

THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

NORTHEAST MISSOURI
HISTORY AND FOLKLORE

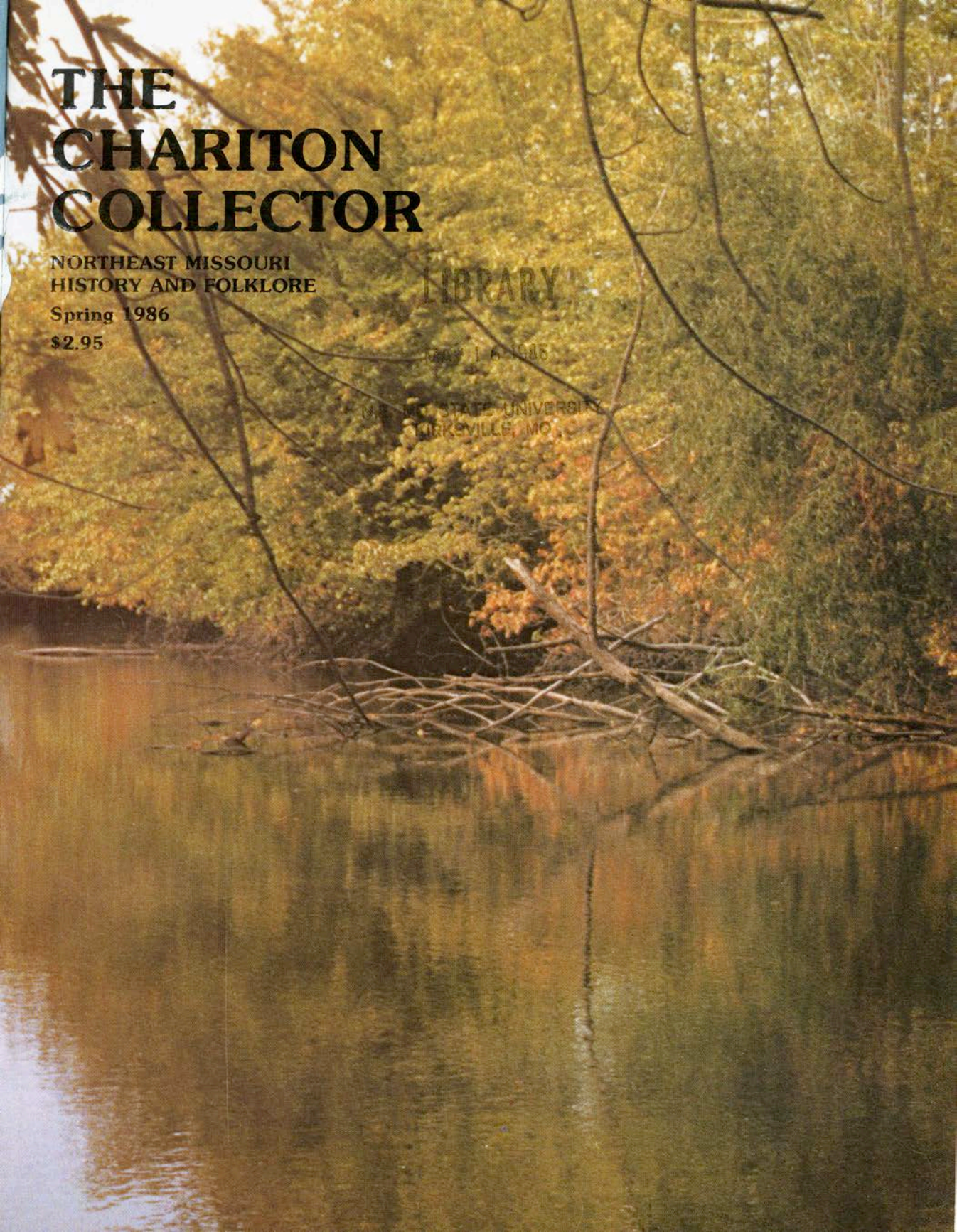
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THE CHARITON COLLECTOR

Kirkville Senior High School
Kirkville, Missouri

Spring, 1986

Vol. ~~5~~ No. 2 Issue ~~11~~

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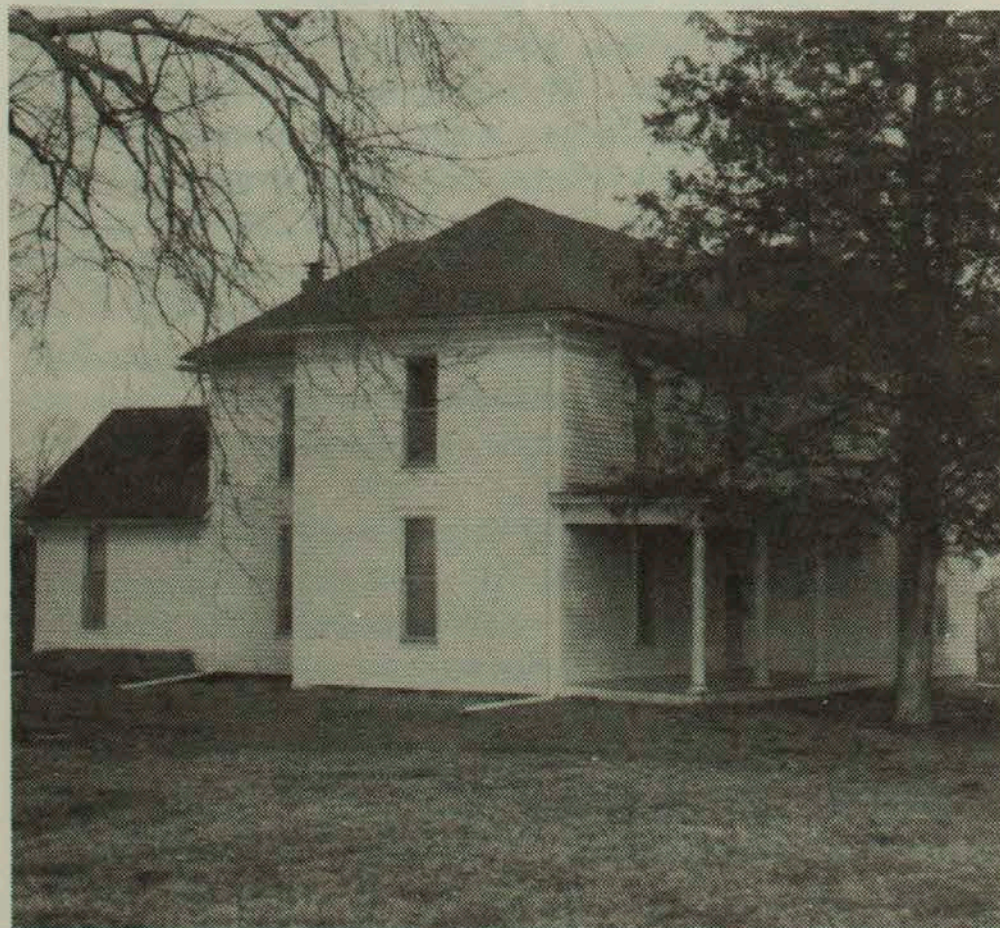
The Chariton Collector is published by the Local and State History Class of Kirkville Senior High School. This special class attempts to preserve the history and local folklore of Northeast Missouri. Copyright 1986.

COVER PICTURE

Beautiful scenes of the river close to residents in Northeast Missouri are photographed by many. Kent Snipes captured the serenity of the Chariton River and its original banks in his photograph taken in 1984.

DISTRIBUTION MANAGERS

Tiffany Tindall
Denny Smoyer



CONTENTS

Have a Pepsi Day!	2
Tiffany Tindall	
The Ritz	6
Marty Montgomery	
It Seems Like Yesterday	8
Laura Magruder	
In Memory of The Silver Star Drive-In Theatre	10
Renée Wilson	
The Forgotten Factory	13
Douglas Ryle	
Kirkville Lodge, No. 464 B. P. O. E.	14
J. Kevin Race	
A Bank Built on Dreams	18
Julie Major and Kim Gonnerman	
Travelers Hotel	20
Andrea Vorkink and Adele LoGaglio	
The End of an Era	23
Tammy Barrickman and Stephania Snyder	
A New Generation in Kirkville	26
Denny Smoyer	
Farming in the Great Depression	Inside Back
Christopher Lowe	

The Imbler home stands three miles east of Kirkville, where it has been since 1888. Laura Magruder took her own pictures for her story on the Imbler home, page 8.



Mr. and Mrs. Tindall, with son, Dale, stand outside the Tindall Beverage warehouse located at 403 North Centennial Street.



Have A Pepsi Day!



In Kirksville, the sales of the soft drink Pepsi-Cola started in 1935, but Pepsi was actually created in 1898 when a North Carolina pharmacist, Caleb Bradham, came up with the Pepsi-Cola formula. Six years later he started bottling the product for the "Pepsi Generations."

J. Harold "Pop" Johnson established a Pepsi-Cola bottling plant in Memphis, Missouri, in 1934. Mr. Johnson commissioned Chauncy Leeper, a young Memphis man attending the Kirksville State Teachers College, to sell and deliver Pepsi products in the Kirksville area that same year.

The plant furnished a truck and expenses relating to sales of this new product. Mr. Leeper was paid four cents per case sold and four cents when a case of empty bottles was returned. He was paid a minimum of one dollar for each day he worked.

Prospective accounts were scarce. Bottles of Pepsi were passed out at community events and picnics. "Pepsi-Cola was new in the area and 'Pop' told me to do as much 'missionary' work as possible," said Mr. Leeper. Soft drinks were slow to be accepted and consumption was confined basically to special occasions like the Fourth of July or other family reunions. "At that time, people didn't drink pop with meals, it was more like a 'treat', like ice cream is today," said Mr. Dale Tindall, former owner of the Tindall Beverage Company.

Charles Tindall was delivering butter and cream for the Producer's Creamery Company in Kirksville. Mr. Frank Santen, owner of Santen's Restaurant on East Harrison Street between Marion and Franklin Streets, suggested that Charles Tindall try to sell the flavors and cola of the Fairfield Bottling Works through the Ottumwa Ice Company.

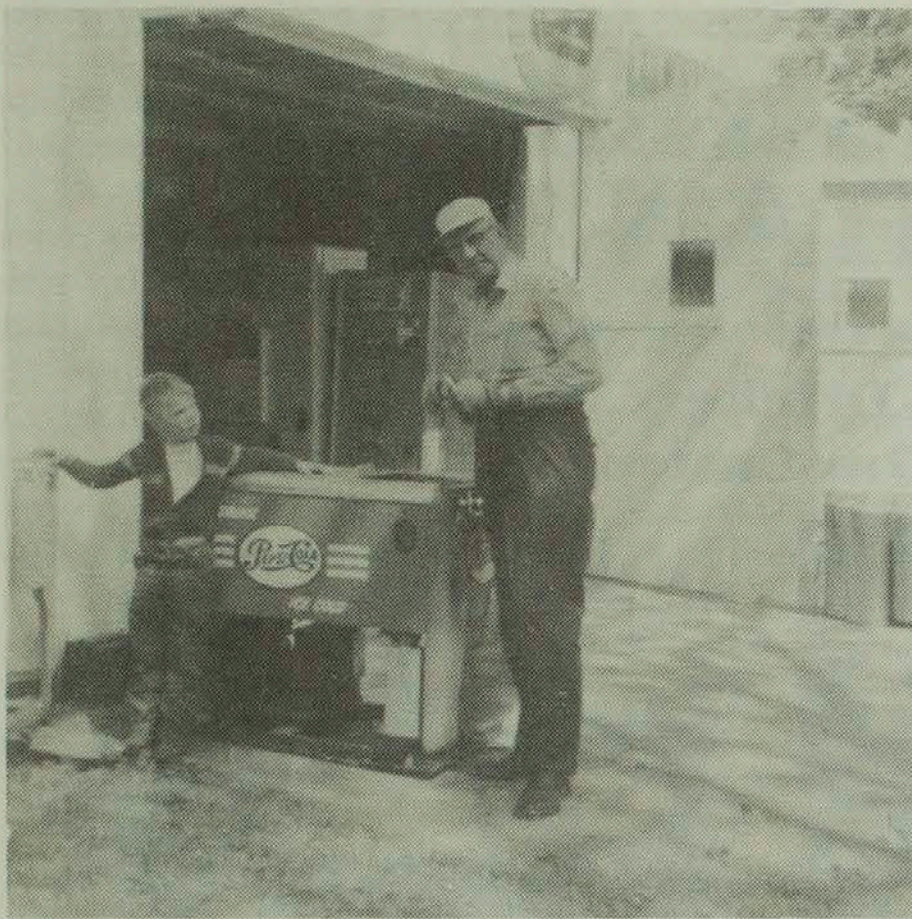
Mr. Tindall made his first contract with Mr. Ray Bounds, owner of the Ottumwa Ice Company and Fairfield Bottling Works. The pop came in pretty bottles and sold pretty well. At this time, Chauncy Leeper was trying to sell pop for Johnson Flavors plus there were other companies trying to sell their soda products too.

According to Mr. Leeper, some of his best customers in the area were gas stations and small cafes in Kirksville, La Plata and Novinger. The old Jinx swimming pool, where the El Kadir Shrine Club is now located, and the White Cabin Cafe, where Hardees is now located, were the best accounts.

The first warehouse for Pepsi-Cola was located at 902 East Line Street where Chauncy Leeper's great uncle, John T. Hocker, resided. Mr. Hocker was one of many people who helped Mr. Leeper "get his foot in the door." Soon Mr. Leeper was selling Five-O (a chocolate drink), Root Beer, Near Beer, and other flavors, along with Pepsi. The flavors were harder to sell because of competition from a local Nehi bottling company. The William Bondurant family not only sold Nehi flavors and later RC Cola, but operated a popular milk producing company and the Palace Bakery.

In 1935, Mr. Leeper left Kirksville to attend the University of Missouri at Columbia. Mr. Johnson asked around town for recommendations for another person to take over as a distributor for his products. Some people suggested that Charles Tindall would be a good man for the job.

When the Ottumwa Ice Company decided to not sell pop in Missouri because of a new Iowa out-of-state sales tax, Mr. Tindall decided that he would try to sell the Johnson Flavors,



Charlie Tindall and a neighborhood boy repair a flat-top venter at the 403 N. Centennial warehouse.

which included Pepsi-Cola.

For a while, the Tindall's were selling pop to people out of their home but, as Mrs. Charles (Lottie) Tindall said, "We didn't want to be in competition with our customers." So, Charles began looking for a warehouse or garage that would hold the pop. He soon found a warehouse to rent, where Ruby Green Seed Company is now, but according to Mrs. Tindall, "It was hard to heat and not the right style for the pop business," so they never bought the building. When Ruby Green purchased the warehouse, Mr. Tindall had to look for another place to handle the Pepsi business. Soon afterward, the new Tindall Beverage warehouse was located at 403 North Centennial Street where the Tindall's eventually resided.

"Charlie, with the help of his entire family, became dedicated to making Pepsi-Cola the number-one soft drink in Adair County," said Mrs. Tindall. The development of soft drink sales and Pepsi-Cola, in particular, took nearly 20 years. Sales accounted for (as bottles per capita) were so few in number that the statistics were meaningless. The popularity of soft drinks, other than on special occasions, was most difficult to achieve because of few retail sales outlets, no vending, poor refrigeration, little national advertising, and living standards so different.

