was the bishop of the newly-formed diocese. The dedication was originally scheduled for December 9, but was postponed one week due to the inclement weather. Mass was held in the church with six priests, including Father John F. Kenny and Father William D. Ludwig of Mary Immaculate presiding. Bishop Marling then blessed the school. The dedication was held that afternoon at 3:30 with the banquet following at 5 o'clock in the gymnasium. The members of the parish committee who helped bring about the new school and the dedication were Fred Zucchi, John Snyder, Phillip J. Mihalevich, John Giovannini, and Charles E. Kauzlarich.

When Mary Immaculate was about ready to start its first school year, it had one problem: no teachers. But thanks to Father Kenny and his great hope for the school, he found the strength to announce the date of the school opening before he had any teachers. Fortunately, teachers were found in time with the Sisters of St. Francis educating the students. The classes went to the fourth grade when the school opened. A new grade was added every year until the eighth was added in the 1960-61 school year. No additional grades have been planned or added since then. The first principal of the school was Sister Stephanie, who belonged to the Sisters of St. Francis. Sister Stephanie held the position of principal for five years until her order was

transferred. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word took over in 1961, guiding the school until 1968 when they too were transferred elsewhere.

With the nuns leaving in 1968, the school had a serious question to face: Will the school go on or will it fold? Some of the Catholic parents who had children enrolled felt that the school wouldn't continue so they enrolled their children in the public schools. But others felt the strong need for their children to stay. They asked, "Who will run the school now?" The congregation, with the help of the diocese, had the answer: Elect a lay school board to run the finances, review school policy, and to hire and fire teachers. But before the parish felt they were ready



Members of the parish committee that helped bring Mary Immaculate School into existence were (seated) Father John Kenny, Father William Ludwig, (standing) Phillip J. Mihalevich, John Snyder, and Fred Zucchi.



The first Christmas play held at Mary Immaculate was the beginning of one of the many traditions of the school.

to have a lay school board and teaching staff, they wrote letters to the Mother Superior of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and to the bishop urging the nuns to remain in Kirksville. They also wrote letters to the different orders of nuns trying to find out if there was any chance of having their sisters appointed here. These attempts proved unsuccessful.

The first school board was formed out of the Home and School Organization, which also started in 1968. Nominations for the school board were made by the Home and School, with further nominations coming from the parish. Jim Thomas, a member of the original school board, remembered that if you had an opinion, were dependable, had good sense, would be willing to serve, and thought you would make a good member, you could run for a position. The members elected to this first school board were Jim Thomas, Lester Sayre, John Donelon, Miss Betty Dougherty, Mrs. Fred Goeke, Dr. Charles Kline, and Dr. Robert Bradley.

The first job of this new board was to convince the parish that there would be school the next year. Doing the best they were able to do, they kept the school open. Their responsibilities included supporting the school's programs, keeping aware of the financial needs of the school, and setting policy when necessary. They also took care of complaints toward the teachers and administration. Although the board received lots of credit, some of the parishioners felt it was a "rubber-stamp group" to turn down any of the parish's proposals for the school. This did not happen very much.

It also goes without saying that the current pastor at that time, Father John Buchanan, was a great factor in the school's survival. He served as the school's plumber, painter, repairman, cook, and was usually known as the

"jack-of-all-trades." Without his valuable help, the school would have gone in a state of disrepair.

The duties of the current school board are basically the same as the original. The parents of the school children vote for board members for a three-year term. Current board members include Kay Clapp as president, Tom Hawkins as vice-president; Joetta Krueger as secretary; Gary Ledford, Chuck Schneider, Joan Jones, and Nilene Belzer. Non-voting members of the school board include Sharon Fleak, head of the Home and School Association, Father Tom Dolan, and Sister Mary Ann Seeker, principal of Mary Immaculate. This year, however, the parish will vote on the candidates during Mass because they felt that it was a parish school so the parishioners should have a say in who should be on the board.

Mary Immaculate has had a number of principals during its 30 year history. Most of the administrative changes have come due to the appointments or dismissals of the various orders of nuns. When the Sisters of the Incarnate Word left in 1968, Miss Betty Dougherty, a member of the school board, became principal the next year. A Dominican sister became principal in 1970, followed by lay principals from 1971 to 1980. In that year, the Sisters of Mercy from Ireland came. They helped to bring stability to the administration and to the school. The new principal then was Sister Doreen Whitney, who previously taught at St. Peter's School in Fulton and Columbia Catholic in Columbia, Missouri. During Sister Doreen's administration, a physical education and computer program were instituted. Sister Doreen stated that the greatest asset to the school during that time was the school spirit. She served as principal until 1984. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word were then appointed and Sister Mary Ann Seeker became principal.

One of the biggest factors in the school is student enrollment. When the school began only 46 students were enrolled. The student population gradually increased. In 1971 it dropped to a low of 71 pupils. There were a couple of reasons for this decline: first, a number of Catholic families with children in the school moved out of the parish and second, the parochial school bus was discontinued due to financial reasons, leaving many children without transportation to Mary Immaculate. Since that time, however, the attendance has increased to an average of 100 students per school year. The greatest enrollment of students enrolled in Mary Immaculate was in 1980 with 130 students. There are 104 students enrolled for the 1984-85 school year.

Mary Immaculate has a wide and varied curriculum for its students. Sister Mary Ann said, "The teachers try to meet the needs of each individual child as best as possible." Their classes included Catholic religious studies, reading, math, English, science, social studies, handwriting, spelling, music, and physical education. Each student is required to take all of these subjects. The eighth grade students must pass all of these classes satisfactorily to graduate and Sister Mary Ann added, "The students must satisfactorily complete graduation requirements set by the Diocesan School Office." Since Mary Immaculate is a parochial school, it tries to put all of its teaching within a Christian context and exposes the students to the rituals and happenings of the Roman Catholic Church whereas, a public or private school emphasizes its teachings on the "everyday" events.

Without the teachers though, a class would not be a class and a school would not be a school. The teachers at Mary Immaculate have made the school what it is today. With seven full-time and three-part time teachers, the needs of the students are well met. The teachers serving Mary Immaculate are Loretta McClanahan, first grade; Mary Ellen Bishop, second grade; Jane Perry, third grade; Jane Bischoff, fourth grade; Barbara Covell, fifth grade;

Brenda Boatright, sixth grade; Jane Theobald, seventh and eighth grades; Richard McKinney, music; James Crnic, physical education; and Sister Mary Catherine Hein, computer and church music. Grades five through eight are departmentalized so the students can get some of the flavor of junior high life.

It is said that an army travels on its stomach. This is true with Mary Immaculate. The school's two cooks, Elsie Eddy and Elfriede (Friede) Young, keep the students well-fed with their delicious, nutritious, hot lunches. Friede has been with the school for 11 years and Elsie has been here since September of 1976. The school receives most of its meat and dairy products from the government. Most of the fruit and vegetables are purchased from various suppliers. Mrs. Young said that when she is attending Mass, during the "peace be with you" part of the service, the students always ask her, "What's for lunch?" She added, "My experience at Mary Immaculate has been very rewarding for me. I love to work and be around children, to see them grow spiritually as well as physically. It makes me feel good to say that I had a part in it. We at Mary Immaculate strive to feed the children a well-balanced meal each day. We try to put a little love into it and I know the children, as well as the teachers appreciate all that."

Mrs. Eddy also reflects that feeling, "The past nine years at Mary Immaculate School has been a very rewarding experience for me. I enjoy seeing the children grow into fine young people. The children and my co-workers, especially Friede, helped me get through a very difficult time in 1982 when I lost my father. A little first grader whispered in my ear, 'Elsie, I hope your dad likes his new home.' In no other atmosphere could I have gotten that kind of response. I think that explains how I feel about Mary Immaculate."

Like most schools, Mary Immaculate has some extra-curricular activities available. The school offers its students basketball, cheerleading, speech, choir, and visitations to the local nursing homes. The basketball

A Mass was held to celebrate the beginning of this school term as the Year of the Catholic Schools.



teams are the most popular of the extracurricular events, with teams available for both boys and girls in grades five through eight. Jon Schwartz, volunteer coach for the past ten years, and his assistant Jim Crnic, have led the blue and white Hawks and Lady Hawks to a 3-4 and 4-3 record, respectively, in 1984.

The seventh and eighth grade Hawks and Lady Hawks play their games in November and December while their fifth and sixth grade counterparts play in February and March. The Lady Hawks, who have just finished their third season of basketball at the school, have an interesting origin. Mrs. Theobald said, "About three years ago when the boys' basketball team went to arrange their games, they found out they couldn't play anybody unless we had a girls' basketball team. So, the coaches were very upset. Here they had a basketball team and nobody to play. So we came into the seventh and eighth grade room and said, 'Every female in this room is now on the basketball team.' They knew what a basketball was and that was basically it!" Around 49 students are now participating in the program at the school. To give the Hawks support during the games, cheerleading is also available for the girls in fifth through eighth grades.

Speech is offered for students in grades six through eight. The school is a member of the Bellarmine Speech League and recently hosted a Bellarmine Speech Meet on November 15, 1984. Mrs. Theobald described the event as "organized chaos." The meet began with an assembly held in the cafeteria where an opening prayer was said by Father Dolan. Students participating in the meet were given an assigned number and room where they gave their speeches. After all of the speeches were given, the school bell rang signaling the end of the first round. Refreshments were served in the cafeteria and soon a second bell rang to start the second round. After all of the speeches were given for the second round, the bell rang a third time and everyone gathered in the cafeteria for the ribbon presentation. Eight schools competed in the meet with each school winning at least one blue ribbon. Mary Immaculate had a clean sweep of the meet with the team winning four blue ribbons. The

Mary Immaculate speech team has also competed in speech meets at Moberly and Bowling Green during this school year. The speech team has been very successful in their meets.

