The background of the cover is a photograph of a body of water, likely a river or lake, with a rocky shoreline. The water is dark and has gentle ripples. The rocks are light-colored and some have sparse, dry-looking vegetation. The overall tone is somewhat muted and historical.

# THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

NORTHEAST MISSOURI  
HISTORY AND FOLKLORE

Spring 1989

\$2.95

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

In 1979, Mrs. Carol Trowbridge began teaching a class entitled *Local History* at Kirksville Senior High School. Instead of learning from a textbook, the class curriculum was based on developing an oral history library, patterned after the publication **Foxfire**.

Then, in the summer of 1980, Mrs. Trowbridge and a few students of the class took that year's work and edited it to produce a magazine, **The Chariton Collector**. This edition was released in December of 1980. In April of 1981, a second edition was published encompassing another year's work. Starting in the 1981-1982 school year, two editions were published, one in the winter and one in the spring.

As stated in the first issue, the class' mission was

1. To preserve a heritage: To develop an oral history library consisting of taped interviews with local residents. Since much history is passed on by word of mouth, it was our intention to capture the stories that might otherwise have been lost. We have also built a photographic library of personalities and historical sites in Northeast Missouri.
2. To become contributors to history as well as learners: Students were able to use all their skills and talents in creating this magazine.
3. To foster better relations between the students and their community.

Now, 10 years after work began on the first edition of **The Chariton Collector**, the work on the last edition is now finished. Our school district has been forced to make budget cuts, causing the cancellation of our class. However, even though we are saddened by its conclusion, we feel we have fulfilled the goals of the first Missouri History Class and have attempted to establish a basis for the understanding of our history.

The class changed its name from *Local History* to *Local and State History* in 1983, and then in 1986 to *Missouri History*. In 1982, Mrs. Trowbridge left the class and Mrs. Mary Grossnickle began instructing. **The Chariton Collector** was first published by the Journal Printing Company until their closing. Simpson Printing began publishing the magazine with the winter 1984 edition.

The oral history library now holds over 100 cassette tapes. More than 150 stories have been researched, written, and published in a total of 18 issues. Last year alone over 350 photographs were taken and catalogued in our files. Scrapbooks of Kirksville's history, taken from the **Kirksville Daily Express**, have been kept since 1982. Since its beginning, the magazine has enjoyed a circulation of 1,250 with eight editions sold out completely. Over 100 class members have experienced the production of a publication, interacted with the community, and, most importantly, contributed to the preservation of our heritage.

The success of our magazine would not have been possible without the help and support of you, the community. By either granting a staff member an interview, loaning materials for publication, helping us locate information, or simply purchasing the magazine, you have contributed to our understanding of our culture. In the back of this edition is a subject and title index for the 18 issues of **The Chariton Collector**. We hope you find this helpful in your search for the past in order to understand the present until **The Chariton Collector** can one day again explore our heritage.

Thank You,  
Brian Riley, editor

# THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

Kirkville Senior High School  
Kirkville, Missouri

Spring 1989

Vol. 9, No. 2, Issue 18

*The Chariton Collector is published by the Missouri State History class of Kirkville Senior High School. This special class has attempted to preserve the history and local folklore of Northeast Missouri. Copyright 1989.*

## COVER PICTURE

Shelly Hoffman took this picture of Floyd Creek in March of 1989 during one of the warmer, spring afternoons.

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## SENIOR EDITOR

Brian Riley

## JUNIOR EDITORS

Bryan Thompson  
Mike Whitney

## DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Angela Briggs

Local citizens raced their horses between the heats of harness racing at the NEMO Fair. Spectators watched from box seats under the old, covered grandstand. The fair is featured in Shelly Hoffman and Tonya Eichor's story on pages 15-19. (Slide courtesy of Mrs. Judy Kittle, reproduced as a print by Paul Wohlfeil)

# THE BARNYARD BARBER

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By Justin Benna

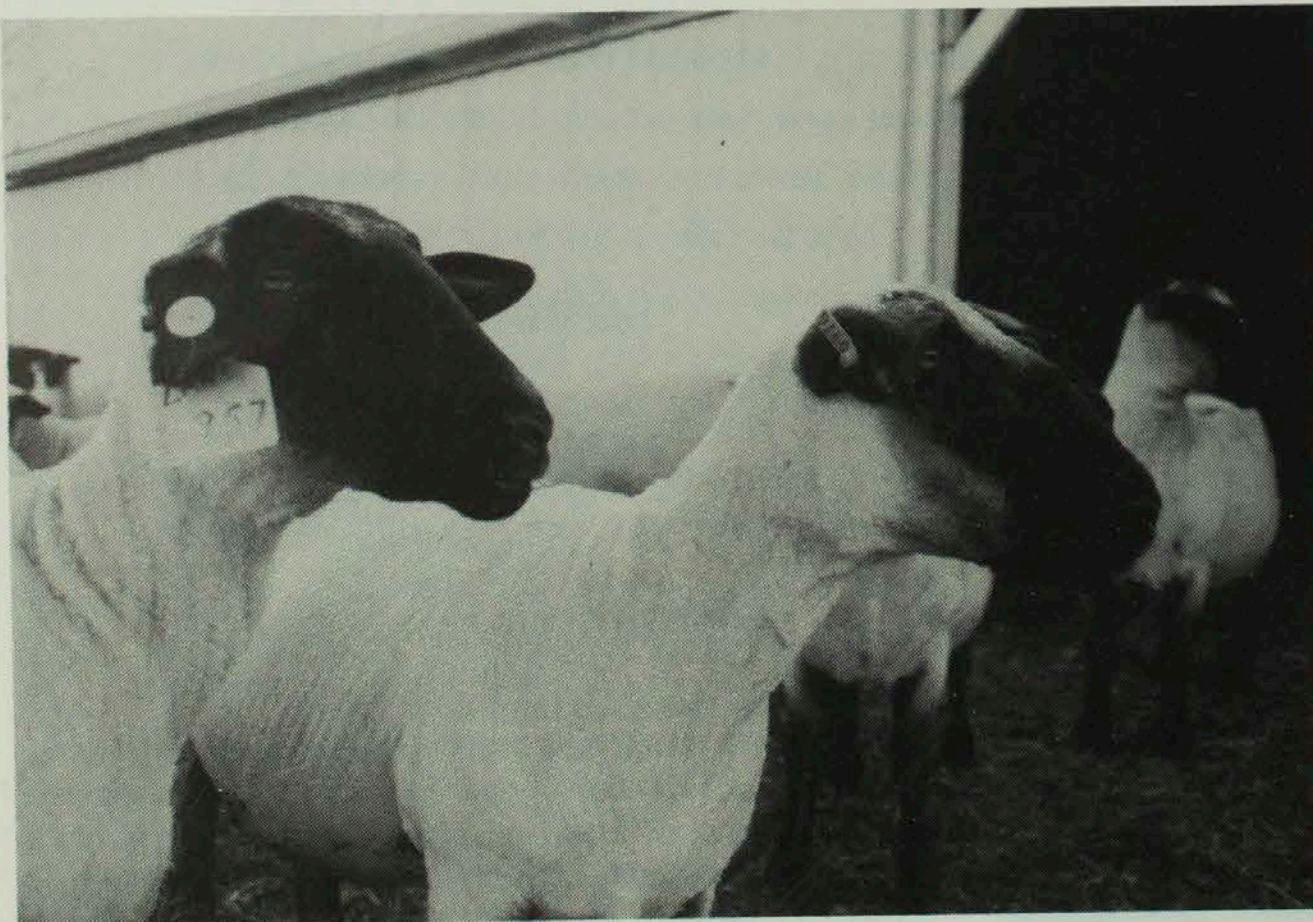
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“Wrestle a 300-pound ewe until it sits on the ground, then take a barber’s razor and shear all the wool so it stays fluffy. Do it for 10 or 12 hours a day, however long it takes to shear a flock. Do it in temperatures so cold your hands ache, and do it in temperatures so hot your eyes burn with sweat. Do it bent at the waist. And try to do it so well that you can be proud of your work.” Besides these physical demands, described in the

*Des Moines Register*, there are additional qualities upon which most all sheep shearers would agree. One of them is a fondness for sheep, and enough patience to put up with them. Another is desire; sheep shearing is something a person must want to do.

Professional sheep shearing is not new to Northeast Missouri. Nearly 70 percent of Missouri’s sheep are located in our part of the state and keep the handful of shearers who live here plenty busy.

Ivan Kaden of rural Coatsville, Missouri, has been shearing for 22 years. He sheared his first sheep when he was a senior in high school at a Sunbeam sponsored short-course on sheep shearing held at the University of Missouri in Columbia, where



*With 70 percent of Missouri’s sheep population located in the northeast portion of our state, sheep have played an important role in the development of our agricultural industry.*

many others learn the trade. Following his two-day training session, he went home and sheared his own flock of sheep, which was his FFA project. He sheared a couple of flocks for his neighbors that spring. After graduating from college, Mr. Kaden met with some professionals and began shearing with them as an apprentice. He took a liking to their work and has made a living shearing professionally for the past 15 years.

While shearing in Wyoming, Mr. Kaden met his wife Marge, who admits she did not really know what a sheep shearer was. However, a few days after they met she witnessed a shearer in action. "I thought it was a nasty, dirty, stinky job," she said.

Besides Wyoming, Mr. Kaden has also sheared in Colorado, South Dakota, Kansas, and Minnesota. More recently, however, his work has mainly been concentrated in western Illinois, southern Iowa, and here in northern Missouri. In these territories, he has shorn nearly 20,000 sheep each year.

Mr. Kaden uses the Australian method of shearing. The first step in this style is to set the sheep on its rump and begin clipping its belly. After the belly has been sheared, the wool between the sheep's legs is clipped. The wool found on the belly and between the legs is of marginal quality, so it can actually be separated from the other wool. Next he shears the left hip. Afterwards, he starts at the neck of the sheep going up and around, then over the top of the head. He then lays the sheep down and shears the left side. Once the wool from the left side has been removed, he shears one stroke over the sheep's backbone and down what shearers call the "last side," which is actually the whole right side. Unlike the left side which is sheared parallel with the sheep's body, the last side is sheared diagonally.

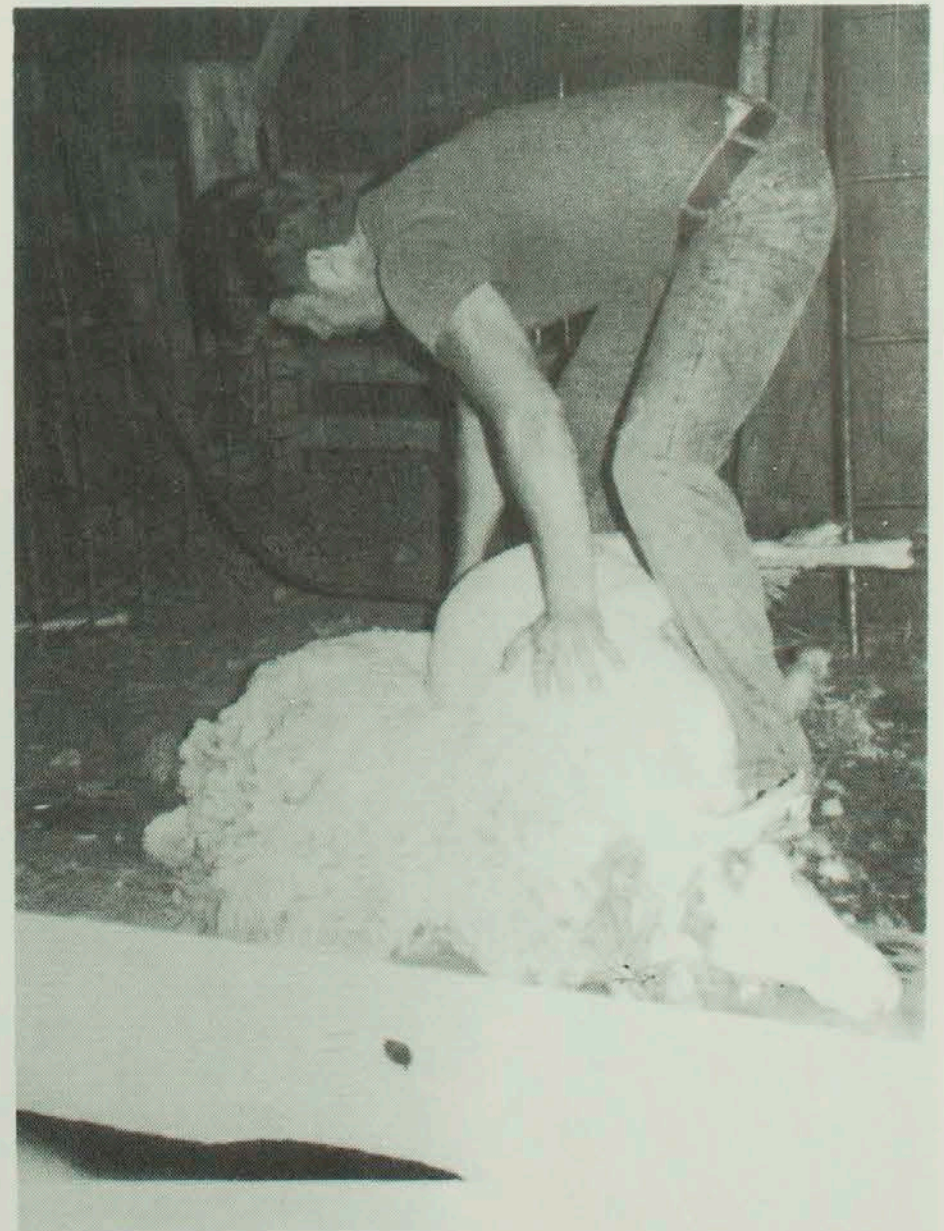
Another style of shearing which is used, but not as readily as the Australian method, is the Mexican style. In using the Mexican style a shearer ties all four legs of the sheep together with a piece of twine before shearing. Although this makes the shearing process less physically demanding for the shearer, more stress is placed upon the sheep.

The whole process takes approximately two minutes, depending upon the size and disposition of the sheep. After the animal has been shorn, someone sacks the fleece into a wool bag for storage. The weight of a fleece varies greatly among sheep. In the wool breeds, those raised for the purpose of producing wool, an average fleece for a mature ewe is about 12 pounds. However, in the meat breeds, those raised for the purpose of producing meats, the average fleece will weigh 5 to 8 pounds.

Most professionals use a machine shearer that is driven by a motor, propelling a hose that has a small cable in it. A hand piece, which looks like a barber's clipper, only larger, is plugged into this hose.

Back in the 1920s, all sheep were shorn with a scissor-type shearer referred to as a "blade." There are some places in the world where sheep are still shorn this way. The most likely place for blade shearing is where sheep are raised in high altitudes. Producers in these regions wait until warm weather to shear, and they do not have access to power. The advantages of the machine shearer make power-driven equipment more popular.

As far as advantages and disadvantages are concerned, the most likely reason someone would shear with a blade would be that a considerable amount of protection is left on the sheep,



*The first wool Ivan Kaden clips when shearing using the Australian method is the belly wool. Within a couple of minutes, Mr. Kaden finishes shearing by clipping the wool from the "last side," the entire right side of the sheep.*

as a shearer cannot shear as close to the skin as with a machine shearer. Many more sheep can be shorn per day with power-driven equipment, and the sheep can be shorn in cold weather. When the weather gets hot, the sheep sweat and the wool separates somewhat from the body, so there is not as much fiber to cut. In cold weather, the wool is intact. To shear in cold weather with a blade would be extremely difficult.

A shearer's income is based upon a charge per-head. The charges can vary considerably depending on the size of the flock to be shorn. A shearer might charge \$2 to \$3 a head for a small flock of 10 to 15. This high cost would be due to the travel involved. On the other hand, a shearer might receive as little as \$1 per head for a job on a feed lot with 5,000 to 10,000 head of lambs.

