

HAWARDEN.... HOW IT ALL BEGAN

An Introduction

We want to WELCOME everyone to what we hope to be a weekly column on Hawarden's early days and events through the 125 years of its existence. Cathy Noble and I will be writing these columns and hope you enjoy reading about the events of the past.

2011 has passed into the history books, and we can only imagine what stories the next 25 years will have to tell. We will leave that for the 150th Committee to write in 2037. We are going to concentrate on the last 125 years, and especially the last 25 years since 1987 when we celebrated Hawarden's Centennial.

Everyone loves to hear stories from the past, and over the years those stories continue to be told, many with additions and exaggerations, and many fall to the wayside and are forgotten and the stories lost to the pages of history. Most of the stories we hope to write will come from the Centennial Book or from the Sioux County Newspaper Archives, some will be stories handed down by grandparents, and octogenarians who have passed on and left their legacy. We will make every attempt to be as accurate as the stories were when we heard them, but we cannot be positively certain that everything is 100% correct. Just as much history changes with the telling of the events, it may be possible that some of our memories have added or subtracted events as time passes. We will attempt to include both the good and the bad in Hawarden's history, with most of the emphasis on the good.

Let's go back now and try to remember how we got to this place in time. Think of the world over 125 years ago, no global warming, no Iowa Caucus, no political phone calls. Sounds wonderful, but let's not forget; there was also no warm houses, no electricity or police protection, no indoor or outdoor plumbing, nothing but Iowa/South Dakota harsh winters, Indians native to the land, and the dreams and ambitions of immigrants to claim the land in this area and eventually bring their families to this wilderness they would call Sioux County

Most everyone who lives in Hawarden has noticed a "rest stop" or "turn around" about 3 1/2 miles south of Hawarden on top of a huge hill on the west side of Highway 12. How many of you know that there is a large rock with a marker there designating this as the Historical Site of the founding of Sioux County. The marker on the rock reads: "Sioux County founded here,

February 6, 1860, by four individuals, Fredrick M. Hubbell, W.H. Frame, Joseph Bell, and E.L.Stone, in a dug out over looking a ford into the Dakota Territory. The Centennial book tells us that they did so in order to take advantage of the procedure at that time of receiving a regulation county salary for county organizing. The Historical Rock and sign marks the site of the "dugout" where the four men lived in an area now known as "Scott's Bottom".

The county was named for the Sioux Native American tribe, which was once prosperous in Iowa and adjacent areas. The tribe was also known as the Dakota Tribe. Sioux means "Snakes" or "Little Snakes", probably also a good reason for calling the river separating the two territories the Sioux River.

This takes us to the first organized government in Sioux County. In the next few weeks we will further explore the "rise" of Calliope and the rivalry that developed between the eastern and western boundaries of Sioux County.

By: Mary Johnson

#1

Hawarden.... How it all began.

In order to take a look at the origins of Hawarden, one must look at the two things that seemed to be essential to settlement at the time – a river and then a railroad both of which provided the transportation necessary to occupy a “wild land.”

Hawarden actually had its beginnings north of where it is now located, in Calliope. The following is paraphrased from the Hawarden Centennial book.

Sioux County was first formed by four young men who decided to organize a county in order to receive a regulation county salary. The young men were Frederick M. Hubbell, W.H. Frame, Joseph Bell, and E.L. Stone. They founded the government site and organization was granted on January 20, 1860. At the time they were living in a dugout overlooking the Big Sioux River, in what is today known as “Scott’s Bottom.”



In the spring of 1861, a new town site was located at the north edge of what is now Hawarden next to the Big Sioux River. A courthouse, which also served as a fort was built. The building served as protection from outlaws and Indians, as well as being home for those who founded the settlement.

The settlement was named "Calliope," because Fredrick Hubbel – one of the founders – had been to Sioux City and heard a calliope (accent on the second syllable) playing on a steamboat. The musical instrument had made quite an impression on him, so he suggested that the settlement be named "Calliope," with the accent being on the first syllable instead!

In 1869, Calliope was made up of the courthouse and three log cabins, and had a population of ten inhabitants. Indian uprisings caused the people to return to Sioux City, and abandon the settlement. They returned two years later and the settlement continued.

More people began to settle in Calliope, and a hotel and more homes were built. A stage line was formed so that mail was possible as well as traveling to Sioux City.

In 1872, Calliope was a prospering settlement complete with homes and businesses. Controversy arose however when in the eastern part of Sioux country there was a Dutch settlement called "Orange City." The residents of Orange City felt that the county seat should be moved there – much to the irritation of the people of Calliope.

What follows is one of the great stories connected to this area, and will be detailed at a later date! Stay tuned for guns, keys, saws, sleds and ice!

#2

Hawarden.... Raiders from the east

In 1872, Calliope was a prospering settlement complete with homes and businesses. Controversy arose however when in the eastern part of Sioux country there was a Dutch settlement called "Orange City." The residents of Orange City felt that the county seat should be moved there – much to the irritation of the people of Calliope.

On January 21, 1872, Henry Hospers, A.J. Betten, J. Pellemulder, and Judge Pendleton tried to persuade the officials of Calliope to relinquish their status as county seat. Their proposal was rejected, so on the next day 55 men with horses and sleighs converged on Calliope intending to "procure" the county books, the safe containing the county money, and the county seal. They were aided by men in 25 sleighs from the Rock Valley-Hull area.

The "raiders" threatened violence unless their demands were met, and were well armed with guns and revolvers. Eventually they got their hands on what they thought was the key to the courthouse, but it turned out to be the wrong key.



It was at that point that the raiders resorted to "drastic measures" and chopped open the lean-to where the safe was kept, backed a sleigh up to the opening, and loaded the safe and the record books onto it. On the way back to Orange City, the sleigh went through the ice on the Floyd River and had to be pulled out by a team of mules so it could be delivered to officials in Orange City.

Ironically, this very incident was referred to this week in an online CNBC article entitled "Sioux County, Iowa: Ground zero for farm boom." While trying to explain the high land prices in Sioux County, Iowa, the article mentioned fertile land, weather patterns, and demand for grain. However, other factors were also mentioned – emotion and competitiveness.