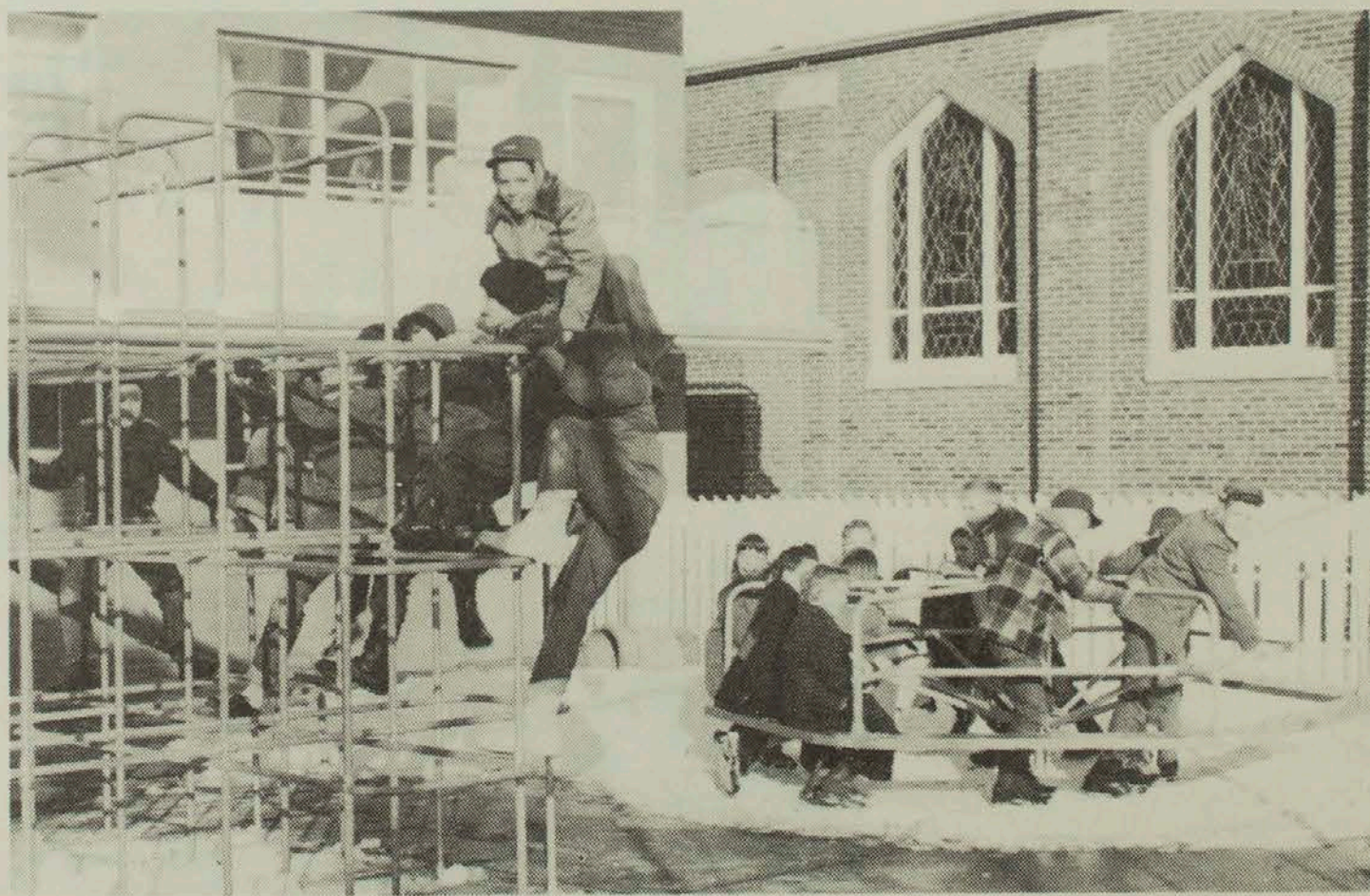
Probably one of the most popular events of the school and the parish is Fun Day, which is held in October of each year. All of the students in the school participate in the program doing one thing or another. The parents take part by running the country store which is located in the cafeteria, organizing committees to work and clean up, and by setting a date to advertise the event on the turntable of the First National Bank. Many different activities are offered during this event including games, like penny pitch, to a costume parade for the pre-school age children of the parish.

Two of the school's long-standing traditions, the Christmas and Spring concerts, are also events that the entire school participates in. The Christmas Concert usually has a theme based on the Catholic/Christian idea of the birth of Christ. Religious and commercial Christmas ballads are sung, as well as skits and speeches performed by the students. Going to a Christmas play performed by these young actors can give anyone the yuletide spirit.

The Spring Concert, like the Christmas Concert, deals with a theme that has to do with the season. Richard McKinney helps write the songs for his music students to perform. He has written the song "Sharing Values, Sharing Vision," which is being used for the Year of the Catholic Schools and is currently being copyrighted. Individual talent is stressed in both programs, although the Spring Concert is more emphasized.

This year has special significance to the Catholic schools throughout Missouri. The present school year was designated as "The Catholic School Year" by a special proclamation of former Governor Christopher Bond. When all of the Catholic schools in Missouri opened the Catholic School Year on September 28, 1984, Mary Immaculate participated by having a school Mass celebrated by Father Dolan. Those attending included the school board, faculty, students, parents, government

Children enjoyed the playground which was located back of the school. The equipment was disassembled approximately 15 years ago and the lot is currently serving as a parking area.



officials, and townspeople. The officials present for the ceremony included 28th District State Senator David Doctorian, 2nd District State Representative Harry Hill, Mayor Russell Roberts, and Chamber of Commerce Director Carolyn Harding. A special flag raising ceremony was held in October, in which the United States and the Catholic schools' flags were raised in conjunction with a Grandparent's Day held at Mary Immaculate. This event brought together more parish and grandparent activity in the school.

The Catholic School Year was divided into three phases. The first phase "Celebrating the Heritage" dealt with the Catholic past. The second phase is "Sharing the Values of the Present," and the third phase is "Looking Toward the Future." The main emphasis according to Sister Mary Ann is to bring before the public the contribution in the number of young people educated in Catholic schools in Missouri.

As Mary Immaculate looks toward the future, many things are scheduled to take place. It has already begun a self-study program and hopes to finish it by May 1, 1985. The purpose of this study is to re-evaluate the school system itself and the direction it is going. The study will include five areas: student personnel, organization and administration, curriculum, physical facilities, and finances. At the completion of the school self-study an evaluation team will visit the school in the spring of 1986. The team will then approve or disapprove the school for accreditation. After the evaluation team's visit, the school's self-study is presented to the Diocesan Accreditation Board for approval. The accreditation will be approved for five years.

With almost 30 years of providing quality Christian education, Mary Immaculate Catholic School has met its challenges and trials and is ready for another 30 years of teaching the Kirksville area.

By Nial Belzer

All Photos Courtesy of Mary Immaculate School.

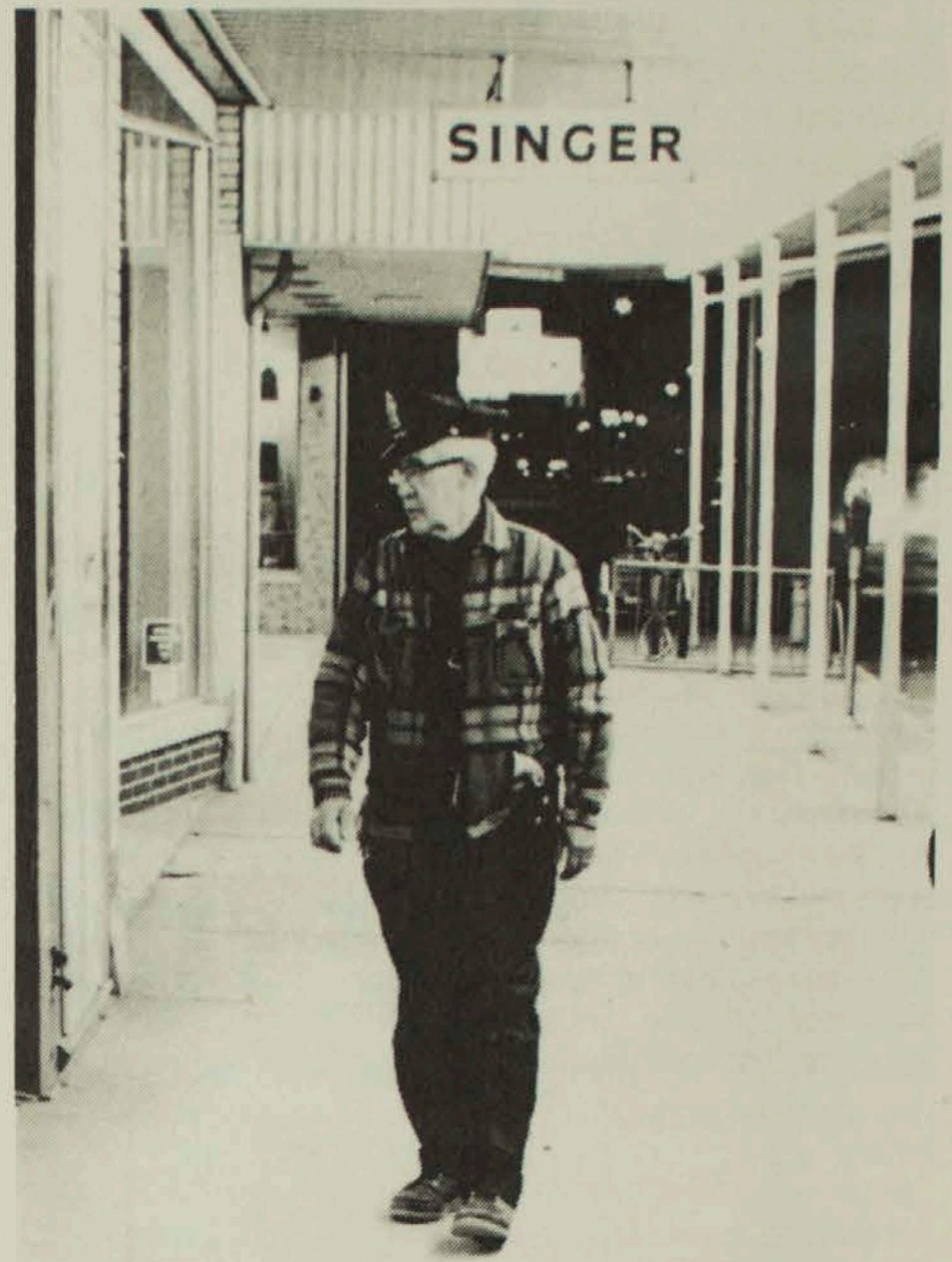


In Memory of You, Grandpa!

After being in the Local and State History class for five months and learning about Adair County, an urge came over me to write a story on a man who I knew very little about but had a great deal of love and respect for, my grandpa. I remember Charley Parx "Hoppy" Fox as a quiet, sweet man who very rarely showed up to my house without bringing me a new doll. I can still see him in his gray or blue uniform with his cap on coming to my house for dinner. We'd always have one of his favorites, cornbread and beans or biscuits and gravy. The one thing the grandchildren could always expect when Grandpa came to visit them was to receive a candy bar. As I began to do more and more research I was overwhelmed. He was not always the quiet man I remembered, I uncovered some funny and interesting things he did as a merchant policeman, as well as a few incidents where he showed his bravery. I feel I know more about this man now and I've helped to discover information which several of my relatives never knew and would have vanished from our family record. I want to share with you the story of Hoppy Fox.

Charley Fox was born at Willmathsville on October 22, 1901. He was the youngest son of Henry and Samatha (March) Fox who were both the youngest children themselves. Charley Parx had seven brothers and sisters: Edward B., Mrs. Sophia Hicks, Wilbur, Mrs. Nettie Callahan who was a twin to James H., Mrs. Elizabeth (Lizzy) Selby, Alfred (who was known as Pete), and Fred, who died at the age of two.

Charley was raised and attended school at Willmathsville, a small town about 15 miles northeast of Kirksville.



Hoppy Fox went to work when everyone else was ready to go home for the night.

Charley Fox, second from the left, worked as a cab dispatcher and driver for the Bradley Cab Company.





Hoppy Fox carried over 300 keys with pride. He knew where each key went.

