

REMEMBRANCES

AS REMEMBERED BY TOM GRABOW

We moved to Harshaw area in 1920, father was a blacksmith. Dad was hired by an attorney from Chicago, to run his sheep farm. Lived on Oneida Farms for 8 years, then moved to the Moffet farm on highway 8 (highway K), and lived there, then bought forty acres of timber land on Horsehead Road, There we raised potatoes. Sister and I won 1st prize at Oneida County Fair. M. Meredith was a potato farmer and we worked as kids picking potatoes at 5 cents a bushel. We went on strike for 10 cents a bushel. We went to school on Highway 8 (old highway K), at Alexander Stewart School, now serving as the town hall. We logged timber to build a house but as it happened, sickness took my mom and we moved to Oconomowoc, we shipped lumber to Oconomowoc and built our house there. Tom Grabow now lives in Oconomowoc.

AS REMEMBERED BY MARY BELTZ

I remembered some of the older residents, Mrs. Fahl, across the creek of Oneida, Jim and Elsie Williams, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Frangen, the Johnson's, the Rudis family, the Day's, Stook's, Michie's, Herman's, Handt, Buechler's, and the Spence family.

Mr. Day was head of the Gas Company in Milwaukee, and built a summer home on Oneida Lake. Mrs. Day lived there a good deal of the time, winters too. Mrs. Day had red hair and an English accent. They had 2 daughters, Marjory and Joan. They had a chauffeur, an Irish man, Andy Moffit, and Marjory had a beautiful palomino.

Old Herman Handt had a farm north of us, lived in a one room, dirt floor shack, and had been a fiddler and dancer and wore silk shirts at one time he told me.

He did see "woos", who no one else could see. He helped build the big barn on Hancock Lake Road, owned at that time by Henry Muntz. He worked hard all his life, for next to nothing.

Charlie Johnson use to go fishing in a little duck boat, hold the line in his teeth, and land muskies. In winter, he wood skid wood to burn, even if it was 20 degrees below zero, and never wear mittens, because he said if his hands were warm they'd stick to the chain, so he preferred to have then cold.

My folks moved up from Wauwatosa in 1918, I think. Mom and Willard stayed in the hotel in Rhinelander, The Oneida, which is the Fenlon now, to give Dad time to get a team of horses to haul the family and furniture out to our property. The first person my Dad met was Andy Michie, Andy was 10 years old and driving a team and smoking a corn cob pipe. The Michie family and the Beltz family soon became fast friends and this is continuing into the fourth generation.

The Jim Williams family were close neighbors, and Mae was my midwife when I was born. I was dressed and ready for company before Dr. Westgate got there. When Alvin was born, also at Camp Mitchell, the doctor asked Mom not to have him on the 4th of July, as he wanted to have the day off. So she had him on the 3rd. However Ken Retherford decided to be born on the 4th so Dr. Westgate didn't get the day off after all. And Al had fun teasing Ken Retherford whenever Ken did or said something silly by saying, "When you get as old as I am, you won't do things like that." What a difference a day can make.

The 4th of July was an exciting day, all the neighbors tried to be the first to set off a charge of dynamite, to wake everybody for miles around, about 4 A.M. Dad had the best spot, a big rock on

the top of the hill over looking Oneida Lake. He used about 3 or 4 sticks of dynamite, it would really jar you out of bed and would echo up and own the lake like thunder. Then the neighbors would set off their charges. Guess that is why I love the aerial bombs on the 4th of July so much.

The neighbors all used dynamite to clear the land, as the loggers had just left and stumps had to be removed. My Dad had one charge that didn't go off, he went to check on it and it blew up just as he bent over it. Blinded him so he had to crawl back home on his hands and knees. His eyes were full of dirt, so Dr. Westgate had to pop his eyes out of their sockets and wash them, but he saved his eyesight.

Willard, my older brother, and Mom use to walk up to school, Alexander Steward, now the town hall, to PTA meetings with a lantern for a light. Then she mentioned something to Mrs. Williams about the dogs howling behind their house and Mrs. Williams told her it was wolves! After that Dad would take us. Babies went too, as there was no such thing as sitters. They'd put the babies to sleep on the table in the back of the room. The kids would play outside until dark, while the meeting was going on. After the meeting, the fun began. They had box socials, dances, songfest, and regular programs. Sometimes the parents put on the programs, sometimes the kids furnished the entertainment. I remember one time they were singing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and Dad stood up to sing one part and Andy Michie would stand and reply, so sweet and clear I can still hear it yet in my mind.