The following is a quote from the article: "Dutch immigrants flocked to Sioux County in the mid-to-late 1800s, in search of cheaper land to carry on their farming heritage. They brought with them a culture of faith and frugality that exists today, with farmers flush with cash and deep emotional roots to their land."

“But they also carried with them an intense enmity between neighbors and outsiders. Such rivalries were so intense that, back in 1872, a fight over where to set up the county seat reportedly prompted farmers and townsfolk in Hull and Orange City to raid the log courthouse in Calliope, Iowa, and steal a safe with all the county property records in it.”

Finally, in January 1873, the Sioux County government was officially transferred to Orange City through a legal process including petitions and an election.

In spite of the loss of the county seat, the town of Calliope kept growing, and in 1878 the Milwaukee Railroad established a station there. In the same year Calliope was platted and placed among the established towns of Iowa.

At the time, the Northwestern Railroad was looking to extend its line from Maurice through Calliope and the Dakotas, and planned to build a station in Calliope. Unfortunately they were unable to obtain a grant of land from the government, so they decided to build the station a mile south of Calliope.

A new settlement sprang up around the railroad station, called “Hawarden.”

#2

Hawarden.... Raiders from the east

In 1872, Calliope was a prospering settlement complete with homes and businesses. Controversy arose however when in the eastern part of Sioux country there was a Dutch settlement called "Orange City." The residents of Orange City felt that the county seat should be moved there – much to the irritation of the people of Calliope.

On January 21, 1872, Henry Hospers, A.J. Betten, J. Pellemulder, and Judge Pendleton tried to persuade the officials of Calliope to relinquish their status as county seat. Their proposal was rejected, so on the next day 55 men with horses and sleighs converged on Calliope intending to "procure" the county books, the safe containing the county money, and the county seal. They were aided by men in 25 sleighs from the Rock Valley-Hull area.

The "raiders" threatened violence unless their demands were met, and were well armed with guns and revolvers. Eventually they got their hands on what they thought was the key to the courthouse, but it turned out to be the wrong key.



It was at that point that the raiders resorted to "drastic measures" and chopped open the lean-to where the safe was kept, backed a sleigh up to the opening, and loaded the safe and the record books onto it. On the way back to Orange City, the sleigh went through the ice on the Floyd River and had to be pulled out by a team of mules so it could be delivered to officials in Orange City.

Ironically, this very incident was referred to this week in an online CNBC article entitled "Sioux County, Iowa: Ground zero for farm boom." While trying to explain the high land prices in Sioux County, Iowa, the article mentioned fertile land, weather patterns, and demand for grain. However, other factors were also mentioned – emotion and competitiveness.

The following is a quote from the article: "Dutch immigrants flocked to Sioux County in the mid-to-late 1800s, in search of cheaper land to carry on their farming heritage. They brought with them a culture of faith and frugality that exists today, with farmers flush with cash and deep emotional roots to their land."

“But they also carried with them an intense enmity between neighbors and outsiders. Such rivalries were so intense that, back in 1872, a fight over where to set up the county seat reportedly prompted farmers and townsfolk in Hull and Orange City to raid the log courthouse in Calliope, Iowa, and steal a safe with all the county property records in it.”

Finally, in January 1873, the Sioux County government was officially transferred to Orange City through a legal process including petitions and an election.

In spite of the loss of the county seat, the town of Calliope kept growing, and in 1878 the Milwaukee Railroad established a station there. In the same year Calliope was platted and placed among the established towns of Iowa.

At the time, the Northwestern Railroad was looking to extend its line from Maurice through Calliope and the Dakotas, and planned to build a station in Calliope. Unfortunately they were unable to obtain a grant of land from the government, so they decided to build the station a mile south of Calliope.

A new settlement sprang up around the railroad station, called “Hawarden.”

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Chapter 3:

A RICH LAND WITH A RICH HISTORY

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Contrary to the imagination of most people, counties in the 1800's were not often organized by the meek and mild farmers and immigrants looking for a better land. It was more often shrewd business men and trappers who blazed the way into land that had only been inhabited by wild animals and Indians.

Ken Hansen in his book *Calliope* states that Frederick M. Hubbell (one of the four organizers in 1860), left Sioux County in early 1861 (a year after it was founded). It is thought that Hubbell had made enough money to take the next step in his career path and moved on to eventually become known as Iowa's richest man.

Hubbell did return to Sioux County on more than one occasion after leaving, to help clear up problems and litigations over early fiscal policies. Hubbell also returned in 1913 to point out the site of the original birth place of the county.

It is reported that Frederick Hubbell was born in Connecticut in 1839. His father was a stone mason. In 1858 the Hubbell family headed west to do land speculating in Iowa. After making the money they hoped to make while in Iowa the Hubbell's soon moved back to Connecticut. The young son, Frederick chose to stay in Iowa and prospered both in wealth and ability.

Frederick worked in the Land Office in Des Moines, and as the area quickly became populated, he realized that his job there would soon be over. He then took a similar job in Sioux City, Iowa, as the border between civilization and wilderness continued to move west. At that time Sioux City had a population of 150. Hubbell dates his arrival in Sioux City as December 1859. He petitioned for the organization of Sioux County in January of 1860 and by 1861 was working back in Des Moines as a law clerk. He became a partner in the firm in 1862 and from then on his fortunes increased by leaps and bounds. In 1866 Hubbell and four others built Des Moines' first street car line. In 1867 the Equitable Life Insurance was founded by Hubbell and continues to be a force in the insurance industry.

In 1884 Hubbell purchased the twenty room mansion on eight acres

of land in Des Moines that was sold as a result of bankruptcy. It is reported that Hubbell paid less than \$50,000 for the home and property that was built shortly after the Civil War at a cost of an estimated \$250,000.00. The mansion served the family well until later years when because of its high upkeep the mansion was abandoned. Terrace Hill received new life when Robert Ray, Governor of Iowa made it the official governor's residence in the 1970's.

Frederick Hubbell took steps early in his life to assure that his financial empire would be secure in his later years and in the years following his death. He had a trust drawn up that has proved a tribute to his wisdom as a businessman and a lawyer. The document consisting of 32 pages has weathered the tests of time and challenges in the courts. His wealth continues to grow long after his death in 1930 at the age of 91. Quite an accomplishment for a young man who quit school in Connecticut at the age of 13 because he felt he knew more than his teachers.