He completed the fourth grade and then quit to help support his large family. Charley, his brothers, and his sisters often put on theater plays at the Adair Hall as teenagers. Adair Hall was located in Adair, Missouri, south of the church and east of the cemetery, but is no longer standing. They received a small commission for their performances. It was here that Charley received his life-long nickname "Hoppy" after appearing in a play, in which he played a Chinese cook.

Hoppy loved the outdoors. The love of the outdoors was shown in Hoppy's collection of 700 western books. He loved to trap and hunt, Hoppy caught everything from muskrats, coons, to snakes. "He used to have cages and cages of snakes that he had caught by hand," replied Letha Christman, Hoppy's niece. When Hoppy was about 15 years old, he would go out into the woods and not return for three months living off what he had killed.

Cecil Selby, Hoppy's nephew said, "I remember going to Grandpa Henry's and asking for Parx. Grandpa said he was out in the timber letting his whiskers grow long, carrying two six-shooters from his side and calling himself Jesse James. Grandpa said he couldn't even get him to come in the house anymore. He was the youngest and they kinda babied him and let him do what he wanted."

Emma Lea Winkler, one of Hoppy's three daughters, said her dad started smoking at the age of four and

continued smoking throughout his entire life. A person would never see Hoppy without a cigarette hanging out of the left side of his mouth. Emma Lea said, "He'd let his nail on his right pinky finger grow pretty long, so he could use it to flip his ashes." He once had a job where he'd take huge bundles of tobacco leaves around the Kirksville area and sell them.

He married Ethel Lillian Lockhart on January 29, 1929. To this marriage eight children were born: Mrs. Jo Ann Yardley, Lester, Mrs. Emma Lea Winkler, Dennis, Larry (my father), Robert, Clarence, and Alice Fox.

Emma Lea remarked, "He was not the sort of person with whom you could sit down and have a nice, long conversation. He was the sort of person who would decide arbitrarily how things were, and then simply wouldn't hear anything that didn't go along with that." Jo Ann agreed, she remembers her dad as a kind, gentle person who wouldn't argue with anyone. He'd listen, but he'd go ahead with what he had already decided.

Charley Fox worked for a railroad, as a cab dispatcher and driver with the Works Progress Administration, a government program to provide work for people during the Depression, and as a phone operator. Emma Lea recalled, "During this time he worked during the day and I loved this. It was probably the only time our family led a fairly normal life. I remember waiting for him and running up to him as he came home from work." In 1945 he was employed as the merchant's police officer.

At the beginning of each month Hoppy would go around to each of the different businesses in an area that stretches north from Buchanan Street, west to Travelers Hotel, east to High Street, and south to Pierce Street to collect his fees which were \$3 to \$5. This did not just include checking doors. He also made coffee, checked the radiators, turned lights on and off, and pulled down the outside awnings. Even though Hoppy was employed by the merchants of Kirksville he had the power of arrest.

To get ready for work Hoppy would get up, turn the television on to watch "The Edge of Night," then go into the kitchen where his wife would shave him and wash his hair. Preparation for work was slow and leisurely. After Hoppy ate, he'd go into the bedroom to put on his uniform that he had coordinated himself, a blue shirt, navy blue or black pants, black shoes, and his black belt. Next he put on his gun, his badge, his 300 keys, and his cap. "He always liked to start off to work proud," said Jo Ann. Hoppy left for work around 6 p.m. and did not return home until after 5 the next morning. "It was always a relief for mom when he came in, not only because of the danger he was in but because of the bad weather. She was afraid he'd fall and nobody would see him until morning," Jo Ann said.

"In private, Dad thought of himself as a police officer and he had a sense of status and importance through his job," said Emma Lea. "But I know this was kind of a false front, because I noticed that when he'd have to call one of the businessmen, whose store he watched, he'd not refer to himself as the merchant's policeman, which I think was his official title. He wouldn't even refer to himself by name. He'd say, 'This is the night watch.' This always made me feel bad, because I thought he was a great person, and yet it seemed to me he showed a great feeling of inferiority in the way he talked to these businessmen."

Wayne Martin, chief of police, recalled an incident where there had been a jail escape when he was working as

There were three things that meant the world to Hoppy—his wife, his children, and his job.



a police officer. Hoppy was making one of his nightly rounds and while walking through an alley he spotted a man running. Hoppy shouted at the man and ordered him to stop, but he continued running. Hoppy then fired a warning shot aimed at the ground. The bullet ricocheted and struck the man in his leg. After receiving medical help the escapee was sent back to jail.

When making one of his rounds Hoppy noticed something peculiar at the White Cabin restaurant, where Hardee's is located today. He called for a backup, and Officer Martin went to assist him. They apprehended the alleged criminal and uncovered a "zip" gun the suspect

had in his possession. A "zip" gun is a long steel pipe with a spring at the end. They found that the gun had been fired, but the shell had stuck in the pipe. Either Hoppy or Officer Martin could have been shot.

There were also the funny times when Hoppy was at his best. He loved to joke around. He often told the police officers that he would outdraw them at anytime. One night he walked into the police station and an officer challenged Hoppy to a draw. Hoppy reached around with his right hand to his left side for his .22 Harrington Richardson pistol. Hoppy always used the crossdraw. The gun stuck in his holster as Hoppy pulled the trigger, shooting a

Charley Parx Fox was very proud of his family. Shown here is his daughter, Emma Lea, and her husband, Arthur Winkler; Hoppy and Ethel Lillian; and son, Lester, with his wife, Betty.

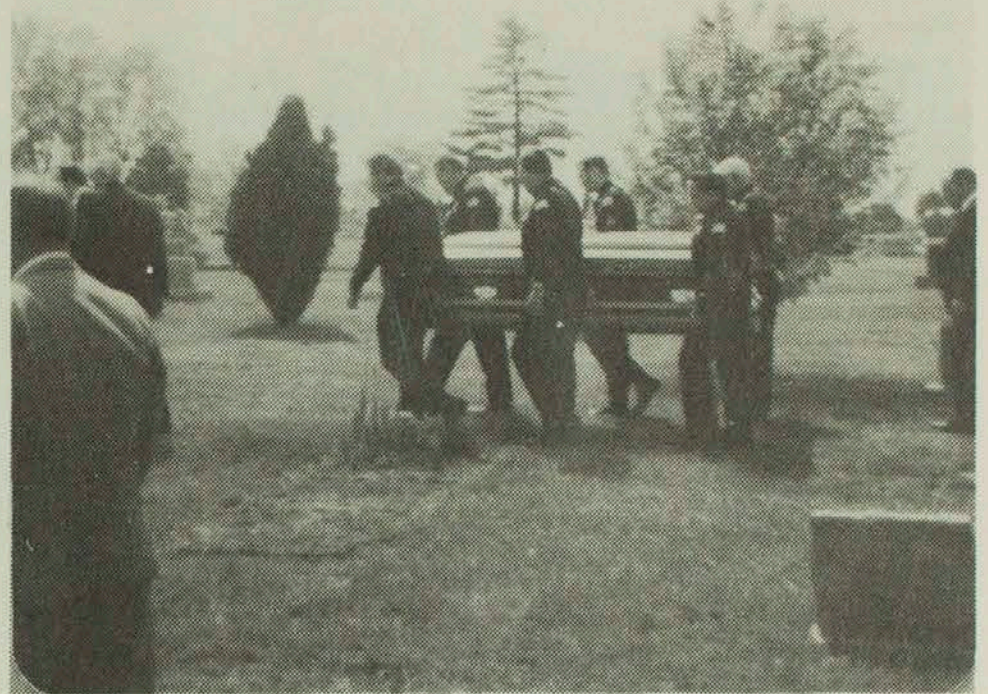


hole through the floor at City Hall. The hole remained in the floor until City Hall was remodeled in 1984.

In another incident a store, which was going out of business, had thrown some mannequins into the alley. As Hoppy passed by he picked up one of the lady mannequins and took it to a coal bin where he buried it except for the feet. Hoppy then proceeded to call the police department to report a possible homicide. When the police officers arrived they thought it was a very humorous joke.

Three years before he had retired Hoppy had walked over 100,000 miles. He made at least two rounds which equaled 20 miles a night. This walking which was calculated did not include that he walked to and from work and everywhere else he went. He carried over 300 keys to the different businesses. His six rings together weighed 7 to 10 pounds. Hoppy always knew which key went where. During his 29 years on the job Hoppy helped to solve a murder, catch one jail escapee, and 70 burglars.

In 1966 Hoppy's second wife, Ethel Lillian, suddenly died. This hit Hoppy very hard. His wife, children, and job meant the world to him, and now a part of his life was gone. Then on February 1, 1974, Hoppy Fox retired at the age of 72, which now meant that another part of his life was gone. After he retired he was in and out of the hospital and on May 18, 1975, Hoppy died after spending three months in a nursing home.



The police department served as honorary pall bearers for Charley "Hoppy" Fox who died on May 18, 1975.



It's time to turn the door knobs for the last time. Hoppy Fox retired on February 1, 1974, after he'd walked the same beat for 29 years.

By Sharla Fox

Now that I know something of what my Grandpa did and how he thought, it seems easier to understand him and I am able to relate more to his children. I was only 8 years old when Grandpa died and I've always felt like I was the one who got the short end of the deal by not being able to spend more time with him, to get to know him. Grandpa was a quiet man and since he had nothing to say he never attended family reunions. After speaking with family members I had never spoken to before or even knew I had, I feel that my Grandpa and I are a lot alike. This research made me feel closer to him and if it's possible, has made me love him even more.

Editor's Note: During the course of this research my aunt, Emma Lea Winkler, passed away on February 16, 1985.

Scenes from the Past

On the morning of July 3, 1922, the citizens of Novinger, Missouri, were awakened by a loud explosion. The explosion was heard as far as Tipperary, almost three miles south of Novinger. The photograph to the right shows the results of the early morning blast which occurred in the downtown area.

John Sullivan, owner of the City Drug Store, was opening his business, around seven that morning, when the accident happened. As he opened the front door of the drug store, the building exploded. The far right photo, taken looking northwest on Frankford Avenue, shows how powerful the blast was.

Mr. Sullivan was found later in a patch of weeds across the street. He was taken to Laughlin Hospital in Kirksville. His injuries included a broken arm and a compound fracture of his leg. He also had multiple cuts and internal injuries. He never regained consciousness after the incident and died on July 7, 1922.

Most of the stores in the area had their windows shattered, including the Novinger School which was located one-half mile away. The lower photo shows the damage to the stores just north of the City Drug Store.

Many people in the northeast Missouri area traveled to Novinger to view the aftermath of the explosion. The lower far right photo shows a group of sightseers looking over the rubble.

Many residents had their own ideas as to what really caused the accident. As reported in the *Kirksville Daily Express*, one explanation was a 15-gallon, carbonated water tank located in the store caused the blast. Another was that it was caused by a gas leak in the back of the drug store. And still another which the paper reported, was that it was a trap set to detonate some kind of explosive by an unknown enemy. The actual cause of the explosion was never positively determined and still today remains a mystery.

Photos Courtesy of Adair County Historical Society.





Chips Today, The Old Fashioned Way!