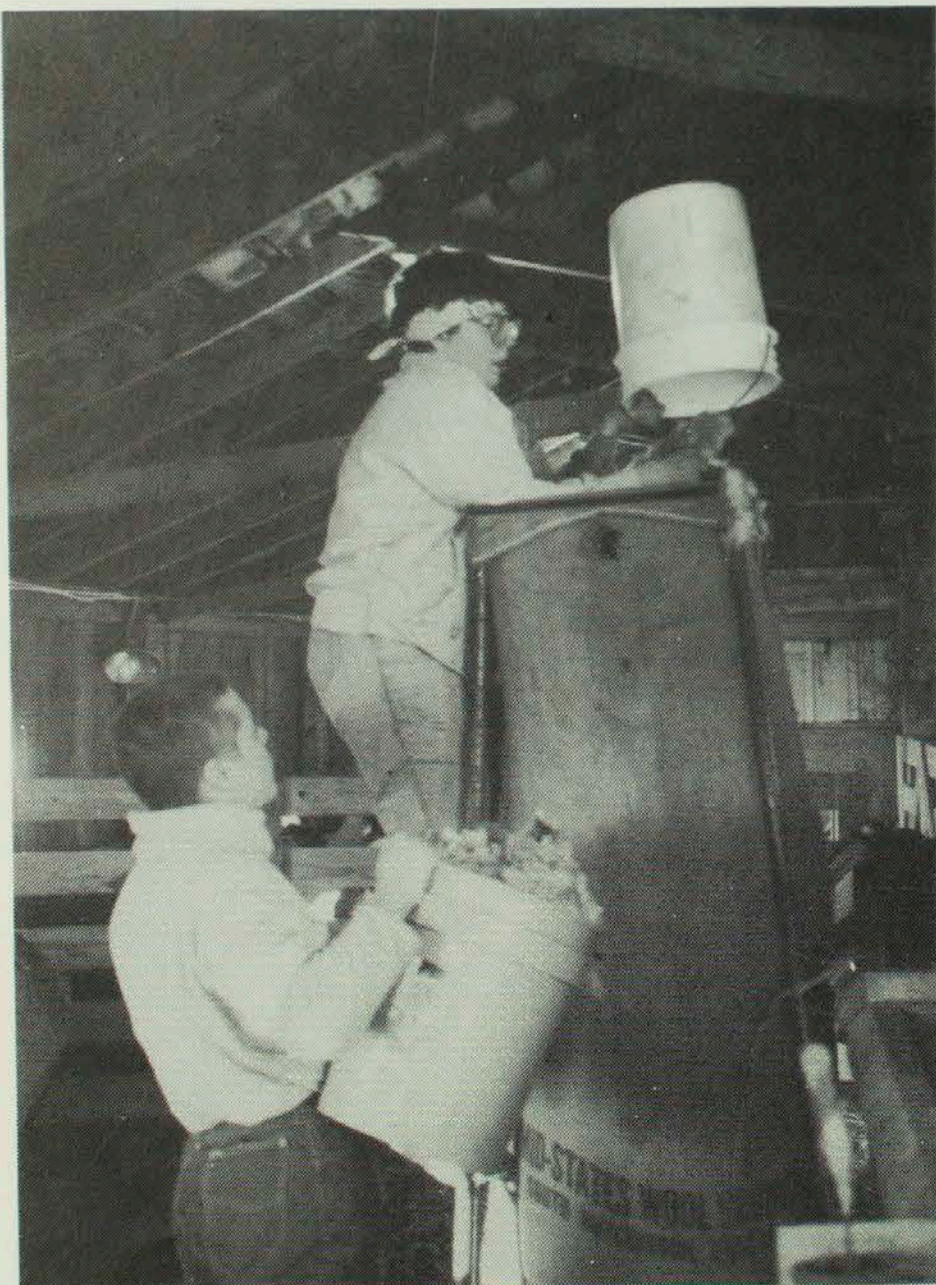
In a feed lot situation, most shearers would have a goal of shearing 150 head in an eight-hour day. When a shearer is working smaller jobs and traveling in between, a goal is usually set at about 80 head per day.

Because Mr. Kaden spends a great deal of time traveling, his family has responsibilities. Mrs. Kaden stated, "They (their boys) all have to do chores before they go to school in the morning which means they have to get up at about six. Scott is the oldest; he's kind of the chief of the whole crew; he has to make sure everything gets done before they leave the barn." The Kaden family has a flock of 125 ewes, and the boys are responsible for the feeding, watering, and lambing of their ewes in the wintertime.

One of the favorite events of a shearer's family is watching dad in shearing contests. Mrs. Kaden relates, "It's kind of like going to a World Series ball game and your husband's one of the players on the ball team. We get awful nervous." Mr. Kaden has participated in numerous contests throughout the United States for 15 years. He will admit it took at least 12 years before he won any. He has participated in the contest held at the Iowa State Fair, at the Missouri State Contest, in numerous county fairs in Iowa, at the Los Angeles County Fair in California, and at the National Sheep Shearing Contest in Denver. His most successes have been at the Missouri State Contest, which is held in Queen City, where he has won three times.

The shearing contests are judged in six categories. A possible 100 points can be awarded on each of the four sheep shorn. Time is worth a possible 20 points. Appearance of the shorn sheep is worth 10 points. Absence of cuts on the sheep is worth 15 points. Manner of handling the sheep is worth 15 points. Condition of the fleece after the sheep is shorn is worth 20 points. And absence of second cuts in the wool, keeping the fiber in its full natural length, is worth 20 points.

Shearing is becoming a lost art. Most young people are not attracted to the profession because the income is unsteady and unpredictable, the hours are often irregular, and the working conditions are often disagreeable. Plus, the work is physically demanding. The Kaden's oldest son Scott does not think he will enter a career involving sheep because, "I've been around them so much I'm kind of tired of them." Their youngest son Ryan



*After a sheep receives its "hair cut," its wool is sacked into bags for storage. Each bag holds approximately 180 pounds of wool.*



says he does not think he would want to be a professional sheep shearer because "it seems boring." However, he did say that it would be interesting to go different places and meet people. The Kaden's feel their middle son Clayton might aspire to a career in shearing. Mrs. Kaden tells, "He's been known to practice on our cats."

Although the number of professional shearers is declining, there will always be a need for them as the wool of a sheep continually grows. Those who are cut out for the job will love it. Mr. Kaden explains why he loves his work: "You can see when you've completed a task. When your job is finished, you have the satisfaction of seeing a finished product. You start out with a woolly bunch of sheep and when you're done you have a white, clean-looking, fresh sheared bunch of sheep out on green grass, and for me, the fact you can see your finished product is very, very satisfying. You can see your accomplishment!"



*Because time is an important factor in shearing contests, electric shears are used in competition. (Photo courtesy of the Lancaster Excelsior)*



*Besides a purple champion banner, the winner of the Missouri State Shearing Contest receives a cash award plus a plane ticket to Denver where he will compete in the National Sheep Shearing Contest. Mr. Kaden won the competition in 1986.*

*The Missouri State Shearing Contest has three separate divisions for professional/amateurs, old-timers (60 and over) and celebrities. The winners of the open division of the 1988 contest are front row, left to right: Jeff Bassett, Keith Hemlic, Jonathon Scott, Wade Shaw, and Hipolito Sanchez. Back row: Dan Ackerman, Max Hubbart, Jeff Swaim, Ivan Kaden, and Fred DuVall. (Photo courtesy of the Lancaster Excelsior)*



# Artifacts of Stone

Most of the places, events, and people read about in historical magazines have to be envisioned in one's mind through detailed descriptions or through the use of old photographs. Contrary to this, Kirksville has a site that dates back further than most artifacts in the area and is still available to view: the petroglyphs.

Petroglyphs are stone carvings made by pecking, scraping, or grinding the surface with stone or bone instruments. The figures are intaglio, or below the surface. These carvings are found on most continents, but the most numerous are west of the Rocky Mountains because of the numerous cliffs available. Flat surfaces are used, such as stone outcrops, ledges, bluff faces, or cave walls.

The first scientific study of petroglyphs was done in 1886, and in 1942 there were 42 sites recorded in Missouri. People hold many beliefs as to the origin of these artifacts. In more southern areas of the United States, it is said that they were markers for the buried treasures of the early Spanish. Some believe that the Aztecs wandered north and created them. Others believe that the petroglyphs are somehow related to the "lost continents" of Atlantis and Mu. It is also said that the Egyptians, Babylonians, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, Chinese, and other Old World peoples reached America long ago.

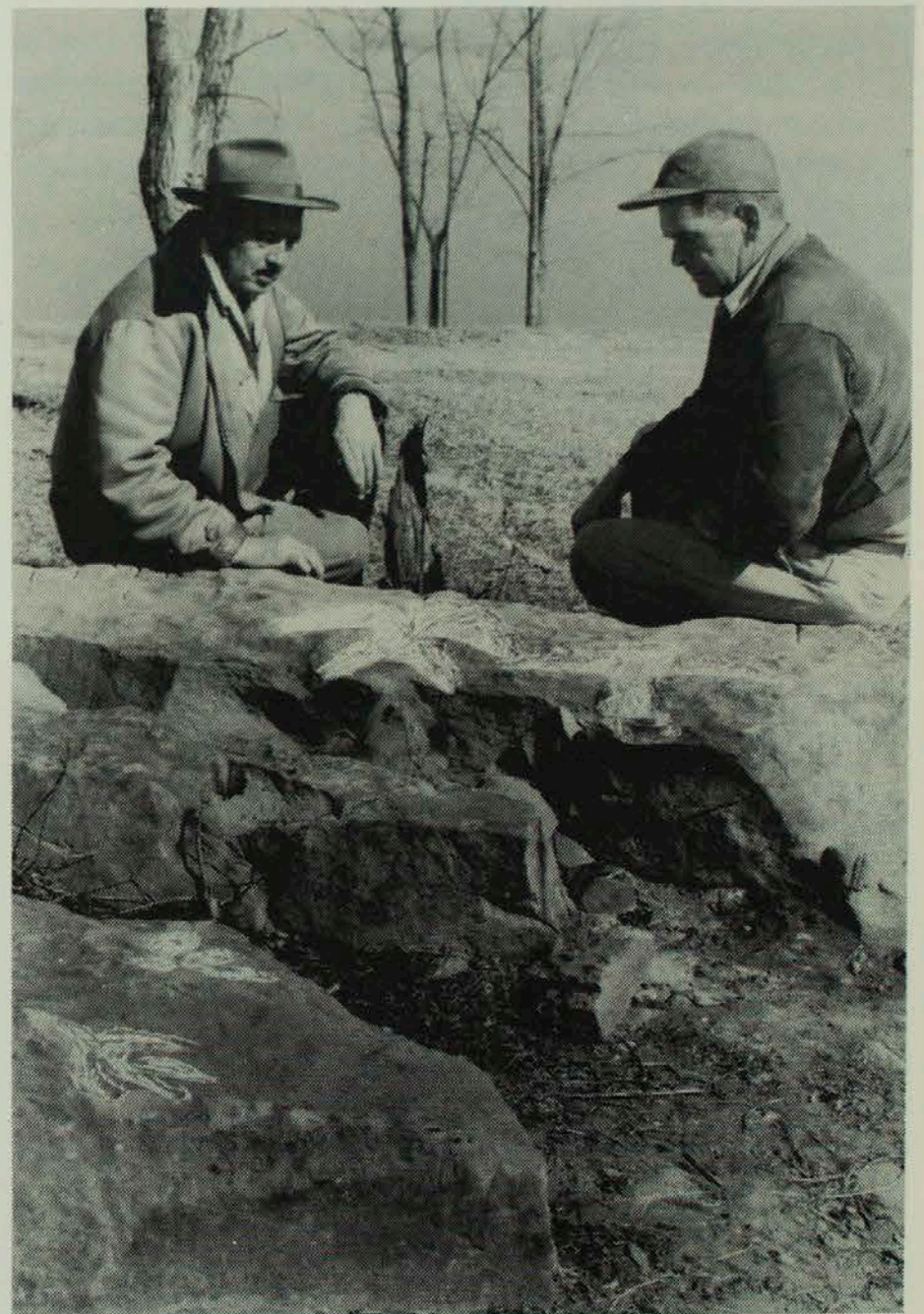
According to the **1936 Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution**, there could basically be two reasons for petroglyphs being made. One may be "random fancies created in leisurely moments." Two, some carvings may truly have historic or symbolic significance. If an event is being recorded, the symbols are placed so that they have a definite relation. Some examples are hunting scenes, dances, ceremonies, or records of visits. When it comes to symbolic or religious petroglyphs, there are many symbols in a small area that have no direct relation. These could be offerings to spirits to compensate for the removal of an object or to supply water, food, or tools. The symbolic or religious petroglyphs are also sacrificial, meaning a devotion to a spirit in a sacred place.

Knowing this general information gives one an overview and helps one to possibly understand the artifacts in this area a little better. The site in Northeast Missouri was found in the fall of 1955 by Mr. Arthur Bailey, a Kirksville resident who was also a member of the Missouri Archeological Society. The site is located on the hill northwest of the present-day swimming beach at Thousand Hills State Park. Mr. Bailey sought the society's president, Jesse Wrench, who came to view the site and authenticate it in March of 1956. Mr. Wrench wrote a letter to Mr. Swain, editor of the *Kirksville Daily Express*, stating how surprised he was that people's initials were carved between the symbols and that the area was used by campers to build fires for cooking food. He pleaded with Mr. Swain, the townsmen, and the Thousand Hills Park Board to preserve the site before any more destruction could occur. It is believed to be an ancient ceremonial ground and the first carvings date back to between A.D. 400 and 900, but different styles suggest

more than one generation of artists.

Dr. Michael Davis, a professor of anthropology at NMSU, says, "Local oral history around here is that before they put the dam in to make that lake, that there were lots more petroglyphs showing, and they're now underwater, a majority of them as well as some rather large archeological sites. Probably a living area."

It seems that these symbols are not written messages or a language, but actually a guide or memory aid for a ceremony. There were supposedly different societies and organizations in the tribe and the men had to correctly perform these ceremonies for membership. The Indians of the area were associated with the Woodland Tradition. They are thought to have been hunter/cultivators because there are many animal representations, tracks, and footprints. It is hard to say exactly what each represented animal is. Miss Maureen McHale, the naturalist at



Arthur Bailey, pictured left, found the petroglyphs in the fall of 1955. He is shown with Don Mulford, Superintendent of Thousand Hill Park, in March of 1956. This picture was taken shortly after the site was authenticated by the Archeological Society of Missouri.

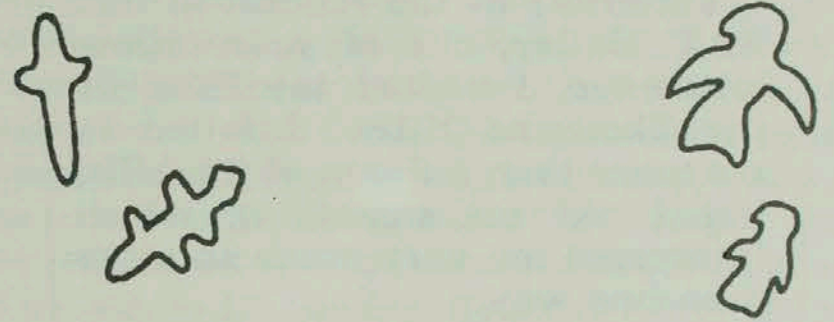
Thousand Hills, believes, "The problem that we have here is trying to learn not only what kinds of animals were native to the area long ago, but which ones were most likely important to the people who made the carvings. Possibly at that time, before the 1800s, we had more open prairie areas interspersed with forests. Coyotes were really common to the prairies. That carving over there may have been one," as she points to an animal carving that could easily be a dog, coyote, wolf, or any other animal along that line. There could also have been some farming and crop storage done because there are many fertility symbols. That could also explain how the Indians found free time to carve the petroglyphs.

Many symbols are present at this site. According to the manuscript written by a naturalist, Stephen Schneider, the squares could be the floor plan of houses or hunting camps. Fertility of animal, plant, and human life are represented by oval objects. There are also bird tracks, footprints, long snake-like symbols, and animals with different shaped bodies. The arrows could possibly be the directional guides for the ceremonies.

One special symbol, fairly widespread among all Indians, is the thunderbird. This mythical animal symbolizes rain. Its flapping wings represent thunder and its blinking eyes represent lightning. An anthropologist who visited our site believes that the thunderbird stands for masculinity, signifying the site for the men's ceremonies. "Well, we say thunderbirds and that might be right, but it could also indicate an eagle or a hawk. And it

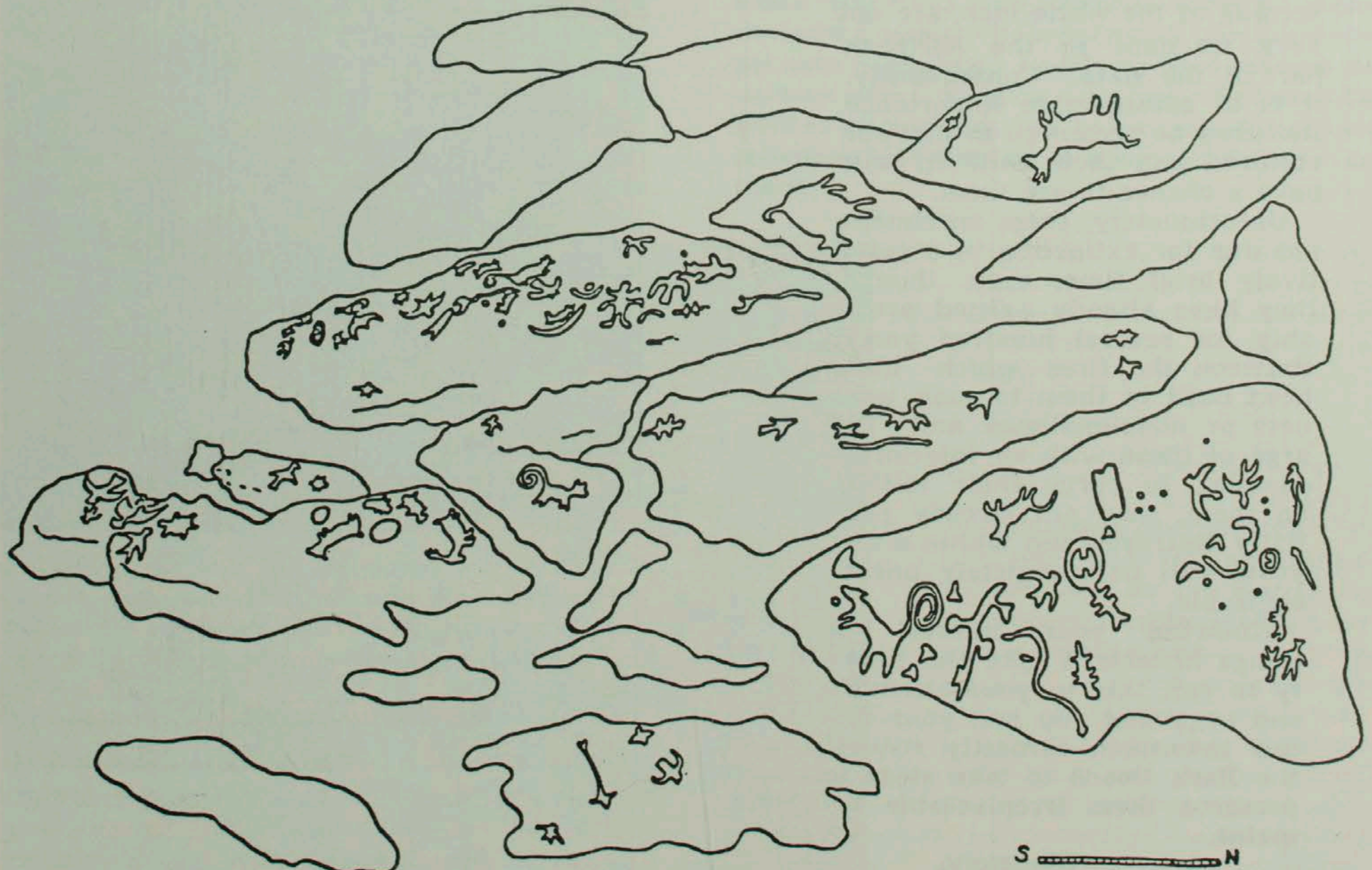
could represent a patron, kind of a guardian spirit." Dr. Davis explained that this symbol could deal with the guardian spirit complex. Indians had to find their own guardian spirit. They usually did this by fasting or going without sleep. "It's possible that that's the place where people went to seek their guardian spirit or to seek some kind of insights to their problems," said Dr. Davis.