In the beginning, Charles and Lottie Tindall wore all the business hats. As delivery man, salesman, bookkeeper, warehouse manager, promotional and advertising expert around the clock, Mr. Tindall's long journey to success began. Later, six Tindall children (four girls and two boys) all played respective parts in the history of the Pepsi story in Kirksville. Long hours, little profit, and, often times, little hope did not permanently discourage the Tindall's. According to Dale, "the ingredients in this formula were simple: persistence, willingness to be patient, service beyond reason, and prayer."

Today, each person in Adair County consumes 400 bottles of Pepsi-Cola and 100 bottles of Mountain Dew each year. With Pepsi enjoying about 60 percent of the total soft drink market in Kirksville, the story may appear simple. The truth was exactly the opposite.

The development of a national advertising series has continued to be unrivaled in the cola industry. Many of these slogans are as recognizable today as they were 30 years ago. Pepsi continues to lead the industry toward new heights of consumer acceptance. The "Be Sociable" generation are the parents and grandparents of the "Now Generation." With water being free, it takes imagination and creativity to sell Pepsi.

Mr. Tindall sold the Pepsi-Cola distributorship in 1963 to retire at the age of 66. His youngest son, Dale, purchased the Tindall Beverage Company and continued to operate the business from the family home and garage warehouse located at 403 North Centennial from 1963 until 1970.

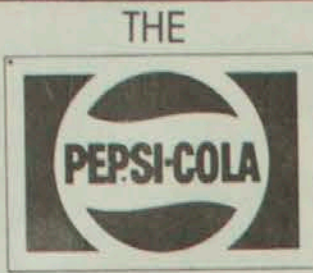
In 1970, Dale purchased the McHenry & Gash Pontiac dealership building located at 1300 South Baltimore Street. The Tindall Beverage Company was located there for ten years, which was an exciting development period for Kirksville, and also an exciting growth period for Pepsi. Mr. Tindall purchased the Canteen Vending franchise for Northeast Missouri, which enabled him to offer full-line product vending to industrial plants, Northeast Missouri University, and the three Kirksville hospitals.

In December, 1979, Dale Tindall had a new warehouse, office, and service center built at 2800 South Halliburton. The size of the new facility is 19,000 square feet and because of its location and landscaping, it offers a pleasant site for travelers entering Kirksville from the south.

Many dramatic changes in the business took place from 1962 to 1980. The introduction of the twelve-ounce can was one of the primary changes. It was first introduced to accommodate the vending segment, then to be more safe and a better size for handling than bottles. Later, the can became a convenient package to accommodate the American public and their desire to either "not return" or to "throw away" the used con-



The old cases on top of the first Pepsi truck for Tindall Beverage were used by Charlie Tindall to carry bottles of pop. Charlie is pictured here with son, Dale, age 3.



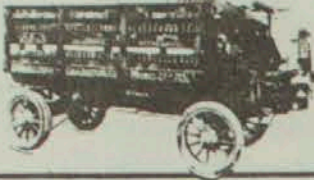
STORY

1903

Pepsi Cola's formula was discovered by "Doc" Bradham. Pepsi was served at soda fountains.



the trade mark was registered. "Doc" Bradham started bottling the drink. By 1907 Pepsi Cola had 40 bottling franchises. Pepsi was one of the first to use motorized delivery vehicles.



1934 "12 Full Ounces...That's a lot!" Radio's first jingle was born...



The sale of Pepsi's big 12 oz. bottles sky rocketed, and became the most successful producer of 12 oz. bottled soft drinks in the nation. Now Pepsi was world famous...Tindall beverage was born in 1935!



1958



"Be Sociable"...

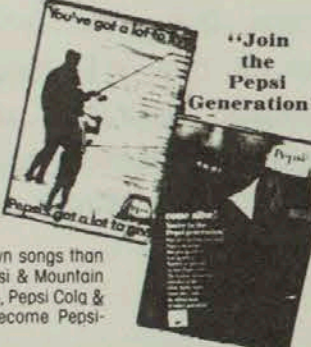
Pepsi was made less sweet, and "Refreshes without Filling" became known world wide. Dale Tindall graduated from KHS in 1957, to take over operation of Tindall Beverage in 1960, from his father who was retiring.



1964



"Come Alive!" & "Pepsi's got a lot to give" were better known songs than the "top ten"! Diet Pepsi & Mountain Dew were born. In 1965, Pepsi Cola & Frito-Lay merged to become Pepsi-Co. Inc.



1975

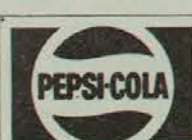
"Have a Pepsi Day"



Pepsi popularity is now world wide, and everyone in the world looked forward to a "Pepsi Day" the symbol of enjoying life & being refreshed!



1985



"Pepsi—The Choice of a New Generation"

Pepsi has expanded into several new products, including the new Pepsi Frees, Slice and many more, enjoyed by everyone, everywhere!



TINDALL BEVEVERAGE COMPANY SAYS:

'THANKS'

For Your 50 years of being Pepsi-Cola Drinkers, Our Friends and Our Customers

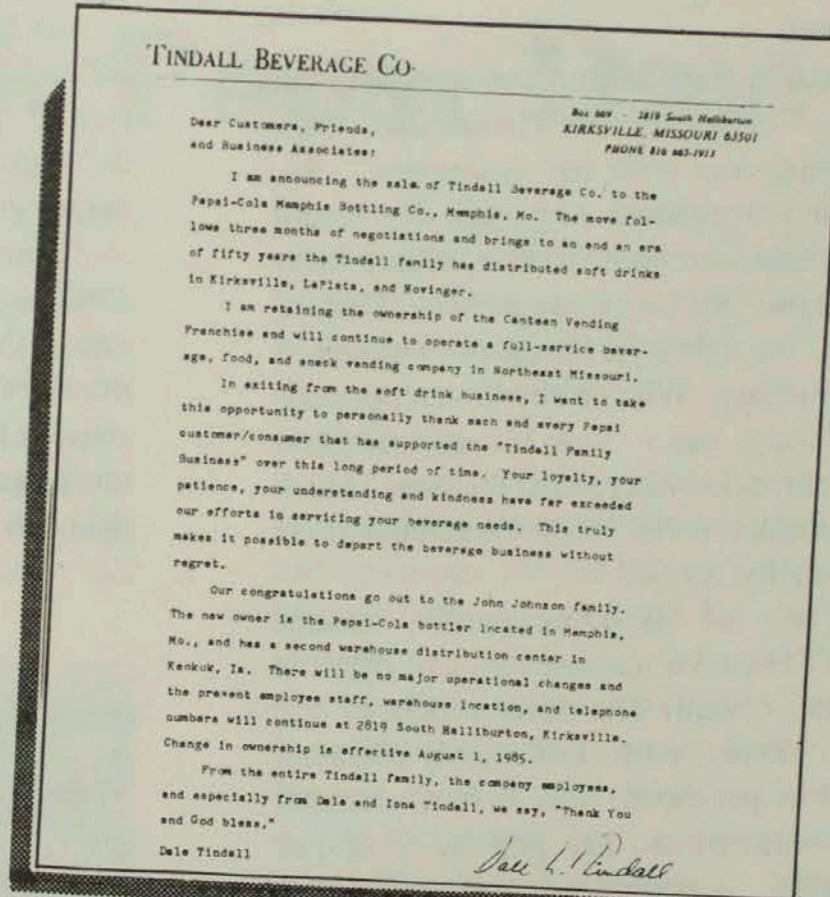


The Tindall Family: Front Row (L to R) - Mrs. Charles (Lottie) Tindall, Dale Tindall, Charles Tindall. Back Row - Dorothy Tindall, Florence Tindall (deceased), Charles Tindall, Jr., Margaret Tindall and Clara Mae Tindall



Tindall Beverage Employees—Front Row (seated): Jerry Gillum, Sales Manager; Dale Tindall, Owner; John Mauck, Office Manager; Yvonne Wynn, Office. Back Row: Stan Eschlagler, Route Salesman; Mark White, Warehouse; Tony Justice, Vending Sales; John Shahan, Vending Repair; Dave Hartje, Route Sales; Bruce Schmitter, Warehouse; Bob Werner, Syrup Route Sales; Ron Person, Vending Sales

We are thankful for each and every one of you...from the child, happily walking down the street with Pepsi & candy bar in hand...to the largest Pepsi Retailer. You've all been very important to us through the years.



The Tindall Family: Dale, Tiffany, Mark, Iona, Dana and their dog Jackson

We have most sincerely enjoyed growing with Pepsi-Cola, and being so closely involved with the people and businesses of the Kirksville area. We are sure you will continue enjoying the same sort of "Home Town" service from Pepsi-Cola Memphis Bottling Co.

Tindall Beverage Company
 Kirksville, MO.

Many may remember some of these ads and emblems over the years from 1903-1985 for the Pepsi Company in general, not just in Kirksville. (Courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)

tainer. As a result of continued pressure by the public for convenience packages, the government and other organizations joined in forming programs to clean up America. As Mr. Tindall commented, "Don't litter signs became a sign of the time!"

Beverages were basically sold in corner neighborhood stores, gas stations, and a few restaurants. "The Snappy Service, Grillette, Maid Rite, Pig Stand, and Hi-Ho Drive-In restaurants were some of the 'famous' fast food establishments of yesteryear," said Mr. Tindall. The vision of Howard Riley to open Riley's 7 to 9 "Super Markets" began a new dimension of marketing for many items, including Pepsi. The evolution of key-accounts continued until today, accounts like Easters, Hy-Vee, and Food Barn, that handle some 20,000 items for sale.

In addition, the great emphasis on recreation, health, hobbies, and exercise in the past 20 years, has resulted in new accounts. Sporting events, little leagues for youth, drive-in theaters, state parks, bowling alleys, swimming pools, and now total sports and aerobic centers, have increased the exposure to the very wholesome (business-wise) soft drink business.

The newest marketing segment to be developed has resulted from people's desire to eat out of the home and on the go. Whether it's hamburger one desires, fish filets, Mexican food, breakfast, pizza, ice cream, or steak and salad... speciality fast-food restaurants are available at and for your convenience.

According to Mr. Tindall, there are many important factors involved in the Pepsi success story, but two extremely important points should be made. One is the development of the vending machine, which resulted in the possibility that beverages could be made available, ice cold, and on a self-serve basis anywhere in the world where there was electricity. "Originally, beverages were cooled by ice, and ice was available through several companies, including Dad's," said Dale. Later, electric coolers requiring water baths were used in stores and restaurants. Often times during hot summer months, warm bottles of soda would burst when placed in the cold water coolers, causing many injuries. Before 1950, electric-dry coolers became available and soon afterward the upright electric vending machine was available. Now beverages could be sold on self-serve basis by the customer inserting coins into the metal machines. According to Mr. Tindall, "a new market was born."

Secondly, with the growth of fast food/convenience restaurants, came the growth of syrup fountain drinks. Delivery of one-gallon syrup jugs soon turned to five-gallon stainless steel tanks called transfer tanks, meaning they could be changed, or transferred, without being opened. Improved health measures, including food and drug regulations, soon required sealed containers, packaged and maintained under CO2 pressure. Nearly all of these major changes required the development and production of new types of beverage equipment.

Some fountain units are low pressure, others high pressure, and some have multiple stations for convenience in serving customers. Some fountain units require manual drawing of the drink, others are by touch of the cup on a lever or stand, some are automatic-fill fountains, and in special high volume locations like professional ball parks, fountain equipment drops up to eight drink servings at once. Fountain drinks served with ice, once recognized as poor in quality and undesirable, represent today the greatest growth segment of the industry. Funny how taste changes with time.

In August of 1985, Mr. Tindall sold the Pepsi business which had been in the family 50 years. "I felt the time was right to sell," he said. The business was bought by the Memphis Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company. According to Mr. Tindall, "I thought if the bottler owned our business, it could give the public better prices on soda by eliminating the 'middle man,' being me." Pepsi-Cola continues to remain a popular drink in Northeast Missouri through each new generation. Catch that Pepsi spirit!

By Tiffany Tindall



The new Tindall Beverage warehouse on S. Halliburton Street occupies 19,000 square feet. Pictured here are the employees and vehicles for the business in 1980.

The Ritz

The purchase of the Ritz Cafe in April of 1961 brought the ownership of the home of the coffee club to Larry, Beulah, and Diana Montgomery. The Ritz remained a coffee drinker's haven until March of 1968 when the cafe was closed due to its purchase by the First National Bank.

The Ritz, which was located at 209 North Elson, was bought by the Montgomerys' from the previous owners, Claude and Helen Martin. The Ritz first opened in the 1930s and was known as the Snappy Service.

Beulah Montgomery was the first Montgomery to own the Ritz and later, in the fall of 1962, joined in a partnership with her son Larry and in the summer of 1963 with her daughter-in-law, Diana. Beulah Montgomery said she went into business for herself because cooking was the only thing she knew she could do as a business for herself.

The Ritz was a family-type restaurant, just a good place to have a cup of coffee and some good conversation. "The Ritz had good homestyle food. Most of the meals I ate out were at the Ritz," commented Bob Knot. "I especially remember Beulah's homemade pies."

Mr. Montgomery said the noon lunch hour and breakfast were the busiest times of the day and Diana Montgomery said the Ritz was fairly successful. "We made a decent living," commented Larry Montgomery. "The Ritz was successful due to good food and good service," added Mr. Montgomery.

Beulah Montgomery said both hamburgers and french fries were 25 cents, breakfast, which consisted of potatoes and a choice of meat (bacon, ham, or sausage) was 65 cents, and a cup of coffee was only 10 cents. Beulah recalled that once a 12-year-old boy ordered some eggs, and when asked how he wanted them cooked he said fried. Mrs. Montgomery also recalled the time a waitress was carrying a pot of coffee to a table filled with customers when the bottom of the pot bursted and the people scattered.



Beulah Montgomery, owner of the Ritz from April of 1961 to March of 1968, mixes up a batch of biscuits for breakfast.

The dinner menu consisted of three meats and six vegetables. Monday's special was sausage patties and gravy, hamhocks and beans were served on Tuesdays, fish was usually served on Friday and on Saturday fried chicken was the special. The dinner meals were ordered and the waitresses would pick up the already prepared food, which was held in a steam table, and then take the meal back to the customers. The steam table was a large steel table with a reservoir full of water running through it with burners underneath to heat the water. The food was set in containers which were placed into the water keeping the food fresh and hot. Beulah Montgomery said that the steam which was used had been around for a while and was not new to the area. She also said that the old containers holding the food were made of crock while the later tables were made of stainless steel for sanitary reasons.

Beulah Montgomery opened the Ritz at 3:30 a.m. when the milkman and the breadman came. About 30 minutes later the morning coffee drinkers would arrive to drink several cups of coffee, eat breakfast, and talk until time to go to work. Cooks and dishwashers came in at 6:00 a.m. and a waitress would sometimes come in at this time also and work until two, or a waitress would come at 11:00 a.m. and work until closing. There were usually five workers present in addition to Beulah, Larry, and Diana Montgomery. The cafe closed between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m.

The grill, the fryer, and a big cooler were in the front so a cook could stand facing the grill with his back to the cooler. In the kitchen, at the opposite end of the building away from the grill and fryer, was the steam table, work tables, and a big range with its back to the west part of the kitchen. Of the two work tables, one had the french fry cutter and a can opener and the other had the salad dressings on it. The coolers were used to store vegetables, fruits, and salads. The sink where the dishes were washed by hand was in the northwest corner of the kitchen. The front where orders were taken was set up in a barstool-type fashion with chairs along the counter. The long brown front counter, the original material was unknown, was later changed



In addition to tables the Ritz had a bar-stool type counter that was located in the front, on the opposite side of the coolers the fruits and vegetables were stored.

In the early morning the faithful coffee drinkers enjoy their favorite beverage and some good conversation.

formica. The ceiling was white, the walls were painted a light green, and new curtains were put up after the Montgomerys' took over.