Whatever happened to the potato chips like grandma used to make? Were they lost in the shuffle from manual labor to mechanized mass production? In a renovated two-room building in Baring, Missouri, a company named Country Cooked, makes potato chips today the way they were made more than 50 years ago. The company uses potatoes, shortening or vegetable oil, and salt.

Alvin Fox and Clay Zimmerman, the owners and operators of Country Cooked, established their business in 1982. Mr. Fox and Mr. Zimmerman first got the idea to make chips when a friend of theirs in southern Missouri was getting out of the business. Mr. Fox said, "We bought the equipment from a friend of ours, Aaron Weaver, and he told us all that he knew about making chips. But that wasn't nearly enough!" To learn more about the business, Mr. Fox and Mr. Zimmerman went back to Adamstown and Bohmansville, Pennsylvania, their hometowns. They toured potato chip companies around these towns learning

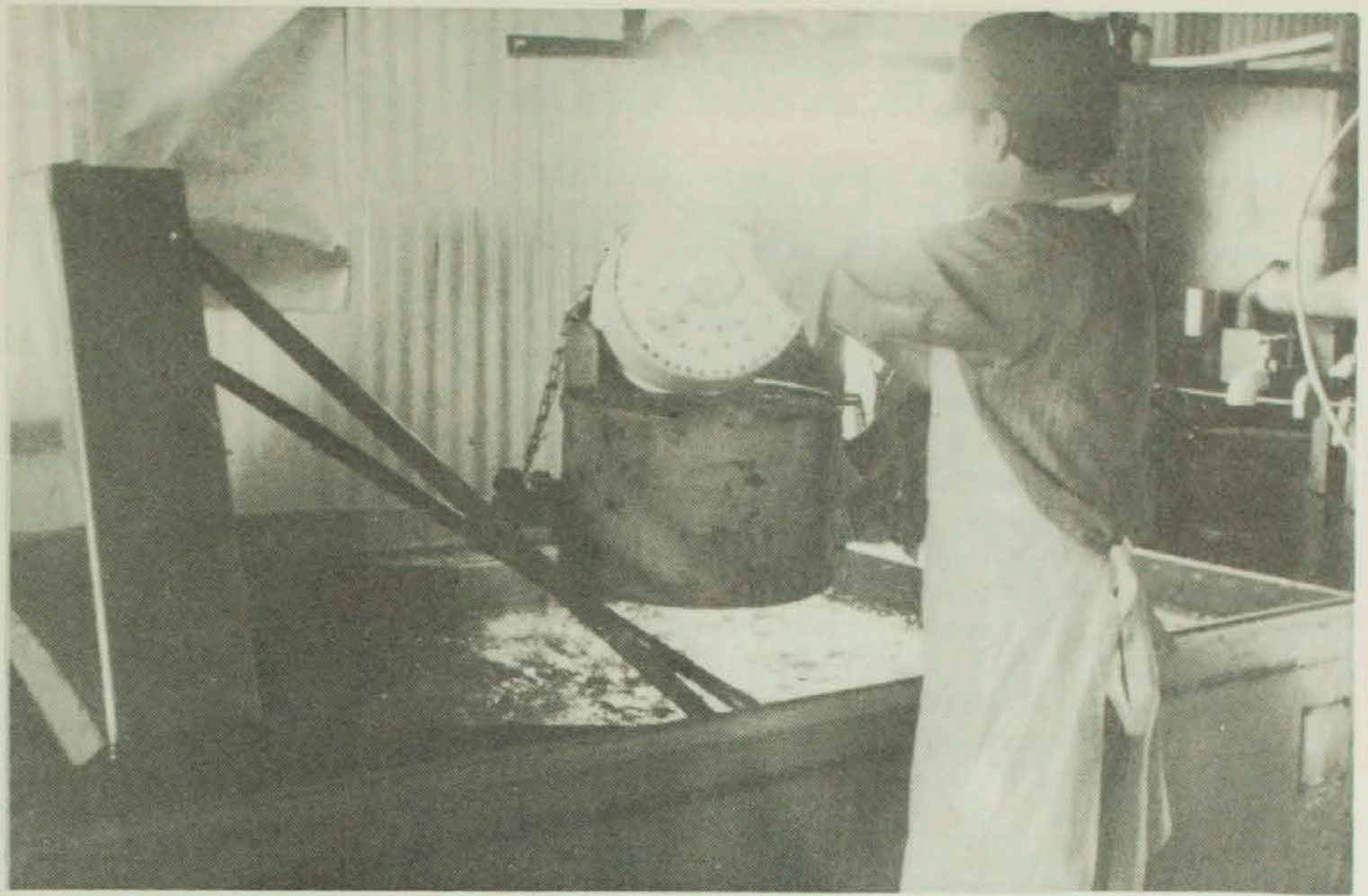
more about the business in which they were involved. Mr. Fox commented, "We made a lot of expensive mistakes when we first started!" After getting the equipment to work properly, the brothers-in-law began production in December. Mr. Fox said, "We really have no special recipes, we just cook them like everyone else." The business is operated by the two families with only one or two part-time helpers.

The company has the potatoes trucked in from North Dakota. Mr. Fox said, "A trailer load would last from eight to ten weeks, sometimes a little longer, depending on the demand." When Mr. Fox and Mr. Zimmerman receive a load of potatoes, it is checked for its moisture content percentage by a test called specific gravity. As a rule, potatoes are around 80 percent moisture, after they are cooked into chips they actually only have one-fourth of the original weight of the potato. Therefore, it is important that the specific gravity, which measures the amount of

The last step in the production of the potato chips is to salt, weigh, and package them.



Alvin Fox, co-owner of Country Cooked, prepares a batch of chips.



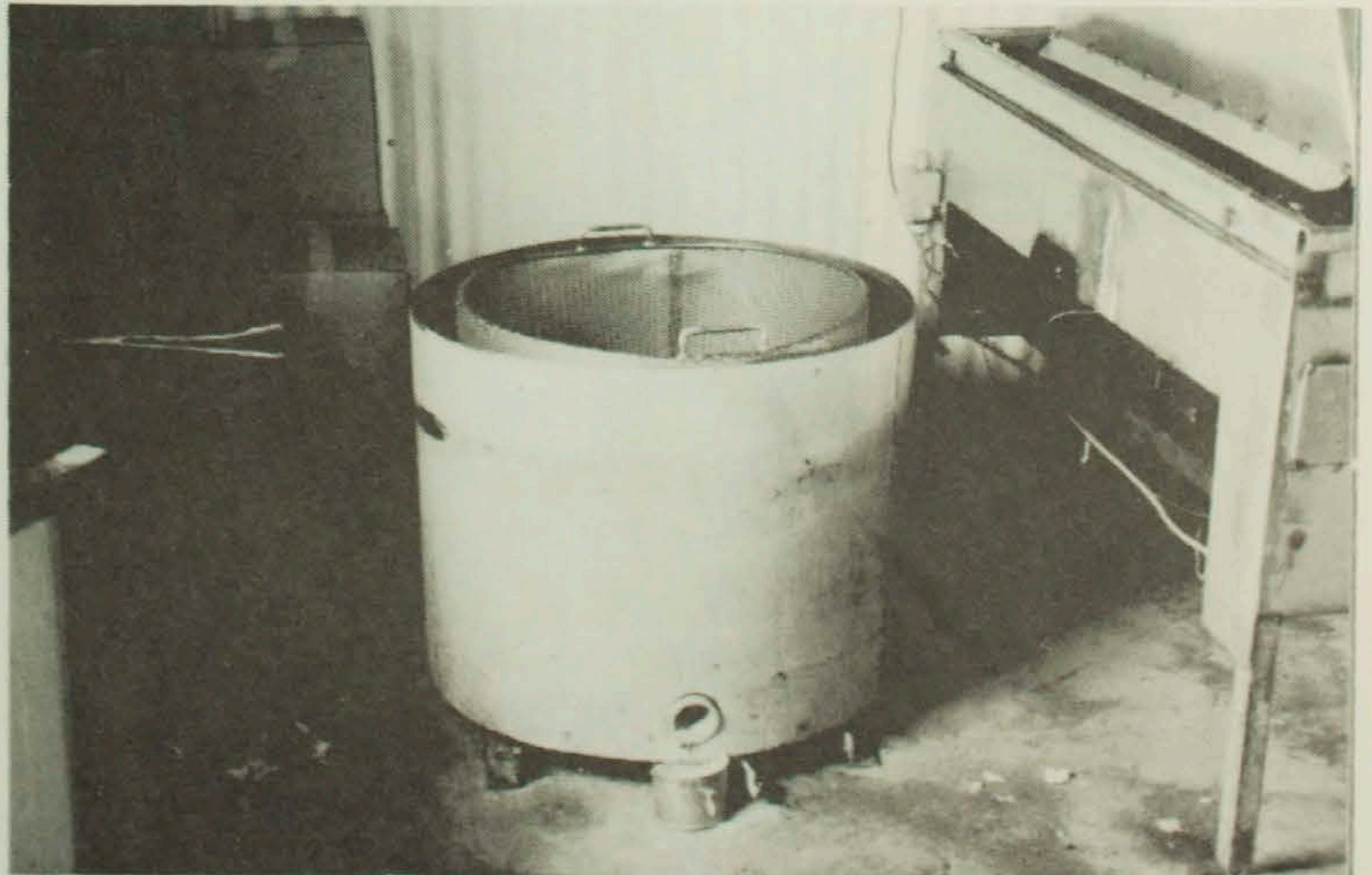
solids as opposed to the water content in a potato, be high.

It takes approximately 60 pounds of raw potatoes and 15 minutes total time to produce about 15 pounds of potato chips. In the first step of production, the potatoes come from a storage hopper kept at a cool temperature. This temperature preserves the potatoes for a longer period of time since it is cool enough to prevent molding and warm enough to prevent freezing. From there, they are loaded into a peeler which washes and peels the potatoes. When the potatoes are ready to cook, they are put into a slicer that slides on a rail over the fryer. The fryer is turned on and the chips are sliced directly into the hot oil. They

are cooked for eight to ten minutes. The oil and shortening used in cooking comes from a company in St. Louis. After the cooking time has elapsed, they are strained out of the fryer and dumped into a spinner. The spinner, a wire mesh basket, uses centrifugal force to spin out the excess oil. From the spinner, they are taken to the next room and spread out on a table, 20 feet long by 3 feet wide. Here the overcooked chips are sorted and thrown out. The remaining chips are salted, weighed, and bagged.

Like all the duties, the responsibility for distribution is shared by the brothers-in-law. They use a Chevrolet panel van to deliver the chips to many towns. Mr. Fox said, "We

The spinner used centrifugal force to spin out the excess oil. The can below catches the excess oil.