Shortly before the coming of the white man, the Indians started following a new religious cult that originated in the southeast United States and spread up the Mississippi River.



**MACE AND BI-LOBED ARROW      THUNDERBIRDS**

*Shortly after the coming of white settlers, Indians started following a cult that developed in the southeastern portion of the U.S. These symbols are associated with this southern cult. (Diagrams courtesy of Pickler Memorial Library)*



*This sketch diagrams the symbols carved at the petroglyph site. Notice the many thunderbirds, oval fertility symbols, and animals with horns or tails. (Diagram courtesy of Pickler Memorial Library)*

# Letters From the People

Missouri Archaeological Society  
15 Switzler Hall  
Columbia, Missouri

March 12, 1956

Mr. E. E. Swain, Editor  
Daily Express and News  
Kirksville, Missouri

Dear Mr. Swain:

Yesterday at the request of Mr. A. T. Bailey, one of your fellow townsmen, I visited the Park of the Thousand Hills. I failed to see more than a dozen of the hills, but I did see something which impressed me very much in more than one way.

On the knoll opposite the new bathing pavillon I was greatly surprised to find an example of those Indian petroglyphs which have up till now made Washington State Park unique. These evidences of one of the later Indian cultures, apparently that which immediately preceded the coming of the white men, are **not** very frequent in the northern part of the state. Consequently, it is of considerable importance that they be preserved so that our children and their children will have a chance to see them.

Unfortunately, these specimens are due for extinction in a relatively brief time, even though they have already existed probably for several hundred years. Between the fires which have been built in them to cook wieners or marshmallows and the urge of those with an inferiority complex to carve their initials on them, they are already partially destroyed and within a few years will be completely unrecognizable.

Knowing your interest in things historic, I take the liberty to call this to your attention and urge that you and your fellow townsmen earnestly request the Park Board to take steps to preserve these irreplaceable remains.

Sincerely,  
JESSE E. WRENCH,  
President.

Maces and bi-lobed arrows, symbols associated with this southern cult, are present at our site. They represent authority and prestige.

Every petroglyphic symbol has variations of meaning. For example, a simple triangle has been known to represent an arrow point, mountain, or horse. It is impossible to interpret one symbol having the same meaning at more than one place. Only the author himself would truly know.

This site was placed on the National Register of Historic Sites in 1970. Throughout the years, there has been a chain link fence around the site and also a structure with just a roof to try to keep the petroglyphs more intact, but those have recently been replaced by a totally enclosed, gazebo-shaped, cedar building. It is locked when not in use to keep any further vandalism from occurring. This shelter also protects the carvings from the normal weathering of wind and rain. The building is open for programs at scheduled times during the summer months, or by arrangement with the park naturalist during the rest of the year. By preserving the petroglyphs for future generations, maybe someday they can be interpreted correctly and we can learn more about Native Americans and the past.



*Arthur Bailey, left, and Don Mulford, right, take a closer look at some of the thunderbirds. The symbols were chalked so they could be seen more clearly. Thunderbirds seem to be the first and most easily noticed symbols by those who view the site.*

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By Tonja Green

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# From Dreams To Reality

Spring Lake, located approximately 12 miles southwest of Kirksville, was constructed in the late forties by area businessmen. The Elm Creek was dammed to form the lake that today provides an easily accessible summer retreat to over 100 members.

The original idea for this lake was conceived in the summer of 1946 by Dr. Chester Attebery, Dr. Stedman Denslow, Ralph Shain, and Edgar Bigsby. This was not the first time that interest had been shown in a lake for Kirksville. Earlier attempts had failed because of the large amount of work that had to be done besides just the actual building of the lake. These four men felt strongly that the community needed a large body of water for recreation as well as relaxation and took it upon themselves to organize and promote the effort. Mrs. Luella Attebery remembers, "There were no water sports facilities around here at that time. That was before Forest Lake was built and before there was a swimming pool, so there was a real need for water sports and fishing, that sort of thing." The idea "was presented through the coffee shop, as most things in Kirksville are," recalls early member Ralph Shain. Dr. Attebery would also approach local service groups and spread the idea.

Dr. Attebery, in the first formal public announcement of the group, told the Rotary Club in 1947 the men's plans to build a 100-acre lake on 670 acres of land. As of that date in

September, 1947, 55 people had joined the informal organization and over \$32,000 had been pledged. An estimate on the project was somewhere around \$61,000: \$13,000 for 550 acres of land and \$48,000 for the dam. A small section of land was purchased from the Adair County Court. The other 120 acres the group acquired was not for sale, but it was put under a 99-year lease. To cover these expenses a \$500 "donation" was paid by each prospective member, who was allowed a building lot 75 feet wide by 150 feet deep. If a person paid \$1,000 he was entitled to a lot and a half or two standard lots.

With the project well underway, the men formed a corporation on September 24, 1947. Spring Lake, Inc. set up a board to oversee its activities. The first board consisted of Dr. Attebery, president; Edgar Bigsby, secretary; Charles Updyke, finance chairman; Ralph Shain, treasurer; Ray Gardner, Charles Truitt, Frank Neal, Joe Burdman, Chester Furnish, Kenneth Jacobs, and Walter Beard, Sr., members. Since the project was similar to the efforts of the Missouri Conservation Commission in that it would provide cover for wildlife and halt erosion and since it was locally funded, the board requested the assistance of the Commission. A provision in the by-laws that stated no one could profit from the lake and the lack of water in Northeast Missouri led the Commission to fully support the project.



*This photo, taken prior to 1947, shows the topography of the area near Yarrow. The proposed lake is outlined in white.*

With the state's approval in hand, the men began to study maps and walk over land, looking for the best possible location. The Missouri Corps of Engineers helped in the selection of the site. The possible sites were considered on the basis of the ability to be flooded, the willingness of the owners to sell, the cost of the land and construction, and the size of the watershed. The spot chosen was 12 miles southwest of Kirksville and one and one-half miles northeast of Yarrow. This area was seen as the most feasible because of the availability of low cost land, possibility of good fishing, possibility of cover and water for all kinds of wildlife, sites for cabins, and a beautiful scenic setting of timberland. The major disadvantage of this area was that the large watershed did not allow for ideal fish propagation and contributed to the high cost of construction. The group took options on the land and on October 17, 1947, the land was purchased. The majority of the 670 acres purchased was from A. E. Prather, Nobel White, Pearl MacDuffie, John Lockhart, and Ace Barton Lockhart.

Construction of the actual body of water began in 1948 with the removal of timber and brush. Harrison Boley was responsible for getting this timber out of the lake bottom. Many members of the corporation were also involved. The men accomplished this lengthy task by mid-summer through the use of axes and chain saws. Mr. Shain recalls, "This ran into quite a project. One time we were sitting on a pile of logs . . . and there was a discussion on whether we should go ahead or quit. I remember that Walter Beard, Sr., said that he didn't want to hear any more quitting, that we were going ahead and build a lake. That was the last thought of anybody quitting and getting out." The men realized that if this effort fell by the wayside, it would be a long time before anybody tried again. With the creek bottom clear, it was now time for the corporation to look for bids on the construction of the lake and dam.

J. W. Shikles & Company, an engineering firm from St. Joseph, were the consulting engineers on the project. They along with engineers from the Missouri Conservation Commission, mapped out the shape the lake would take, calculated the amount of work, drew the specifications of the dam, and listed the materials needed for the project. The Shikles Company also oversaw all work done on the dam.

In July of 1948, proposal blanks, listing specifications for the construction of a dam, a spillway, and an access road, were made available to the public. Sealed bids were received until the beginning of August. Bids were received from Brookfield, Kansas City, and St. Joseph, but it was the Barker Young Construction Company of Macon that was contracted to do the work.

Construction began on August 23, 1948. The dam was approximately 365 feet high and 1,000 feet long. When the dam was completed, a road could be extended to the north side of the lake. The road was not completed at this time, but rather when it was needed to reach a lot located farther around the lake. Charles Truitt was the head of the committee that laid out the roads. Later, when the road extended to its present length, the board decided that the road should not reach completely around the lake to form a circle with Route N. This was due to the fact that the members did not want joyriders and Sunday drivers driving through the area and disturbing the tranquil atmosphere.

When it came time to assign the lots, a drawing was held.

The people who had purchased a \$1,000 lot had the first choice. The rest of the people drew numbers to see in what order they would choose. There was no one particular area that was chosen first. Different people had different ideas of what they wanted and which lot they wanted. When the layout of the lots was drawn, a second tier had been included. Once there was water in the lake, a lake front lot cost \$625, while second tier lots remained the original \$500. This upper tier was located on the opposite side of the road at various places around the lake. Only two of these lots were ever sold because the lake had already paid for itself and there was a desire to limit the number of members.



*These pictures were taken in 1961 while the leak in the lake's dam was being repaired. The lake was drained to allow bulldozers onto the dry bottom to do the necessary dirt work. The empty lake exposed many tree stumps and gave members the chance to remove debris that could interfere with successful fishing.*

Once the lake had filled with water, the state fisheries stocked the lake with bass, channel cat, crappie, and bluegill. This was done under the condition that the corporation would encourage all members to purchase fishing licenses and require all guests to do so also. Grass carp were added later to combat the moss and algae problem.

Even though no cabins were built while the dam was being constructed, the members still utilized the area. "We would have picnics and barbeques during the summer," recalls Mrs. Attebery, "and when there was enough water, the men would go fishing."

Upon completion of the dam, cabins began to appear on various lots. In 1949, the Leo Blodgett family was the first to complete a cabin. Arnold Blodgett recalls there being no roads, "We had to park at the beach and boat across. Even when the roads were built, we couldn't always use them because sometimes they were impassable." Being the first owners of a cabin, the Blodgetts were very proud. "Dad even kept a guest book of everyone who came that first summer. They signed it, dated it, and wrote what they did."

A total of 27 cabins had been built by the winter of 1951. Some of the other early residences included the families of C. L. Attebery, J. S. Denslow, Edgar Bigsby, Ralph Shain, Ralph Sees, Walter Beard, and Tom Eichorn. Mr. Eichorn bought the old farmhouse that was on the creek bottom and had it moved to his lot. This building is now incorporated in the Martha Gooch residence.

In the spring of 1952, a leak developed in the southeast corner of the dam. Studies were run and it was concluded that small holes in the clay deposits were responsible for the leakage. The leak was repaired by pumping intrusion grout into the gap between the cap rock and the bedrock. It was not known if the leak was stopped, but people thought that the south bank joining the dam had been saved.

In 1960 the leak started again. This time a full-fledged repair was planned by the corporation. In order to do this, the lake had to be drained, allowing the engineers to fix the leak from the inside out. The lake was drained by cutting slots in the dam.

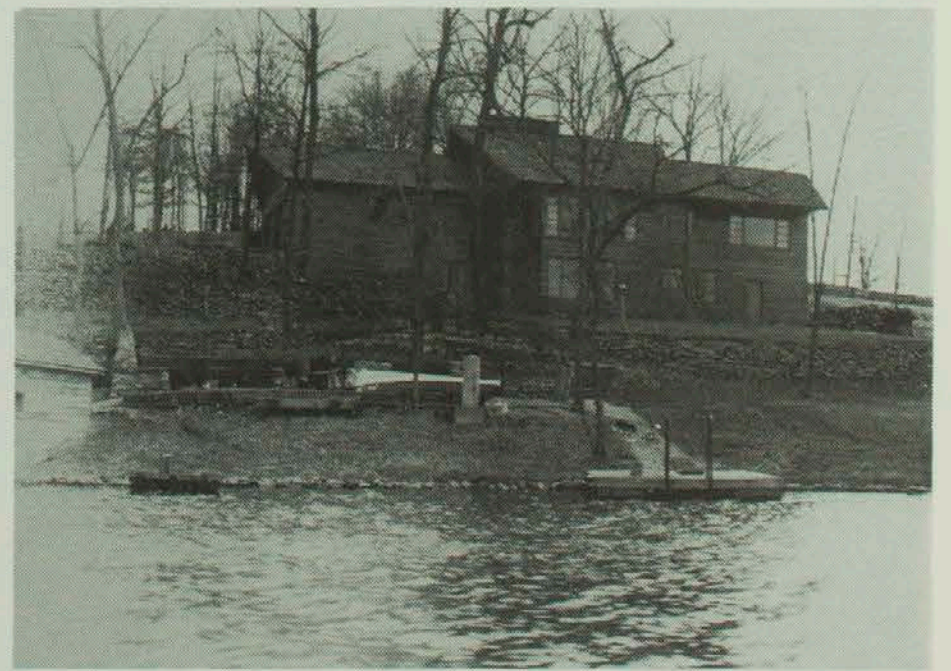


*Legend has it that this tree, located at the entrance to Spring Lake, is an Indian thong tree. The tree, which is thought to have pointed towards a trail, has become so dear to the members of Spring Lake that much effort was spent in saving it from chemical poisoning last summer.*

Tamped clay, concrete, and grouting were placed in the crack once it had been revealed, approximately 15 to 20 feet below the surface. Repairing the leak took close to a month and, with the melting of the winter snows, the lake was ready to re-open the next spring. It was thought that the leak could have been prevented, had the proper tubes been placed in the dam when it was built, but a lack of funds had prevented this from occurring.



*Of the 54 cabins on Spring Lake in 1955, this was one of the first to be built. It was constructed by Dr. Hugh A. Schuetz in 1951. This cabin which was built on the north side of the lake, now belongs to David Blickhan.*



*This cabin, one of the largest on the lake today, was built by Ray P. Gardner in the early 1950s. Shown here in 1955, it was the first to be constructed on three levels.*

In the early '50s the corporation received an anonymous \$1,000 donation to build a beach-swim area. Before this, the corporation planned to build and maintain a beach area by a "family fee" that was charged to the members, not exceeding \$5. Today, the swimming beach is open only to members and their guests.

Many improvements, including rural water, electricity, and telephones were made through the years. It was decided in the early 1980s that the life expectancy of the lake would decline unless the silt that had drained into the lake was removed. An extensive project was put into motion, and the corporation rented machinery to dredge the lake. This project took the majority of the summer of 1982 with hired men, some of whom were members of Spring Lake, taking turns running the dredge 20 hours a day. Thousands of cubic yards of silt were extracted and pumped into silt reservoirs and Sugar Creek. As a result of this effort, the life of the lake was lengthened by more than 20 years.

The lake has seen much more activity on the water over the last few years partly due to the fact that the dredging widened the coves and made the lake cleaner and deeper. The board also moved the horsepower limit to 60 horsepower which made water

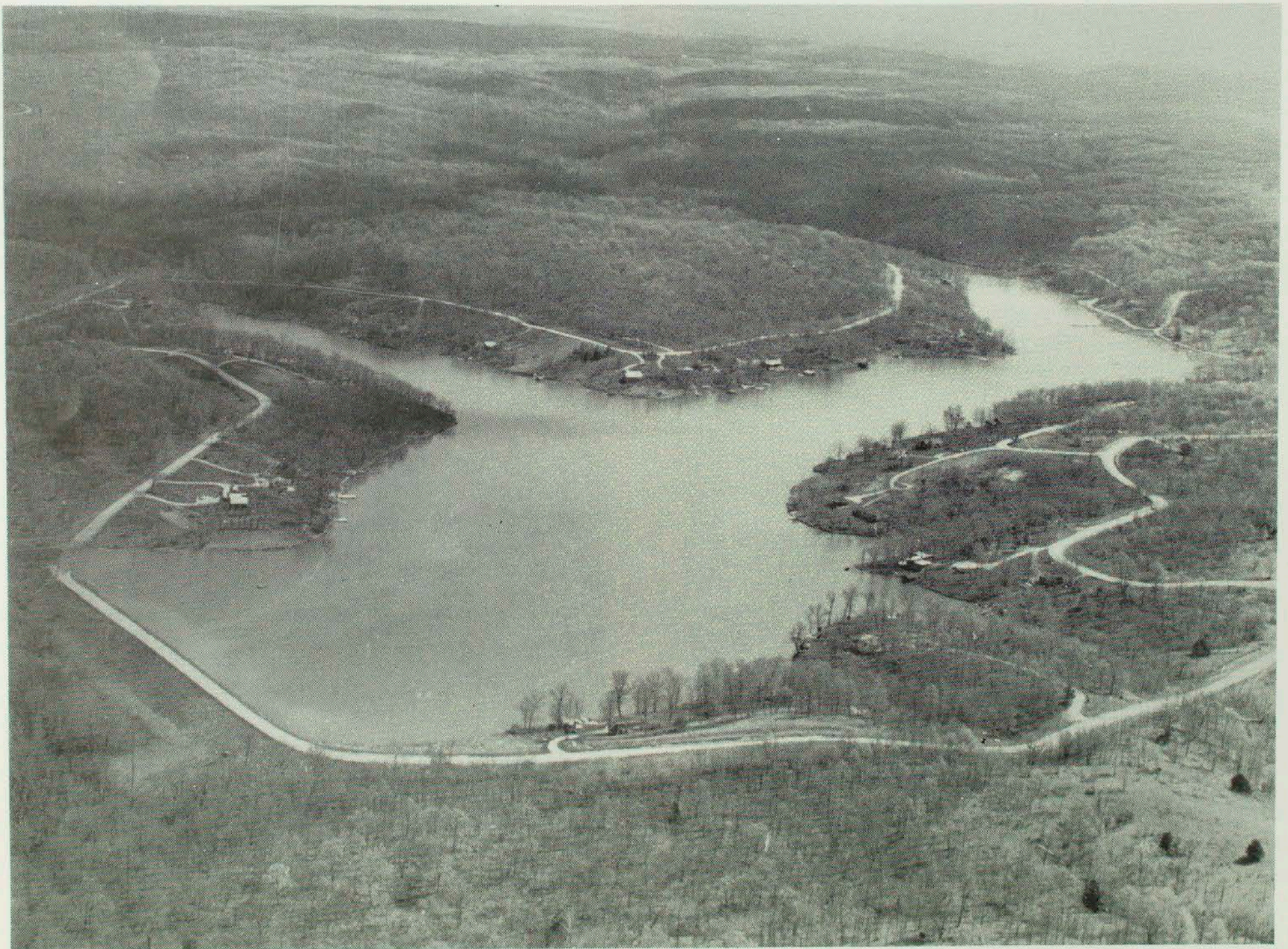
skiing easier. Each year the members hold two clean-up days/picnics, and on the Fourth of July they also gather for a brilliant fireworks display.