"The customers who came to the Ritz were regulars," Mr. Montgomery replied, "all types of people came into The Ritz, from ditchdiggers to doctors and lawyers." Maybe the most memorable group of regulars was the "coffee club," the early morning coffee drinkers. The morning coffee drinking groups were found at the Ritz from 4:00 to 7:30. The members of the club moved to the Ritz after the closing of Everhart's Cafe in 1954 which was located where Wright Tire and Appliance is today. The club was made up basically of city council men, prominent businessmen, and the mayor who would get together and talk of local events and political affairs. The Ritz was referred to as a "political hotbed" in Kirksville. Larry Montgomery said this was due to the fact that men announced their running for city offices. "Some of them did their campaigning there."

Another remembered group was the baseball club. The club consisted of "a bunch of guys" who liked baseball and got together to have a pool on the games of the day. They sometimes held after-hours parties which might have consisted of a steak dinner or turkey fries and reminiscing about baseball.

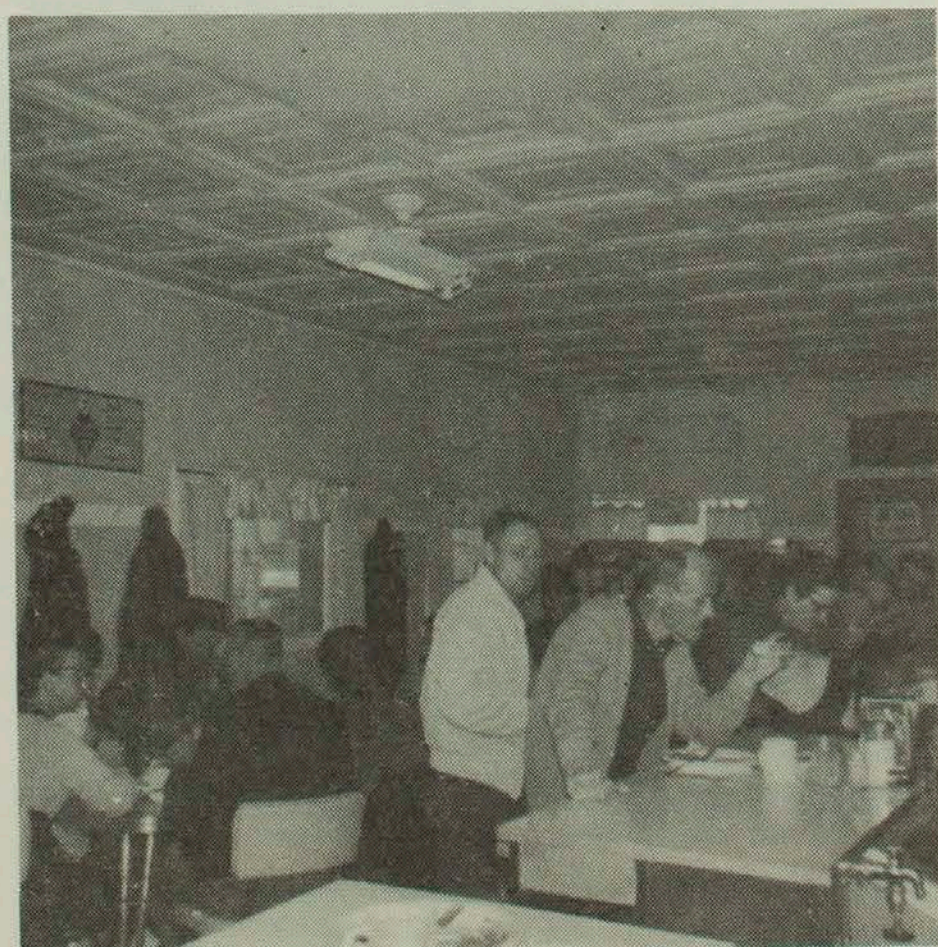
On March 31, 1968, the Ritz held a last breakfast for its hard-core members, although it had closed two days before. After the breakfast the Ritz closed its doors for good. The building was torn down after its purchase by the First National Bank. The Ritz Cafe stood between the bank and where Wrights' Tire and Appliance is today.



Mrs. Montgomery summed it up best when she said her fondest memories were having a good day and having several customers. "I just loved all the people and I think they all liked me and that made it all worthwhile."

After the Ritz closed Beulah Montgomery didn't go into business in another place because the places offered to her did not sound like anything she wanted. Also at the time the Diagnostic Clinic opened up and she decided to work there rather than for herself.

Even though the Ritz is no longer with us the memories still linger.



By Marty Montgomery

The Ritz was not only a great place for coffee, but also a friendly place to have a hot and hearty, home-cooked meal.

It Seems Like Yesterday

Ephriam Imbler was born in Fairfield, Iowa, on July 19, 1845, the son of Daniel and Saloma (William) Imbler. When he was 12 years old, his parents moved to Knox County, Missouri. In 1861, at the age of 16, Ephriam joined Company F, Third Missouri Calvary, and saw much hard service in Louisiana and Arkansas during the course of the Civil War. Afterward, he returned to Missouri and married Anna E. Murray.

In 1882 Ephriam and Anna and their five children settled in Adair County, Missouri, on 360 acres east of Kirksville. This land had been granted by the government in 1855 to John Thomas Imbler, a relative of Ephriam's. Here their sixth child, Thomas, was born.

When Ephriam and Anna moved to the farm they lived in a log cabin which was on the property. Their son, Thomas, told Mr. Vernon Noe, a long-time neighbor and friend, the level of snow on the inside of the cabin in the winter was the same as the snow on the ground outside. Therefore, in the winter months, they lived on the second floor. They built the house and barn later around 1888. The frame of the house and barn were of white oak. This was of virgin timber from the area and contained no nails. It was pegged and grooved, instead. The lumber was bought from Frank Mason who lived on the land now known as the Still Meadows farm. The barn is a three level structure and was a very prestigious building. The house and barn are still in excellent condition today.

The crooked crossroad west of the Imbler property is a result of the courthouse records being burned in the fire of 1882. The south end of the road to Radical Ridge was already in place. There was a problem about the north end and it never did join in a straight line with the south end due to loss of records and disagreements.

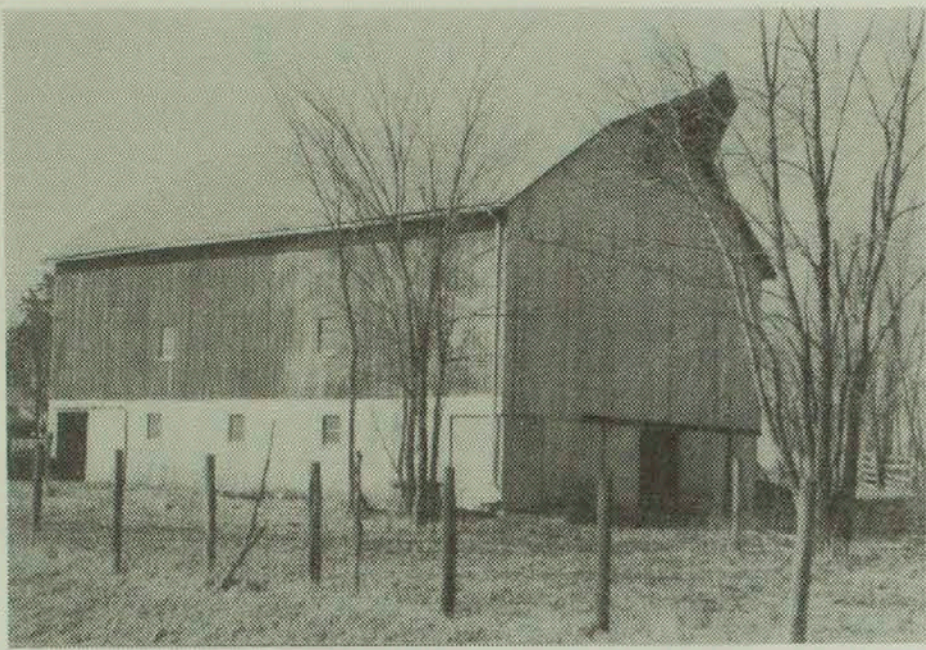
The family earned their living by farming and from the apple, pear, and cherry orchard. It was known as Imbler's Orchard and was especially known for the pears. When Ephriam died in 1901, Anna and the children carried on. They sold most of the fruit locally. At that time they had a new Ford truck and took a load of fruit to town every week during the season. Mr. Tom Imbler got rid of all but a few apple and pear trees when the orchard was about 75 years old. Mr. Noe said he remembered when Mr. Imbler took the orchard out he said, "It's been here 75 years, that's long enough!"

Tom's mother, Anna, was a very feisty person. Mrs. Noe, one of Tom's close friends, put it best saying, "She was a true pioneer type." She also recalled that Anna would keep a rifle at the back door and use it to shoot rabbits in the orchard. She had her own horse and buggy and she would hitch them up by herself. She also went to town alone which was unusual in that day for a woman. Mr. Noe said, "Anna Imbler was very independent. She used to say that she didn't need anyone to do anything for her." Mrs. Imbler planted shrubs and flowers around the house in the late 1800s. Some of these plants are still alive today. The white shrub rose at the back porch today was planted by her. It is unusual because it only has a few petals

By Laura Magruder



Anna Imbler planted the great maple tree on the west side of the house.



The three-story barn was built in 1888 and is still in good shape today.



Two pillars at the driveway present the Imbler name to all who pass through.

per bud. She planted the day lilies on the bank by the road to keep it from eroding, when the road was built. These are still alive today, but during the last three years have decreased in number because of close mowing.

Thomas, the youngest son, never married and lived on the Imbler property all but two of his 99 years. Those two years he went to the University of Missouri in Columbia. Young Tom went to the East Elm Grove county school east of Kirksville. He also graduated from the Normal School and donated his college notes to the library. These notes are in the Missouri Room at Northeast Missouri State University. After attending the University of Columbia he returned to the farm and became a teacher at the Fairview School which was located four miles east of Kirksville on Highway 11. He later taught at Radical Ridge School which is now the living room of the Dr. Harry Still residence, three miles east of Kirksville on Highway 6.

Thomas Imbler also farmed, raised cattle and hogs, and worked the orchard. He was "big" in hogs. Mr. Imbler was also a surveyor for the government and helped to plot out the land in this area.

The style and structure of the house dates back to the 1840s. The staircase is typical of the style of that day, having a newel post at the base of the stairwell, and a landing about halfway, from which the stairs divide and go on up in separate directions. The windows and doors are grooved and each top corner has a circular medallion insert.

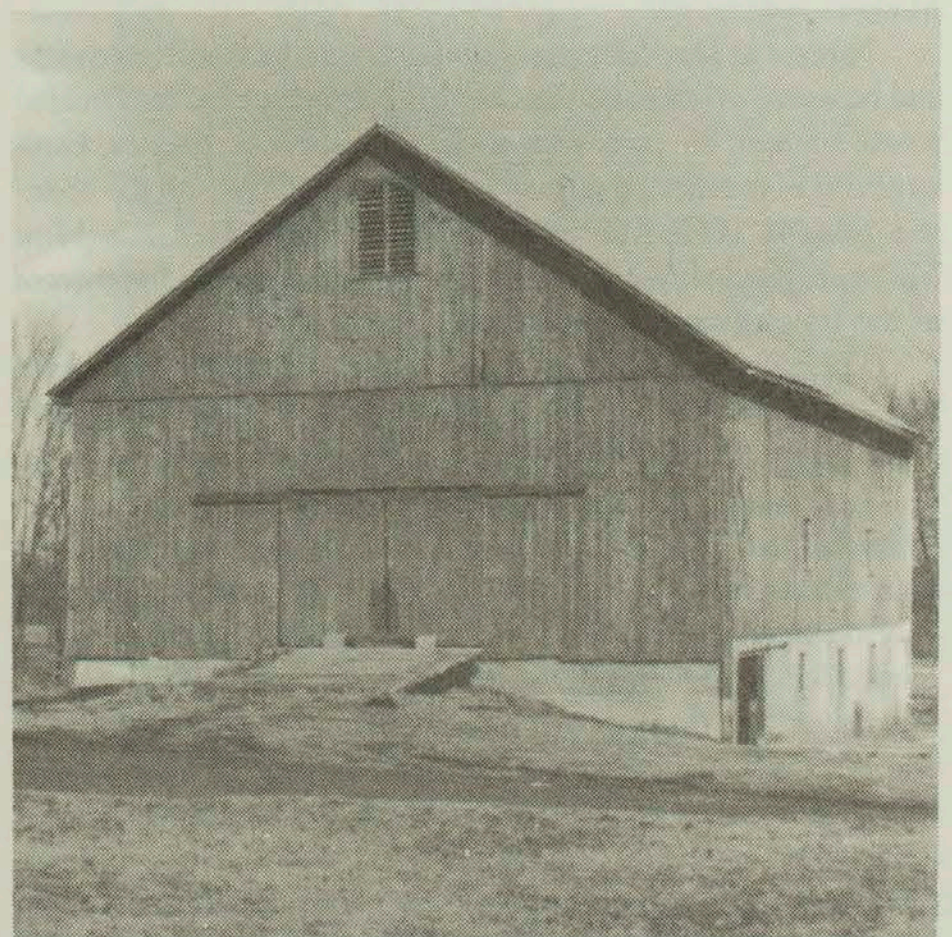
During the 1840s, homes were not built with fireplaces. Instead heating stoves were used. The flues to the stoves came from the interior walls, and when electric heat became prevalent the flues were covered with decorative plates or pictures to hide the openings for the pipes in the walls.

Across the floor of every room was a full size rug that was loom sewn. Each rug was made in pieces, then sewn together to fit the size of the room.