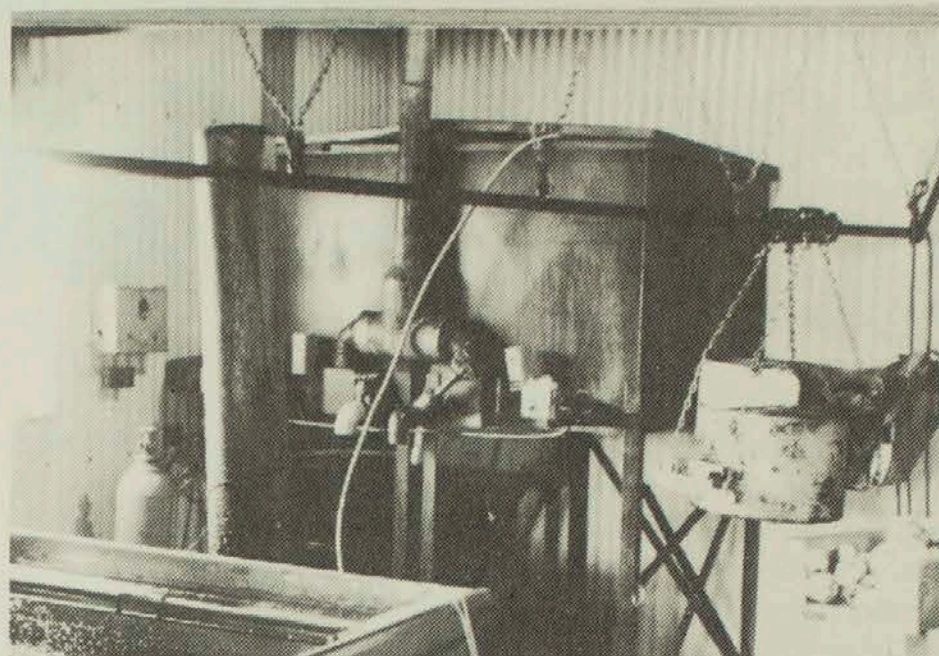


deliver to Kirksville, Macon, Edina, Canton, Memphis, Kahoka, Lancaster, and all up and down Highway 63. Then we have distributors that branch out farther into southern Iowa."

The company is currently selling three types of chips. The first chips made were the "old-fashioned" style which are cooked in shortening. In 1983, they introduced the "homestyle" chips which are fried in vegetable oil. The two shortenings, lard and vegetable oil, are responsible for the difference in taste. The most recent addition to the family was the "bar-b-que" flavored chips. Plans are underway to start making a "jalepeno" flavored hot chip. They are also planning on phasing out the "homestyle" chip and replacing it with a chip cooked in peanut oil. Again, the different oil (peanut) will give the chips a different taste. The owners feel the peanut oil chip has a better flavor than the vegetable oil chip and will sell better.

With a little over two years in production, the chips have been readily accepted and the business is quite successful. Mr. Zimmerman said, "Country Cooked is looking forward to continue serving the public with a great snack food product!"

By Doug Shoop and Jon Williams



These are the holding tanks for the oils that are used for frying the chips. In the lower left corner you can see part of the fryer.

The potatoes in the wooden bin come from the storage trailer. In the center of the picture is the washer-peeler and to the left, on the rail, is the slicer.



THE MASONIC TEMPLE



This is a view of the front entrance of the temple. The inscription above the doors is the emblem of Freemasonry, the letter "G" stands for God.

Many people in Kirksville don't know the location of the Masonic Temple, let alone its purpose. The Masonic Temple is the meeting place for the different orders of Freemasonry in Adair County. There are over 3,000 members if you combine all the different orders.

The temple was designed by the Bonsack and Pearce architectural firms. The erection of the four-story building was supervised by Leonard Poehlman, a local member of the lodge. Mr. Bruce Hunt said, "I would call the type of architecture a contemporary-Grecian, Egyptian-type style." Mr. Hunt has been a member of Adair Lodge No. 366 for 49 years. He is a past Master and a past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

A Masonic Temple Board was set up with three members from Kirksville Lodge No. 105, three from Adair

Lodge No. 366, three from the Caldwell Chapter, and three from Ely Commandery. This group made the decisions about the temple, such as the amount that would be paid on the debt each year. Mr. Hunt said, "The board was considered to be fair since the members were evenly distributed from each lodge."

The location of the temple, 217 East Harrison, was chosen by the temple board because it was close to the downtown area. Since the Masonic Temple has been built, many buildings have been erected in the area, and finding a parking space today is sometimes a problem.

The temple was originally to be constructed of yellow bricks on the exterior, but Mr. Poehlman had connections with a stone company in Carthage, Missouri. Mr. Hunt recalled, "Mr. Poehlman was able to get some Carthage



The Masonic Temple, located at 217 East Harrison Street, was built in 1930. Leonard Poehlman, a local member, supervised the construction of the building.

stone, which was left from the construction of another building at a very reasonable price." For this reason the north and west sides were made of yellow brick and the other two of Carthage stone.

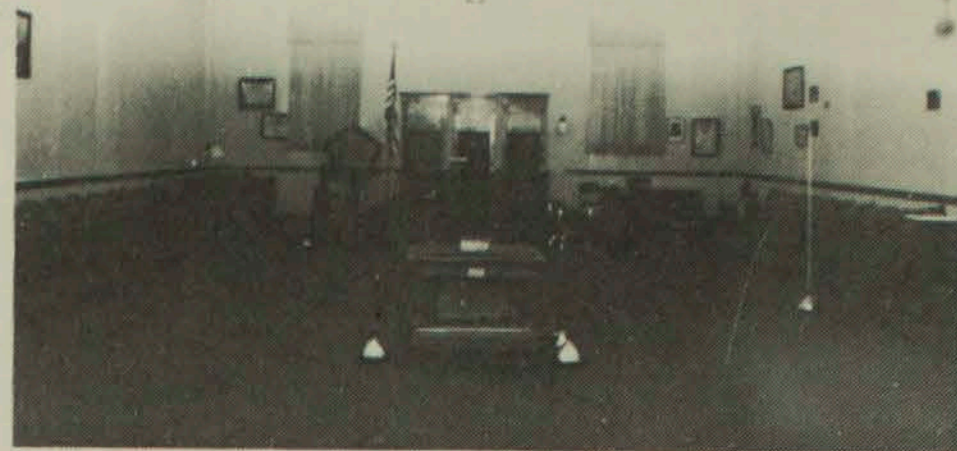
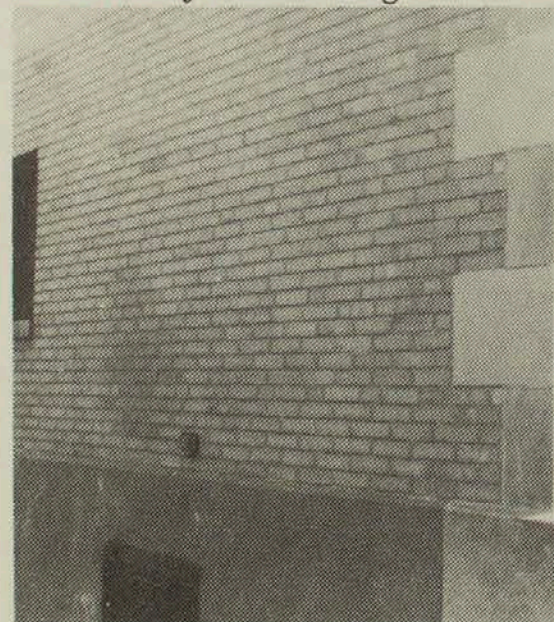
The cornerstone of the temple was laid on April 2, 1930, by Samuel L. Freet, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri. According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, the contents of the cornerstone consisted of a Bible, a Masonic apron, a chapter penny, a petition, the 1929 Grand Lodge proceedings, a directory of all members in Adair County, a copy of the by-laws for the different Masonic orders, copies of the *Kirksville Daily Express* and the *Kirksville Weekly Graphic*, and a book containing the names of all the men from Adair County who died in World War I. A special ceremony was held with all the lodge members present and the Kirksville High School band performed.

Two lodge members, Dr. George M. Laughlin and Dr. Harry M. Still, loaned \$30,000 for the construction of the temple. The temple was completed in the fall of 1930 at a cost of just under \$70,000. A ceremony was held and Grand Master Van Freemont Boar dedicated the temple. The lodges had an indebtedness of \$20,000 or more. The board paid on the debt every year except one, when the boilers had to be replaced. In 1949 the debt was paid and the notes were burned. They never received a single contribution towards the construction of the building.

The temple consists of four floors. On the first floor is the kitchen and the dining room. The kitchen has been kept up-to-date with remodeled cabinets and new appliances, such as two new electric ranges. In the early years of the temple, the dining room was the only place in Kirksville that could accommodate up to 250 people. The colleges and other organizations held their dinners in the temple's dining room, but now many buildings in Kirksville can accommodate large groups, so the temple's dining room is used for Masonic purposes only.

On the second floor there is one meeting room. Kirksville Lodge No. 105 and Adair Lodge No. 366 hold their meetings here. The Kirksville Chapter No. 184 Order of the Eastern Star, which includes men and women, and the Job's Daughters, which is for young women, also meet in this room.

The north and west sides of the temple are made of yellow brick with the south and east sides made of Carthage stone. The reason the building is half-and-half is because Mr. Poehlman made a business transaction during the construction of the building.



This is the meeting room for the Kirksville Lodge No. 105, Adair Lodge No. 366, Kirksville Chapter No. 184 Order of the Eastern Star, and the Job's Daughters. The chairs along the walls were bought by the lodge members and their names are engraved on the front of the chairs.

Offices and a recreation room with pool tables are on the third floor. The offices are for the secretaries of the different lodges. All the records for the different organizations are kept on this floor.

The fourth floor of the temple is where the York Rite bodies of Freemasonry hold their meetings. The York Rite is a higher form of Freemasonry. The York Rite bodies consist of Caldwell Chapter No. 53 Royal Arch Masons, named after James D. Caldwell of Ohio, and the Kirksville Council No. 44 Royal and Select Masters. The Cryptic section of the York Rite and Ely Commandery also conduct their meetings here. The Ely Commandery, chartered on October 7, 1872, is named for David A. Ely of Kirksville. He was quite active in the early formation of the Ely Commandery in Kirksville. The White Shrine for women also held their meetings in this room until their charter was surrendered on March 7, 1985.

"The building is in first-class condition in every way, but maintenance is expensive," said Mr. Hunt. A lot of things have to be done to keep a building in good shape, an example would be the new roof put on the temple in 1984. A caretaker is hired to keep up the maintenance. "There are no plans to renovate nor plans to open the cornerstone, unless the building should be sold," said Mr. Hunt.

The temple has been visited by many Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Missouri. One of the more memorable Grand Masters to visit was Harry S. Truman in the early 1940's, when he was also a U.S. Senator. He gave a speech about freemasonry. As Grand Master, he tried to visit as many temples as he could during his term.

"Men from every walk of life are in the lodge," said Mr. Hunt. If membership in the lodge continues to be as high as it is now, the Masonic Temple will be around for a long, long time.

**By Mike Truitt
and
Jerry Winslow**

KENNETH GARDNER

Kenneth Gardner, 1982 Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association coach of the year, is a man of great talent, knowledge, and understanding in the sport of track and field. His most successful seasons, which were at Northeast Missouri State University, shows how his positive attitude towards his athletes works well in the winner's circle.