Through the years the lake has provided many people with a year-round home, as well as summer enjoyment. Although Spring Lake has been modernized by speedboats, water skiers, satellite dishes, and luxurious homes, the area still retains its original intent as a family-oriented recreation facility. "It really has been very nice," said Mrs. Attebery. "Those of us that have known it for a long time are real proud of it."

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**By Mike Whitney  
and  
John Hill**

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*During the summer of 1968, the 20th year of the lake's existence, boats could be seen gliding across the water with motors limited to 18 horsepower. The original by-laws stated that motors could not exceed 3 horsepower and today that limit is 60.*

# FOR THEIR HOMELANDS

In the early 1830s, troubles stemming from the Black Hawk War were appearing near Kirksville. As a result two stockades were built: Fort Matson, which was built on the land across from the present-day Madison Church and Cemetery, and Fort Clark, which stood on Camp Collett east of Novinger. A force of around 500 Indians from Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and northern Missouri began to threaten new settlements in this area. Sauk chief, Black Hawk, led the unsuccessful battles, which became the last Indian war in this part of the country.

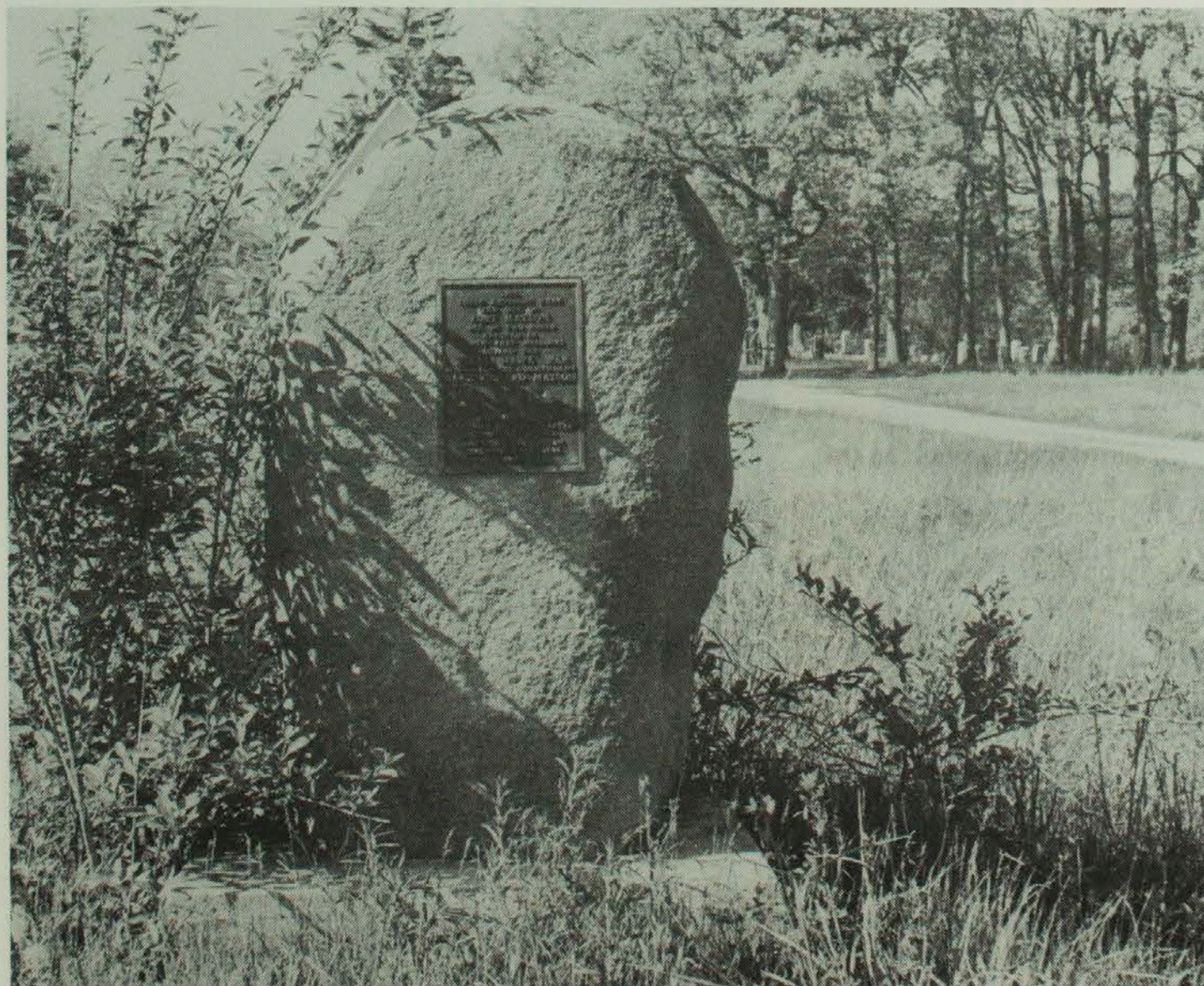
Chief Black Hawk was born in 1767. Known in his native tongue as Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak, he became a minor chief of his tribe in 1788 at the age of 21. From this time forward, he struggled with the westward movement of the white man. A few days after the last battle of the war, Black Hawk was captured and taken as a hostage to Washington, D.C., to meet President Andrew Jackson. Black Hawk died on October 31, 1838, on the Sauk Reservation near Des Moines, Iowa.

The dispute named for the Sauk chief was over land located near Rock Island, Illinois, on which the Sauk and Fox Indians had lived for years. In 1804, a contract was signed by Keokuk, self-

designated chief of the tribe, in which the Indians sold their homelands for \$500 a year for 10 years. In return the Indians could live on the now government land until it was sold to white settlers moving into the area.

Although given monetary compensation, many of the tribal members did not accept this agreement. Black Hawk was one of them. He declared that the chiefs who signed the document were intoxicated and the liquor was provided by the whites involved in the deal. According to **Westward Expansion**, a textbook by Ray Billington, Black Hawk's "hatred of Americans transcended his good judgment" when he and his followers continued to live on the land.

**Westward Expansion** continues to state that authorities in Illinois decided that the "peaceful natives endangered the frontier." Governor Reynolds of Illinois sent the state militia to drive the Indians off the land and out of the state. Seeing the danger for his tribe, Black Hawk called a truce. A new treaty was created, stating that the Indians would cross the Mississippi River from Rock Island. They also promised to never re-cross back into Illinois.



*This bronze plaque, donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution, is mounted on the boulder designating the approximate area where Fort Matson was located. In the background is Fort Madison Cemetery. (Photo courtesy of Dr. David D. March)*

After spending a horrible winter in Iowa in which they had little food or shelter, Black Hawk made a decision to return to the land he had surrendered. Breaking the treaty, he led approximately 1,000 tribesmen, including many women and children, across the Mississippi near the mouth of the Rock River in 1832. He planned on peacefully returning to his former lands and planting crops with his people. As Black Hawk crossed near a fort on the Rock River, his group was shot at by soldiers who saw this as an aggressive movement. Black Hawk and his people continued to move in hopes of returning to their homelands; however, it was no longer by peaceful means.

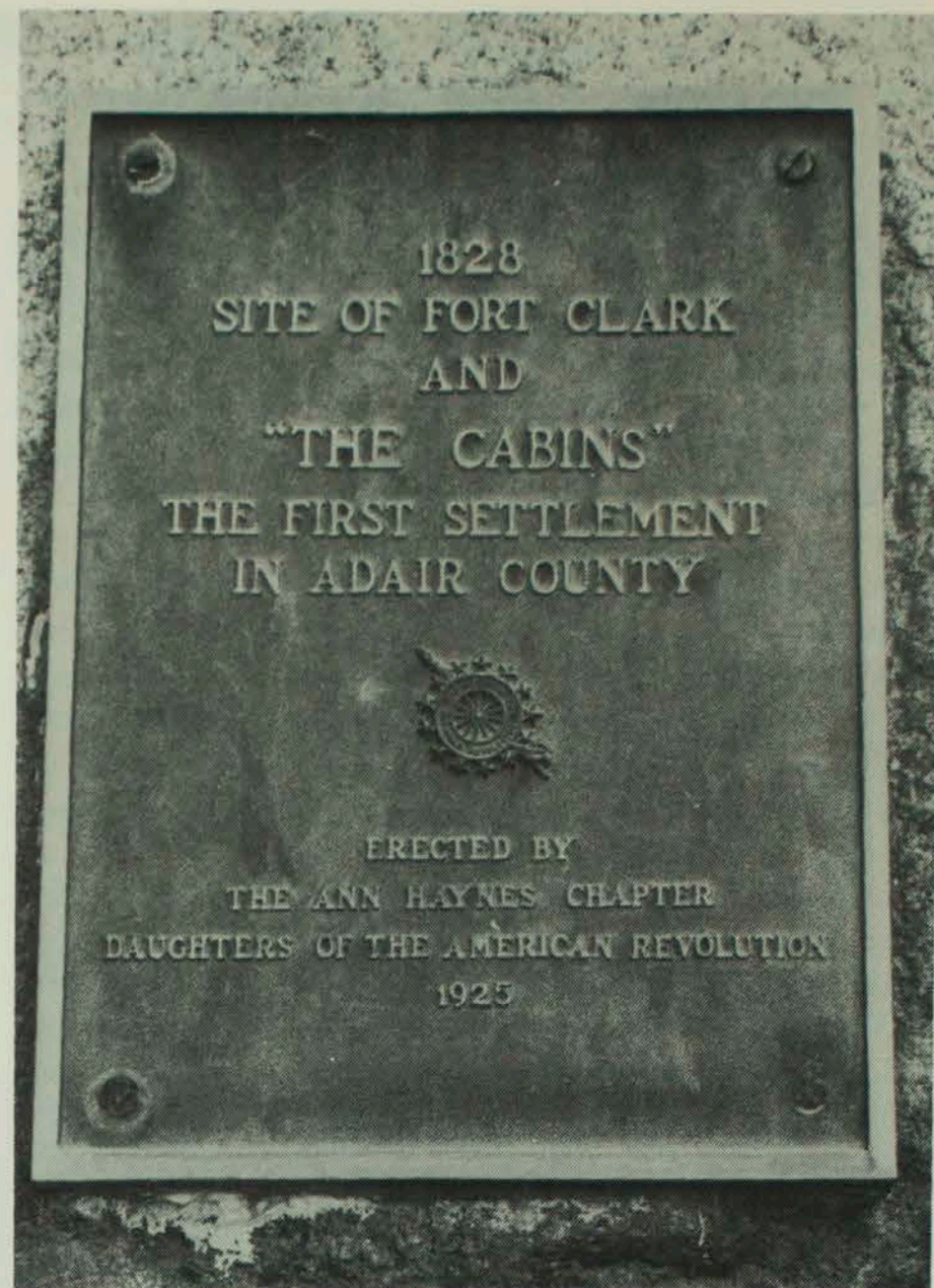
The last confrontation of the war was at the Bad Axe River in Wisconsin. Black Hawk's band of Fox and Sauk Indians were trying to cross the river. A group of around 1,300 vengeful Americans trapped them against the steamship *Warrior*. **Westward Expansion** reported only 150 men, women, and children that started the trip to the Rock River Valley three months before were alive after the Bad Axe Massacre: "It was one of the bloodiest tragedies in the sad history of American-Indian relations."

The Black Hawk War was short-lived, lasting throughout the summer of 1832. Before the conflict ended, two frontier forts were established in Adair County in preparation for the impending Indian uprising.

One of the forts, Fort Clark, was located at what has been called Camp Collett, the Gordon Collett farm south of Highway 6 and east of Novinger. It stood on high ground overlooking the Chariton River from the east. Inside the fort, there were three blockhouses that served as quarters for the military detachment that patrolled the area and for worried settlers that lived nearby. The fort stood idle for many years but later, the Collett family used the remaining structure as a stable for their horses. A bronze plaque donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution can now be seen in the area where the fort stood. It is mounted on a huge boulder furnished by Ira Collett in 1925.

The other fort built in this time period for the purpose of local protection was Fort Matson. Named after its commanding officer, it is found two miles east of an unmarked gravel road off U.S. 63, one mile north of Sublette. Currently, the Madison Church and Cemetery is across the road from where the fort stood. Captain Richard Matson came to Adair County in 1832 from Ralls County. The fort consisted of a stockade, a brush shed for horses and a separate log building used for general storage as well as for storing the company's magazine gun. A palisade, a high fence of stakes used for defense, surrounded a blockhouse. The company stayed the winter before returning to their homes or other military duties. According to Marlow Ediger, who owns the 45 acres on which the fort was built, "It seems to me like maybe the fort could have been there where that hill is located," the hill across from the church. Like Fort Clark, the land is marked with a bronze plaque on a large boulder donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Although the Indians were not successful in their campaign, the Black Hawk War was the last Indian uprising in this area.



*This large boulder, located near Novinger on the Gordon Collett farm, marks the approximate site of Fort Clark. The plaque was donated in 1925 and Ira Collett had it mounted on the large boulder shown. (Photo courtesy of Dr. David D. March)*

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**By Kimberly Baker**

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# Beyond the Midway



Art work courtesy of Steve Wheeler

Beautiful queen contestants! Exciting livestock shows! Thrilling carnival rides! Home economics masterpieces created by local hands! Each of these is a piece of the patchwork known today as the Northeast Missouri District Fair.

The Adair County Agricultural and Mechanical Association sponsored the first Adair County Fair in 1866. Held on land a quarter-mile southwest of Kirksville on present-day Boundary Street, this first fair featured a soldiers' reunion where the 1862 Civil War Battle of Kirksville was re-enacted. Annual fairs were held there until 1882 or 1883. In 1889, the Adair County Fair Association was organized. This organization sponsored fairs each fall until 1896.

In 1934, the Kirksville Chamber of Commerce held a one-day Harvest Festival on the Kirksville square. Because of the success of this festival, the location of the fair moved to Stickler's Softball Park east of the city, and it became a two-day



Owned by the NEMO Fair Association, this sale barn was located where the Town Pump in Pamida's parking lot is today. It was the site of many 4-H and FFA livestock sales and weekly community sales. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Donna Stribling)

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## By Tonya Eichor and Shelly Hoffman

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event. Re-named the Adair County Harvest Festival, this fair was held until 1946. According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, the Northeast Missouri Fair Association was organized when "a group of forward thinking people, headed by Joe Burdman" was able to acquire a 100-acre tract of land north of the city limits. Fair stock was sold to finance the organization and to purchase the grounds. Johnny Pack, a member of the Trailrider's



Standing in front of the old, covered grandstand overlooking the half-mile track, these 4-H'ers are enjoying the "Gay Nineties" day at the 1961 fair. (Photo courtesy of Fairview 4-H Club)

Association and supporter of the fair, stated, "In 1947, we all bought shares for the opening of the fair to help promote the fair and it's just started from there." The first association was established with 13 board members. Eight of the members were farmers and five were Kirksville townspeople. Some of the first board members included Sherman Eitel, Joe Burdman, Howard Rolston, and Ray Updyke. Years later, Mexico, Missouri, decided that it could not support the district fair anymore, and Kirksville became the site of the event. The district includes counties as far south as St. Charles and as far west as Putnam County. To the north and east are the state borders. Other than a change in name to the Northeast Missouri District Fair, the same fair association exists today, and fairs are still held in the same location, although the area of the fairgrounds has been reduced to 50 acres through sales to the Gibson Corporation, the University of Missouri Adair County Extension Center, and a housing development. With money from these sales, the water lines were laid in 1954, the sewer lines were added in 1962, and the existing grandstand was built in 1964. Before the water lines were laid, wells on the grounds furnished water for fair

attenders.

In 1947, the first Northeast Missouri Fair was held. Despite the fact that the first fairs lasted only four days, its estimated attendance was 40,000 people. Events included livestock shows, horse and harness horse racing, professional entertainment, a carnival, exhibits, and Fair Band performances.

For many years, a parade marked the grand opening of the fair. Led by 50 or more mounted Trailriders, the Fair Band played from their vast repertoire of marches.

Under the direction of the late Homer Clough, the Fair Band played before grandstand events each night. The band members were volunteers from the community. Jack Weber, a long-time Kirksville High School band instructor, stated, "When the Fair Band broke up, they gave all their instruments and equipment to the high school. We still have some of it." After this group disbanded, the Northeast Missouri State College band continued to perform at the fair with Tom Duden as the director. After he left this position in 1979, the band no longer performed at the fair.