We had a lot of entertainment in the neighborhood. Mrs. Ahles could do an Irish jig, Carl Alex, who worked for the Rudis family, could do a Russian dance sitting on his heels. Mrs. Meredith gave recitations to piano music. Plays and skits were put on. Andy Michie played the bagpipes, Clarence Johnson played the accordion. Dave Ahles played accordion for dances. Everybody did something.

The first teacher I remember was Cinderella Anderson. She boarded with the Michie family and was so nice. I use to walk to school with Willard just to "visit" once in a while before I was old enough to go myself. I do remember that Miss Frymouth was boarding with us. When I was just a baby Mom got a kick out of Miss Frymouth, because the only time she would have anything to do with me was when her young man would come to call, then she would hold me.

The first year I went to school was Willard's last year. Miss Bernstein was my first teacher. Dave and Ralph Ahles walked with Willard and I to school the first year. Dave and Ralph would row or walk across Hancock Lake, then we'd cross Oneida Lake. Sometimes it was so cold we'd have our eye lashes freeze shut and we'd have to look out for frost bite.

The next year they built a school over near the corners of Hancock Lake Road and Oneida Lake Road, Elizabeth Herman Michie was their teacher.

Miss Halstead was my next teacher. At Christmas the school always put on a program. The kids putting on plays, reciting poems, and singing songs. At the end Santa Clause always came with fruit and candy bags.

Mrs. Barg was out next teacher.

At home at Christmas time we would have a balsam tree with real candles on it. The candles weren't lit very often.

When I was nine and Al was six our house burned. All the neighbors came from miles around and saved everything they could, even Mom's piano. Daddy had built a workshop, which is now our house and we had 400 young chickens in it. The neighbors moved the chickens out and us in. (After a good cleaning!) The neighbors gave us a household shower to replace the things we had lost and needed most. We had wonderful neighbors!

With the insurance money Daddy bought a Model A and took us to see our relatives, his folks, in Ohio. He had an old aunt Polly who was Mennonite, I think, and she wouldn't even sit in the car. And I remember she wore dresses clear to the ground. That was the only real trip we ever took.

Later Dad took the body off the car and put a couple of boards over the gas tank for a seat for him and a plank platform on back so he could use it as a truck. I called it the "grasshopper." The truck became one of our fist school buses in the area. When the inner tube gave out Dad packed gunny sacks in the tires and sometimes they'd come flapping out and Dad would have to tuff them back in again.

Once in a while when we were in Camp Mitchell, Daddy would take us to school with the horse and sled. A lantern would be placed under the quilt to keep us warm. Snowballs from Neddie's flying feet would fly by us.

Dad once built what he called the "bathtub" as that is what it looked like. Sort of a toboggan with a high side. He built I think, about four boats, great ones, they were almost impossible to tip over. Once he built an ice boat and all the neighbors would gather around to enjoy the fun.

Dad also started the first kite contest up here. He built a box kite six feet high and had to use the car to fly it, as that day there was no wind. There was so many beautiful and fancy kites, I remember one was a sailing ship.

Years ago, we had the first crystal set, one of the first radios. You had to use earphones though and if you said anything, whoever had the earphones would yell "shut up" at you. The neighbors would all come to listen to the radio.

Willard had a milk route around the lake in the summer, he would go to Rahn's, Mr. Scarsbrick's and Mrs. Stutzman's. Mrs. Stutzman had a parrot, the first one I ever saw. Willard got a whole five cents a quart and rowed halfway around the lake besides.

In the winter the neighbors would get together nad make ice and would store it in ice houses.

Dad was Chairman of Woodboro for quite a few years and was on the Oneida County Board of Supervisors and the Oneida County Fair Board. We had a good fair then. There were horse races, circus acts and even the Grand Ole Opry, with Cousin Minnie Pearl and her price tag hat.

Dad was also the head of the airport committee when the airport was moved from the fairgrounds. President Eisenhower was invited to the airport dedication but he could not come. Col. Foss, South Dakota Nation Guard came, they were some of the first jets seen in the area. They flew wing tip to wing tip at 500 miles per hour. The sound almost driving you into the ground.