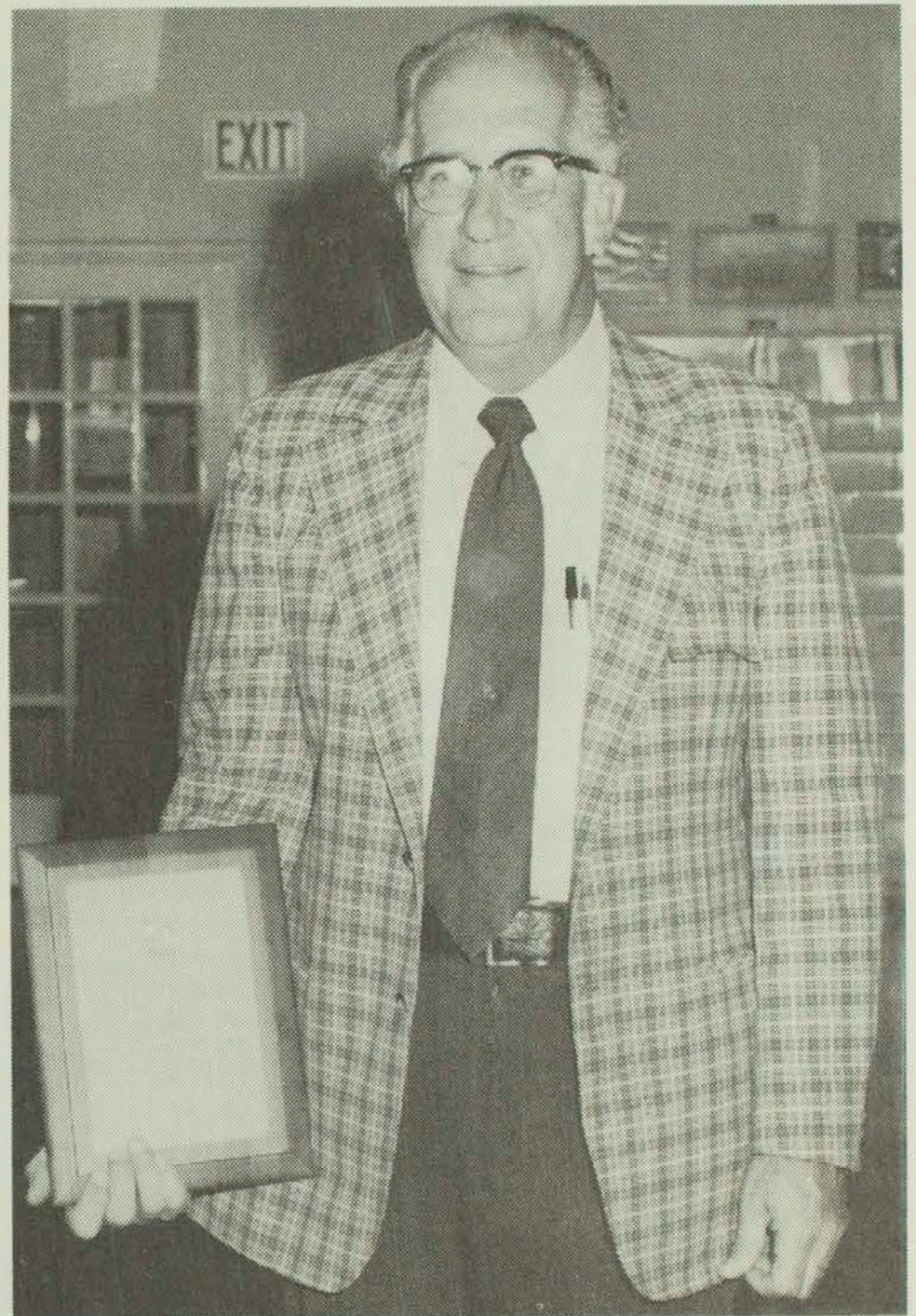
"I have always been interested in coaching since I was knee-high to a grasshopper," said Coach Gardner. As a young boy from Iowa City, Iowa, he was always active in sports, such as football and track. In high school his favorite sport was football and because of his vast interest in sports he joined the track and basketball teams, too.

As a top high school football prospect, Mr. Gardner had been "wined and dined" by many college coaches. Kirksville State Teachers College's Coach Ed Markel took a different approach. He told Mr. Gardner that he better get on the next bus to Kirksville and come look at the college. This naturally attracted Mr. Gardner and out of curiosity he went and visited.

Mr. Gardner attended the Kirksville State Teachers College in 1939. He played tackle for four years as an undergraduate. Then in his sophomore year, he started to participate in track and continued to do so for the next three years of his college career.

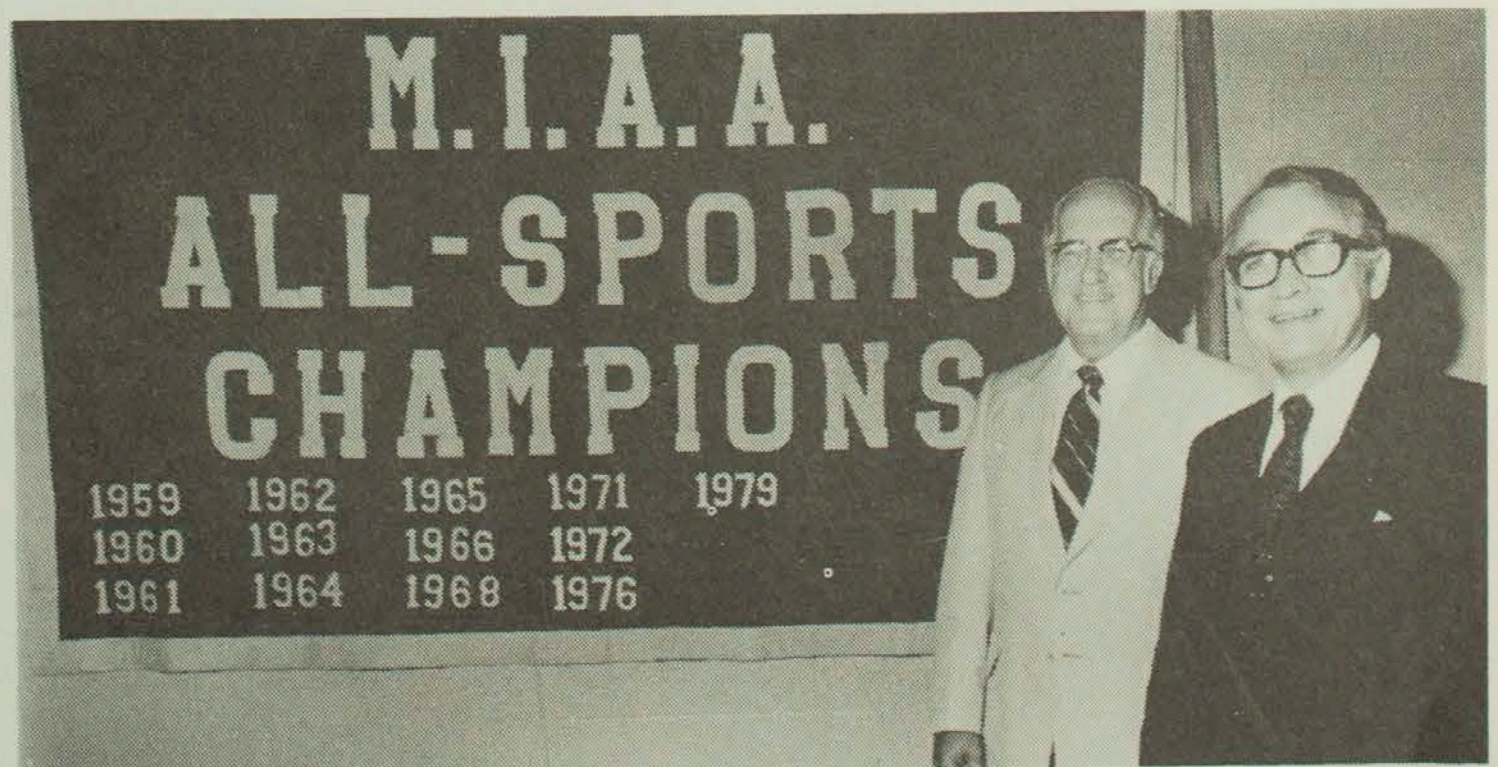
In 1942 Mr. Gardner was drafted into the Army where he participated in the invasion of North Africa, southern France, Sicily and Sorrento, Italy. At the close of the war, he had earned the rank of major in the field artillery.

After serving four years in the Army he returned to KSTC and graduated in 1946. After his graduation he was married on May 26, 1946, to Ethelyn Larner in Warsaw, Illinois. Kenneth Gardner took his first coaching position at the high school in Marceline, Missouri. He was head football coach from 1947 to 1950. His 1949 team was co-champion in the North Central Conference and he was



Coach Gardner displays the Drake Relay Honor Team Plaque they won in 1977.

Kenneth Gardner (left) and President Charles McClain received the MIAA All-Sports Champions Banner in 1979.



considered one of the most successful high school coaches in North Missouri. The second position he accepted was in 1951 at the Kirksville State Teachers College as a line coach for the Bulldog team.

In the spring of 1952, Coach Gardner was walking on campus and noticed six people in sweatsuits running. He stopped and asked them what they were training for. The team members said they were to go to a conference indoor track meet that weekend but they didn't have anyone to take them. In 1952 he volunteered to coach track at KSTC. Coach Gardner stated, "Coaching track took the number-one spot over football." While coaching track, he became very close to his athletes because it was such an individual oriented sport and 30 years later he retired.

Coach Gardner recalled many fine athletes he has had during his coaching days. "Ed Schneider was the best distance runner that ever attended Northeast Missouri State University. I'll say that without any qualifications." Other athletes which stood out in Coach Gardner's mind were Larry Jones, Freddie Banks, Ron Davis, and the three Taylors: Chuck, Norm and David. Also Olympic gold medal winner, Ray Armstead, was Coach Gardner's last recruit before he retired from coaching.

Kenneth Gardner has a long list of accomplishments which include 11 individual national championships.



Photo Above: In 1951 Kenneth Gardner accepted the position of line coach for the KSTC Bulldogs.

Photo Below: Coach Gardner has retired from coaching track but still teaches an anatomy class at Northeast Missouri State University.



Coach Gardner said that anytime an athlete won a national title, he was probably a little happier than they were. Coach Gardner has accepted some special honors since he has been at the college. The most respected honors are the inductions into the Athletic Hall of Fame at Northeast Missouri State University and the Missouri Track Coaches Hall of Fame in Columbia, Missouri.

Coach Gardner said that many athletes, although they have graduated, still come to him to talk and ask advice. He has always tried to help them set goals and that was the greatest reward of coaching, to see the accomplishments of an individual to reach his goals. He still receives cards from former students, too.

Coach Gardner became athletic director at Northeast Missouri State University in 1974. He said his three main tasks as the director are: 1) being a watchdog, 2) being a manipulator, and 3) being an arbitrator. He oversees all 20 men and women's sports. In 1982 he retired from coaching and Ed Schneider took over as head track coach. He currently teaches an anatomy class and serves as athletic director. Coach Gardner said, "My game today is reminiscing in which I often go into triple overtime!"