One time-honored tradition of the NEMO Fair is the queen



*Despite the fact that the number of contestants has dwindled between the years 1968 to 1988, the contest to crown "The Fairest of the Fair" signals that the opening day has arrived.*



contest. "The Fairest of the Fair" has attracted as many as 20 to 30 entrants from Adair County, including students from Northeast Missouri State Teachers College. Approximately one month before the contest, all of the contestants were introduced to the public at the Kennedy Theatre. A silent committee composed of various community members selected approximately five of the entrants for the final competition. These finalists were judged by the people at the fair on beauty, poise, personality, and talent. The contestants were introduced at the grandstand events during the first two nights of the fair and all fair visitors were allowed to vote for the queen, who was crowned on the second night. Since 1983, the fair queen contestants must be a past or present member of 4-H or Future Farmers of America. The numbers of entrants has dropped to less than 10 in the past few years. Two or three judges choose the queen based on the same qualities those outlined at the early fairs with the exception of talent. In 1987, this competition was replaced by a speech.

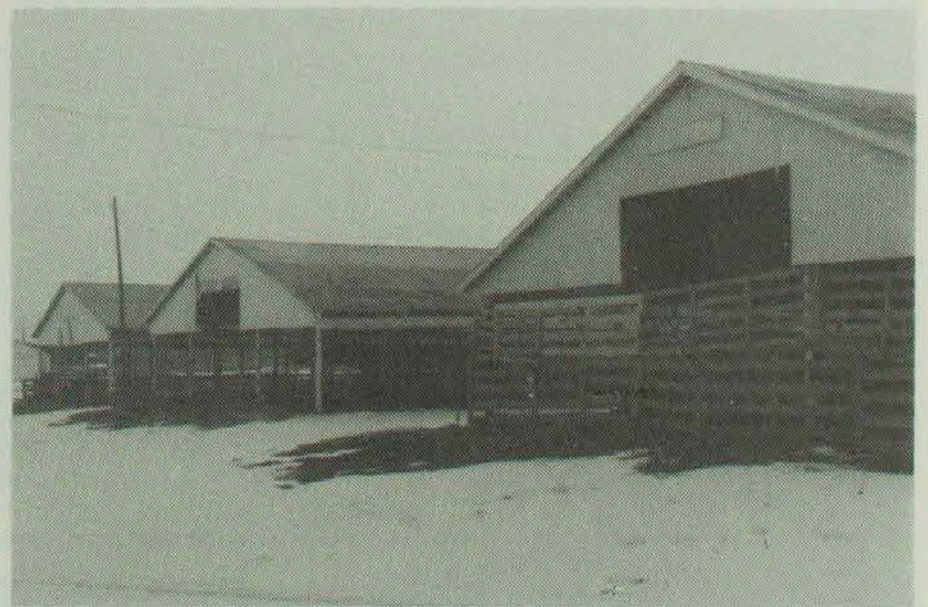
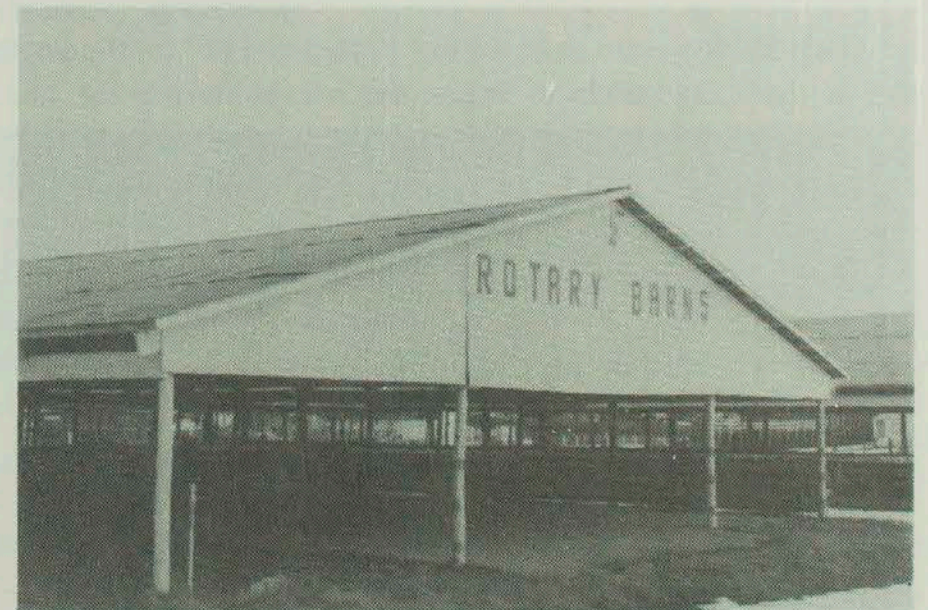
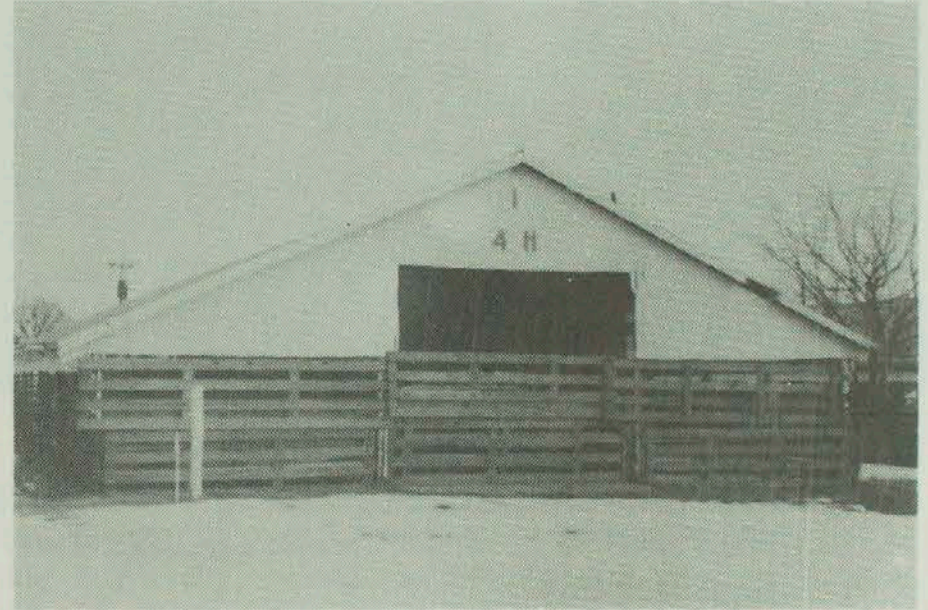
Another fair tradition that has always been an important part is the livestock shows. In the past, there were many classes of livestock: open classes for every breed of livestock, as well as 4-H and FFA classes. Today, the open classes are much smaller. Before 1957, when the present-day barns were built, exhibitors tied their animals under large tents. At judging time, the cattle exhibitors parked their vehicles to form a show ring west of the tents. The cattle were shown there until the big pole barn was built. The hogs and sheep, which were kept in pens under the tents, were shown in an arena in the middle of their tent. Today, the cattle are shown in the 4-H and FFA Rotary barn, and the sheep and swine are shown in the #2 Rotary barn.

Sales of the 4-H and FFA animals are also tradition bound. Sheep and swine have always been sold during the fair. Today, they are sold in one of the Rotary barns following a Chamber of Commerce lamb and pork dinner for the buyers and the community. "The group that comes up and cooks for the Chamber really has a good time and enjoys it. We've got the same core group up there every year. They really enjoy being up there, and they know everybody," said Bill Baiotto, past president of the fair association. In the past, the sheep and swine sale took place in the sale barn located on the property. The steer sale took place a month later after the fair at this sale barn, which was also used for community livestock sales every week until the grounds with the barn were sold to the Gibson Corporation in 1970. Since that time, the cattle are sold at the Kirksville Livestock Market in September.

Attendance was high as crowds packed the grandstand to watch horse and harness racing, and pony shows. The local men of the Kirksville area brought their farm horses and raced each other between heats of the harness racing. When the fair began, harness racing was supported by the community. Businesses closed early in the afternoon on days of harness racing, giving the employees time to attend the races. The harness races were held at 1:30 p.m. at the old, covered grandstand. When the present-day grandstand was built in 1964, the harness races were moved to 5:30 p.m. because the new grandstand was not covered, and the people did not want to sit in the sun. Professional racers came from many towns in Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri to compete in the races. Approximately 12 horse and buggies competed in each heat, and the winners of the races

received cash prizes. C.R. Updyke was a major supporter of the harness racing. With his death, harness racing slowly died out.

The pony shows also brought a large crowd to the fair. The pony shows were Society Horse Shows and were run by an independent organization. Kathy Cleaver, a former contestant, said, "This was a major horse show area. I had a pony that I showed that was undefeated in the Missouri and Iowa circuit." The equine events utilized the half-mile track, starting gate, judges, and timers.



*The construction of these barns in 1957 was financed by the Kirksville Rotary Club. Labor was supplied by members of the club and local 4-H'ers.*



Fair board and Trailraider members in 1950 were front row, left to right: Dean Davison, Johnny Pack, Vivian Carry, W.O. Mackie, Nelson Daniels, Summer Davis, and Bill Findling. Middle row: Boyd Brown, Homer Collop, Frank Eitel, Earl Rogers, Marilyn Cowinger, Martha Dykster, Norvell Allen, and John Miller. Back row: Raymond Conner, Sherman Eitel, Myron Propst, Harry Salsberry, Paul Sellers, and Grover Morris.

Two stables were built during 1946 and 1947 on the north end of the fairgrounds to house the horses during the fair. Although horses and harness racing have not been a part of the fair since 1982, the stables are still used by KCOM and NMSU students who bring their horses to Kirksville.

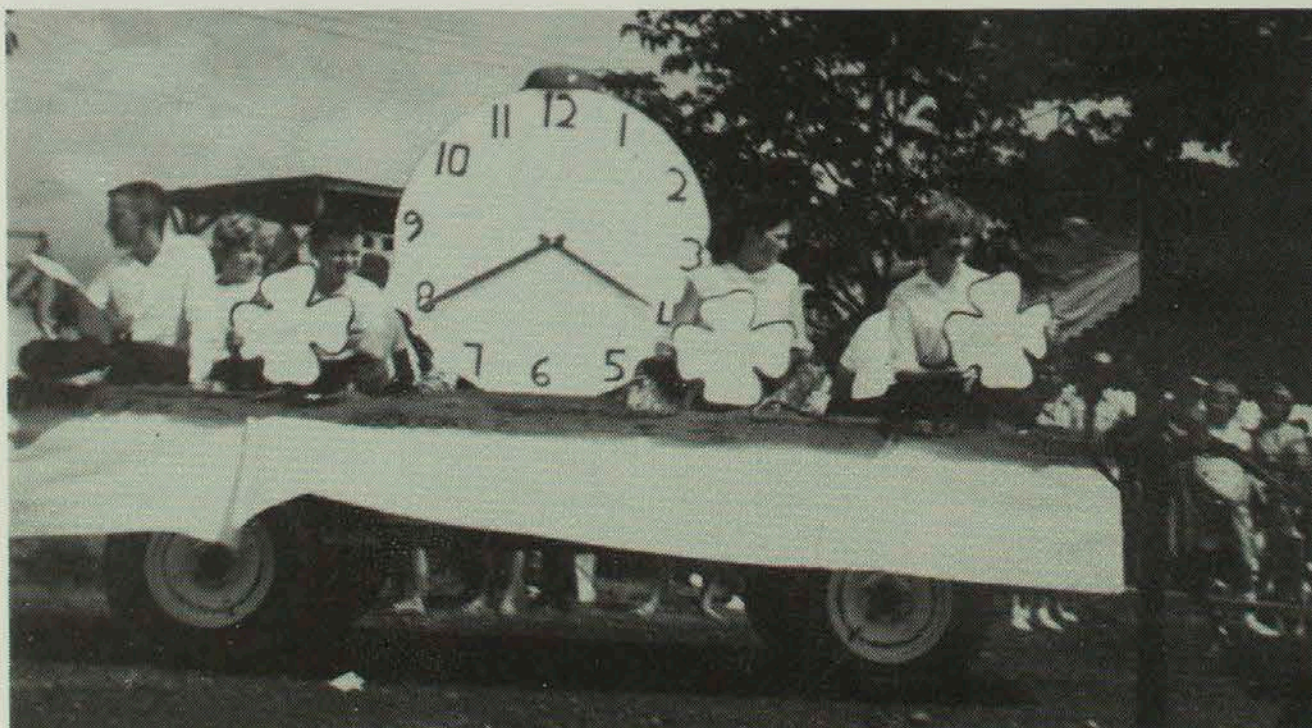
In the late 1950s, stock car races and demolition derbies entertained crowds and bolstered attendance. As a result, a quarter-mile track was built within the half-mile track. Although both events have been an attraction of recent fairs, they are diminishing in popularity.

One of the long-running grandstand events was the Joie Chitwood Thrill Show. This show included car jumping ramps, driving around on two wheels, and performing other stunts. With rising insurance costs, this event became un-

profitable and was discontinued.

The carnival was, and still is, a main attraction at the fair. The carnival once covered an area from Route P to the north end of the commercial quonset hut. According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, "The carnival, usually a good spread of tents by itself, was almost lost in the blooming canvas city." Today the carnival sets up on a smaller area from Easter's Food Store to the north end of the commercial quonset hut.

West of the grandstand is a low, seemingly innocuous building. The home economics building houses works of art for every household. The building is filled with items from 4-H and open show exhibits. Awards are given to the top entries in floriculture, foods, clothing, crafts, electricity, woodworking, and horticulture.



The Green Grove 4-H Club built this entry for the float competition at Youth Day during the 1961 fair. (Slide courtesy of Mrs. Judy Kittle, reproduced as a print by Paul Wohlfeil)



Although harness races are no longer held at the fair, the horse stables are still in use. NMSU and KCOM students, and others rent stalls from the NEMO Fair Association to house their horses and mules.

Other features at the fair have been a Red Cross tent manned by a doctor and nurse along with assistants from the Kirksville Senior High School. A rest center was provided for all fair attenders who were hot or who just wanted to rest. Firefighters were on hand with their equipment in case of emergency. Today none of these facilities or services are in existence.

A night for many of the 4-H and FFA members was spending the night at the fair. The boys slept in the vehicles or outside while the girls stayed in the barn lofts with their parents. According to Bob Jackson, long-time fair attender, water fights were one of his most memorable moments as a young 4-H member staying all night at the fair. Many 4-H and FFA members still enjoy having water fights today.

Another fun activity for the 4-H'ers has been Youth Day. Following a Grand March of 4-H members and club floats, all 4-H clubs participated in such events as obstacle courses, water relays, watermelon eating contests, whistling after eating crackers, and egg tosses. The winners of the events received ribbons.

For many years a Grand Parade was held at the end of the fair and all the showmen brought their animals to the half-mile track in front of the grandstand. At this time, the winners of the shows were presented with trophies. Swine were not taken in front of the grandstand since they were hard to control.

Recently, to commemorate two past presidents of the NEMO Fair Board, the Elmer Williams Adair County Youth Award and the Roy E. Jackson Memorial District 4-H Award have been established as annual awards. These awards are given to 4-H and FFA members who have shown good sportsmanship throughout the fair. The Elmer Williams Award promotes courtesy, enthusiasm, and quality exhibits. The Roy E. Jackson Award promotes courtesy, enthusiasm, friendliness, and the ability to do the best with what is available. Each of these awards is presented at the conclusion of the fair.

There are many people who have enjoyed the fair as they were growing up. Harold Propst, a past fair board member, said, "It was a good thing for Kirksville." Mr. Baiotto stated, "I enjoy working at the fair. I don't know what the answer is to the whole project. We've got an expensive piece of ground and everybody says we ought to be doing anything but having a fair out there." Mr. Jackson believes, "Our society is just getting too mobile. It used to be that the only time I saw a friend from Novinger was at the fair. Now if I want to see someone, I just get in the car and go. But I think that the fair is going to come back around."

Whatever the problem, or whatever the solution, what the *Kirksville Daily Express* once called "the biggest community enterprise of the year" is no longer drawing the people it once had. Previously, the counties strongly supported the Northeast Missouri District Fair; however, this support has been continuously decreasing.



Stunts, such as cars flying through the air, awed spectators at the Joie Chitwood Thrill Show.



# Scenes from the Past



Originally the NMSU Red Barn, pictured above, was not red, but white. Built in the early 1900s, south of where Pershing Arena is now located, the barn, shown in the two bottom photos, was part of the agricultural curriculum at the school under the administration of Dean John R. Kirk. It was used as a dairy barn, where students actually processed and sold milk to Kirksville's residents. The barn's floor is made of a rubberized-type tile to make it easy to clean. Cattle stalls run along the west side of the building. The barn contains an open area for storing machinery, a tack room, and on the second floor, a large hay loft, shown in the top center photo.