Sioux County can certainly feel gratified to know that this land we have come to love and cherish was organized by a man who definitely knew a good value when he saw one. Just as Frederick Hubbell's wealth has

magnified itself over the years, so has Sioux County. Rich in land and rich in history.

Much more information about this interesting man in our history can be found in the book, *CALLIOPE* written by Ken Hansen 1982

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Chapter #4 INDIAN TROUBLE

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Before going further with the development of Calliope and Sioux County, I think we need to turn back the pages to the 1860's when Sioux County was still inhabited by only trappers, the four men who settled the county, and of course American Indians.

The four settlers of Sioux County were well aware of the original inhabitants of this land they laid claim to. The log cabin courthouse they built was constructed as a protection from Indian attacks as referenced by mention of portholes that had been drilled through the walls. Rumors of the Spirit Lake Massacre which took place around Okoboji in the winter of 1857 had reached Sioux County.

The year of 1862, as peaceful as it began, did make the history books with stories of war and rumors of Indian uprisings.

The stories tell us that a 60 year old Sioux Chief named Little Crow was living with his people on a reservation in Minnesota. Little Crow had signed a treaty that caused his band of tribesmen to give up a large portion of their land in Minnesota in exchange for money, food and supposedly peace. As with most treaties in those days, the money was slow in coming. The previous two years had produced much bad weather and poor crops. The Indians were out of food and starving and money from Washington had not arrived. In August of 1862 (Calliope by Ken Hansen) Little Crow and other Chiefs went to the Indian agent and begged for food for their people. The agent refused, even though the government warehouse was full. The Indians returned 500 strong and broke into the warehouse taking what they needed to survive. The Army officer in charge at the time of the raid sympathized with the Indians and convinced the agent to let the group have their supplies until the money came from Washington. The Indians quickly left with their goods without violence. Everyone left but Little Crow who refused to go until he was assured that his tribe at the lower agency would also have food. Again, the promises were not kept and Little Crow was forced to beg for food.

The situation was not over. Later that same month, some young braves stole some eggs from a farmer, and on a dare by their comrades, ended up killing the farmer and four other people. Little Crow knew what the outcome would be. Rather than wait for the inevitable, Little Crow led his people in war against the whites and started the Minnesota Massacre or Little Crow's War. The Sioux cut a wide and bloody path. Hardly any settlements were spared attack. Survivors quickly fled their new homes, leaving some settlements empty for several years.

It is not sure whether the Sioux traveled through Sioux County in their retreat to the Dakota Territory from Minnesota. The word of the battles traveled faster than the Indians themselves. Calliope was quickly deserted. It is thought that the news of the fighting was delivered to Calliope by the settlers who fled from Sioux Falls, after the Sioux attacked there.

Even though most of the Indians were captured, the remaining free Indians kept things unstable in the area. Hardly any white man ventured into Sioux or any of the adjoining counties for quite some time.

Calliope remained deserted until sometime in 1864. County business was conducted in Sioux City. No small matter like an Indian war could keep the officers of Sioux County from doing their duties and especially collecting their pay. When they did venture back to Sioux County, the log courthouse they had built was still

standing much to their surprise. Had it not been destroyed by the Indians, they had expected it to be burned by the many prairie fires that started up almost every year in the fall.

Whatever time the officers spent in Sioux County before the Sioux uprising, it is believed that they spent even less time there afterward.

While the original organizers of the county continued to spend their time in the safety of Sioux City, reports of new settlers braving the dangers to make the Calliope area their home began to appear,

Next Week: COME TO CALLIOPE

HAWARDEN.....how it all began

Calliope

#5

By: Cathy Noble



To many of us, Calliope is a name that may conjure up a few memories, but not of the significance the little town truly deserves. My generation might remember the little “Calliope Store,” primarily because it was the only store in the area open on Sundays. Others may remember the huge brick building that once housed a body shop. Few if any, realize the significance of the location. Not only was Calliope the original county seat, the first school in the county was established there, and it had a thriving main street. Read the excerpt from the 1883 article below, to gain a new insight and appreciation for where it all began – Calliope, Iowa.

Today’s chapter on Hawarden’s history is partially reprinted from the Hawarden Independent, May 17, 1883. The article was entitled: “Calliope and its Businesses.”

The Banner County of Iowa

To the rich men of the east, we say come. To the man of moderate means, we say come. To the man who is working his life away to support his wife and little ones, when there is not a lingering ray of hope to brighten his path,

to him we say, throw off the yoke of bondage and come to this magnificent county and be a man among men, independent as the breezes that blow over our broad and fertile prairies.

Calliope

One of the most important towns in the county and the metropolis is the young city of Calliope. It is beautifully located upon the east bank of the Big Sioux River far above the high water mark, and about mid-way between Sioux City and Sioux Falls. The larger portion of the town is on a high dry bottom; while the smaller, situated near the Northwestern Depot, is the only part ever covered with water, and that only about a week, three or four times a year.

Calliope has made rapid strides in population and wealth. Two years ago the votes cast were about twenty-five. At present there are over two hundred and twenty five voters, making our population over one thousand. Her citizens are mainly Americans of the enterprising and energetic class. Social, refined and intelligent.

The mill and all the machinery is in place on the banks of the Big Sioux, and as soon as the water subsides, the dam will be completed. The time is not far distant when this water will all be utilized for this purpose and mills and manufacturing will line the river. Capitalists should take heed of this matter.

Nearly all kinds of business is presented in our midst and are as follows: Four Lumber yards, Six general stores, Three grocery stores, Two drug stores, Three hardware stores, Six restaurants, Six hotels and many private boarding places, Two banks, Two newspapers, One book store, One large furniture store, Eight land and Insurances offices, Three blacksmith shops, One temporary photograph gallery, Two livery stables, Four draymen (constantly employed), Three harness shops, One shoe shop, One large clothing store, Two agricultural Implement dealers, Two millinery stores, One wagon shop, Five saloons, Four practicing physicians, Four attorneys.

We have three church organizations: The Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational. The Presbyterians already have a fine church erected costing something over \$1800.00. The Methodists have one in the course of

construction and will be finished this coming summer at a cost of not less than \$2500.00 The Congregationalists have just organized their society and hold their meetings in the Northwestern Depot..