Dad was on the Forestry committee. The Oneida County Memorial Forest was his idea to honor the boys from here who had gone to war. At that time it was the largest county forest in the U.S.A.

During the war our men were gone so they had men come from Barbados to help with the potato harvest. Dad was in charge of the camp of 96 men, he had to be there at night also, so I was to tend the farm. Dad would take us to the camp sometimes and the men would play cricket. Mom and I would get to eat with them. At this time Al was in the Air Force and Willard was in Milwaukee. The last night the Barbadians were here they serenaded us, and sang "God Be With You Til We Meet Again." We were all misty eyed. The Barbadians were all housed at Hugo Sauer Nursery.

Elections use to be a big thing back then, with a real wing-ding of a party afterwards making up for the day, when you couldn't buy a drink. All the taverns were closed on election day. Speaking of that, my Dad did go with the revenueurs when they busted up a still on Trout Creek. I

remember them going off in the dark with lanterns in their hands. And my Dad talking about all the copper tubing.

For a few years they had a county drama contest, Dad was interested in those and was in quite a few plays. Mr. and Mrs. Spence, who lived on Windy Point (Oneida Lake) were in "Green Paint" and "Ironing Board" with him. Uncle Marion and Dad were in Thorton Wilder's "Our Town" one year, it won the county contest and it was put on at the State Fair that year.

It was an interesting life, from horse and wagon to jets, lanterns and candles to electricity, hand pump in the yard to indoor running water. Neighbors were good friends and worked with you on the bigger jobs, so even though you worked hard, life wa fun and you enjoyed your neighbors more. A good life to live and I'm glad I got to share it and got to know all the people who were our friends.

AS REMEMBERED BY EVERETT WILLIAMS

In January 1914, when I was 3 months old my folks moved from Cassian, a little settlement on the Milwaukee railroad, of which is now the town of Nokomis, to Indian Lake. Thee were five of us, my parents James and Elsie (Miller) Williams, my sisters Mae, Edna, our sister Lillian was born later.

While living on Indian Lake I remember the Indian burial grounds just across the bay from our house. I believe they were Chippewa. I was told most of the tribe died of scarlet fever, and the remaining moved to the Clearwater area. Little log houses were built on each grave, so food could be brought to the spirits. There was also a big pine tree down near the shoreline that had a wooded box nailed to it, it was used by the Indians to put tobacco in for the spirits. The dancing circle was still visible, and stayed visible for many years, before growing up with underbrush. I went to school at Alexander Stewart School, in the eight grade there were two of us in the class, myself and William Beltz.

Our post office was in Harshaw and in the early days we had to walk there every day, later we had mail delivery. Jim Lokkens brought the mail by horse and buggy. His brother August took over after Jim's death.

In the winter the snow plow would leave Rhinelander and be gone all winter. It would come out what is now highway K, at that time it was highway 14. The plow was a Holt caterpillar with a v-plow. One man would drive the tractor and another stood outside and lifted the plow with a chain hoist. If they broke down, the guys would have to fix it. You could hear them coming a couple days before they would get to you.

Only remember a few buildings in the village of Woodboro. The hotel had a dance hall and bar with rooms upstairs, it had been there since the lumbering days, and burned down in the 20s. Two stores, one is still there today, and has had many owners, the other store was across from it, it was owned by Louie Christian. He later sold it and moved west of Woodboro on what is now highway 8. Louie was killed on the railroad tracks in Woodboro, his model T touring car stalled on the tracks and he was hit by the night train.

There was a depot in Woodboro, located back of Weirs. There was a night train and two passenger trains daily.

Alex Bonek, he was the assessor for many years. He lived down by Roe Lake. Alex was an ole bachelor and rode a bicycle everywhere he went. He had a basket on the front of the bicycle that his little beagle rode in. He was found dead in the barn back of the town hall in Woodboro. The barn was used to put the horses in when people would come to the town hall.

Joe Stefankiewicz, the chairman for many years, lived where the Alpine Inn is on Squash Lake. The Pete Mikalauski family lived next to him.

John Warner was the town clerk for many years and lived on Squash Lake.

Doc Hornung, the veterinarian, had a model T Ford. In the winter he would put runners on the front and tracks on the back, so he could get around to take of sick cows and horses.