**By Lori Owens
and
Mike Parsons**



At meets at Central Missouri the competition is tough, but Coach Gardner keeps his calm composure while under the stressful conditions.

All Photos Courtesy of NMSU Sports Information.

THE POINT OF THE MATTER

Who would have guessed that 20 years ago, people would be collecting barbed wire for a hobby? Now there are about 2,000 different kinds of wire in the world. Thousands of people have been collecting it for many years.

Old wire is now hard to find as most fence rows have been bulldozed to give the farmers larger fields to use. Today one has to explore many miles along old hedge rows, old country cemeteries, and country lanes long-forgotten.

Oren and Marie Russell of La Plata, Missouri, started collecting barbed wire in 1968. Mr. Russell's brother-in-law, Ray Horner, gave him several different kinds of wire he had while the Russells were visiting his home one weekend near Kansas City.

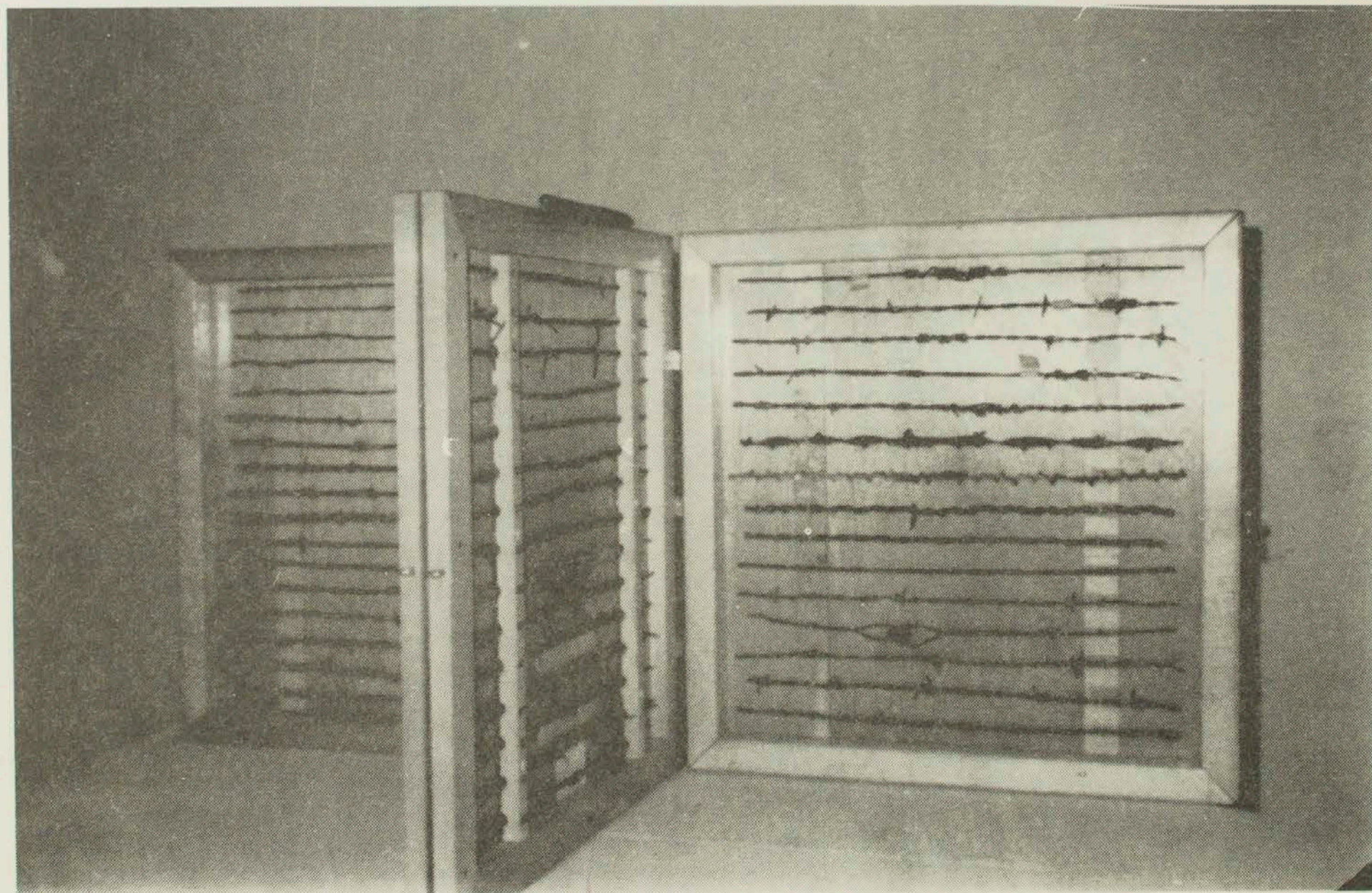
That same weekend Mr. Horner took his brother-in-law to another barbed wire collector, Robert Little of Odessa, Missouri. Mr. Russell said, "Mr. Little had barns and sheds full of mounted wires on boards, hanging from the walls and ceilings. He also had coils of wire outside the buildings." Mr. Russell received nearly 50 different kinds of wire from Mr. Little and that is really what got him started.

Mr. Russell found a book titled *Glover's Bobbed Wire Bible* by Jack Glover. This book is used for finding information on who patented a particular wire and in what year



Photo Above: Oren and Marie Russell of La Plata, Missouri, began collecting barbed wire in 1968 as a hobby.

Photo Below: To be considered an official barbed wire collector, wire must be cut into 18-inch strips. In order to alleviate the problems of carrying the wires, Mr. Russell made this display case in which he has 60 different kinds of wire mounted.



each was patented. Each wire has a sketch of what it looks like and the name of the wire. As far as Oren knows, there are four books specifically on barbed wire.

Mr. Russell has found most of his wire in old fence rows around his home near La Plata and in adjoining counties. Also, friends of the Russells would bring wire to them that they would find in the fence rows around their farms.

Mr. Russell bought several different hard-to-find wires from Gibb Brown in Unionville, Missouri. Mr. Brown owned a filling station east of Unionville, which he had full of barbed wire. It covered the walls of the station! Oren, after learning that Mr. Brown wanted to sell most of his wire, bought him out.

In order to collect barbed wire, Mr. Russell had to start sorting and cutting the wire to the required length. To collect and display wire it must be mounted on boards 2 feet by 2 feet. The pieces of wire have to be 18 inches in length and have at least two barbs. Mr. Russell used thin plywood 2 feet square, varnished it and mounted 15 different wires on each board. He would label each with the wire's name, who patented it, and the year it was patented. Mr. Russell said, "It takes about four hours to do one board, so you can see it is very time consuming."

From looking through his books, Mr. Russell found that he has some of the first wires patented. The earliest wire patented was by W. H. Merriweather of New Braunsfels, Texas, in 1854. This wire is a smooth wire called "horse wire." It has blocks of wood spaced about every six feet so the horses wouldn't run into it and get cut up.

Starting in 1867 Smith, Hunt, and Kelly applied for patents of barbed wire called the "thorny fence." This steel wire was made on coffee mills and grind stones in blacksmith shops.

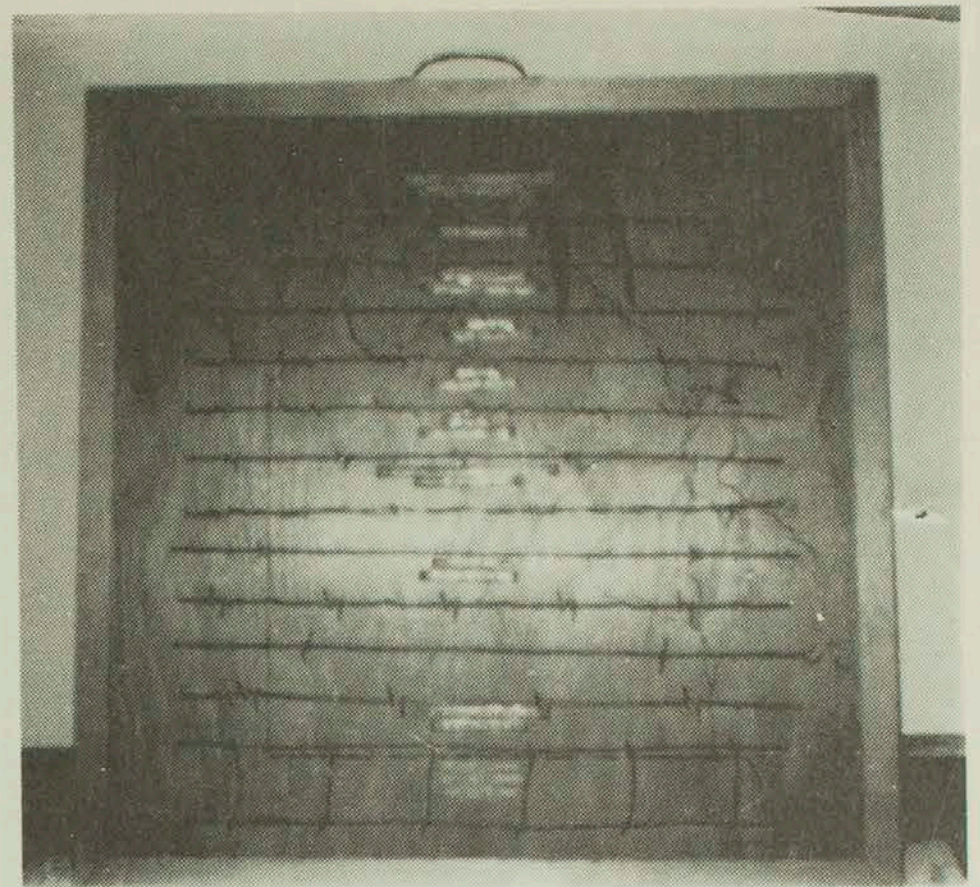
World War I brought the need for two- and four-point barbed wire. The military used it for stockades and compounds for it was the most vicious of any previous wires. As of now Mr. and Mrs. Russell have approximately 800 different kinds of wire; 500 of them mounted.

Mr. Russell belonged to the Missouri Barbed Wire Association from 1970 to 1975. This association had conventions four times a year, every three months, in various cities. Oren and Marie were on the association's mailing list of when and where barbed wire shows were being held and they tried to go to them at least twice a year.

Mr. and Mrs. Russell went to their first convention in Moscow Mills near St. Louis in 1976. There were around 50 collectors who set up their booths of barbed wire, displaying them on large boards or in bundles on the tables.