Quite a large school house was built here two years ago, costing over two thousand dollars, capable of seating two hundred scholars. It is already found to be too small and another is to be built in the south part of town this Fall, the appropriation having already been made for this building.

Calliope undoubtedly will make as large a place as any inland city in the state. The country surrounding it possibly can be equaled but cannot be excelled in the world, lying at the junction of two great rival railroads, where there always will be competition in freights and will always afford the best of market for all kinds of farm produce

To those thinking of changing their location we would invite them to visit Calliope, before locating elsewhere.

Pretty impressive! The people of Calliope had been deeply disappointed at the loss of the county seat, but were excited when they heard that the Northwestern Railroad Company planned to build a branch line through their town. That would give them two railroad lines, and open the doors for even greater opportunities!

However, once again, the people of Calliope were to be disappointed, when the line was built about a mile south, in a new site named "Hawarden."

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Prosperity, Small Pox and Rumors.

Mary Truesdell Johnson

Even though Calliope was no longer the Capitol of Sioux County, it continued to prosper for several more years. The stage coach continued to run between Sioux City and Sioux Falls until 1879 when the new north-south railroad eliminated the need for a stagecoach. This was an asset to the area and if anything, the growth of Calliope was more energetic after the raid on the courthouse than before.

This good luck and prosperity was not to last however. Hard times were just around the corner.

At the end of December 1880, the owner of the General Store in Calliope made a trip to Sioux City by way of Elk Point to purchase supplies for his business. As Ken Hansen reports in his book CALLIOPE, the business man spent the night on his trip in the town of Jefferson in Dakota Territory.

The story tells that the bed given to the man to sleep on had been slept on a few nights previously by a man suffering from Small Pox. Unaware of the impending disaster, the Calliope business man continued on his mission and returned to his home and business without a worry. A few days after his return home, he became ill and was bedridden for several days. He began to feel better and eventually went back to work at his store, meeting customers and helping them with their purchases. This unsuspecting man had no idea that he had small pox and was spreading the disease to every customer he came in contact with. A few days later, one of his customers who had previously survived the dangerous disease came into the store and immediately recognized the symptoms the proprietor displayed and informed him and the town of the fate that was in store for them. The results were devastating.

The store owner was immediately quarantined, but it was too late. A full fledged small pox scare had consumed the town.

As the news of the epidemic spread the consequences were great. Trains would no longer stop in Calliope under any circumstances. During one of the worst winters of all time the town was unable to receive supplies by rail or any other means. Every town in the area posted guards at their entrances to make sure that none of the "infected Calliopers" wandered into their towns. No mail could be received in Calliope and none could be sent. It soon became a rumor that spread as fast as the disease itself that everyone in Calliope was either dead or dying.

Out of desperation, because their supplies were so low, two men from Calliope headed toward Portland (now Akron) with a team of horses, a buggy and a shot gun on a bitterly cold morning. They were not going to return without the supplies they desperately needed for the people to survive. They managed to slip into Portland before the town's guards were posted, and entered the hotel causing quite a panic. Only one man dared to approach the men from Calliope. When the Calliopers told their story of desperation, he agreed to secure the provisions for them, but refused any money in return. He feared the money would be contaminated with small pox germs.

For all the rumors that were spread about the unstoppable death in Calliope, the actual records show sixteen confirmed cases of small pox with only two deaths. Both deaths were reported to have been caused as much by the severe cold of that winter as from the disease itself.

Many untrue rumors spread about the town and the disease that later were discounted as just that....untrue rumors. Unfortunately, the damage had been done. The town had incurred a legacy that would not soon be forgotten. Small pox returned the next winter, but the town was prepared and recognized the symptoms. Their quick response proved valuable and only one person died that year.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN ICE BOXES AND ICE HOUSES

Chapter #7

By: Cathy Noble

When is the last time you heard someone refer to the refrigerator as an "ice box"? Unless you have been lucky enough to be around grandparents, great grandparents, or others of that age, you might not have - - - ever.

The refrigerator that we all know got its start using ice - a product that we now need a refrigeration unit of some kind to make. Back "in the day," however, there was no way to make ice, other than cold temperatures and water, but what happened during the sweltering months of a Midwest summer? That's where the ice houses came in. Ice houses stored the blocks of ice that had been cut from rivers such as the Big Sioux during the winter months.

Ice houses were big business in the river town of Calliope, and later in Hawarden as well. They not only provided ice for the growing communities, they provided jobs as well. A dam was first built in Calliope in 1877, to provide a large body of still, deep water that was necessary for the formation of good ice. After that, ice harvesting, storage and delivery began in earnest.

The Calliope Ice Company supplied ice to The Northwestern Railroad Company, the cities of Ireton, Alcester, and Beresford as well as the citizens of Calliope. Later, more ice houses were built supplying the area with more ice, and jobs.

This new industry also meant people no longer had to harvest their own natural ice or snow. Instead ice men delivered ice to people's homes. The ice man delivered large blocks of ice not only to people's homes, but to their ice boxes as well. People would post a sign on their house indicating how much ice they would like: .25, .50 or .75 cent blocks. The ice man would cut the required amount of ice, weigh it on a scale, pick it up with an ice tong tool, put the ice on his shoulder, and deliver it to the house.