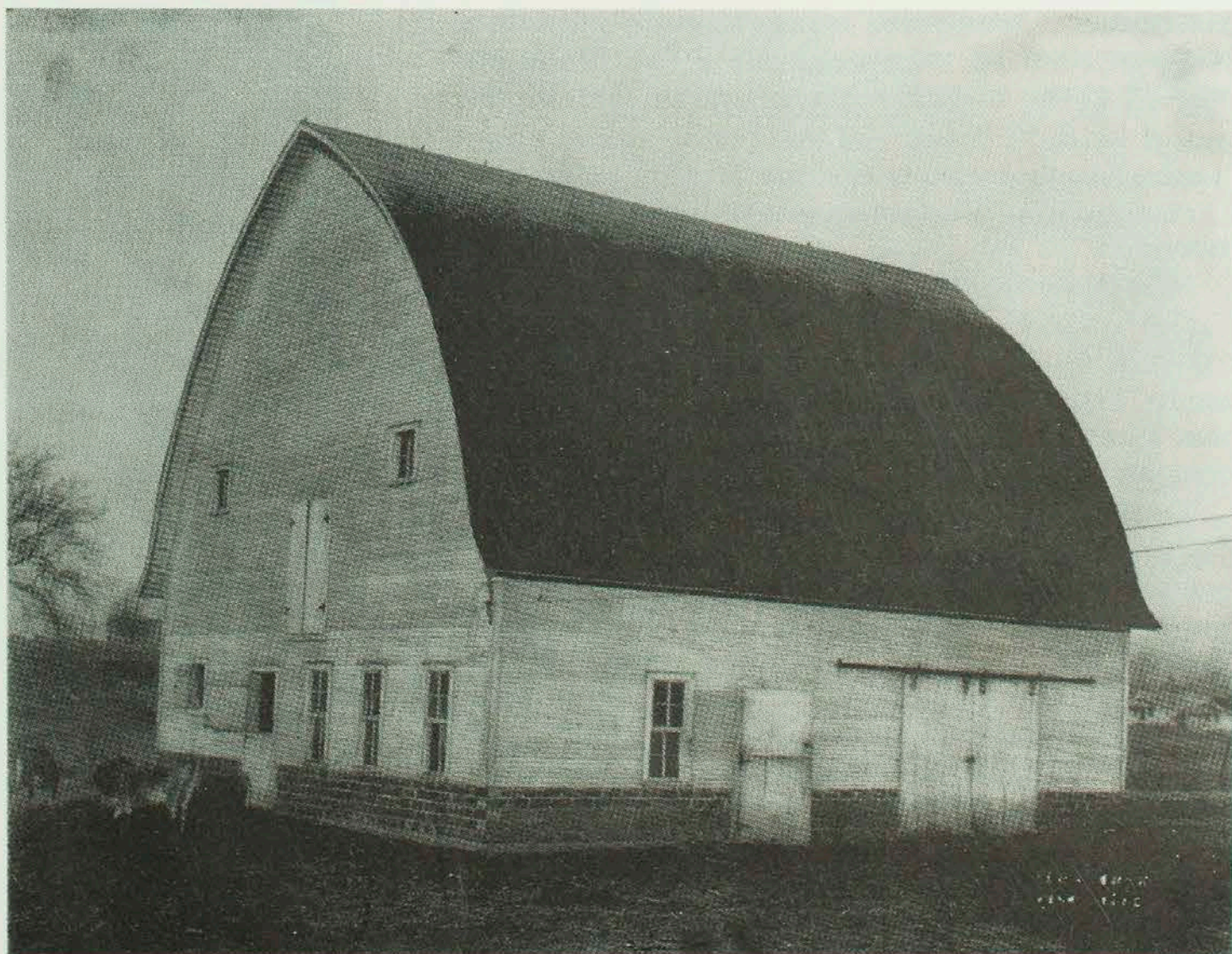
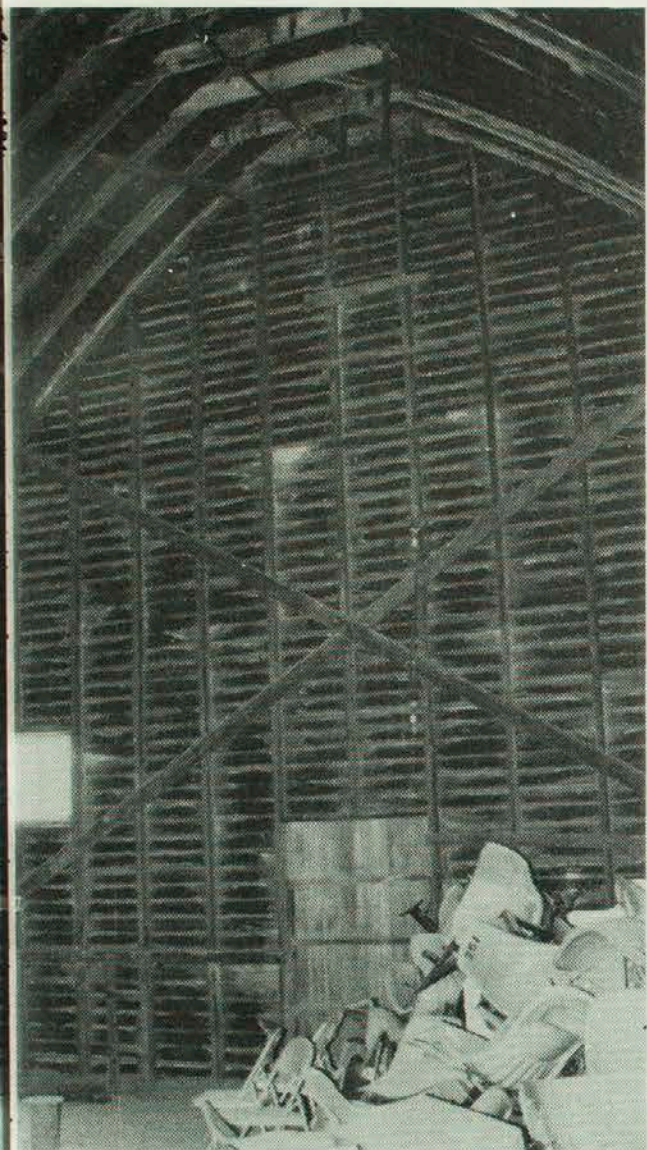
Used only for storage, top right photo, the barn sat idle after the model dairy barn program was discontinued in the late 1920s due to depression budget cuts by Dean Eugene Fair. However, in 1971 Dean Charles C. Campbell developed a plan to renovate the barn into an "antiquated, red barn theater" and art gallery. Although his dream never became a reality due to the expense of converting the building into a theater, it was painted red and the two and one-half acres around it were developed into a park.

In 1972 the barn returned to agricultural use for approximately one year by housing Hal's Prince, a Tennessee Walking Horse used experimentally by the university to train law enforcement majors and the honor guard in the use of a mounted patrol. Hal's Prince was also used at football games by the NMSU Safety and Security for directing traffic.

The Red Barn Arts League began holding an Arts and Crafts Festival annually in the Red Barn Park in 1974 until the event was moved to the downtown area in 1977. The fate of the barn was in jeopardy during the construction of the natatorium in 1975. The administration feared that the barn would not complement the new landscaping and would have to be torn down. However, a campaign by the Red Barn Arts League saved the barn although the interior, which the League wanted made into an "art center and a gallery," was not renovated due to the expense of installing utilities so that the barn could be used during the winter months.

Today, the park is a setting for summer programs such as band camps and art classes and the barn is used for storage. Although the barn seems out of place, it remains a decorative, integral landmark for NMSU students and the citizens of Kirksville.





# In Remembrance Of The “Ice King”

James B. Bowcock, known as the “Ice King,” was a legend in his own time and as one citizen put it, “an end of an era.” As the only ice dealer in the Kirksville area for more than half a century, he is remembered for his jovial, witty personality and his friendliness to everyone. He is also remembered for his park, which still remains in the northwest part of Kirksville near Woodland Village Trailer Court, in which he planted a catalpa tree for each serviceman killed from Adair County during World War I.

James Baynes Bowcock was born the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Bowcock from Randolph County on June 12, 1867. He was born in a cabin west of Kirksville and received little education.

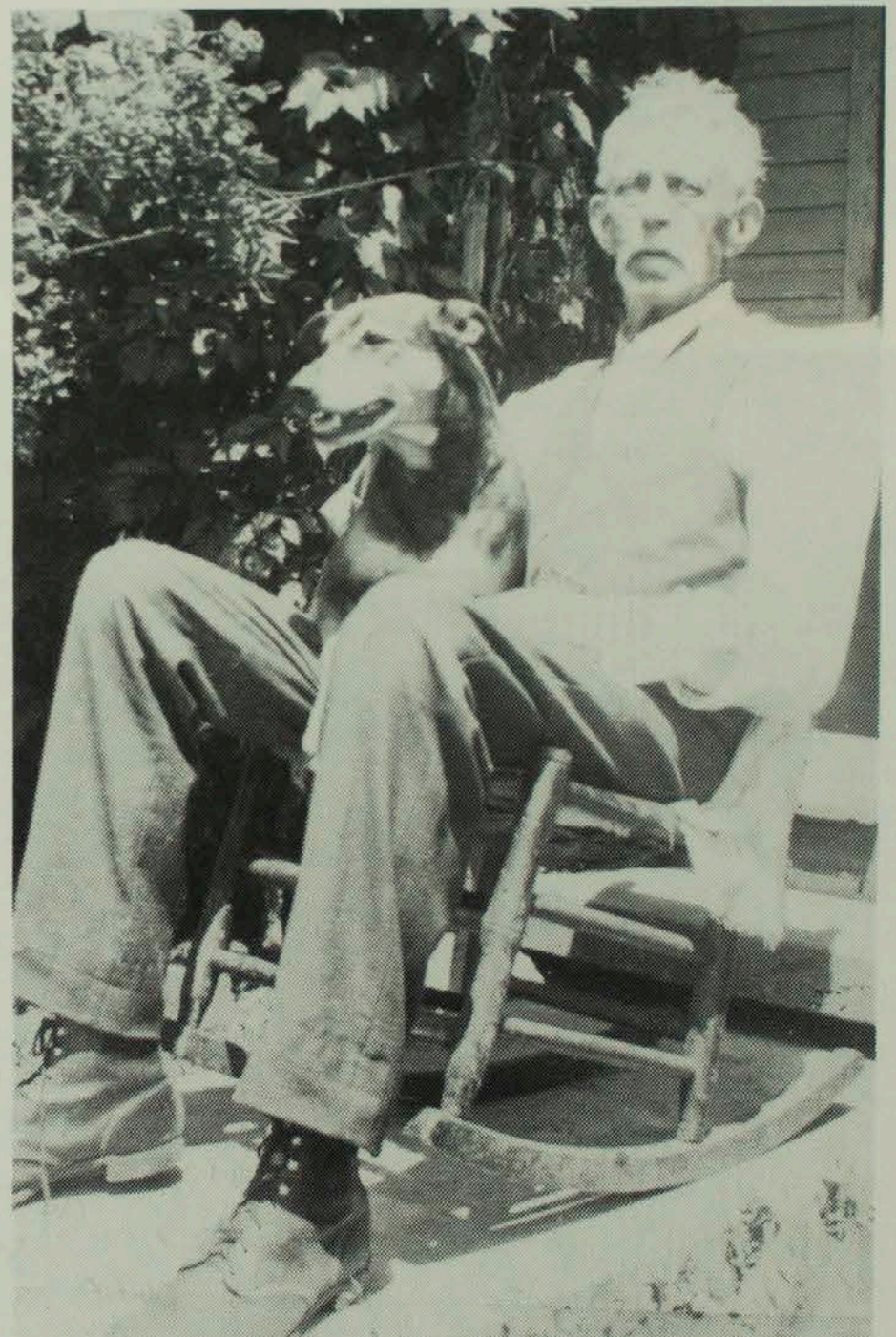
Mr. Bowcock loved to tell stories. In 1925 he considered writing a history of Kirksville. He discussed this with many of his friends downtown and jokingly, they encouraged him. Mr. Bowcock went to see Charles Link of the Journal Printing Company to inquire about printing the book for him. Mr. Link questioned Mr. Bowcock’s ability to pay for the book as well as being able to sell it. Mayor Az Stookey and Banker Carl Magee agreed to sponsor this project up to \$100. Mr. Magee allowed Mr. Bowcock the use of a bank stenographer and Jim dictated his story to her. The 24-page book was a mixture of his own recollections, characterizations, and philosophy. Mr. Bowcock sold his book for a dollar a copy. His sponsors were amazed that all the copies were quickly sold. Making a profit of approximately one hundred dollars, Mr. Bowcock inquired into a second printing but did not gain further support from his backers.

Mr. Bowcock’s first wife was Lida Wimber whom he married on May 11, 1886. They had three children: May, Hyla, and Helen. In his book, **A History of Kirksville**, Mr. Bowcock wrote, “I raised three daughters, May Dollard, now living in Mare’s Island where her husband is a physician for the government. Hyla, wife of Zara South who lives in Los Angeles, California and Helen, a nurse in Tucson, Arizona.” After the death of his first wife, Mr. Bowcock married Mrs. Emma C. Beardsley in 1914. After her death, he married Mrs. Stella Eitel, who survived him. Jim Bowcock lived at 516 East Illinois Street most of his life.

James Bowcock was liked by everyone, especially children. It was not unusual to see his horse-drawn buggy, followed by children seeking a free piece of ice. According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, Mr. Bowcock once recalled, “I used to take a 20 pound piece (of ice) and cut it into 20 pieces and give the kids. When I got down to one of the saloons I just took that 20 pounds of the 100 the saloon was supposed to get and charge them for it.” Bob Rothchild of San Leondro, California,

formerly of Kirksville, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Kirksville Daily Express* saying that James Bowcock was a “town character.”

After being a drayman, Jim Bowcock worked in a creamery in the mid-1880s where he handled a considerable amount of ice which kept ice cream and butter fresh. Recognizing the need for an ice wagon in Kirksville, he got the idea to start his own ice business. According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, Mr. Bowcock recalled, “One day it dawned on me, that if I could save up enough money to get started the ice business looked like a good opportunity.” The old Porter ice house, as well as a pond owned by John L. Porter, was available for \$350 annual rent and was located “near circus grounds,” in the area



James B. Bowcock is shown here with his faithful companion, Rover, who followed him everywhere he went.

near Elizabeth and Luther streets. He saved \$120 and a friend loaned him the additional \$230. He filled the house with ice, unconcerned about the previous attempts by four others who had gone broke. He eventually obtained a five-acre tract in the northwestern part of Kirksville, dug a pond, and constructed his own ice house.

The "Ice King" cut the ice from his newly dug pond as well as several other ponds around town. The owner of the pond usually received a commission of 10 to 15 cents a ton for his ice. Jim Bowcock and his employees used large saws to cut the ice into 18 by 18 inch squares. The thickness of the ice was determined by the winter, usually being the thickest by the first of February; it might be as much as 24 inches, but usually only 12 to 18. Some winters the ice was only six inches thick. Mr. Bowcock's pond served for many years as a barometer of winter severity. He made daily reports on the thickness of the ice on it. This pond, although polluted by the salt run-off from streets, still exists. After the ice was cut, it was hauled out on the bank and then transported by sled or dray, a low cart or wagon without fixed sides used for carrying heavy loads, to Mr. Bowcock's ice house. The ice was kept cold by surrounding it with sawdust. Blocks of ice were placed throughout the building and then covered with three inches of sawdust. Ice was stacked on top of this, then covered with more sawdust, and this method was repeated until the building was filled. More sawdust was pushed around the sides to further insulate the ice against the warming sun.

Around the first of April the "Ice King" started delivering the ice to his customers. Some of his customers included stores, taverns, meat markets, and almost every merchant. Most of his business came from restaurants. Mr. Bowcock soon launched a successful business, and being the only delivering ice man in the area, dubbed himself the "Ice King." According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, Mr. Bowcock once related, "The most money I ever made was when I had 4 or 5 saloons to supply with ice and 100 private homes. One year I made \$1800. It was

hot and dry and I had that big ice house full and I shot the price up to 50 cents a hundred." Jim Bowcock delivered his ice with horse and buggy throughout his entire career. Mr. Rothchild remembered seeing Jim Bowcock and faithful companion Rover riding the horse-drawn ice wagon under a striped umbrella. Mr. Bowcock once drove a Ford automobile but abandoned his car after driving it a few blocks and returned to his horse and buggy. According to Rudolph Tomich, who with his wife owns what was formerly Mr. Bowcock's land, remembers that Mr. Bowcock called his aged nag by the phrase "Nancy Hanks 22 years old," and he was also usually accompanied by his shaggy old dog Rover. Occasionally, according to Mrs. Margaret Tomich, whose parents had ice delivered by the "Ice King," his wife also accompanied him. Mr. Bowcock gave up his business in 1938.

What Jim Bowcock is remembered for today is his dedication of a park to the servicemen who lost their lives in World War I. Mr. Bowcock planted a grove of trees at his home shortly after the World War as a memorial to Adair County servicemen who gave their lives in the war and he took great pride in the park's development. Jim Bowcock planted a catalpa tree for each serviceman killed, about 35, and most of these trees still stand after more than 70 years. Mr. Bowcock wrote in his book, "On my five acres one mile northwest of the square, when Company C went to war I bought one hundred catalpa trees. I lost twenty. I told my wife I was going to have me a park. But my intentions when I put them out was to have a tree named for each boy that was killed. So thirty-five never came back, each boy has a brass tag and a copper wire stuck in the ground and his name on the tag. I have a picture eight inches by five inches with each boy's picture and the hospital in which he was treated. The frame that they are in is four feet by three feet, bolted on two parts, and boxed in with white pine and plated glass. There are two doors to open it. The thirty-five pictures cost the government \$350,000.00, \$10,000.00 for each boy." These artifacts no longer exist. Catalpa trees are said to be one of the most



*This large, granite rock with the initials "CO C" was part of the monument Jim Bowcock created for the men of Company C, those Adair Countians who had left to fight in World War I.*

beautiful, flowering trees with their lovely white blooms, but according to Mrs. Tomich, many of the trees have been damaged by catalpa worms. The park is located north of Walker Street near Woodland Village Trailer Court. Decades of neglect have made this park overgrown with brush. Various organizations have begun discussing the possibility of renovating Bowcock Park.

Jim Bowcock died September 22, 1940, at age 73 of a paralytic stroke, leaving us with his sweet memories. The "Ice King" is buried in Llewellyn Cemetery.