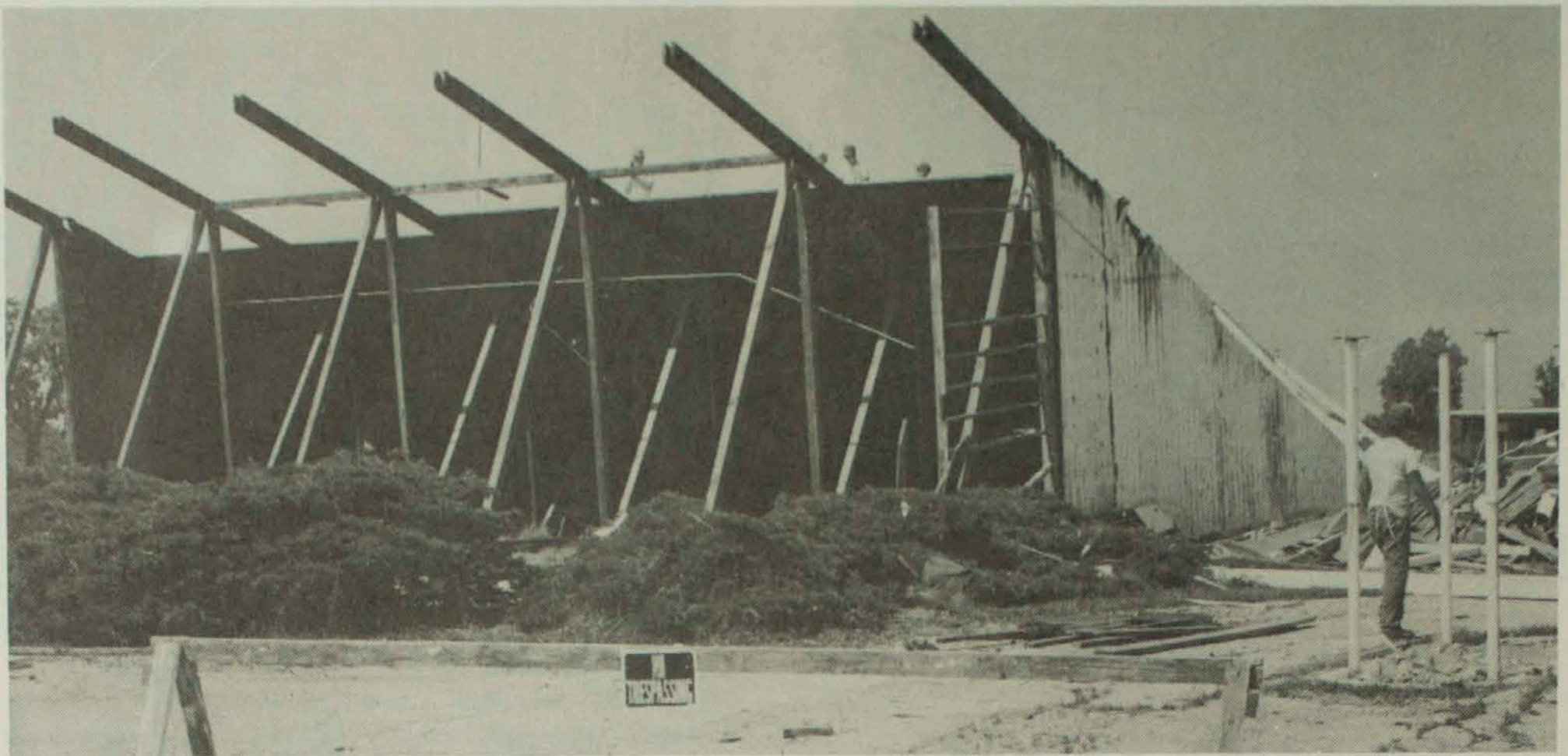
A china cabinet and panels in all the cupboard doors in the kitchen were styled with diagonal panels, a contemporary style of the day. Each cupboard had solid brass pulls with carvings that slightly resembled Japanese style.

The wall in the kitchen was fire proofed by building it in brick. The kitchen was actually a part of the house, which was not as common during the 1840s. All brick used during this period for inside walls was softer, lighter and susceptible to wear and tear. Therefore, all interior brick was covered with plaster to protect the brick from eroding due to changes in the weather.

Looking at the house and land today, one can only imagine the breathtaking beauty and splendor of its earlier days. It was well built and structurally sound. The home is excellently maintained and even now, it holds a special distinction to all who go near it. The home's elegance has been carried forward through the years with grace, as Mr. Vernon Noe put it, "It seems like yesterday."



The ramp on the west side of the barn led to the storage for the Imbler's horse and buggy.



The end of the golden age of the Silver Star Drive-In. After a long period of indecision the screen was torn down in the summer of 1985. (Photo courtesy of Kirksville Daily Express)

In Memory of The Silver Star Drive-In Theatre

Family entertainment, Buck Night, Westerns, long lines of cars, summer nights, and Ma and Pa Kettle all bring back memories of Day Mangus' Silver Star Drive-In Theatre. The only drive-in Kirksville had begun as an idea that Mr. and Mrs. Mangus conceived.

No one in Day Mangus' family was in the theatre business and he wasn't involved either; he was raising horses. He decided to use some of his pasture as a site for a drive-in theatre. Construction of the theatre started in September 1949 with the opening June 4, 1950. His daughters, Mrs. Iola Wait and Mrs. Miller, remember the community being receptive to the theatre at the time of construction.

The planned site totaled 12 acres and would be able to hold 500 cars. It would include a 60 x 60 foot screen and a 42 x 42 foot building for the snack bar, rest rooms, and storage.

According to the *Kirksville Daily Express*, Mr. Mangus estimated the cost of completion to be \$75,000. Although they aren't sure, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Wait think that this might have included the land value and the cost of the projection equipment. They feel their father was a perfectionist and because of this he had the theatre built with the finest materials available and best workmanship possible. The Silver Star wasn't just sheets of metal in the middle of a field. It was a well-planned theatre. Mr. and Mrs. Mangus wanted their theatre to please the eye as well as to withstand years of use. Their attempts to achieve this goal started with the screen.

The screen was factory manufactured and instead of leaving the back open to the weather, Mr. Mangus had his workers

box in the back with tongue and groove lumber. The screen structure also included an area for storage. Another feature of the screen was that it was tilted slightly toward the projection room to cut down on the keystone effect, the image distortion toward the top of the screen.

The only major change in the screen was that sometime in the 1960s, the wings were added. These were sections attached to either side of the screen to accommodate Cinemascope film which required a wider screen. The only destruction that happened to the screen was the wings blew off two or three times when Kirksville had some major storms. Other than this damage, the screen only required putting a new coat of white paint every year or so.

The ramps were also an important feature of the drive-in. These areas of built-up dirt served to elevate the nose of cars up so customers could see the screen better. The ramps also contained the large amounts of wire required for the sound system. When the theatre first opened, Mr. Mangus hired several young men to direct the customers in positioning their cars correctly on the ramps so that the cars would be next to a speaker.

The theatre was often full to capacity with more cars waiting to get into the next show. Because the waiting cars weren't permitted by the highway patrol to line up on the highway, holding areas were installed on the land between the screen and the highway. The holding areas were large areas divided so that the cars were in a zigzag line ending at the box office.

Kenneth Turner worked for the Silver Star Drive-In Theatre

SILVER STAR DRIVE-IN THEATRE

1/4 Mile North of Kirksville on 63

Box Office Opens at 7:15; Shows Start at 8:00 and 10:00.

TONIGHT, MONDAY AND TUESDAY

BING AT HIS BEST IN A DAZZLING, COLORFUL SPECTACLE OF ADVENTURE, MUSIC AND ROMANCE!

Paramount presents

BING CROSBY
RHONDA FLEMING · WILLIAM BENDIX
SIR CEDRIC HARDWICKE

The King Of American Entertainers In A King-Size Technicolor Musical Picturization Of

MARK TWAIN'S **'A CONNECTICUT YANKEE**
IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT

Color by **TECHNICOLOR**

Produced by ROBERT FELLOWS
Directed by TAY GARNETT

MURVYN VIRGINIA HENRY
VYE · FIELD · WILCOXON

Plus News and Comedy

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY

LADD
In His Greatest Role...

filling the screen with excitement and violence... in a love story to match the tension of the times!

Paramount Presents

ALAN BETTY
LADD · FIELD
MCCORMACK · RUTH
CAREY · HUSSEY
BARRY HOWARD
SULLIVAN · DA SILVA
in F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S

"The GREAT Gatsby"

with **SHELLEY WINTERS** PRODUCED BY RICHARD MAIBALM
DIRECTED BY ELLIOTT NUGENT

Plus Comedy and News

Admission 50c tax included; Children under 12 **FREE**

The glorious beginning, the first advertisement the theatre ever ran clearly demonstrates Day Mangus' devotion to family entertainment.

for 30 years. During this period he was responsible for opening, closing, maintenance, and the projection at the theatre. He remembers replacing up to 100 speakers a year. Many of the speakers were worn out, but some of them were jerked off the post out of the meanness or the forgetfulness of the patrons. These speakers would sometimes be returned by highway patrolmen who found them along the highway.

The theatre opened its 34 seasons with the movie "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court." The seasons usually started in April and ended in October or November. During most of the years of operation the theatre ran movies every night of the week with each show running two or three days.

The theatre's movies were provided by a service from Kansas City. A man selected the movies that he felt were appropriate and in the price range set by the theatre. The last few years before they leased the theatre, Mrs. Wait and Mrs. Miller contracted the pictures on their own.

Tuesday was Buck Night, a carload of people could get in for a dollar. It was okay to bring a bus or truck load but then the cost was two dollars. For the price of one dollar it was possi-

Silver Star★ DRIVE-IN THEATRE

Admission:

Adults 50c

Children UNDER 12, free

Kirksville, Mo.

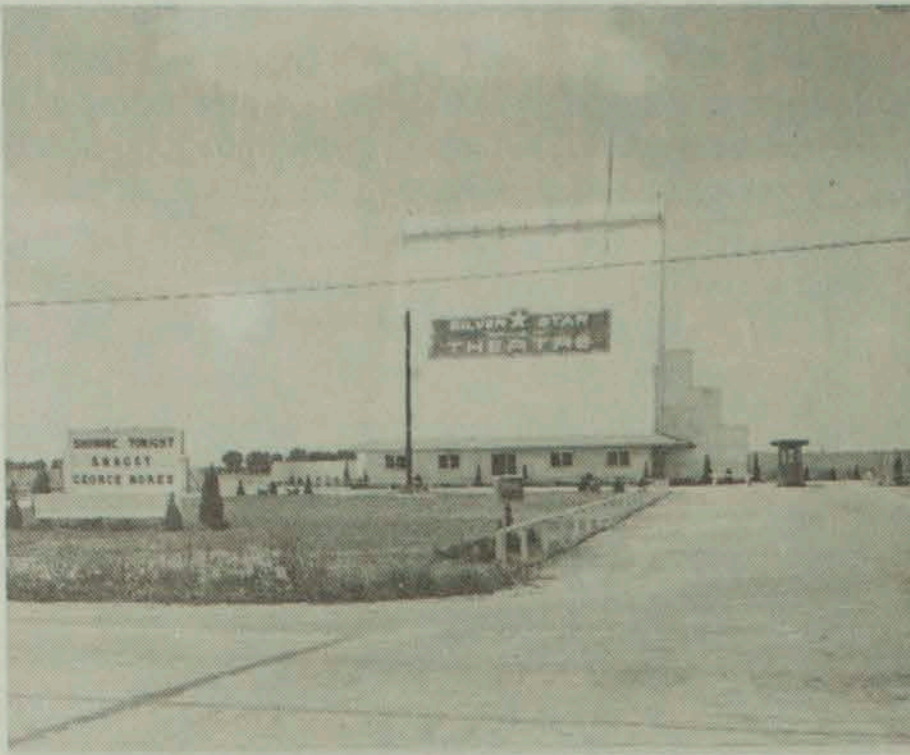
Program for April 1952

Tue.	1	"REX, KING OF WILD HORSES" — William (Buck Nite) Janney & Dorothy Appleby — Short & 2 Cmdy
Wed.	2	"I'D CLIMB THE HIGHEST MTN." — Susan
Thur.	3	Hayward & Wm. Lundigan — News & Cmdy
Fri.	4	"WYOMING MAIL" — Stephen McNally.
Sat.	5	Alexis Smith — Plus Cartoons.
Sun.	6	"UP FRONT" — David Wayne & Jeffrie
Mon.	7	Lynn — Plus News & Comedy.
Tue.	8	"NIGHT TRAIN TO MEMPHIS" — Roy Acuff (Buck Nite) & Allan Lane — 2 Comedies & Short.
Wed.	9	"BORN YESTERDAY" — Judy Halliday &
Thur.	10	William Holden — Plus Comedy & News.
Fri.	11	"CALIFORNIA PASSAGE" — Forrest Tucker
Sat.	12	& Adele Mara — Plus 2 Cartoons.
Sun.	13	"HALF ANGEL" — Loretta Young & Joseph
Mon.	14	Cotten — News & Cartoon
Tue.	15	"BLUES BUSTERS" — Leo Gorcey & Huntz (Buck Nite) Hall — Short & 2 Comedies.
Wed.	16	"CATTLE DRIVE" — Joel McCrea & Dean
Thur.	17	Stockwell — Woody Woodpecker & News.
Fri.	18	"KANSAS RAIDERS" — Audie Murphy &
Sat.	19	Marguerite Chapman — 2 Comedies.
Sun.	20	"JIM THORP - ALL AMERICAN" — Burt
Mon.	21	Lancaster & Phyllis Thaxter - News & Cartoon
Tue.	22	"GOD IS MY CO-PILOT" — Dennis Morgan & (Buck Nite) Dane Clark — Plus 2 Cartoons.
Wed.	23	"ADAMS RIB" — Spencer Tracy & Katherine
Thur.	24	Hepburn — News & Tom & Jerry.
Fri.	25	"AL JENNINGS OF OKLAHOMA" — Dan
Sat.	26	Duryea & Gale Storm — Plus Short & Comedy.
Sun.	27	"FRENCHIE" — Joel McCrea & Shelley Win-
Mon.	28	ters — News & Abou Ben Boogie.
Tue.	29	"FURY OF THE CONGO" — Johnny Weiss- (Buck Nite) mueller — Sherry Moreland — 2 Comedies.
Wed.	30	"TOMAHAWK" — Van Heflin & Yvonne De
Thur.	May 1	Carlo — Plus News & Comedy.

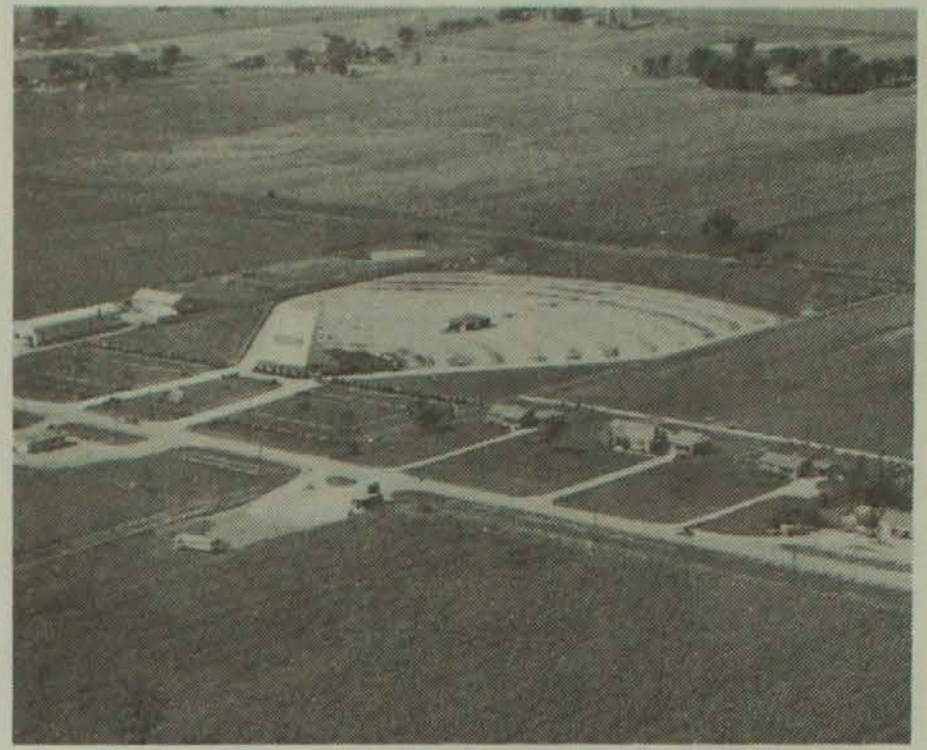
Two Shows Nightly — Rain or Clear

Graphic Printing Co.

The drive-in provided programs for its patrons so they would know what movies were coming and could plan to attend. This program from 1952 illustrates the popularity of westerns during this period.



One of Day and Frances Mangus' efforts to make their theatre special was through its landscaping, a testament to its longevity. The small seedlings seen in this photo grew into huge shrubs before the theatre was closed in 1985.



A view from the air, this picture was taken before there was much development north of Kirksville. It was mostly pasture that surrounded the theatre. It is also possible to see the holding areas between the screen and the highway.

ble to get as many as ten people in a car, a great savings on the regular admission of 50 cents for adults. The regular admission went up to \$1.75 before the theatre closed.