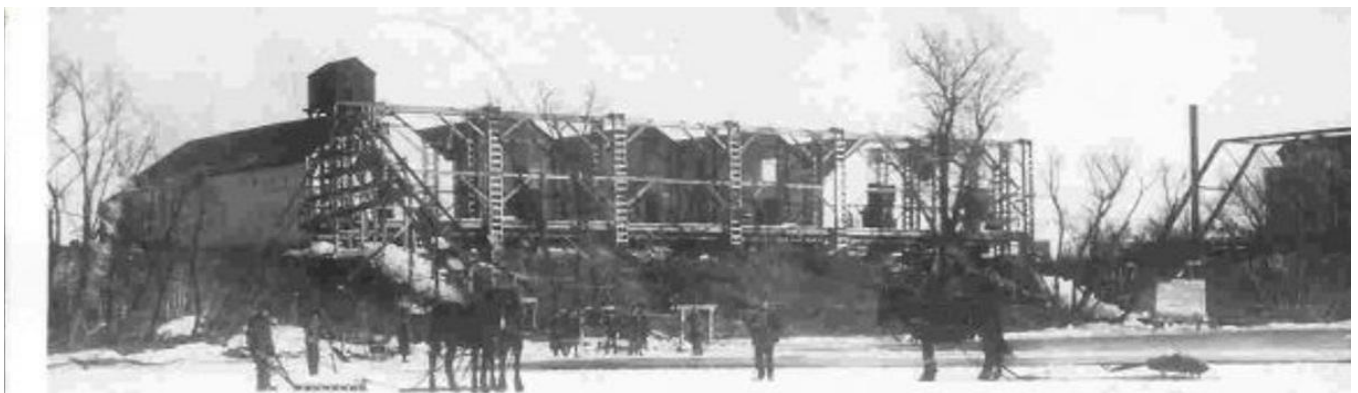
Children would scamper behind the ice wagon, waiting for it to stop and make a delivery. Often the ice man would treat the children to the ice chips left from "cutting" the required size block of ice for the customer. Other children collected the chips to take home for their mom to make home-made ice cream.

The block of ice would then be brought into the house, and placed in the ice box, where it would last for two to three days.

The ice box made it possible for people to store their foods safely and for longer periods of time. One compartment in the ice box was used for food storage, while the other housed the large block of ice. Ice boxes were usually insulated with tin, zinc or sawdust to help preserve the cold. The ice eventually melted, needing to be replaced. At the bottom of the ice box was a drip pan that needed to be emptied on a daily basis.

Back then, having an ice box was a luxury - a concept that is difficult to imagine in a world where most of our refrigerators defrost themselves automatically and ice cubes can come right out of the door! However, through ingenuity, hard work and the resources surrounding them, settlers to this area were able to create industries that made their everyday life easier!

Once again, Calliope's (and later Hawarden's) location as a river and railroad town contributed to its well-being and development.



Calliope Ice Houses circa 1920's, Horses cutting the cakes of ice. Photo courtesy of Don Schlueter.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

LIQUID GOLD FROM THE SIOUX RIVER

Chapter #8

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

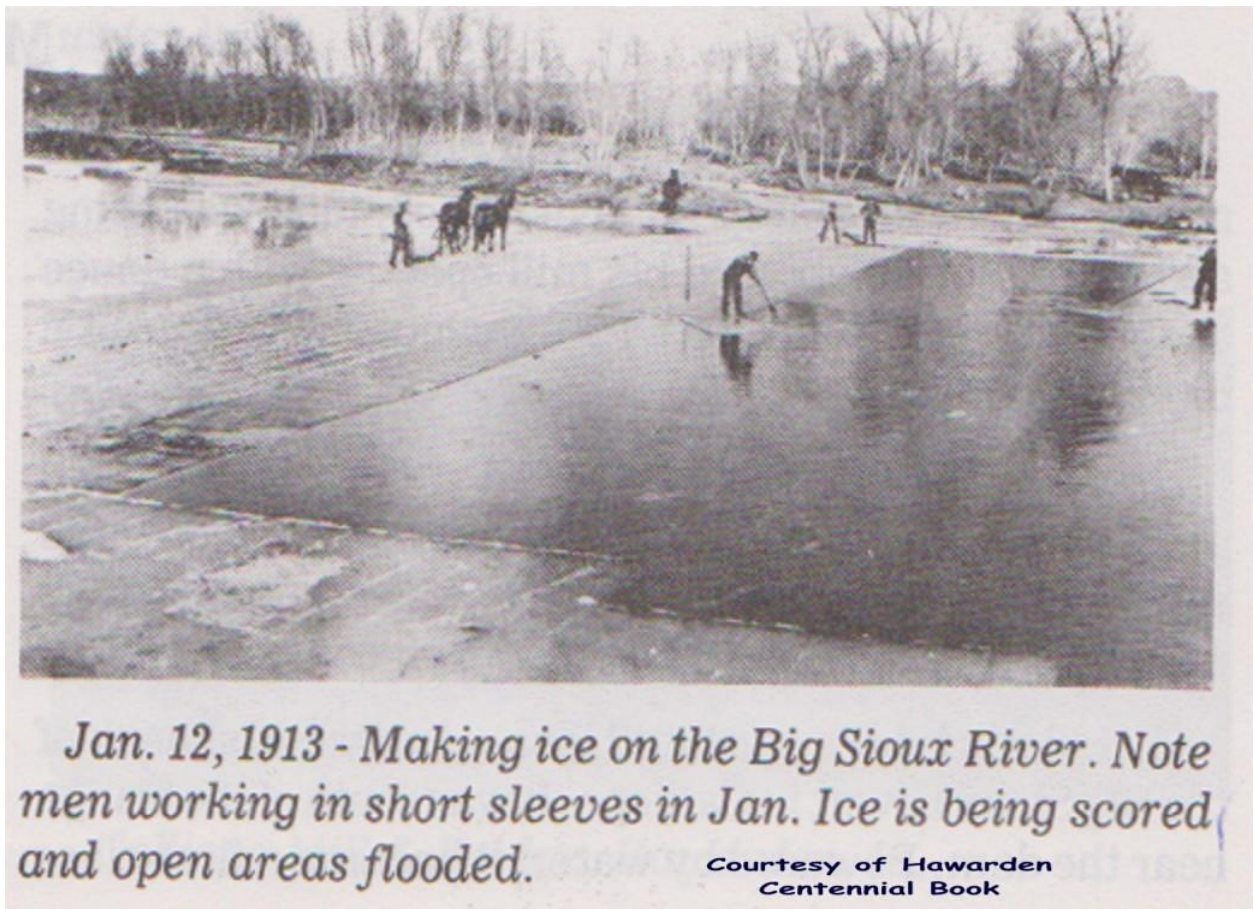
As we learned last week, Ice houses and Ice harvests provided the citizens of Hawarden and Calliope the luxury of having fine quality ice readily available for their use, as well as employment for many men and teenage boys. The ice business was one of Hawarden and Calliope's best industries and although the harvest season was extremely short, the Ice Company eventually expanded its distribution radius thus creating year round work for a considerable crew, delivering ice, and managing the Ice houses.