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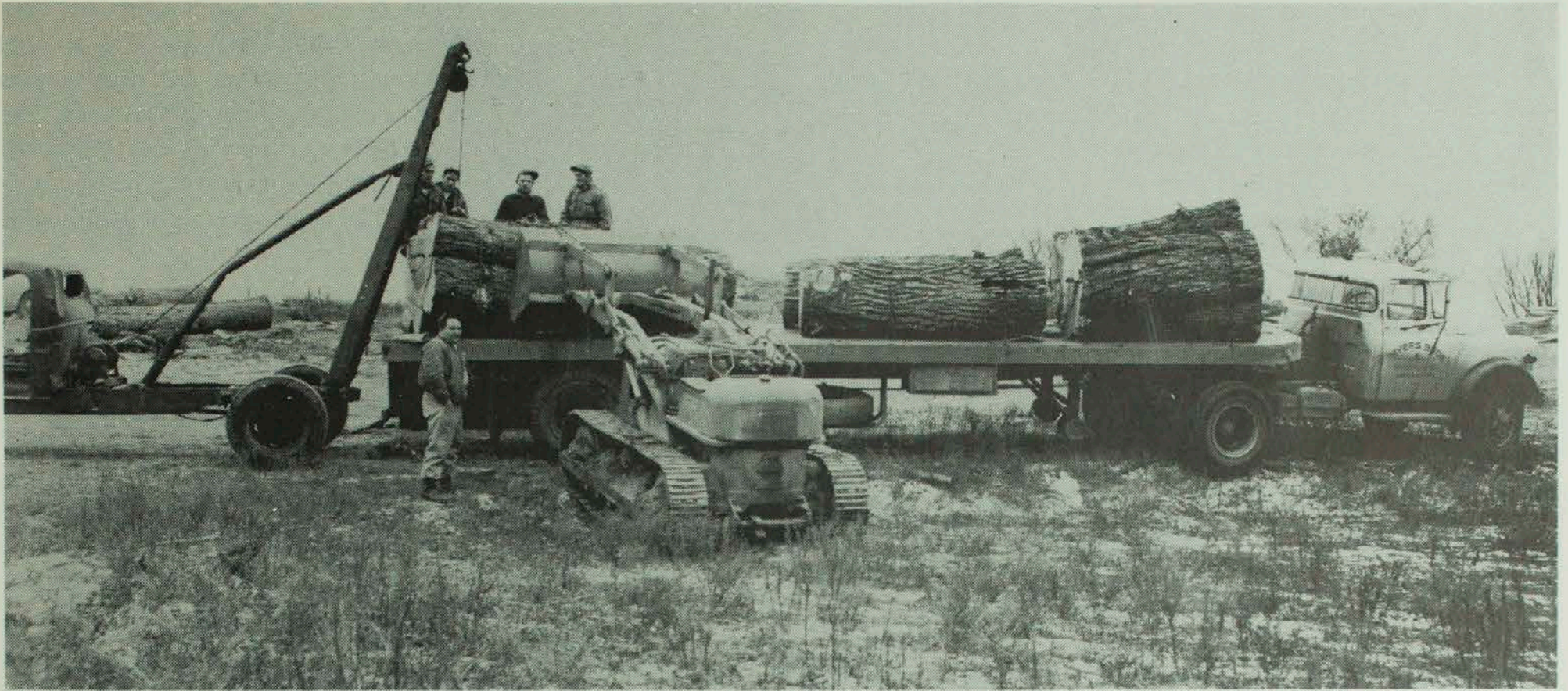
**By Susan Cooper**

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*Many people do not realize that the unkept grove of trees located near Woodland Village Trailer Park, in the northwest part of town, was dedicated to the Adair County soldiers who lost their lives in World War I.*



*Mr. Bowcock used to cut ice from this pond in the winter. For many years, he indicated the harshness of winter by the thickness of his ice.*



*Billy Joe Gordon, Clifford Snyder, Alfred Sizemore, and J.D. Sizemore stand on the truck while Allen Myers oversees a bulldozer loading logs onto the truck.*

# CUT 'em UP and SHIP 'em OUT

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**By Clint Myers**

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“Maple and walnut is what we specialize in.” These were two types of wood that the Myers Brothers Lumber Company sent to furniture manufacturers throughout the United States. Myers Brothers Lumber Company was put into operation by Ray and Allen Myers in the early 1940s. The sawmill, located on Route 11 West, prepared the rough-cut green lumber into slabs which were used mainly for making furniture. The company went out of business in 1976.

The entrepreneurs of this business had worked in the lumber business all their lives. Ray and Allen Myers entered into this

type of business to carry on the tradition of their father, Leo Myers. The enormous competition in this market at that time was another factor. Furniture manufacturers wanted lumber and Myers Brothers had it to sell.

Myers Brothers Lumber Company began operation in Winterset, Iowa, in the early 1940s where they made gun stocks for the M-1 rifle which was used during World War II. Then, in the late 1950s, they opened in Louisiana, Missouri, where they stayed until they felt that the best lumber was exhausted. In 1965 they moved again, this time to Brashear. In 1971 the mill burned and Myers Brothers Lumber came to Kirksville.

The sawmill employed ten people throughout their business period. The sawmill hired the people that no one else would, for example the ex-convict and the person who could not read or write. Gary Myers remembered his dad Ray always saying, “We didn’t care what their background was as long as they gave us a day’s work, we would give them a day’s pay.” He added,

“We need somebody with a strong back.”

When the logs were being cut into slabs, the sawyer would many times find various items that had become part of the tree. For example, he found rocks that had been set in a knot hole or on a branch and the tree had grown around them. He also found nails, glass bottles, and once a raccoon trap was found in a tree. These were both interesting and dangerous to find because if the saw would hit the objects, the saw teeth would break and be thrown around the working area like sharp razors. Being in the lumber business was dangerous; accidents could and did happen. One employee was hit in the eye by a piece of flying wood from the saw and another man lost all of his fingers on one hand while oiling the edger.

Myers Brothers received approximately \$150 per thousand feet of maple and \$300 to \$500 per thousand feet of walnut. A load of lumber at that time would go for about \$3,000. People in the area could buy slab lumber for a dollar a pick-up load. One year they gave the state sawdust when the state ran out of salt to put on the slick roads. The company produced two million board feet per year for furniture manufacturers. The mill dealt mainly with the Delkar Brothers in Anderson, Kentucky; Singer Sewing Machine in Truman, Arkansas; and a company in Napanee, Indiana. Myers Brothers not only shipped lumber in the United States but sold to Japan and Germany. “The sawmill was a great asset to Kirksville and the state of Missouri, contributing \$600,000 to \$1 million a year into the town of Kirksville and the state,” Allen Myers said. During the recession of the mid-1970s, three manufacturers filed bankruptcy. Unable to collect payments, the mill closed in 1976.

In order for the mill to be able to ship the lumber, they first had to make the logs into slabs. The logs were brought in by farmers and professional loggers from a 50-mile radius of Kirksville and were stored on the grounds, “the yard,” as the brothers called it. The logs were measured and afterwards put on the carriage and sent down the line to the sawyer who cut the logs into slab lumber. The slabs were eight inches wide



*Slab lumber, cut by Myers Brothers Lumber Co., is on its way to the final destination, the furniture manufacturer.*

*C.H. Corum, Allen Myers, and Ray Myers of the Myers Brothers Lumber Company check the 56 to 60 miles of cottonwood and maple that floated down the Mississippi River to the mill at Louisiana, Missouri, in 1953.*



*Logs waiting in "the yard" at the mill located on Highway 11 West. The mill went out of business in 1976.*



and six to twelve feet long. The slabs would go to the edgerman who would smooth the rough edges. The slabs would then be lifted from the carriage, stacked, steel-banded, and loaded by forklift or highlift onto a truck. The equipment used to shape the logs into lumber slabs was a circle saw that had to be sharpened twice a day, the edger which smoothed the rough edges of the logs, and a forklift which placed the finished slabs on the truck. Allen Myers recalled, "When we started out we had to do it by hand, just a board at a time. It would take about two and a half hours to load a truck, but then later we got a highlift and loaded it in 20 minutes."

Myers Brothers dealt with four main grades of lumber. The

top grade logs were called veneer, which was the prime or select log. Next was the common log. The two lower grades were the number one common and the number two common, which was a "rough" log. The lumber from the mill went to the making of many items such as furniture, water skis, and gun stocks.

The lumber company had two buildings on the lot, a trailer for the office, and a metal machine shop that was used as the working place where all the machinery was kept. Now, there is no building or any other sign left as a reminder of the mill, only an empty lot with mounds of sawdust. After the mill closed in 1976, each partner went on his own way. Ray Myers continued to operate sawmills for different people and Allen Myers



*Myers Brothers Lumber Company not only sold and shipped lumber in the United States but also to foreign countries. These logs were sold to a Japanese company in 1970.*



*Leo Myers with his son, Ray.*

bought and sold lumber for various lumber companies. Ray retired in 1988 and passed away that same year. Allen is still in the business and buys lumber on consignment. Today a load of lumber sells for about \$5,000 to \$7,000 and there are very few small sawmills left. Like the corner grocery store, their place has been taken by the large corporations.



*Many stacks of soft maple sit in the yard until ready to be loaded onto a truck.*



*In 1956 Ray and Allen Myers posed in front of their mother's house in Kirksville. Ray retired from the lumber business in 1988 and passed away that same year. Allen still buys and sells lumber for a company in Texas.*



*Ray Myers with his driver Cliff Snyder.*

# Elaine's DINING ROOM

Elaine Curtis became a working woman in 1952 after she was forced into employment due to unfortunate circumstances on the family farm. Mrs. Curtis worked as a waitress at Hartzell's Supper Club, located west on Northtown Road. After a few years she was hired as a waitress by Cleo Mendenhall, the owner of the Colonial Manor. Elaine Curtis became manager in 1954, the same year she was hired, due to the death of Mr. Mendenhall. Mrs. Curtis received a proposal from Raymond Newcum and W.O. Mackie that they would build the type of building she wanted if she would open a restaurant on the site. Mrs. Curtis accepted the offer.

In an advertisement in the September 15, 1957, edition of the *Kirksville Daily Express*, Mrs. Curtis gave a description of the dining room: "We want you to come see our beautiful New Dining Rooms, Modern Stainless Steel Kitchen and New Platinum Walnut Chrome and Ebony Furniture. Visitors are welcome to see our new building. No cooking in the new building until Monday. Meals will be served at Colonial Manor Dining Room on Sunday and we will start serving in our new dining room on Monday, Sept. 16. We will use similar Menu and our Price Policy for meals, coffee hour and after show snacks that have proved to be so popular in the past. We greatly appreciate the wonderful business that we have enjoyed. We thank you for the patronage which has exceeded our former

facilities. You have helped us to grow so now we can offer you more comfort and better service. . . . The fine food you like will be served promptly in new attractive surroundings." The *Kirksville Daily Express* carried four pages of ads from supporters on that same day. A few of the supporters of the opening of Elaine's Dining Room and the Northland Shopping Center were Babcock Sales Co.; Beards; Adair Lumber Company; Shockey's Service Station; Adair County Sale Barn; Superway Food Store; Leo's Roller Rink; Jesse Peterson & Son Furniture; Hayden Concrete Products; Siegles Cities Service; Brown Construction Co.; Luther Longfield; Doc Haggard & Son Oil Co.; Shelton & Sons; Mackie & Williams Food Stores; Baker Sign Co.; T.H. & N. Electric Service; Wright's Tire & Appliance; and M-M Gas.

On September 15, 1957, the open house of the first unit in the Northland Shopping Center took place. Within the first few weeks, after-opening problems were being encountered. Mrs. Curtis said, "We had our Grand Opening on September 15, 1957, with all the usual problems of a new business; exhaust fans that didn't work and a broiler that caught on fire, but somehow we survived those first few weeks, in spite of ourselves, and the customers kept coming back." At this time there were few other places to eat in Kirksville.

The business became a family-owned and family-run



*This was the sign that many people saw when they passed by the restaurant located north on Highway 63.*

*Elaine's, the first business to open in the Northland Shopping Center, held an open house on September 15, 1957.*



restaurant after her husband Paul Curtis sold the farm and moved to town to help his wife manage the restaurant. "We tried to run a family farm and a restaurant but found that it wasn't possible, so Paul sold the farm and we moved to town. The restaurant was then truly a 'family' owned and run business. On any given day you could see Paul in the kitchen cooking or out front cleaning tables. The kids were doing whatever they had to. They were typical kids who would rather have not worked but we kept them busy. They always thought we had spies all over town because we usually knew what they'd been up to before they came home. By the time the restaurant was gone, we had not only raised our four kids but also had them all married with 10 grandchildren. They realized that the people skills they learned from Elaine's were something that would help them the rest of their lives. There were many good people who worked for us over the years and I can't possibly mention them all but there are a few that I just have to mention. Some of the cooks were Jim and Lucille Miley, Graci Kenney, Buelah Simler, Bessie Wilson, Dorothy Garwood, and Maggie Sullivan. Some of the waitresses were Kay Richards, Glenda Shaver, Mary Riley, Brenda Sewell, Bonita Cassidy, and Ellena Western. Some of the bus boys were Rex Hardman, Fred Northrop, Rob and Jack Bragg. All of these people helped to make Elaine's what it was." Ellena Western, an employee of Mrs. Curtis' for 15 years said, "Elaine wouldn't ask for help to do anything that she wouldn't just get right in there and do herself."

Elaine's quickly grew into a gathering place with the family in mind. Mrs. Curtis said, "Elaine's Dining Room was one of the social centers in town. Everyone came to Elaine's after a football game, play, or any important event. It was the place to 'see and be seen.' Easter, Mother's Day, Homecoming or Graduation Days were always big days for Elaine's." She also said there were times when people were lined up outside for a half a block to get in on one of those days. "There wasn't even time to think on those days let alone realize how tired you were. You just had to keep going." Elaine's offered four dining rooms, two of which, the Hereford Room and the Angus Room, could seat up to 300 people. Anne Kelly, waitress for Elaine's from 1958 until 1963, recalled what type of people would eat at the restaurant: "Elaine's was at that time the 'in' restaurant. Kiwanis, Lions, Sig Taus, Phi Sigs, college as well

as local (people) because the student union wasn't there so Elaine's was about the only place you could have a big banquet in Kirksville."

Many customers ate the cinnamon rolls, one of the specialties at Elaine's. Mrs. Western remembers, "I loved to eat them. I think everybody else did too because at that time they could get two large rolls and all the coffee they wanted to drink for 25 cents. We set the coffee right on the table and they could drink as much as they wanted. The rolls were made in muffin tins and they would rise to the top and they had sugar, cinnamon, and pecans on them." Mrs. Curtis said, "There was something called 'Coffee Hour' that usually lasted from about 8:30 till 10:00. You could get two of Elaine's famous cinnamon rolls for 15 cents and all the coffee you could drink for 10 cents. It wasn't unusual on Tuesday nights, 'Greek Night,' to have 300 people there for Coffee Hour." Mrs. Kelly said that there were other popular items on the menu: "Her roquefort dress-

## Welcome to ELAINE'S DINING ROOM

### Steaks

WE SERVE  
U.S.D.A. CHOICE BEEF



NEW YORK STRIP SIRLOIN, Large	Large	4.50
	Medium	3.50
FILET MIGNON, Bacon Wrapped	Filet	4.50
CHOICE CLUB STEAK	Club St	3.50
GIANT T-BONE STEAK	T-Bone	5.00

SERVED WITH CHOICE OF TOSSED GREEN SALAD, COTTAGE CHEESE OR JELLO SALAD, CHOICE OF POTATOES, HOT ROLLS, BUTTER & COFFEE  
(BAKED POTATOES AFTER 5:00 P.M.)

### CHEF'S SUGGESTIONS

HAMBURGER STEAK	H.Bst	1.50
PORK TENDERLOIN	Loin pl	1.50
CALVES LIVER	Calf	2.75
PORK CHOPS, Broiled	PC	2.75
HAM STEAK	Ham St	3.00
BARBECUE RIBS, Top Loin	Ribs TJ + Deq	2.00

SERVED WITH ~~CHOICE OF POTATO~~, CHOICE OF POTATO, CHOICE OF SALAD, HOT ROLLS, BUTTER AND COFFEE

### Seafood

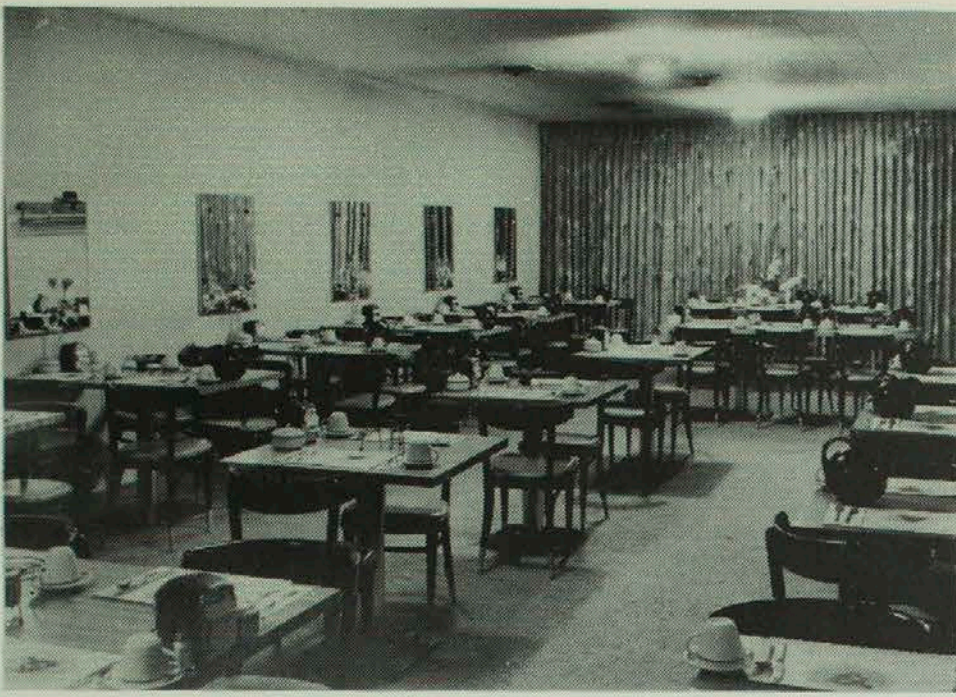
FRENCH FRIED JUMBO SHRIMP	Shrimp	2.00
FRENCH FRIED OYSTERS	Oys	2.00
FRENCH FRIED SCALLOPS	Scallops	1.75
CATFISH FILLET, Tartar Sauce	Cat	2.00
FROG LEGS	Frog	3.00
AFRICAN LOBSTER TAIL	Lo bst	5.00

SERVED WITH TOMATO JUICE, VEGETABLE, CHOICE OF POTATO, CHOICE OF SALAD, HOT ROLLS, BUTTER AND COFFEE



Elaine's main dining room was furnished with platinum, walnut, chrome, and ebony furniture.