The movies that were popular included westerns, family shows, and cartoons. Mr. Turner says the cartoons were usually the most fun to watch. There was also a series of movies that was very popular on Buck Night, Ma and Pa Kettle. This series was a hillbilly comedy that packed people into the drive-in according to Mrs. Wait. Tuesdays were very popular with families making it a big night for the snack bar.

The snack bar served many refreshments including popcorn (the main item), soft drinks, ice cream, hot dogs, and hamburgers. The snack bar didn't have car service, but the drive-in did sell popcorn at the box office.

To accommodate all the customers, the theatre always had several employees other than Mr. Turner, Mrs. Wait, Mrs. Miller, and their other sister Sarah, who worked there during high school. Mrs. Frances Mangus managed the theatre until her death in 1957. The people who worked there were everyone from Mr. Turner's wife Jeanette to high school girls and college students' wives. These people sold tickets and snacks, took tickets, and helped park cars.

The snack bar provided many memories for the people who worked in there. Mrs. Miller remembers mothers bringing their children to the restrooms dressed in their pajamas all ready to go to sleep in the back of the car as soon as they got back. "One of the most interesting things to do was stand around and watch the people go through the snack bar. We had all kinds of people go through there. Everything from families to kids wanting to cause trouble," Mr. Turner said. Even though he didn't work in the food area, he was familiar with the people because while

the movies were playing, he would go into the snack bar and hang around until the next movie had to be played.

As Mr. Turner pointed out the people that came to the drive-in were varied. They were everyone from the families that flocked to the theatre when it opened to the teenagers that held parties out there in the years before it closed. The patrons that were the bulk of the crowds in the beginning were families. In 1950 there wasn't much for families to do together so they went to the movies. This was before everyone had their own color television, air conditioning, and could go to the lake.

The sisters continued to run the theatre until the 1982 season. At this time they leased the theatre to B and B theatre chain so they could retire. They leased the theatre for three years until 1985 at which time B and B didn't want to renew its lease.

The sisters didn't decide to tear the theatre down until a year of thought made this decision the only practical one. It was a hard choice to make. Mrs. Wait said, "It was like losing a member of the family. Even though it wasn't always fun going there every night. The drive-in was a part of our lives that was very hard to lose."

For all the people in the Kirksville area that grew up going to the drive-in it was a great loss. A sign of an era passing that would never return. "There just isn't a place in our society for the drive-in anymore. People are just more interested in new technology and comfort than the drive-in can offer," observed Mrs. Miller.

By Renée Wilson



Ivie's
Coal Mine,
Kirksville, Mo.
Pub. by J. J.
McKeehan,
Drugs.

B640.A6

The Ivie coal mine, sunk around 1909, was known in Northeast Missouri for its high quality coal. (Courtesy of KCOM Library and Pickler Memorial Library)

The Forgotten Factory

Joseph M. Ivie may not be the name of anyone you have ever heard of, but if you were a citizen of Kirksville around the year 1900 you would.

J. M. Ivie was a well-respected businessman in Adair County. He lived here all of his life. He owned and operated a coal mine and a brick factory and there was a hotel close to the factory that he owned.

The coal was said to be of the highest quality in the state. It was located three miles west of Kirksville. The mine was equipped with the best and newest equipment. His coal output had increased over the years substantially. This mine was first opened in the year 1906. The coal was used for stoves in Kirksville. The company hauled the coal in by wagons and there was a massive obstacle in their way, Graveyard Hill. His mine was forgotten years ago because there were so many mines close to this area.

The brick factory was the largest brick producer in the area in the late 1800s. At one time in 1899, he had over one million bricks in stock. This factory was also one of the most prominent factories in Kirksville. The bricks were used as building bricks; then in 1907, local businessmen incorporated with Mr. Ivie and his son in an effort to produce paving brick. One kiln of paving brick was burnt with excellent results. The materials used in the bricks were found close to the mine.

Mr. Ivie always had a smile on his face for everyone and everyone like him. He had suffered from stomach trouble for two or three years, this also affected his heart. Mr. Ivie committed suicide by inducing carbolic acid. He was only 59 years old when he died in February 1909. Everyone was shocked when they heard of his death. He left a wife and three children.

In June of 1909, the Ivies sold their brick plant and 20 acres of land to the Adair County Brick, Coal and Construction Company. They ran the coal and brick operation after 1909 until 1912.

By Douglas Ryle

Kirksville Lodge, No. 46



A group of 15 singers and actors formed a social organization on November 15, 1867, in New York City, to evade a newly enacted statute which banned drinking on Sundays. They called themselves the "Jolly Corks."

On February 16, 1868, the social organization became a benevolent order. The name "Elks" was selected because in nature the elk does not attack other species but will defend itself if it is attacked.

The first constitution was adopted in March, 1868, and stated that the order was formed to "promote, protect and enhance the welfare and happiness" of its members. However, since 1871 the Elks have provided charitable assistance to a variety of causes such as flood relief, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, and hospitalized veterans. Today there are more than 2,200 lodges in the United States.

The Kirksville Elks Lodge No. 464 was instituted on January 30, 1899, when some members of Elks Lodge No. 9 from St. Louis came to Kirksville to institute the local chapter. The instituting officer was B. W. Lyon. A banquet for 65 people was held in the corner room of the new post office (now City Hall) and was catered by H. G. Doeling of Kirksville. Music was provided by the Farrington orchestra, and the evening was concluded with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne." Later that year on June 22, 1899, the local chapter received a charter from the national organization. Fred N. Chapman, E. T. Brewington, V. H. Greenwood, G. M. Laughlin, F. C. Miller, E. H. Bestman, C. B. Mathews, M. J. Maxwell, C. W. Adams, H. H. Straight, C. A. Hamilton, W. T. Stephenson, and William Smith were among the charter members.

The presiding officer of the Elks Lodge was called the Exalted Ruler. Fred N. Chapman was elected the first Exalted Ruler of the Kirksville lodge and F. G. Webber was the first secretary. F. N. Chapman would later hold the office of chaplain in the national organization.

In January 1902 the Kirksville Elks filed for incorporation. Article II states, "The object of this corporation shall be

benevolent, social and altruistic, to promote and encourage manly friendship and kindly intercourse, to aid, protect and assist its members and their families, to give moral and material aid to its members, and to provide social and literary entertainments and lectures." For over 30 years the Kirksville Elks tried to live up to the standards set forth in their articles of incorporation.

Over the next several years the Elks continued to grow, sometimes initiating 40 new members at a time. Weekly meetings were held on Tuesdays at the Elks Lodge at 114½ South Elson (upstairs from what is now Doughboys Doughnuts). In 1910 there were approximately 250 members in the Kirksville Lodge, No. 464.

On March 10, 1910, it was announced that the Elks would build a new house at the corner of Jefferson and Elson. A building committee was formed to look at other lodges around the state. H. M. Still and B. L. Bonfoey were members of the committee which traveled all over Missouri to gather ideas so that the Kirksville lodge would be a showplace.

On June 30, 1910, the cornerstone was laid. Reverend A. B. Gass of Mary Immaculate Church gave an address entitled "The Elks, A Social Fraternity." He spoke about the characteristics of the Elks, namely charity, brotherly love, justice, and fidelity. He said, "Members of the Elks' Lodge had the true idea of charity, in that their left hand knows not what their right hand doeth when they bestowed charity upon their fellow man."

Guests were present from Elks Lodges in Macon, Moberly and Mexico. It was a gala occasion for the entire town with businesses decorated in Elks' colors of purple and white. The Kirksville Lodge played a baseball game against the lodge from Mexico. The home team lost and the *Kirksville Journal* reported, "The Mexico team won the game but we are afraid to give the score for the reason that a committee from the Elks' team interviewed us and threatened to dynamite the Journal plant if we gave the score, however it can be said that the total mileage made by the Mexico team in running bases will about cover



the distance between Kirksville and Kansas City, and the Mexico Elks are threatening to play them on horseback if they are ever compelled to play the Kirksville Elks again.”

The fall of 1910 was a very busy one for the Elks. A benefit carnival was held from September 26 to October 1. The Great Cosmopolitan Show came to Kirksville for the carnival. Its attractions included a human roulette wheel and a ferris wheel. Nine Elks were appointed as special policemen by Mayor John McCall. He felt that the Elks should keep order themselves. They were congratulated by the mayor for being able to maintain law and order during the entire event.

A carnival queen contest was held with 11 candidates. Seven local businesses were used as polling places. Over 11,000 votes were cast at a penny each and totals were published nightly in the *Kirksville Daily Express*. Miss Carmelita Quinn was crowned carnival queen at 7:30 p.m. on October 2, 1910, in front of the Normal Book Store on the square, beating her closest opponent by 981 votes. She was given a diamond ring as a memento of the occasion.

The carnival was a huge success. People came from the surrounding area to enjoy themselves and the Elks managed to clear over \$500 for the building fund.

One of the highlights of the carnival week was the membership application of “Uncle” George Cain, the first white person born in Adair County. He was 77 years old when he was initiated into the Elks. When he died in 1919, he was known as the oldest Elk in Missouri and a large number of Elks from around the state attended his funeral services.

As a part of their charitable activities, the Elks had an annual Christmas tree for the poor children in Kirksville. In 1910 there were more than 200 children present at the party. The *Kirksville Daily Express* reported, “Following the invocation, a burly Santa Claus (B. L. Bonfoey) attired in the furs and conventional garments of the character, appeared and amidst squeals of delight from the children, welcomed the youngsters and explained how the gifts would be handed to them from the

Christmas tree.” Since preparations had been made for 250 or more, each child received an armload of toys, fruit, and candy.

January 3 and 4, 1911, were scheduled for the grand opening of the new house. On Tuesday, January 3, 40 new members were initiated followed by a banquet attended by over 200 people. On January 4 the house was opened to the public until 8 p.m. Members of the ladies executive committee received the guests. Purple and white programs were provided to all, and each lady received an aluminum pin tray with a picture of the Elks’ Lodge and the date on it. Afterwards there was dancing and cards for members.

The house was perhaps the most elegant structure in and around Kirksville at that time. The architect was W. M. Goold from Kansas City and the contractors were Shaw and McKim of Kirksville. The exterior was dark buff brick with Carthage stone trimmings. The second story was stucco topped by a red asbestos shingle roof. The lodge measured 40 by 85 feet. The structure occupied most of the lot which measured 54 by 108 feet, leaving little or no room for parking. A large porch spanned the front. The main entrance had double oak doors with an elk’s head etched in each glass panel. After the Elks’ Club was razed, these panels graced the rear doors of the Beard’s Decorating Center. Walter Beard still has one panel in the store, and it seems to be the only remnant of the elegant structure.

On December 29, 1910, the *Kirksville Journal* reported, “To all intents and purposes the building contains four stories, although it appears to be two and one-half. Not a square inch of space is wasted, and it makes a cozy clubhouse that would equal many rich clubs in large cities.” The basement contained baths, two bowling alleys, and a buffet. On the main floor there was a reading room, a ladies parlor, the secretary’s office, a pantry, a card room, and a billiard room. The second floor contained a lodge room with a capacity of 350. It had a hardwood floor which could be used for dancing. Former member Louis P. Anesi recalls, “It had guest rooms on the top floors where dignitaries could come here from other lodges and have all night

lodging." The Elks apparently spared no expense in selecting the interior materials and furniture. The rooms were tastefully decorated with coordinating rugs and hangings, and fine paneling and hardwoods were used throughout. The building was reported to have cost \$30,000. In contrast, Grim-Smith Hospital was built at about the same time at a cost of \$10,000.

Charitable and social activities intertwined as many of the fund-raising events such as carnivals, plays and musicales provided opportunities for the Elks and the community to work for the common good.

Another carnival was scheduled for October 1914. The A. B. Miller's Greater Shows with 20 attractions and nightly fireworks was scheduled to arrive in Kirksville for a week. The event was co-sponsored by the Commercial Club. The two organizations were to divide 15 percent of the receipts. The carnival was scheduled to be held around the square. Just before it arrived in town, the County Court announced that they would collect \$275 in license fees for the week. Both the Elks and the Commercial Club appealed the levy stating that the money was to be used for charity. However, the Court decided that it would still collect the fees. The carnival had to be moved to Still Field (now P.C. Mills Park) because some of the attractions were too big for the streets. The weather was not good and several attractions were unable to open during the week so the total license fee was reduced to \$232. When Constable John McGuire presented the bill, payment was refused. A court hearing was scheduled for October 20, 1914, before Justice of the Peace

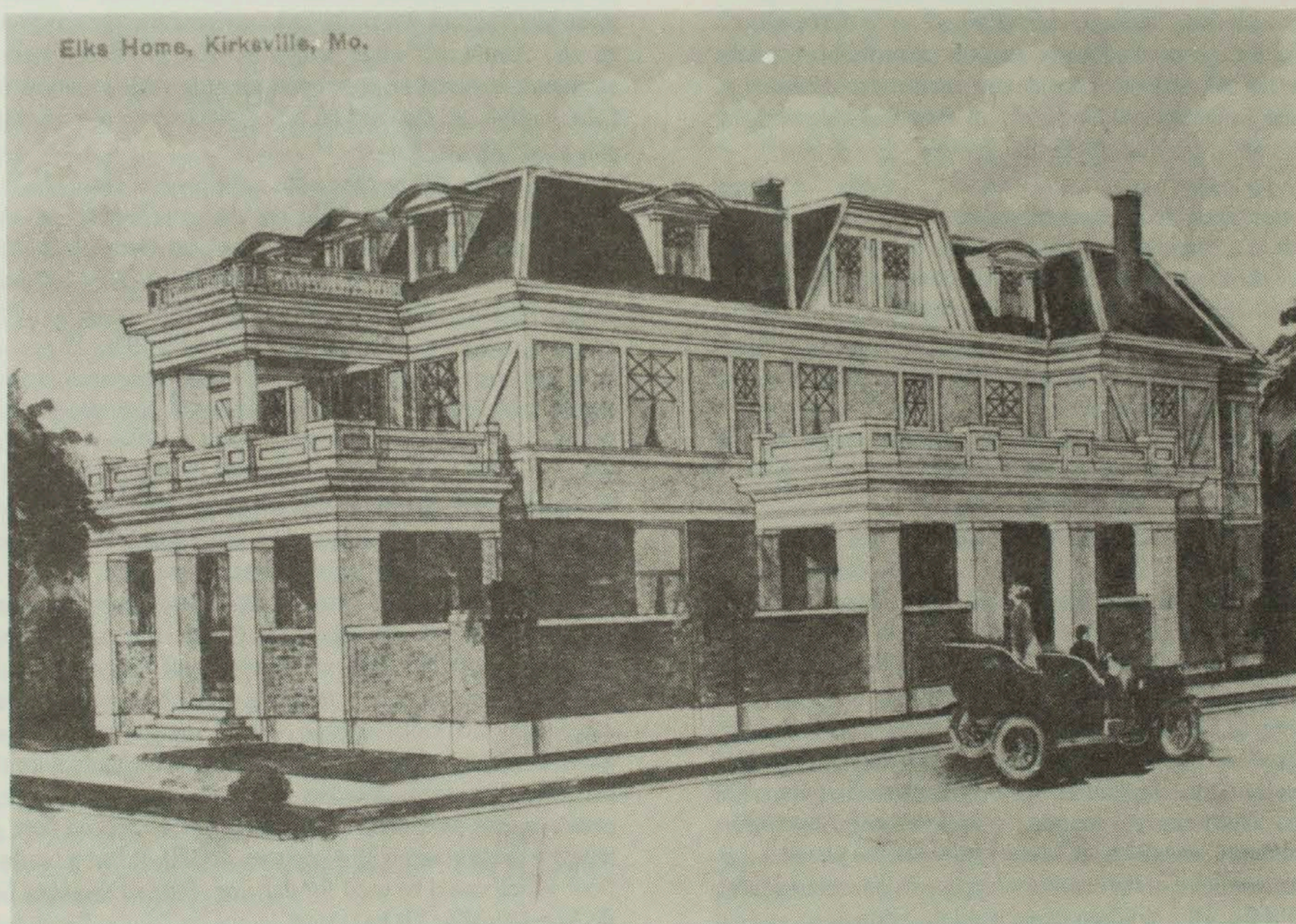
Pickell; however, a change of venue was requested. On December 14, 1914, Justice Elston decided that the license fees would have to be paid.