One of these young men who spent several of his Christmas' vacations harvesting ice in the early 1940's is Hawarden resident, Don Schlueter. Don's family was among the pioneer residents of Calliope. His great aunt Lettie Storts lived in the first wood frame house built in Calliope by her grandfather Alexander Johnson.

Don tells that the ice harvest started in the fall when men were hired to cut willow saplings that were tied in bundles. The ice company stretched a cable across the river above the dam and the men loaded the willow bundles in a barge and placed them in the water. Rocks, sand, and later concrete chunks were placed on the willows to hold them in place. This was repeated over and over until the dam was high enough to provide a sufficient ice field and slow down the current so the ice would freeze thick enough to harvest. The dam had to be rebuilt every fall because the high water in the spring washed it out.

When the ice was thick enough to harvest, it was scored with a gas powered circular saw that had a guide for the proper width of the ice cakes. Before the 1920's the ice was cut with work horses. The horses were harnessed to a tool resembling a plow. It had sharp blades on the bottom and horses pulled it over the ice as it cut. It took several passes to cut through a cake of ice. A man walked behind the horse to keep the blade upright and guide it. When the gas powered saw became popular it only took one cut to go through the ice cake. When the ice was ready to harvest the ice cakes were broken apart with spud bars and

pushed by men with pike poles to the open channel of the river and elevated up the chutes to the conveyor that carried them up to the ice house.



The Hawarden Independent of January 25, 1939 reported that “a crew of 50 men was employed and they will be cutting and storing about 5,000 tons of ice. Each cake of ice weighs about 225 pounds and when the machinery is working full capacity the ice is elevated into the ice house at a rate of 30 to 40 cakes per minute.” Don Schlueter tells that one man in the ice house would grab the cakes as they came down the chute and his partner would hook his tongs into the rear of the cake. The cake would be pushed to the rear of the house and put in place. This would continue until they reached the front. You then would start over on the second layer and continue until the ice house was filled to capacity. The scaffold in front of the houses had to be raised with chain hoists as the houses filled up.

“It was all hard hand work, but it provided a lot of jobs for men who were looking for work. “ Don Schlueter

One hundred years ago this article appeared in the Hawarden Independent dated January 11, 1912: "Wallace and Knight started the ice harvest on Monday with a force of about 40 men. The ice is now about twenty inches thick and is the finest quality ever put up on the Sioux River. Right after the first freeze this enterprising firm put a force of men to work and shoved all the dirty slush ice over the dam. They are now putting snow scrapers on the ice and the result is that every cake is a perfect piece of congealed crystal."

The last ice house on the Sioux River in Calliope burned and was badly damaged in 1948. The owners at that time were Jess Vearrier and C.E.McCormick. Rather than rebuild the damaged ice house they purchased the Brick Block in Calliope (which consisted of five buildings) and built an artificial ice plant. The river was no longer their source for ice. They retained the name Hawarden Ice Company, and it continued to serve Hawarden and surrounding towns until 1951.

The only remains of this unusual and colorful part of our history are the cement foundations that can be found in the area of Carr's Landing on the east banks of the Sioux River north of Hawarden.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THE GLOVES ARE OFF

Chapter: 9

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

In October of 1882, it became apparent to the citizens of Calliope that they needed to “stake their claim”. Calliope had grown significantly, but that “thorn in their side” settlement called Hawarden was also growing and Calliope decided to legally set their boundaries so that everyone was aware of who was in control. A vote was held to incorporate their town site known as Calliope as well as the southern territory called Hawarden. The vote was 79 in favor of the Incorporation and 15 against. Calliope officials now had control over the entire area where the two towns were located.

The fight was on and the gloves were off. This turn of events marked the beginning of a long and bitter rivalry between Calliope and Hawarden. A rivalry that may have equaled or exceeded the old opposition between Calliope and Orange City.

Calliope’s real growth spurt had begun in 1880 when C.W.Cutler and Alex Johnson who were proprietors of the town site offered free lots to promote the town’s growth. Homes and business sprang up and farmers soon learned that they could get fair prices and honest weight for their grain in Calliope. This brought many customers and a large trade in grain and other merchandise which helped Calliope experience the growth it had been hoping for. A large amount of trade came from South Dakota and the people soon realized that a bridge was needed across the Sioux River. A committee with members from both Sioux County and Union County was formed and at their second meeting they awarded a contract to a company from Ohio to build the bridge.

After the small pox epidemic and severe winter of the early months of 1881, the large amounts of accumulated snow started to melt, causing the Sioux River to rise so high that all the railroad bridges and many of the tracks were damaged or swept away. This slowed any expansion until repairs could be made. In June of 1881 the bridge to South Dakota was completed and the future again looked bright. The town boasted three hotels with plenty of guests, one doctor, one minister, five school teachers, two black smiths and six or seven carpenters. Calliope reported \$85,000.00 worth of improvements to dwellings and businesses in 1882. All buildings old and new were occupied. The Bank of Calliope was organized in May of 1882.

While Calliope was growing in the north, the Northwestern Railroad was also establishing itself in the area called Hawarden in the southern location. The Calliopiers claimed that the Northwestern Railroad was trying to destroy their town and enrich the town of Hawarden where they owned a large share of land. Calliope also claimed that the town of Hawarden could never be built up, as the land was low and swampy and anything built there would be washed away in the spring floods. This did come to pass in the spring of 1883 when the flood waters invaded Hawarden and washed part of it away. The Calliopiers came down to gloat. They came in their boats and paddled up and down Hawarden's business district offering to be of assistance, with an "I told you so" look on their faces.

Instead of the flood convincing the railroad that Hawarden was a poor investment, a group of men from Hawarden convinced the railroad to spend a great deal of money building diversion ditches to prevent another occurrence.

The railroad also built an eating house and hotel in Hawarden as well as managed to have a town law enacted that prevented Calliope hotel owners and delivery drivers from approaching the depot to solicit customers. This order was immediately enforced and it wasn't long until a ruckus arose. A hotel owner and others from Calliope went to the depot with willow clubs in hand to challenge the law. Several of the Calliopiers ended up in jail charged with conspiracy. The trial was held in Ireton and eventually the Calliopiers were acquitted of the charges against them.