Anne Kelly worked at Elaine's when it was located at the Shamrock Restaurant, which was under Mrs. Curtis' control for most of 1968. The menu shows the abbreviations used by the waitresses on their order forms.



*The Angus Room was one of the dining rooms at Elaine's which was decorated similar to the main dining room.*



*The main dining room was much larger in size than any of the other rooms. The walls were tan and the carpet was green. The drapes were mainly green with a floral print while the leather on the chair seats closely matched the table tops.*



*The Hereford Room was one of four dining rooms where banquets, receptions, business meetings, and reunions were held.*

ing was because a lot of people liked it. It was a combination of a French dressing and bleu cheese dressing. It looked like French dressing but it tasted like bleu cheese. It was good and I think people liked her family-style meals. I think her sirloin strips were real popular.”

A table that many referred to as the “round table” was placed in the restaurant after opening. Mrs. Western remembers waiting on the prominent business people of that time: “They had a round table up close to the kitchen door and every morning when I would come, the table would be full of businessmen. They came there so often that you would have to know what they wanted. All they would say was, ‘Bring me my usual.’ You had to remember what everybody ate and drank. I imagine 15 people would crowd around the table at one time.”

Elaine’s was open 363 days a year from 7 a.m. until midnight, seven days a week. Not even weather seemed to halt the restaurant from staying open. The event that sticks out most in Mrs. Curtis’ mind was the snowstorm on April 9, 1973. “It was so bad they closed Highway 63. I kept the restaurant open all night for the people who were stranded. Paul was making trips back and forth on his horse to bring things from the house. He even took Marge and Charlie McCune home by horse! He took Marge first and then came back for Charlie. It was so bad he couldn’t leave the horse outside so he stayed in the entryway while Paul was at the restaurant.”

On September 24, 1978, 21 years and 9 days after the grand opening, Elaine’s Dining Room was destroyed by fire. Bob Foss, one of the first firefighters to arrive on the scene, recalls being on duty that night: “On a Sunday morning the Fire Department received a call at 3:05 a.m. that Lucky Lanes was on fire. Me and Dave Hudnall took old engine number two from the north station where we were on duty. Upon arriving at the scene we noticed smoke and fire coming from the roof of the bowling alley. Twenty-five firefighters from the Kirksville Fire Department responded to the call. Fred Schwaner, a volunteer from the department, was on a ladder on the west side of the building when the roof caved in causing the wall to cave in also. Fred was thrown from the ladder away from the fire, breaking his back in two places. We were there for about 16 hours.” The fire was believed to have started in the attic of the bowling alley. Although the exact cause was not found, Elaine’s was completely destroyed by 6 a.m., along with Lucky Lanes and the Untouchable Disco Bar.

Elaine and Paul Curtis now live in Claremore, Oklahoma, and Mrs. Curtis works in the medical office of Dr. Fred Northrop, her son-in-law. Although Elaine’s Dining Room is no longer around, it still fondly lingers in the memories of those who supported it.

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**By Angela Briggs**

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*The Rev. Cooper aired his radio program, "Morning Meditations," for over 30 years on KIRX Radio.*



*The Rev. Archie Cooper preached at the Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church from 1966-1974.*

# Spreading THE WORD

The Reverend Archie Cooper said that one of the greatest influences of his early ministry was a trip to the Billy Sunday Tabernacle at Winona Lake, Indiana. Here, the Rev. Cooper listened to "some of the biggest and best at that particular time." He said that this really gave him a good start on his ministry by exposing him to some of the most dynamic speakers of that period.

Archie Cooper was born at Mystic, Missouri, in Sullivan County, on July 10, 1907. His parents were Byron Isaac and Cleo Virginia Cooper, and he is the oldest of seven children, five boys and two girls. Archie attended the Green Grove School until he graduated from eighth grade and then farmed until 1938. Archie also worked at the Novinger Farmer's Exchange and occasionally at the Arnold Lumber Company. He was later employed by Kirksville Savings and Loan.

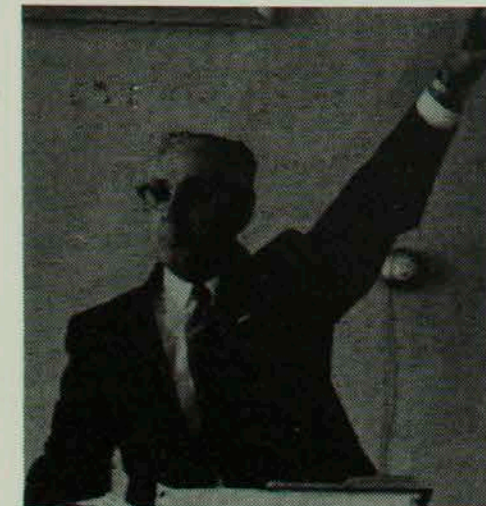
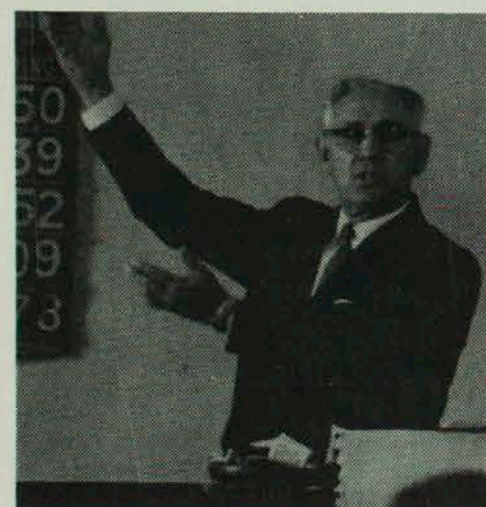
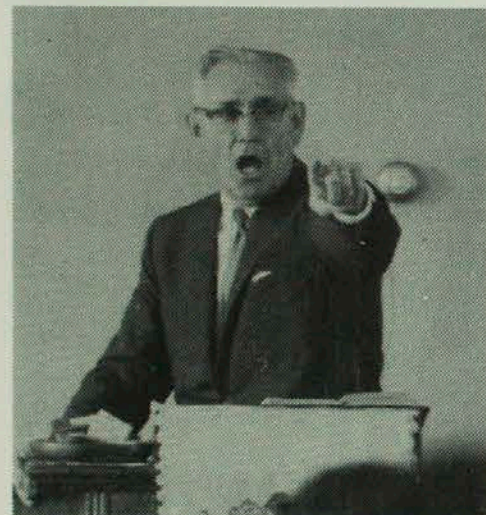
Archie Cooper was married on October 16, 1927, to Verdine May Summers. He had two daughters: Phyllis Beth, who died at age 8, and Betty Lou. Verdine Cooper died in 1945. The Rev. Cooper married Gladys Peterson, whose first husband died

in World War II, on August 15, 1946. Gladys' two children, Charles and Patty, also became part of the Cooper family.

The Rev. Cooper felt the call to preach at an early age. He was saved under the Rev. Charley Mann, pastor of the Green Grove Church, who persuaded him to preach sermons there. In 1935, Archie Cooper was licensed into the Free Will Baptist denomination. The Rev. Cooper became a full-fledged pastor in 1937 when he was ordained into the Free Will Baptist denomination. He preached at several churches, including Baring, Stahl, Refuge, Sublette, and Mount Hope.

The Rev. Cooper is noted for the many funerals he has officiated and wedding ceremonies he has performed. According to his records, as of January 1, 1989, he has held nearly 2,500 funerals and over 800 weddings.

Weddings were usually held at the Cooper house. In the beginning, there was a wedding fee of \$5. Unlike today, couples in that time would not make an appointment to be married, but would just walk right in and ask to be married. This led to many unusual and amusing incidents. Because weddings were held



at the Cooper home, the children were usually around to watch the ceremony. Once, according to Gladys Cooper, the Rev. Cooper officiated a wedding while Charley, their son, lay on the floor behind the newlyweds coloring in a coloring book. When he was sent to his room upstairs, Charley made a periscope out of a paper tube and some mirrors and watched the wedding from a vent that went to the living room downstairs.

In 1947, the Rev. Cooper started one of the ministries he is probably most recognized for—his radio broadcasts. “Morning Meditations with Archie Cooper” was a 15-minute program on KIRX Radio at 6:15 on weekday mornings and 8:15 on Sunday mornings. This program became one of the longest-running radio programs on KIRX. It lasted about 35 years when it ended in 1982. According to Charlie Porter, a radio announcer at KIRX, the Rev. Cooper’s program was also one of the first programs on KIRX.

The Rev. Cooper said that his radio ministry started out in a “strange and outstanding” way. Sam Burk, founder of KIRX, had just returned home from the Army and had his belongings stored at the Arnold Lumber Company. Archie Cooper happened to be working there when Mr. Burk retrieved his belongings and the two became acquaintances. A little while later, after Mr. Burk finished building the KIRX station, the Rev. Cooper met him again on the square. Mr. Burk asked the Rev. Cooper if he would like to begin a radio ministry. “Well, that was the farthest from my thoughts,” says Archie Cooper. “I had not thought about it at all.” However, a man named Johnny Adkins, the president of the Adair County Sunday School Convention, offered to pay for the first week on radio. At that time, each show cost \$6.75 a day for a total of \$40.50 for each six-day week. After the first week, several other people offered to underwrite the following weeks.

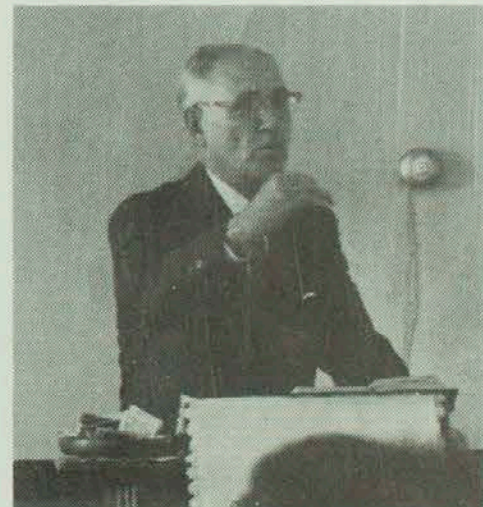
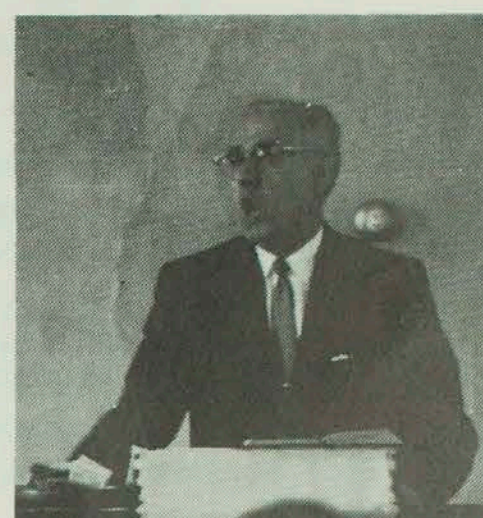
Mr. Porter recalled the Rev. Cooper’s program, “Well, Archie was a really popular, real popular with just about every denomination of listener. Archie did a lot of poems and interesting stories, along with a short sermon each morning.”

The Rev. Cooper’s program started out at the KIRX studio. However, after a few years, Mr. Porter installed an amplifier in the Rev. Cooper’s house so he could broadcast from his home. The amplifier was used for over 30 years of broadcasting.

While maintaining his radio program, the Rev. Cooper managed to preach at several different churches using the circuit-riding method. For example, Mrs. Cooper said, “There was Sundays when preaching at this little church down at Linn County, he (the Rev. Cooper) would have a funeral off over toward Unionville in the afternoon. We’d go down to Mount Hope for Sunday School and preaching and then go on to the funeral and go back to church that night.” The Rev. Cooper said that at times he would go as far as 65 miles to perform a service.

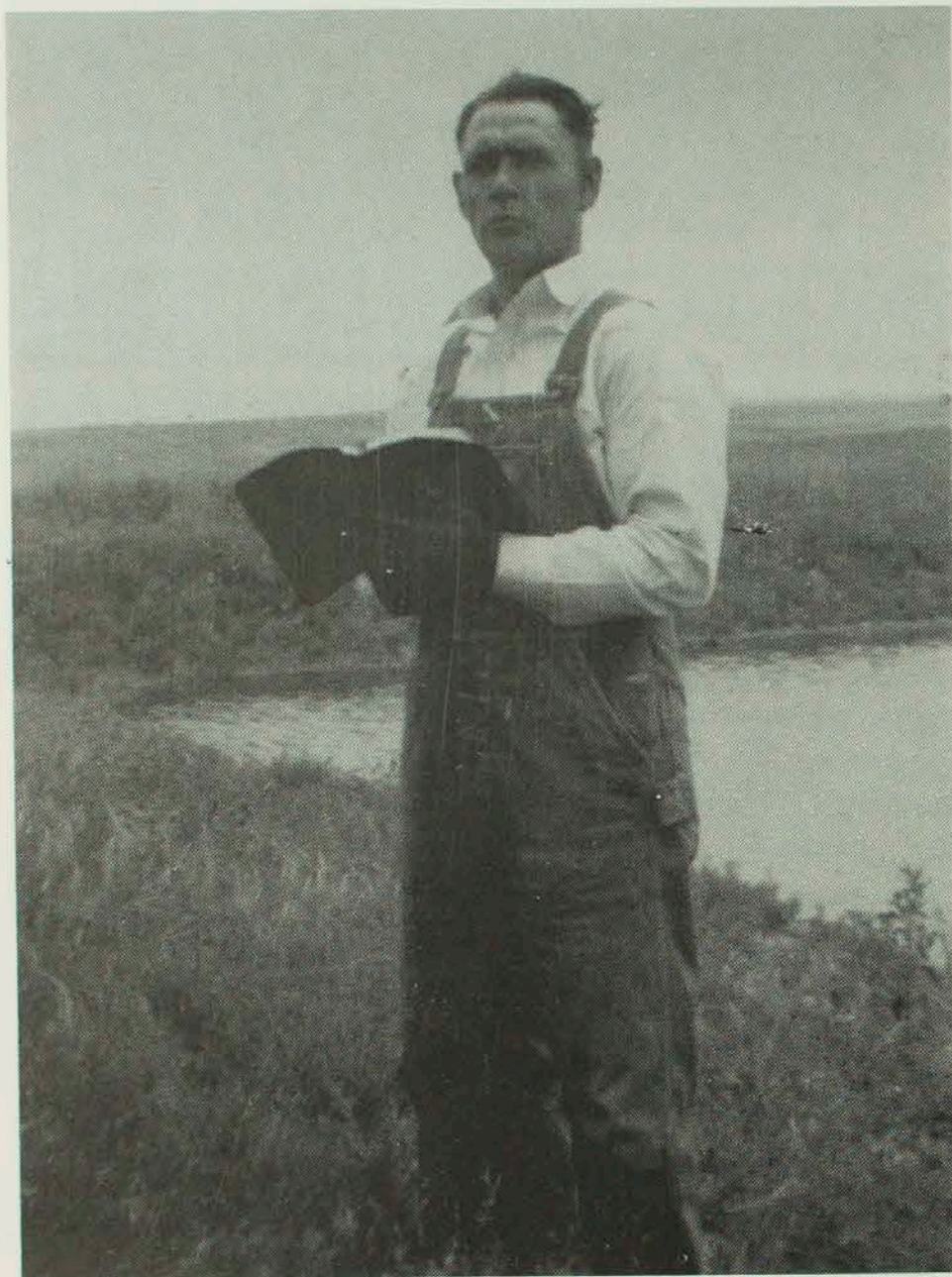
According to the Coopers, this was not uncommon. Although the Rev. Cooper preached to several different congregations each Sunday, he says that he tried not to use the same sermon twice. If at all possible, the Rev. Cooper would try to make a new sermon for each service.

*These candid pictures were taken by Howard Townsend during a sermon that his father-in-law, the Rev. Cooper, gave while he served as minister of the Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church.*



Later in life, the Rev. Cooper preached many revivals in churches of all denominations. He held revivals at Methodist churches, the Novinger church, and, of course, nearly every Free Will Baptist church for miles around, including churches at Stahl, Connelsville, Hazel Creek, and the Baring Community Church. He is presently preaching at New Harmony, a rural Free Will Baptist church located west of Greentop.

Throughout his life, the Rev. Archie Cooper has been an influence on the lives of many. His ministries, radio programs, funeral services, and wedding services have given him a chance to touch the heart of several communities in a way that not many people can.



*The Rev. Cooper during a baptismal service in 1948. The pond, belonging to Ivan Peterson and located east of Greentop, was used for many baptismal services.*



*Sam Burk, right, asked the Rev. Cooper if he would like to begin a radio ministry program. Little did the Rev. Cooper realize that it was to be one of the longest-running programs on KIRX. At the 1979 Northeast Missouri District Fair, Mr. Burk presented the Rev. Cooper a plaque of appreciation for his many years of ministry.*

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**By Bryan Thompson**

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