I remember the still, on Trout Creek, run by a man from Crandon. Many local people worked at the still in different jobs, this still had 3 steam boilers, eight 8 by 10 foot vats and a 40 foot cooling tower. It produced as much as 1500 gallons of 180 proof alcohol a day, until the feds destroyed it. One day a fellow fishing in Trout Creek noticed the still, he went up to look at it and was given a gallon of shine to keep quiet. Later he came back and wanted five gallons and they wouldn't give it to him, so he turned them in. The day they got caught there was no watchman. (Usually there was a day and night watchman.) The boss was walking out to his car, he always left his car out on the road, he also always carried a fishing pole. he met the feds coming in and they stopped him and asked him who he was and what he was doing there. He said he was fishing and fish weren't biting, and he walked to his car and drove away. The fellows at the still saw the feds coming and took off into the woods. One fellow was up on the cooling tower and he jumped down into the swamp. When the boss drove away he met two of his brand new chevy stake bed trucks coming back to load up. He told them not to go in. They drove over to my folks place on the Oneida Lake Road and hid the trucks back of the place almost to the big hill for over a month. The feds never caught anyone. They came back 2 or 3 days later and chopped up the tubing and blew up the boilers with dynamite. Although they did know who owned the still because they recognized one of the boilers. It was the third time they had blown it up, each time in a different location.

I remember one of the stake bed trucks tipping over up by Charlie Kling's driveway one night. There were one-gallon tins all over the place. The shine was put in gallon tin cans. It took a couple hours to get the truck out and the cans picked up.

My dad ran the log hoist on Hancock Lake that lifted the logs out of the lake and onto the train. The train would go down to the Cassian Mill. Hancock was used to store logs. The logs would be dumped on the ice and in the spring they would float. There were two booms on Hancock to hold the logs.

There was also a hoist on Oneida Lake. It was located near the public access on Schmidt Drive. Logs were also stored on Oneida. That was the same railroad, it ran from up near O'Day Lake down along Oneida and Hancock and joining the one on Oscar Jenne Lake Road, that ran to Cassian.

Pete Paulson had the first resort on Manson Lake, he had a log house and 3 log cottages when I was 13 or 14. Another early resort was owned by Duenk, now Feases' Shady Rest Resort.

On the west side on Manson Lake John Hess had a resort with ten cottages, he owned a lot of land in the Woodboro area.

The George Huebner family lived near Duck Lake (Gary Lake). They had a little log school house at the end of their driveway, that their kids went to.

I remember Len McCormick, he was the caretaker for the Day family. And he was an ole fisherman. He would catch fish and put them in barrels and ship them south on the train at Harshaw. In the winter he would hunt showshoe rabbits and put them in barrels and ship them south.

The dam in Hancock Lake went out in 1929, and was replaced with a cement one built by Joe Capazinske from Wausau. When the dam went out Hancock was nothing but a creek.

Charlie Kling was constable for many years. He was from Sweden, moving here from Illinois, where he worked in a buggy factory. Elmer Fahl owned land on Indian Lake and Charlie Kling was his caretaker. In about 1932 Charlie went to work for Tom Spence as a caretaker. Charlie had a black lab named Chuck, and he went everywhere with Charlie.

I remember Mr. Morris, a short stocky fellow, he was the road patrolman on highway 14. (The family lived near what is now the state potato farms on K.) He and his team would stop at Alexander Stewart School and he would play ball with us on our lunch hour, while his team fed.

My wife Wilma (White) and I lived in Woodboro many years with our three daughters Darlene, Sandra and Sherry.

AS REMEMBERED BY JOAN DAY BUSCHE

Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Day purchased their first property in Woodboro from the Oneida Farms Sheep Company in 1914 on the Northeast shore of Oneida Lake. (Formerly Rice Lake.) It was their summer home until 1939, when Mr. Day died. They were instrumental in obtaining electricity and phone service for Woodboro and maintaining the dam on Oneida Lake. After P. C. death, Mrs. Day built cottages and established a resort known as Woodland View, which she operated until 1949. After subsequent short term owners, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Kraetsch purchased it in 1954 and operated it for twenty-six years. it is now known as the Alpine and is owned by Deanne Von Arx and her son Scott.