Incidents such as these were frequent and Calliope would not back down. The May 28, 1885 issue of The Independent stated: "***as fast as one store goes out of Calliope another and a better one comes in. Calliope is bound to live, although her misfortunes are many and her enemies have worked hard, she is a brave little burg and still defies them. She will continue to flourish and be a city when Dry Creek shall have washed the little, insignificant place which sets herself up as her rival down the Big Sioux.***" Strong words and wishful thinking.

By the fall of 1885 many Hawarden residents and business men decided they no longer wanted to be under the control of Calliope. It was very obvious that the Calliope city fathers were extremely loyal to Calliope and not willing to help Hawarden in any of their endeavors. Notices of a plan to free themselves from the domination of Calliope were posted on trees, buildings, etc. in Hawarden to build up support for a change. The August 20, 1885 issue of the Independent (still published in Calliope) stated that: "***signs have been posted in the area to the effect that the south end of the incorporated town of Calliope (known as Hawarden) would attempt to draw off from parental protection and set up housekeeping for itself at the September court. This stripling, like all others, as soon as she is large enough to toddle, thinks she can hoe her own row. But Mother Calliope says "no" and will at once proceed to administer chastisement to the rebellious, ungrateful young upstart.***"

Next week: Divorce trial – Hawarden accuses Calliope of cruel and inhuman treatment. It's the Indians vs. the Pollywogs!

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

MR. CALLIOPE AND MISS HAWARDEN MEET IN COURT

Chapter 10: By Mary Truesdell Johnson

Last week's article told us that Hawarden filed papers in Orange City asking for a divorce. Calliope residents did not understand why any businessman would throw away a splendid location and move into "the swamp at the mouth of Dry Creek," but many did. Nash and Lynn started a branch store in Hawarden and thereby lost trade in Calliope, so the Calliope store was closed. J.P. Lind also sold out to his partner as he had been coaxed by some men in Hawarden to move there and thereby drawing the Swedish trade from South Dakota. Mr. J.W. Dubs moved his clothing store to Hawarden because, as rumor had it, he was offered a years free rent in the Hawarden location.

The rumors of the discontent between Calliope and its nemesis Hawarden were soon circulating around the surrounding cities and area. In 1886 the Alton Democrat published this comment: **"The facts of the matter are that Hawarden and Calliope are two boss towns and we'd rather hold an olive branch between them, get a good old Methodist minister and a marriage license, witness their marriage and help truck them into a trundle bed of success, than have the best 640 acre farm in Sioux Co.! Mr. Calliope and Miss Hawarden the Democrat loves you and wishes you both happiness and prosperity, but bless your sweet souls, drop your quarrels and marry for keeps."**

In September of 1886 "Divorce Papers" were filed, and despite all of Calliope's warnings and dire predictions about the foolishness of such an action the date for the trial was set. The trial resembled a true divorce trial. Hawarden claimed that Calliope residents held all the offices of the city and they refused to spend any money on the Hawarden end of town for even the smallest improvements. Hawarden residents reasoned that for this reason they were entitled to a "divorce" by reason of cruel and inhuman treatment. The trial lasted three days, and much to the surprise and dismay of the Calliope "fathers", the jury decided in favor of Hawarden. Hawarden was an entity in its own right. Calliope had lost control.

In spite of the court's decision, the feud remained intense and it became no less bitter as the years progressed. In school the Calliope children were referred to as the Calliope Indians by the Hawarden children and the Calliopers referred to the Hawarden children as Hawarden Polywogs due to the insistence that Hawarden was a swamp. When it came time to build a larger school to hold the growing population in the two towns, the question was not where the best location for the school was, but which town would it be located in. Citizens of each town worried that the location of the school would determine the success of the town and the winner of the feud.

There were occasions when the two towns put down their "hatchets" and worked together, but those times were the exception, rather than the rule.

The December 1886 issue of THE INDEPENDENT had this statement: **"With this issue ceases the publication of The Independent in Calliope and henceforth will appear each week from Hawarden. We have decided to change, not from any ill-will to Calliope, the people or town, but to better our condition financially and because we can see brighter prospects for Hawarden than in the future for Calliope."**

Finally, early in 1887, some leading residents of Hawarden decided that it was time to incorporate their town. There were about four hundred people within its borders, so a referendum was held in February and at that time the voters approved incorporation by a count of 97 to 3. The incorporation of Hawarden was "hereby declared to be duly and legally established" on the 18th day of March 1887. (Hawarden Centennial Book, page 21). Out of a spiteful and lengthy "domestic" quarrel...and a public divorce in the courts of Sioux County, a new town named Hawarden was born.....HAPPY BIRTHDAY HAWARDEN !

IN HONOR OF THE INCORPORATION OF OUR HOMETOWN, HAWARDEN, IOWA ON MARCH 18, 1887, PLEASE JOIN EVERYONE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012 AT THE HAWARDEN COMMUNITY CENTER FROM 2 – 4 pm FOR AN OLD FASHIONED BIRTHDAY PARTY TO CELEBRATE HAWARDEN'S 125TH BIRTHDAY. BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS FOR BIRTHDAY CAKE, FUN AND FELLOWSHIP.

SEE YOU THERE.

HAWARDEN.....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

MEMORIES OF A CALLIOPE INDIAN and SCHEMES OF A DREAMER

Chapter: 11

By: Cathy Noble & Mary Truesdell Johnson

Celebrating Hawarden's 125th birthday is in part a bittersweet event. As a former "Calliope Indian," I can't help but wonder what Calliope's future would have held had it not become embroiled in the losing battle with the settlement to the south – Hawarden.

It's not that I don't love Hawarden, or am not proud of its history and its people, I'm just sad that so much of what Calliope was, is now lost. For most people in Hawarden, Calliope is more of a name, than a place.

To me, Calliope is the body shop that my Grandpa Truesdell owned – part of what was once the "Brick Block" in the thriving town of Calliope. It is the Calliope Store, the place I used to pedal my bike to and where we used to stop on Sundays. It is the colored lanterns at Carr's house that I used to beg my dad to drive by on our way to buy popcorn from Schoenrock's stand in Hawarden. It is a part of who I was growing up as a child, and still I grew up unaware of the significance of my surroundings.