Each year in early December, the Elks held a public memorial service to honor those members who had died that year. Generally, these services included a speaker and music after which the names of the departed members were inscribed on a tablet.

On January 28, 1917, the Elks held a musicale at the Princess Theater to raise money for their charity fund. A group of local musicians provided an afternoon of entertainment under the direction of Professor Johannes Goetze of the Kirksville State Normal School. The final selection of the program was the B.P.O.E. March composed especially for the occasion by Professor Goetz.

The Elks' generosity to the children of Kirksville continued over the years as the annual Christmas celebration grew. An open invitation was given to all children whose parents could not afford presents. A committee, consisting mainly of the wives of members, assisted the Elks with the event. They dressed dolls for the girls and helped with the refreshments. The event took place at 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Day and by 1917, 350 children took part in the festivities. Additionally, the Elks worked with the Local Board of Charities to distribute food baskets to needy families.

The Elks' membership continued to grow. On January 7, 1920, 250 new members were initiated into the Kirksville



Artist's perspective of the Elk's Home planned for Kirksville, Missouri. (Courtesy of Pickler Memorial Library)

ELKS HOME.
KIRKSVILLE, MO.



The Elk's Home, which was built in 1910, was located at the corner of Jefferson and Elson. (Courtesy of Pickler Memorial Library)

Lodge. This was the largest class ever initiated in Missouri. A number of prominent Elks were present, including Otto C. Boltz of Sedalia, President of the Missouri Elks, and W. S. Bowers of Moberly, District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler. Festivities included a parade, initiation ceremonies, a dinner at the high school, and a smoker at the clubhouse. Mr. Anesi estimates the membership was near 500 in 1927. He said that members ranged from 21-to 70-years-old.

Over the years the nature of the fund-raising events changed to reflect the current tastes in recreation. Boxing and wrestling matches were held on the third floor of the Elks' Club and were open to the public. Mr. Anesi recalled that several nationally prominent wrestlers, including "Strangler" Lewis, came to Kirksville. One of the local favorites was Gust Karras of Kirksville. Instead of large outdoor carnivals, the Elks staged an indoor circus preceded by movies at the Kennedy Theater.

Several of the Elks received local and state recognition over the years. Twice Dr. George Still received mention for his charitable works in the *National Elks' Horn*, a publication of the national Elks' organization. Dr. Still was praised for his "Elk-like" behavior for sending crippled children to the circus and for operating on a crippled girl sent to Kirksville by the Elks of Tucumcari, New Mexico.

The Elks borrowed \$8,000 from the Kirksville Savings Bank in 1927, pledging their clubhouse as security. Mr. Anesi felt that the sale of life memberships was a prime cause of the Elks' financial problems. He explained that a life membership meant that a member would no longer pay annual dues. He

estimated that as many as 200 life memberships were sold in Kirksville. On February 6, 1933, the Commissioner of Finance took possession of the business and property of the Kirksville Savings Bank because of insolvency. Unable to save their club, the Elks gave up their charter in May 1934. On July 19, 1934, all of their furnishings were auctioned by order of Alvah Brassfield, Justice of the Peace. On July 30, 1934, the property was auctioned on the courthouse steps because the Elks were unable to pay the mortgage. Kirksville Savings Bank purchased it for \$5,500 and subsequently sold it to H. M. Still on September 25, 1934. He sold it to Iota Tau Sigma fraternity on September 4, 1936. It served as a fraternity house until 1946 when ownership was transferred to the Walter and Carrie Stewart scholarship fund. The building then served as a dormitory for medical students. On July 10, 1963, the Bank of Kirksville bought the property for \$22,000. It was torn down to make room for the bank's drive through windows.

The fate of the Kirksville Lodge was not unusual. Lodges all over the country failed in 1934 as the depression ravaged the country and Elks were unable to pay the mortgages on their property. Large Elks' Clubs in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Atlantic City, New Jersey, were among the many which didn't survive 1934. The failure of the Elks' Club ended an era of fellowship and community service in Kirksville. Mr. Anesi said, "I hated to see it. It was a great fraternal organization and it was recreation. A person could pass the time playing pool or cards or just socialize."



The present location of the Bank of Kirksville was the Truitt Garage on the corner of Franklin and Jefferson. This picture was taken August 14, 1958.

A Bank Built On Dreams

The Bank of Kirksville began as three brothers' dream and became a town's home-owned bank. For 72 years the bank has stood its ground through bad weather, a tornado, three wars, and the Great Depression to become the largest bank in this county.

The dream began in the back room of the Adair County Miner's Bank of Connelsville. Frank Fechtling, Harvey Young, Charles Young, and John Young decided to begin a bank in Kirksville that was home-owned and home-operated. The Youngs had met with Mr. Fechtling after they had previously organized the Bank of Worthington. Mr. Fechtling was born January 11, 1862, on a farm near Martinson, Missouri. In 1913 he decided to join the Youngs with the Bank of Kirksville. Mr. Fechtling was also president of a bank in Connelsville.

The Young brothers were farm boys who decided to go into banking together. In 1903 they began their first banking venture when they organized the Bank of Worthington. The bank later consolidated with the Bank of Kirksville.

The Youngs' mother was totally against the idea of the brothers opening up a bank. It was her firm opinion they would lose money from the very start. They went ahead anyhow, and the charter was issued the day before Christmas in 1913, and the new bank opened its doors on January 17, 1914. The original location was in the Odd Fellow's Building on the corner of Harrison and Elson Streets. The bank's first president was Frank Fechtling, Harvey B. Young was the bank's first vice-president, and Charles Young became the first cashier. The first day's intake was less than \$100,000. As the bank grew, its assets recorded in May of 1914 were \$155,578.99. The bank employed seven people when it began, including a teller, a bookkeeper, and a loan officer.

The bank was brought to a successful start by Frank Fechtling. Mr. Fechtling believed in a home-owned, home-operated bank. He thought that this would allow the bank more freedom when it concerned rules and regulations. Even though they followed the state rules, Mr. Fechtling had the power to declare

**By Julie Major
and
Kim Gonnerman**

holidays, introduce new ideas, and propose the bank's own hours. This freedom, he believed, would benefit the bank the most.

Unfortunately, all banks, no matter how strong or how secure, felt the impact when the Great Depression hit. Banks in particular were always in jeopardy of runs. People were afraid of losing their life savings. Area banks joined together to decide what to do if a run should take place. Although a run never took place, the meeting closed the gap between rivaling banks and laid the foundation for a new attitude between them.

When Frank Fechtling died on October 23, 1942, Harvey Young took over the position of president, realizing that the future of the bank rested on his shoulders. In 1943, only one year into his position, the assets climbed to \$2,171,809.09. In only 20 years the bank's finances had tripled twice.

Mr. Young had always been a fighter. His logic was if he believed in something he went after it strongly. All banks fought for the accounts of the new businesses that came to Kirksville. When a new establishment came to town, Mr. Young got up early in the morning and went to the owner's home to discuss bringing their account to the Bank of Kirksville. Once, when he got to one man's home, he met his fiercest competitor, the same man who tried to run the Bank of Kirksville out of town when it was first established. Mr. Young told the man that "If it was a fight he wanted, he'd give one to them." It was that strong-willed attitude that kept the bank alive through the hard times. Mr. Young's wife, Frances, said, "He was a fighter. He was a worker. He didn't care for a social gathering, but let him get a sniff of a new business and he'd get right on it."

Mr. Young decided early not to let a woman interfere with his growing career. But when he met Frances, his outlook suddenly changed. Harvey met Frances with the luck of her shorthand. She had enrolled in shorthand classes at the college and asked if she could gain experience by taking a job at the Bank of Kirksville. Frances ran checks through a hand-cranked machine. Before the days of computer, employees of the bank had to record in longhand who wrote the check, who it was going to, where it was from, the number of the check, and what bank the check came from. Harvey met Frances through her job as teller. They were married in 1917 in H.B.'s mother's home. On December 23, 1919, Harvey Jr. was born.

Mr. Young's optimistic outlook spread through the bank like a bolt of lightning. The bank's employees grew from just seven to over 40 members. In 1938, they had to enlarge, mainly because the first building used couldn't contain the prosperous and growing bank. However, in 1952 they again had to remodel. The bank's management felt that the present location couldn't adequately serve their customers, so in 1960 the bank bought the corner lot of Franklin and Jefferson from Frank Truitt, where the Flying "A" Service gas station stood. The station was razed to create room for the new Bank of Kirksville. The parking lot to the north was purchased from Rolston Realtors and turned into a parking lot. The area west of the new bank was bought from KCOM to create a drive-through window. In 1983, the bank added more space and created offices, a loan department, a meeting room, and another basement area.

Many wonder just how a bank gets off the ground in its early days. Frank Fechtling, the Youngs, and other members of the community bought stock in the bank. A bank receives its capital by people who buy shares in the bank. "We find that people whose great-grandfathers bought original shares in the bank still have the shares today," said assistant vice president Evelyn Krink. "The bank served Adair County and part of Schuyler County. Transportation wasn't as good as it is now. This bank is currently larger than any in this city or county. You would have to go to Chillicothe or Hannibal to find a bigger bank. There weren't that many big businesses in the early days. However, they helped the people with little businesses develop into larger businesses." This, said Mrs. Krink, is what keeps the bank's home-town appearance.

Perhaps it is this quality that has kept the Bank of Kirksville alive through the years. Just as their new slogan suggests. "Here yesterday, here today, here tomorrow." The bank will continue its strive for the betterment for Kirksville, the people, and continue the Youngs' everlasting dream.

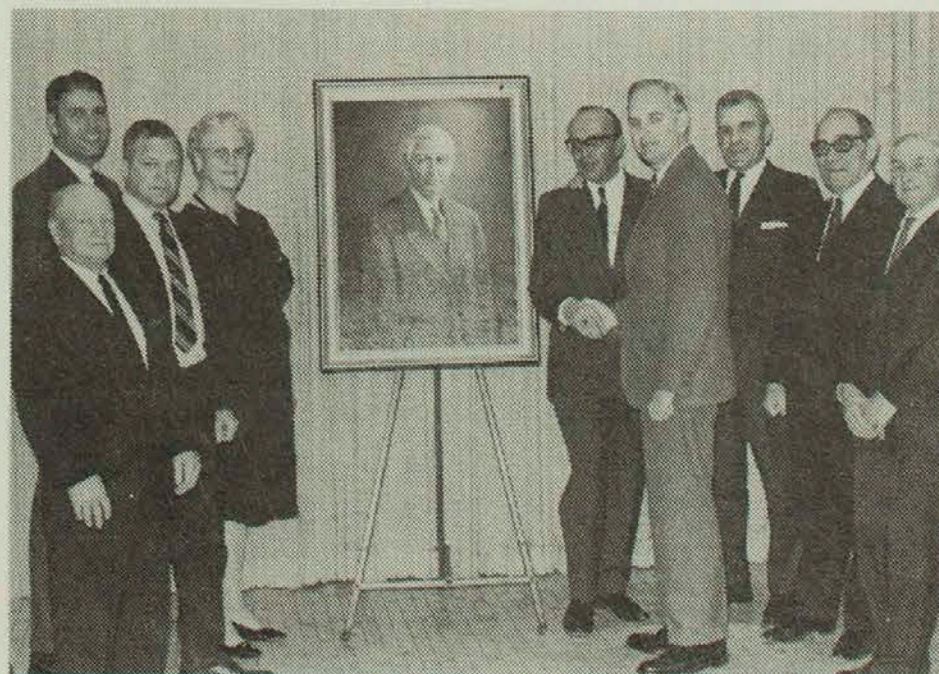
The original location of the Bank of Kirksville was at the corner of Elson and Harrison, in the Odd Fellow's Building.



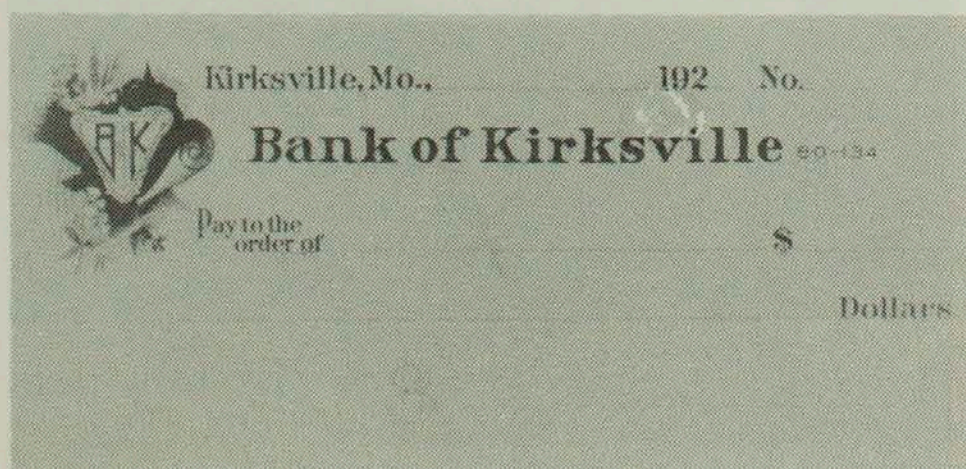
The current Board of Directors for the Bank of Kirksville. Front Row: Foster Pulis, Harry Young, Bernard Burdman, and Earl Rogers. Back row: Lon Critchfield, Edward Jayne, Ben Graves, Harold Propst, Harold Jones. Not pictured, Fred C. Tinning.



The unveiling of the portrait of the late H.B. Young on March 21, 1967. The portrait was painted by William Unger. Left to right are: Birney Fechtling, Edward R. Jayne, Harry B. Young, Frances Young, William Unger, Harvey B. Young Jr., Charles G. Young, Sherod Collins, and M.H. Propst.



The Bank of Kirksville used a symbol on the checks that were used in the 1920s. (Photo courtesy of Pickler Memorial Library)



TRAVELERS HOTEL

Standing on the corner of Main and Washington, is four-story, brick building. Posted on the front of this edifice, displayed in large, black letters, are the words Travelers Hotel. Travelers was a fitting name for one of the finest hotels between Chicago, Kansas City, Des Moines, St. Louis, and throughout the Midwest.

This location, in what was at the time considered the hub of Kirksville, was chosen because it was next to the Wabash railroad tracks, making the hotel easily accessible for travelers.

In 1923 B.L. Eastin, a Kirksville resident, sold his land to the Kirksville Hotel Company for \$15,000. In addition to his land, he gave the Company his set of plans for a hotel that he had considered building.

The Kirksville Company, which bought the land, consisted of many well-known Kirksville citizens including M.C. Shyrack, C.C. Givens, H.M. Still, E.C. Brott, George W. England, B.L. Bonfoey, Sr., and M.D. Campbell, S.H. Ellison, and P.C. Mills.

After the common stock was sold, construction began immediately. The corporation hired R.H. Sanneman, from Kansas City, to modify Eastin's previous set of plans. On September 15, 1923, bids for construction were opened, attracting 45 bids ranging from \$132,986.50 to \$155,000. C.L. McKim, a Kirksville contractor, won the contract.