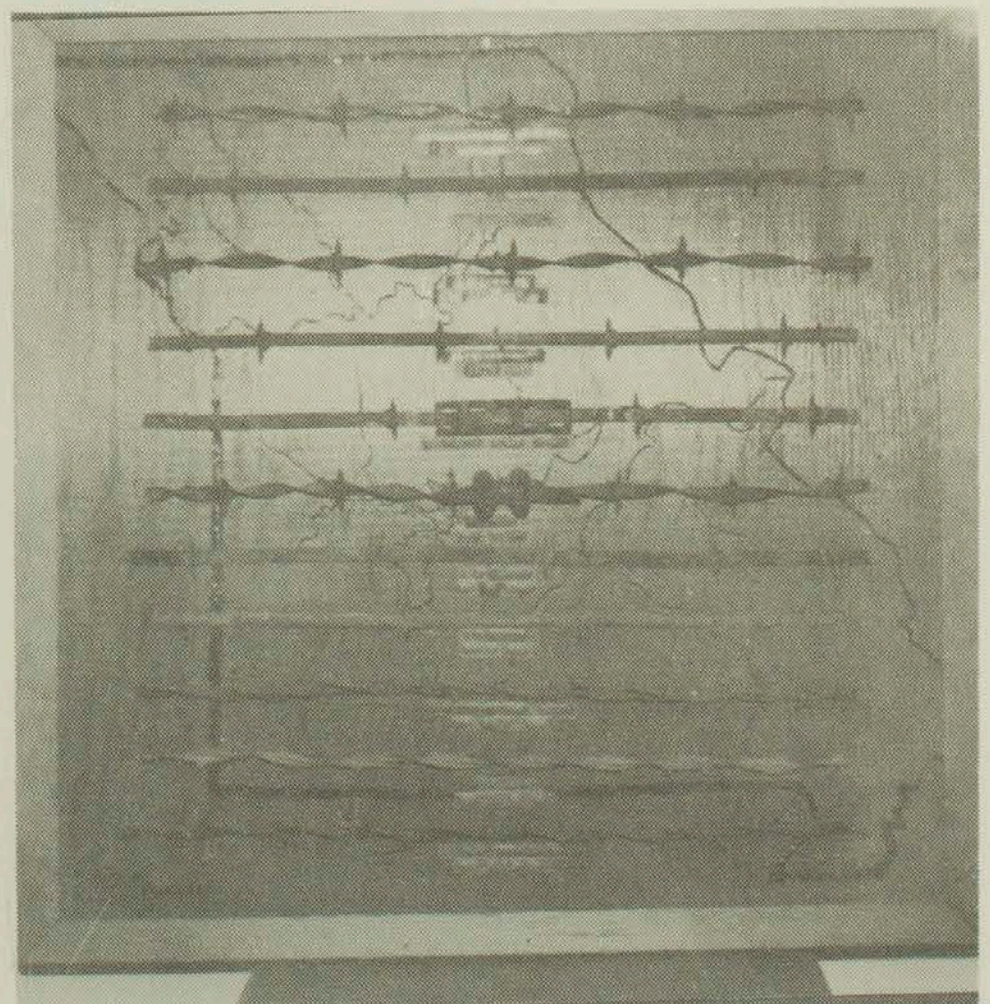
As well as barbed wire being displayed, people collected and also showed fencing tools. Fencing tools were displayed on larger boards. Several other collectors displayed other antique articles such as canes, beer cans, rocks, knives, and Indian artifacts. Some of these antiques were for sale, but most of them were for display.

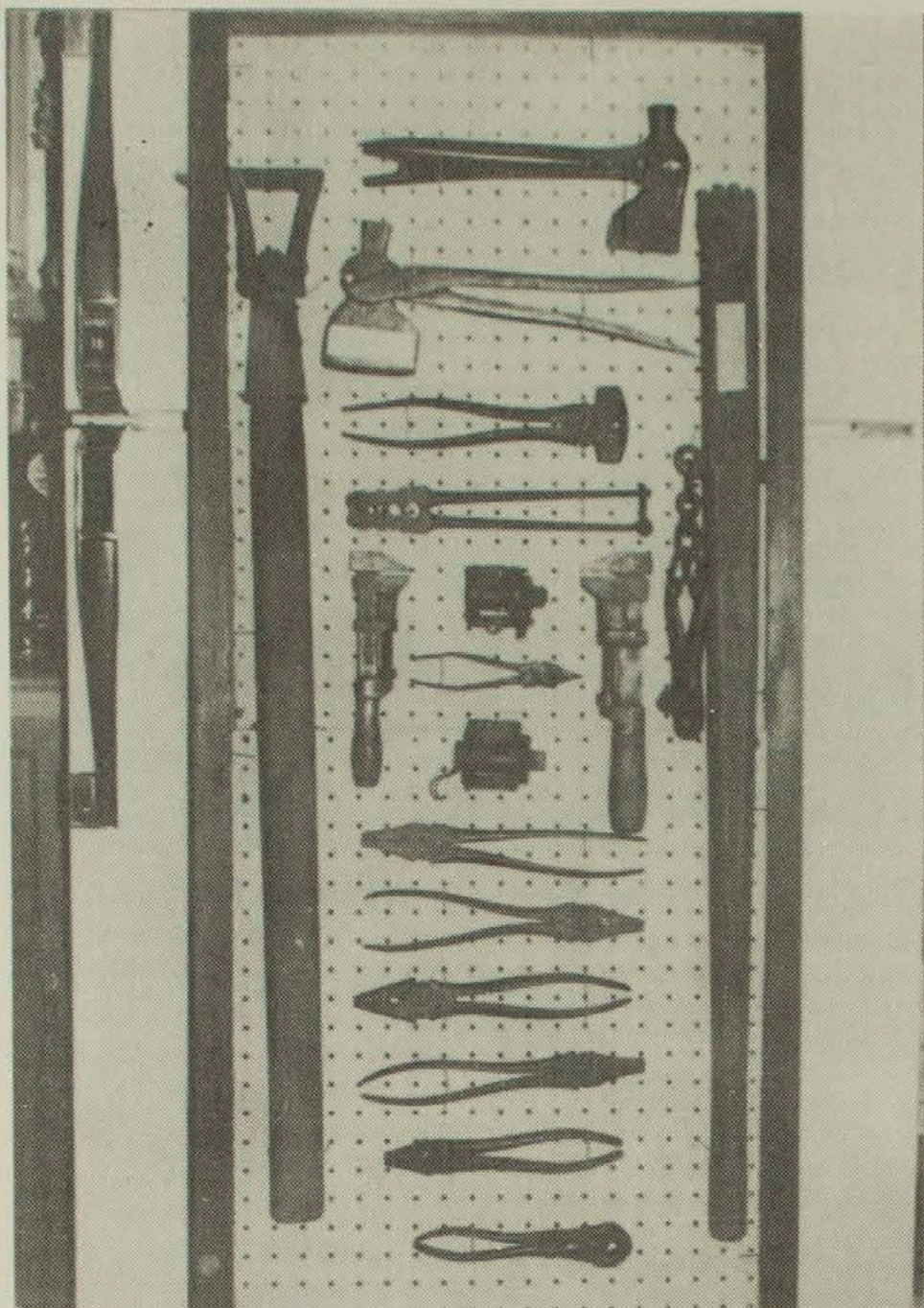
The conventions usually lasted two days and when nearing the end of the convention, the collectors would trade among themselves. Mr. Russell said, "As this was my first convention, I was very green about selling or trading wire and fencing tools."



This is just one of the many wire-mounted boards Mr. Russell has in his collection of barbed wire. Many times collectors will carve backgrounds on the boards, such as the state of Missouri shown here.

This mounted display of wire was one of the first made by Mr. Russell. The fifth and sixth wires from the top are examples of a barbed wire splice.





Mr. Russell also collects fencing tools. The two long boards on the side are wire stretchers.

While at this convention, a trader, Herman Dewing, from Phelps County, Missouri, had a very large collection of barbed wire. This man saw that Mr. Russell had a pair of Dillion Barbed Wire Stretchers on display. "This trader kept offering me more and more good pieces of barbed wire for these fence stretchers," said Mr. Russell. Two other traders from Illinois and Ohio who had been in the business for a long time and had been listening to the conversation between the two, advised Oren to take the trader up on his offer. Mr. Russell said this is how wire that is hard-to-find is obtained.

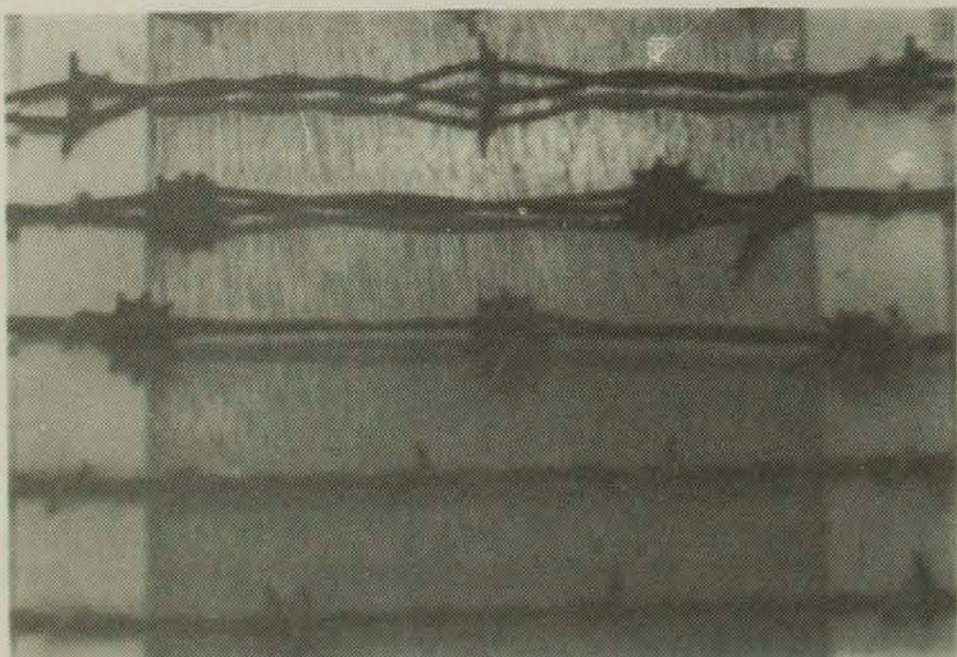
Several months later Mr. Russell read about a national convention in La Crosse, Kansas, where a piece of wire made by Dodge Rowel, patented in 1881, sold for \$350. This was one of the wires he had traded the fence stretchers for!

During 1976 Mr. and Mrs. Russell displayed their wire at Centennial Celebrations in La Plata, Novinger, Brashear, Edina, and Kirksville. Centennial Celebrations were two-day affairs. Oren and Marie usually attended one day because it was such a chore to carry in, set up, take down, and carry the wires back to their van.

Mr. and Mrs. Russell said that they would rather travel to smaller towns than larger towns. The reason for this is that they felt the townfolk seemed to appreciate it more and had more interest in it. They also said that they knew more people from the smaller towns and it gave them a chance to talk to the people they hadn't seen for a while.

These last few years Mr. Russell hasn't been able to work on his collection as much as he would like due to his health. However, he still enjoys reading, showing, and talking about his barbed wire collection. Mr. Russell said, "If you want to learn how to collect barbed wire, you have got to learn how to buy, sell, trade, steal, give a little to boot, and take a little of boot."

By Garen Shorten



This is a close-up of a Rockwell Spur Wire. If you notice closely the second and third wires are similar. The top wire is twisted and the bottom wire is straight.