The cost of the building, the furnishings, and the land totaled \$224,000. Construction ran smoothly. The roof was made of six to eight inches of concrete, and a jip-block masonry concept. She was molded into one of the sturdiest buildings in Kirksville.

The new four-story hotel offered many conveniences and features that were highly uncommon for hotels in the early 1920s. These extras included hot and cold running water in all of her 90 rooms, three suites, and an elevator. Fifty-four of her rooms included baths, and she featured a glamorous ballroom and several businesses.

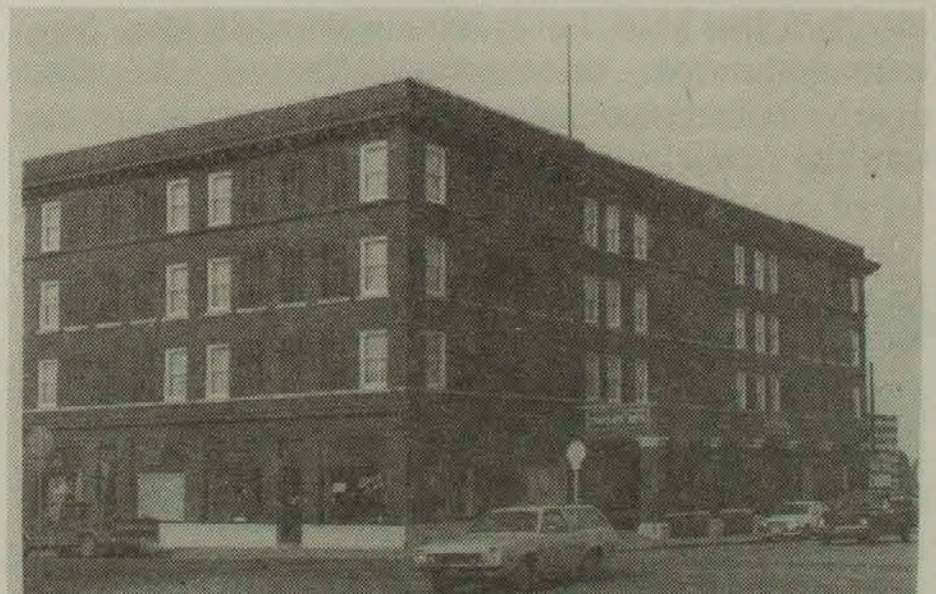
In 1923 the name "The Travelers" was chosen through a "name the new hotel" contest sponsored by the corporation. Lula Swanson from Novinger won \$25 for her suggestion for the name of the hotel. The contest attracted 198 entries from all over the county.

Travelers hosted many social activities and accommodated many club and organizational meetings as well. The Rotary Club, the Lions Club, and the Kiwanis Club each met weekly during their noon meals at the hotel. The businessmen were often generous with their tips and light conversation. The hotel also hosted wedding showers and private parties. She was the scene of several Kirksville High School Junior and Senior proms, some consisting of 350 people, for which the word elegance held no bounds. Mrs. Betty Crosley, a former waitress at The Travelers, commented, "There would be so many people coming to a prom that we had to take everybody out of the coffee shop to set up tables. It was a fantastic time."

These activities were held in one of three rooms: the banquet room (dining room), the County Fair Room, and another room, equal to the size and grandeur of the other two rooms. Each room was decorated in white, from the chandeliers down to the white cloth napkins. Each customer was treated like royalty as each was pampered and waited on hand and foot by the



The Travelers in the 1930s. Note the numerous windows in the building compared to the picture of today's hotel. (Courtesy of the Kirksville Daily Express)



The Traveler's Hotel today. (Courtesy of the Kirksville Daily Express)

busboys, bellhops, waitresses, and maids. Mrs. Crosley remembers, "We, the employees, all worked together as a big happy family, and that feeling was reflected in our attitude towards our customers."

Over the years, the hotel has hosted many businesses and offices on the ground floor. Some of these included Orin Kannan's Drugstore, Alta Grace's Beauty Shop, the Crist Barber Shop, and the Liquor Control Office. During Mr. Pete Anesi's ownership, from 1969-1981, the top floor of the building was leased to the NMSU football players and coaches.

The Tap Room, located in the basement of the building, has been operating since Prohibition. This establishment has served countless numbers of college students, as well as citizens from around the county. Mrs. Crosley commented, "The Tap Room is a very nice business that serves the community well. This business was an added asset to the Travelers building, and to Kirksville."

The Dining Room, or banquet hall, was well-known for her Sunday meals and delicious buffets during the mid 1900s. The buffet consisted of three meat choices, a wonderful salad bar, vegetables, hot rolls and butter, and dessert, all for only \$2 per person. "The food was delicious. I think that's the reason why it's such an outstanding place for everybody," commented Mrs. Crosley. The tables in the dining room were elegantly decorated and always reflected the preciseness and care that each waitress practiced. "We were all very proud of the Travelers reputation, and it showed in each and every room," replied Mrs. Crosley.

Before the hotel became affiliated with the American Hotels Corporation, it was operated by B.L. Bonfoey, Sr. and Les Orwiler. In 1955 Gene Sams was transferred to Kirksville to run Travelers. After the hotel left its affiliation with the corporation, Mr. Sams, with Mr. Woods as manager, stayed until Mr. Sams sold the hotel in 1969 to Pete Anesi.

The first floor of the hotel suffered severe smoke damage in a fire in 1981.



During the renovation men worked on installing new cement walls and a new plumbing system.

On April 10, 1981, a fire broke out in the basement area of the hotel beneath the main lobby. Several Tap Room employees noticed the blaze and contacted the Kirksville Fire Department. Four fire trucks were summoned to the hotel in hopes of containing the blaze.

At the time not more than 20 people were staying in the building. One lady, Mrs. Vickie Kunkle, jumped from the fourth floor, fell three stories, landed on the first-floor landing, breaking both of her legs. Two other residents, the fire chief, and a fireman suffered smoke inhalation, and the deputy fire chief injured his leg.

When the fire was finally brought under control, it was clear that the hotel had sustained severe damage. The cause of the blaze was uncertain, but the flames took its toll. The basement suffered severe damage, and the stairwell and upper floors sustained smoke damage as well. This unforeseen tragedy had a great impact on the hotel and its employees, as well as the city of Kirksville.

In August of 1981, Pete Anesi sold the Travelers Hotel to Charles and Mary Anne Giovannini, and Dr. Rex and Jody Hardman, who are now the current owners.

These owners looked at the hotel and decided that she needed changes. They began renovation in 1982, which was completed in 1984. During this time, the walls were torn down and replaced by new concrete walls, the old woodwork was refinished, the electrical and plumbing systems were replaced, some walls were covered with wallpaper, and new furnishings were added to the building. The building was redone one side at a time. In addition to these improvements, an exercise room, whirlpool, and sauna were added in May of 1985 to add more comfort and style to the establishment. These improvements brought back her glamorous personality.

The hotel now consists of 66 rooms with queen-size beds, handicapped accommodations, valet parking, bellmen, 24-hour security, color televisions, an exercise room with a whirlpool

and sauna, a grand ballroom, with a 200 person seating capacity, and an exquisite dining room.

Travelers has had several visitors of important significance. Harry S Truman stayed when he came to visit our town to present a Masonic award. Geraldine Ferraro stayed at the Travelers in February of 1986 and Alexander Haig stayed shortly after Mrs. Ferraro's visit. Vincent Price has stayed at the Travelers several times during his frequent trips to Kirksville. The original Harlem Globe Trotters ate their meals and slept there when they came to play against the Kirksville College basketball team in the 1950s. Mrs. Crosley remembers, "They were so tall, back then the beds were just regular-sized beds so we had to take chairs and put pillows and blankets on them to support their feet. It was really exciting when they came."

For several years, Travelers has hosted a variety of people in her own special way. People always enjoyed their stay at

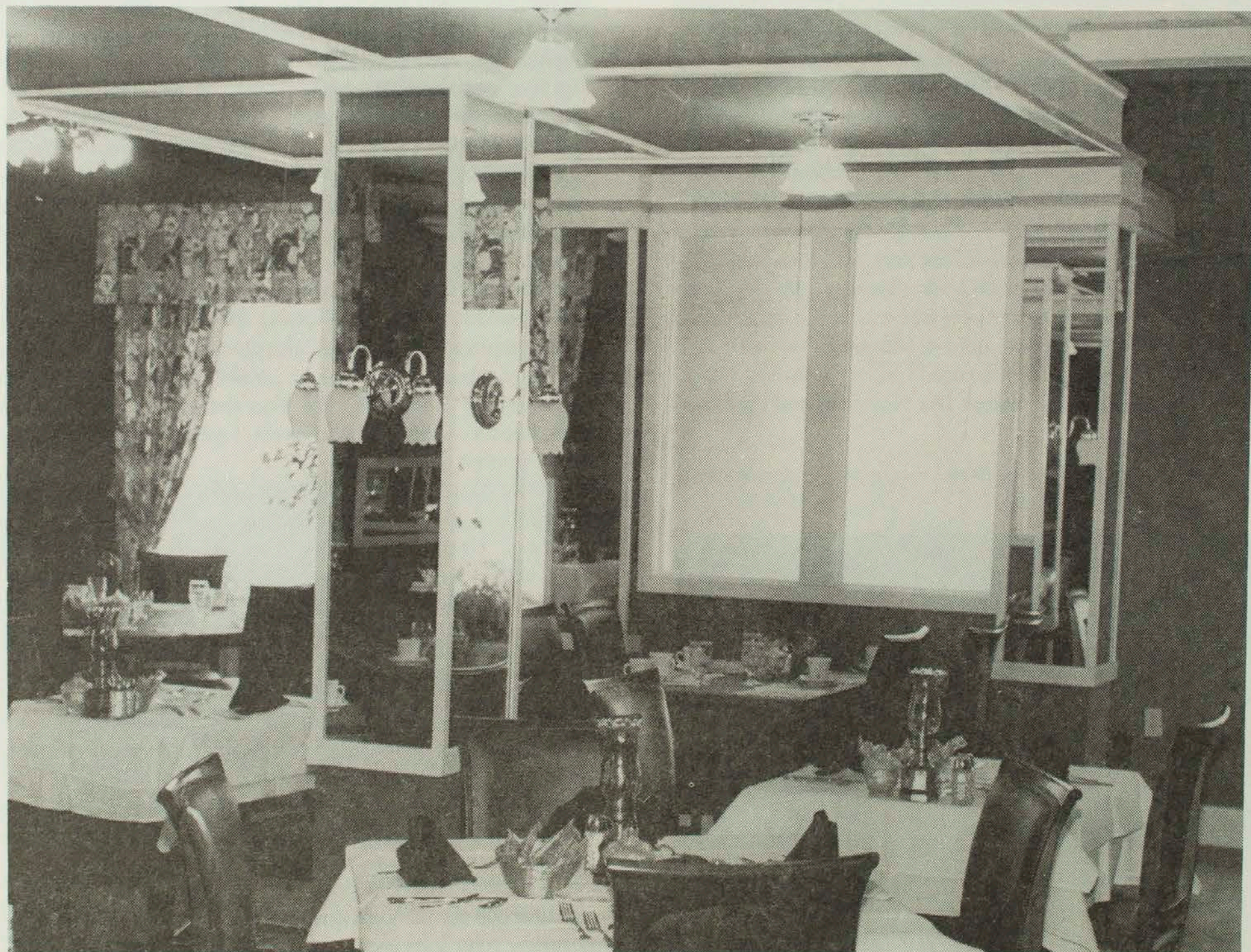
the hotel because of the employees' hospitality and reasonable prices. That special feeling hasn't changed today, and hopefully never will.

As one continues to gaze at the obviously worn, yet cared for building, one begins to wonder what she was like when newly built, and how she withstood the years of use, yet still retained her majesty. From her first opening to the last grand reopening after her renovation, the Travelers Hotel has always been held high in the public's eye and is one of the stabilizing businesses in Kirksville and in the surrounding area.

It is unknown what the future will hold for this "fair lady" of Kirksville. She has overcome a serious fire, and periods of wear and neglect but the love that the community of Kirksville shares for the Travelers Hotel will support and sustain "the lady" throughout her life.

**By Andrea Vorkink
and
Adele LoGaglio**

The dining room is decorated in a very elegant, yet comfortable atmosphere that reflects the personality of the hotel. (Courtesy of the Kirksville Daily Express)



THE END OF AN ERA

The Kirksville Senior High School's class of 1960 saw the end of the many memories and events of the 1950s era. This was the last year that the old Kirksville High School on McPherson Street had high school classes. The worn building had been in use since 1914 when it was built to accommodate larger classes. At the time of the building's construction, it was the largest school building in the northeast Missouri area. With the passage of time, the building deteriorated and became considered unsafe for student use. Enrollment increased with each year until the three-story building became inadequate for the anticipated larger classes. However, as the classes grew larger, students gained a feeling of closeness. Mrs. Anne (Baldwin) Jerome, a 1960 graduate, remembers this close feeling. "Everyone knew what was happening in the building. It wasn't like being in three separate buildings." Even now, former students remember those moments that make up school life.

The everyday school dress during the '50s was quite simple. Girls made the fashion scene in long, straight wool skirts, that hit about mid-calf, and bobby socks. The bobby socks of the '50s were knee socks rolled down three times to make a bulky cuff. Only about four inches of the leg was shown. A Jantzen sweater or a button-down blouse was worn tucked in the skirt. Mrs. Mary Jane (Novinger) Valuck, a 1954 graduate, recalls, "If you didn't wear a Jantzen sweater, you just weren't anyone." Topping off the outfit was a bright scarf tied in a knot around your neck, or tied around a ponytail. Saddle shoes and buck shoes were worn by both guys and girls. The boys also wore the blutcher shoe. According to an unwritten dress code, the young men were to wear nice slacks and shirts. They also wore undershirts. Occasionally, for one reason or another, the



Girls are at their best in the long, pale colored, formals of the 1950s.

boys could wear jeans. When they did, the thing to do was roll the hem up in a cuff just above the top of their shoes. Along with this attire the athletes were very proud to walk the halls in their letter jackets. The letter K on the side was an important status symbol. Coach John Spainhower issued the letters only if they were earned. The letter was the pride and joy of the boys. Not everyone was permitted to wear the jacket, especially not the girls. It was also a symbol of the importance of a relationship if the boyfriend let his girlfriend wear his letter jacket. This just usually was not done.

A major theme of the 1950s was to be "cool." It was cool to be involved in school activities. One event that was looked forward to each year was Mardi Gras. During the week of Mardi Gras, classes competed against each other to raise the most money for the Student Senate Council. Many projects, such as car washes, talent shows, bake sales, and scrap iron drives were organized to raise the money. To distinguish between the classes, students wore hats symbolizing their class. At the end of the competition a banquet was held and the winning class was announced. The king and queen of Mardi Gras were determined by the class that earned the most money. Later that evening a semi-formal dance was held. Couples were at their best in gowns and suits.

Accompanying this involvement in activities was a strong school spirit and pride. The boys were very involved in sports and the girls supported them with the pep club. Everyone went to the games just for the purpose of cheering on their team. Mrs.



In 1960, students dressed formally to attend the Mardi Gras dance, one of the biggest dances of the year.

**By Tammy Barrickman
and
Stephania Snyder**

Virginia Durden, a Kirksville High School teacher, recalls that there was "standing room only at the dances that were regularly held after the Friday night ball games." Everybody went to school functions because it was the thing to do. Coach Spainhower commented that school participation was so strong in the '50s because school was important to the community and was the center of the teenagers' lives. "Kids just didn't have all the extras like we do today, such as television, cars, and jobs."

One of the most important memories of a high school senior year is the prom. The 1960 prom, held at Greenwood School, was no exception. The gymnasium at Greenwood held many high school functions because the high school's own gymnasium was inadequate for the large crowds that attended. Mrs. Anne (Baldwin) Jerome remembers the light-footed feeling of dancing under low lights and the false ceiling of paper streamers. The basketball court was silent that night as the gymnasium was magically transformed into an elegant ballroom. Couples floated into the ballroom two-by-two. The girls were completely made up from their sling-backed, three-inch heels to their rhinestone jewelry. Mrs. Iona (Rollins) Tindall, a 1960 graduate, recalls the dresses as being long and cumbersome with layers of pale colored, ruffled netting. Equally as uncomfortable were the hoops used to make the dresses stand out. The gentlemen look

PROGRAM

TOASTMISTRESS, LINDA VINCENT

INVOCATION MICHAEL LANE

OUR THEME SONG "HARBOR LIGHTS"
 JOAN MOORE, NINA FULKERSON, CAROL CRNIC,
 JUDY CRAIG, KAYE ROBERTS
 ACCOMPANIED BY JOYCE DAUDEL

STRICTLY ON THE BEAM—

THE JUNIORS . . LARRY SPEAKS, JUNIOR CLASS PRESIDENT
 THE SENIORS . . . RUTH HILL, SENIOR CLASS PRESIDENT

TWO PRELUDES FOR PIANO—*Gerschwin* RUTH HILL

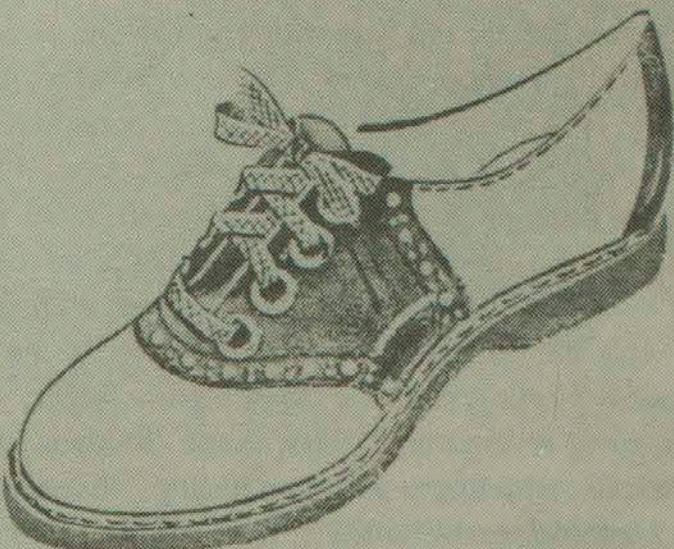
FOCUSING THE BEAM—

THE PRINCIPAL MR. KENNETH J. SMITH
 THE SUPERINTENDENT MR. O. WAYNE PHILLIPS

TWO READINGS—

"KING JUKE" *Kenneth Fearing*
 "THE LIGHT'S ON US" *Anonymous*
 JANIE CHARLES, BARBARA WRIGHT, BONNIE BIGSBY,
 NORMAN CLARKSON, RICHARD ALLEN, GARY
 CONKIN, MICHAEL LANE

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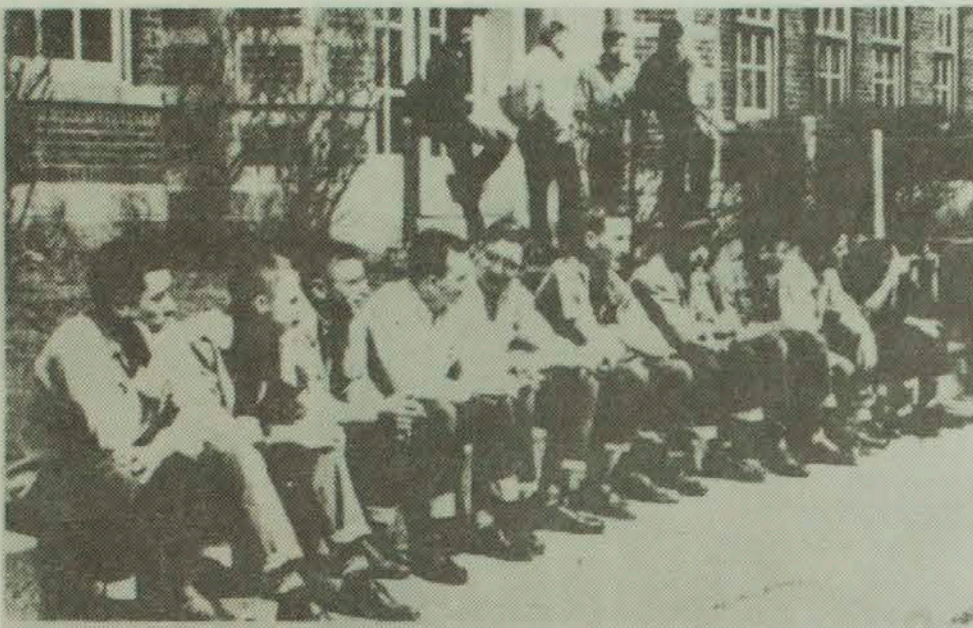


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The high school newspaper, the Tiger, featured the day's fashion as seen in the February 24, 1953 copy.



Couples enjoy themselves at the 1960 prom. Accompanying the picture is a 1960 prom announcement.



Yes, it's spring at KHS and these guys have that "old Spring fever." The boys who have that "want to go fishing" look in their eyes are from left to right: Ellis Waddill, Ronald Wheeler, Jim Rolston, Freddie Madorin, Bob Hogenson, Harold Linder, Bill Allen, Jack Baker, Len Gorke, Larry Rogers, and Chris Wilson. In the background are: Do. Foster Pulis, Charles Baldwin and Jerry Hitt.

Boys are found sitting outside the high school in rolled up jeans and crew cuts, a popular fashion in 1954.

their best in tuxedos or nice suits. The night had begun earlier at Northeast Missouri State University's Nason Hall, with a banquet for the juniors and seniors. Sophomores were included in the banquet by serving their older peers. As well as providing a speaker, the sophomores put on the program to provide entertainment for the junior and senior classes. Later that night students arrived at Greenwood's gymnasium for an evening full of romance.

After that special night in May, school would resume as normal for the rest of the year. Although school was "normal,"



Vivian Shelton, Mary Cox, and Sandi Wigal model the latest style of dress in 1953.

there was something in the air. Change was coming to the Kirksville area. The end was coming to the old Kirksville High School. The old high school was to close its doors; a new building complete with new memories, styles, and trends was going to take its place. The end was coming to the times that are remembered today as "fun."



The north side of the old Schmoyer home place. It was built after the Civil War with materials from the bullet-proof house.

A New Generation in Kirksville

In 1858 ten families left Pennsylvania and headed for the Oregon Trail. They stopped at a river for two weeks, where they made plans to cross it. During those two weeks, half of the families decided to go back to Pennsylvania. The other half forged the river and headed west to start a new life.

The Oregon Trail was approximately 2,000 miles long, the longest of the overland routes used to cross the country. It originally began at Independence, Missouri, and made its way through prairies, deserts, and mountains to the Pacific Northwest. Families traveling on the Oregon Trail usually met at Independence or Westport, which is now Kansas City. Both were near the Missouri River.

The five families that were left reached Missouri. Three of the five liked the land that Northeast Missouri had to offer. They discovered water resources were abundant in the area too. These three families decided to leave the trail. They settled five miles northeast of Kirksville, about one-fourth mile off the trail they were following through Northeast Missouri.

One of the three families, the Schmoyer's, bought two plots of land. The first plot was near the Chariton River where Novinger is today. Here they gathered all the lumber and stones needed to build their first house. The second plot of land was one-fourth mile from the trail they were following. James and Catherine Schmoyer decided to build their first house here.

Because the Schmoyers had heard stories of the lawlessness of the Civil War soldiers, the first house they built was a two room, bullet-proof structure. The soldiers camped in the field just south of the house. The Schmoyer family soon grew accustomed to the soldiers and would erect large tables and cook massive meals for the soldiers camping around the house. The soldiers never did harm them or steal anything from them.

Eventually James and Catherine Schmoyer dropped the ch from their name. According to their great-grand children, Harry Smoyer and Helen Rogers, maybe to make them more American or maybe it made them feel they fit in more to the surroundings.

After the Civil War, James Smoyer decided they needed a new house to go with their new name. So he razed the old bullet-proof walls and out of the same lumber he built a new two-story house.

Catherine also had projects. She was determined to prove to everyone that it was possible to can food. She would put the food into tin cans and send James to town. In town James would have the cans soldered closed. The food kept fine and a new way to store food was introduced in Kirksville.

James and Catherine had projects together too. When they left Pennsylvania, they stocked their wagon with seeds and small fruit trees. When the new house was built, they set out these trees and grew an orchard.

The Smoyer family pose for a picture in the early 1900s. From left to right are: Harry, Grace, Nellie, Helen, Augusta, Gladys, Ada, Virgil, and Jimmy Smoyer.



The east side of the second house built by James Schmoyer who settled in Northeast Missouri.



James and Catherine had five children: one son Harry and four daughters: Nellie, Grace, Augusta, and Alta. Of the five, only two ever married. Harry married Helen Boyd and they had one son. Soon after the birth of their son, Helen died, so Harry took his son and moved back into the old house with his sisters.

Alta, who married James Bell, was the second and last to marry. It's been told through the family that when Alta saw her beau turn the corner of the driveway, she threw all her clothes into a flour sack and ran from the house and wasn't heard from again until she was married.

Nellie, Grace, and Augusta never married. They always said it just wasn't the right thing to do. They didn't think it was right for anyone else to marry either. Grace opened a millinery store which was located where Taylor Flowers is on the square today. When Grace closed the store, she invested all the money she had in a coal mine that was opening north of town. The mine started off fine but soon ran into problems. The miners hit an underground river and the mine went broke. All the investors lost all they had invested.

The old, two-story house that was built by James Smoyer was burned to the ground in the fall of 1985. It was used as



Augusta, Harry, and Grace set in the front yard of the old home place northeast of Kirksville.

a practice drill for the Rural Fire District. The tracks of the trail the Smoyers' followed and the burial mounds of the people who fought in the Civil War can still be seen.

James and Catherine Schmoyer didn't realize that moving to Missouri would establish a family that would remain in and around Kirksville for seven generations. Today in Kirksville there are seven local businesses (Smoyer Trenching, Smoyer Cable Service, Smoyer Bulldozing, Sherry's Style-It-Right, Taylor Carpet Company, Taylor Flowers, and Roger's Trucking), whose owners can trace their roots to James and Catherine Smoyer.



Grace, Nellie, Augusta, and Alta outside the old home place. They are part of the second generation of Smoyer's in Kirksville.



James and Catherine Schmoyer came to Kirksville before the Civil War. They were headed west for the Oregon Trail but settled in Adair County because of land and water resources.

By Denny Smoyer

Farming in the Great Depression

The Depression was not only a tragedy in the larger towns and cities of America. Although many people thought the rural areas were not affected, because farming was a self-sufficient occupation, Northeast Missouri was hit. It was an era that few will forget.

The troubles that affected the Northeast Missouri started, partly, from the stock market crash on October 30, 1929—Black Tuesday, but the failure of the stock market was not the only reason Northeast Missouri was struck with hard times in the 1930s. The failure of most banks in the area caused the floor of the local economy to drop. Many people woke up and found their life savings gone. Others not only lost their savings, but found that money just deposited, lost as well. Wallace Farmer, a life-long resident of Adair County, remembers his father putting money in a local bank after buying a single pair of shoes. When he walked across the street, the bank closed, taking his freshly deposited money with it. Only three banks survived the stock market crash: the National Bank, the Bank of Kirksville and the Citizen's Bank.

Farm production was also curtailed because of the stock market. Low prices, bad weather conditions, and chinch bugs plagued the farmers from 1930 to 1940.

Wallace Farmer remembers 1933 being a difficult year for farming. The farmers had swamped the market with livestock in a rush to gain money; prices were much lower than the product was worth—so low that it was often more expensive to raise a crop or cattle than to let the land lie idle. In that same year, Congress passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) which raised the price of farm products for paying farmers not to raise crops or livestock. By 1934, 936 out of 1,455 farmers completed corn and hog reduction contracts. The government controlled 87% of corn land and 95% of hog production.

Along with low prices, 1933 was the year of the chinch bugs which invaded and destroyed the crops that the farmers had raised. Russell Murfin remembers, "First the bugs would clean up the wheat if they could find it. Then, they would head for the oats. When the oats were gone, they would finish up the corn." To deter the chinch bugs, creosote was applied with log-like ropes that were dragged around the field. The bugs would not cross the oil-like substance. Mr. Murfin also remembers, "I had a German neighbor once. He caught on to the idea that if he soaked binder twine with the creosote and stretched it around it would do the same thing. He would just keep soaking it. He had heard it said the bugs wouldn't go over it. So he did that and a few days after, I asked him how his binder twine worked out. 'Did the chinch bugs go over it?' I asked. He said 'Nope...but they went under it!'" He added, "There was just no way to keep all the bugs from crossing the creosote."

Another reason farming was rough was the drought of 1934. The land was so dry that the farmers were forced to feed their cattle the leaves from the trees because they were the only thing green around. It is said that when the cattle heard the sound of an axe, they would stampede in the direction of the noise.

In 1935, the rain caused farming as much trouble as the dryness did in the previous year. Rain prevented farmers from

getting crops into their fields. If the crop did get planted, it was too wet in the fall to harvest.

In the following year, the drought returned, worse than it had been in 1934. The dry weather also brought dust bowls upon the region. Many people remember a time when the dust made the horizon hazy and left a film of dust on porches. This dust was once valuable topsoil that was left idle in Kansas and Oklahoma.

In the summer of 1936, grasshoppers invaded the fields of Northeast Missouri, causing considerable damage to corn, soybeans, and pasture crops. To deter the grasshoppers, the government distributed poison bran mash through the Adair County Agriculture Extension Agency. It distributed 10,000 pounds of mash to 56 farmers to protect 5,000 acres in crops. The next year, farmers saved an estimated \$60,000 with the poison bran. In 1938, 194 farmers reported 266 cases of sleeping sickness in horses. Meetings were held to discuss the disease and the treatment.

Through all the hardships of farm life, the center of the community was the school. Since church attendance had dropped so drastically, people turned toward the school for social events. Parties were organized by the Literary, which was the equivalent of the PTA of today. At these parties, the neighbors would gather and eat watermelon and ice cream "if there was money for ice," recalls Sue Murfin. Cards were also a favorite pastime during the days of the Depression.

In the city, while soup lines fed many people, country people ate about the same. "It was one blessing we did have," Sue Murfin said. Faye Farmer remembers, "We raised the food we had. I never remember any shortage of food. In the summer time, I remember we picked blackberries. The whole family would go in the morning and pick them. In the afternoon, we would clean and can them. We had 105 quarts that year." Meat was plentiful also because of low prices for livestock. What couldn't be raised was available at the store down the road. Wallace Farmer recalls one man "...walked down to the store one cold day with roosters to buy groceries with and on the way over, it was so cold that one of them froze to death. He took it back home with him and ate it."

When the World War II began, prices rose and the lack of jobs turned into an abundance of jobs. The Depression taught many about conserving money and the need to prevent another. Wallace Farmer sums it up when he said, "I think it's hard to express the overall feeling of people. I didn't ever think it would be any different that what it was. There just wasn't any money. I didn't know there was any other way but to be hard up all the time."

By Christopher Lowe