Writing these columns has allowed me to learn so much more about the colorful history of the place from which Hawarden got its start. Now I'm even prouder to have grown up a Calliope Indian! So, on this – Hawarden's 125th birthday, let us also remember the little village that started it all! By: Cathy Noble

History books show that as Hawarden grew, Calliope declined. Businesses located for years in Calliope closed up their shops and moved to Hawarden. According to Ken Hansen in his book, "Calliope", there was at least one man, Ed E. Carpenter who still had faith in the old town and tried to save it. Mr. Carpenter was from a town about 20 miles north of Calliope on the Big Sioux, called Beloit. His family was one of the first to settle in that area, and had considerable property there. Carpenter was a GRAND PROMOTER, always wanting to make his mark on the world and always in a hurry to do so! Carpenter was going to make the land between Calliope and Beloit "Carpenter Country".

He decided to build a streetcar track that would run from Hawarden to Calliope and eventually on to Eden (now Hudson, South Dakota) and Beloit. His starting point was Calliope and the line would run both directions from there. At the same time word was received that he had purchased all the dams on the Big Sioux between Sioux City and Sioux Falls and had a contract with a Milwaukee concern to furnish them all with electric generating plants.

He once built a grain elevator with a water tower on top out of scrap lumber. It was a completely non functioning building except for the fact that he took pictures of it and convinced bankers from out east to invest in his schemes. The story goes that he sunk a pier into the river at the north end of Calliope and took a picture at a distorted angle to show that the river was able to navigate large ships, hoping to lure people and their money to Calliope. He also built five houses finished only on the outside and photographed them to promote his new subdivision in Calliope and convince investors to give him money. After the houses had served their purpose, he had them burned.

Carpenter's main project, the streetcar line was one mistake after another. When he started grading the roadbed he forgot the minor detail of getting permission for right of way from the landowners, a small problem which almost put him in jail. When he finally tried to get the official contract for the line connecting Hawarden and Calliope, it was denied, possibly because much of the work he had already completed had ruined several of the city's streets. In 1889, a spark from a train set fire to a pile of railroad tiles that were going to be used for the street car line. With that fire, the remaining hopes of Ed E. Carpenter and Calliope literally went up in smoke. (Calliope, by Ken Hansen p.124)

In 1911, the post office of Calliope was closed and the town officially ceased to exist.

Authors note:

I have at one time seen postcards offered for sale on E Bay of Hawarden's elevated railway. I have always discounted them as someone trying to sell a distorted view of Hawarden as a frontier town and a hoax. After reading the above story in Mr. Hansen's book, I now wonder if some way, somehow, someone got a hold of Mr. Carpenter's original blueprints of the streetcar line he dreamed to build.....just a thought. By: Mary Johnson



The Northside Store or Calliope Store was purchased in May 1951 from Coy Wood, by Golda and Edward Foltz. Mr. Foltz passed away in October 1952 and Golda continued to operate the store until she retired. Golda Foltz passed away in 1992 at the age of 94. The Calliope/Northside Store was probably Hawarden's first Convenience store, as it was often open hours when other stores were closed. It was well known for its fresh cold meat and penny candy, as well as other staples needed by homemakers. Mrs. Foltz was never too busy to help the children pick out their penny candy and spend their nickels. It still stands in its original location.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

How Old is Old?

Chapter 12

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

125 years – How old is that? Ask a child or teenager and they will say “ancient,” or “older than dirt.” But is it really that old? The United States will be 236 years old in July. The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1621, that’s 391 years ago! Compared to the above, Hawarden is still a baby!

While researching information for these articles the subject of time has been running through my mind. My grandmother was born in 1881, that means she was six years OLDER than Hawarden! She lived to be 98 and that boggles my mind. The fact that the people I knew and loved would be older than Hawarden if they were still alive just amazes me!

The reality is, that was over a century ago. As a child and young adult, a century was what you studied in your history books. When I turned 50, I never thought of myself as being one half a century old. When I was born, Hawarden was only 52! That is just a blink of an eye in my perspective.

Our class celebrated our 50th Class Reunion in 2007. Those 50 years went by faster than the speed of sound. It was only yesterday that we were tromping across the footbridge and going to proms, and yes, graduating. Then there is the perspective of raising a family. How can children go from babies to fifty in 30 seconds? Sounds like a drag race or something similar. Hawarden was only 75 years old when my youngest children were born. I can relate to 75, I’ll see it in a few years, and it doesn’t seem old at all!

Over a span of 125 years, Hawarden has had its challenges and its accomplishments. Obviously there have always been naysayers, as well as those who saw Hawarden’s potential and were willing to fight for it. There are people who love this town and will always call it home, no matter how far away life takes them. And, there are people who have lived here and move away without any lasting attachment. Some people fall in love, and some don’t - it’s a fact of life.

Our ancestors have passed the torch to the generations of people who are here to celebrate this huge event. It is now our responsibility to continue to support our town and help it “mature” into a city where people can live and enjoy life.

Hawarden may never become the industrial mecca that our pioneer fathers dreamed of, or the cultural giant that others predicted, but it is, and can be, a town looking to the future, preserving our history, and embracing the modern technological age.

Hawarden offers a quality of life that replicates what our parents, and grandparents dreamed of only a few, short-years ago when they built the 1st Courthouse in Sioux County, held the 1st National election in Sioux County, built roads, bridges, mills, ice houses, and welcomed all who chose Hawarden as their home.

A diverse group of settlers helped shape Hawarden into the town we love. A patchwork quilt of nationalities who continue to color and enhance the framework of our lives. It falls on us, and those who follow us, to continue to nurture our hometown as it goes into its next phase of life. Whatever happens to Hawarden in the next quarter of a century will be guided by the hands of people who live here now, and will be reported in the history written in 2037.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THE ENGLISH ARE COMING ! BY TRAIN !

Chapter 13

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

A new town....Hawarden, Iowa, no longer a part of Calliope, but a city or town on its own, confirmed by a decision of the Sioux County Courts, and definitely created by the necessity of the Northwestern Railroad to by-pass its original route from Eagle Grove, Iowa to the Big Sioux River, forcing it to curve a mile to the south, thus leaving Calliope with its dreams shattered and Hawarden, a town to be reckoned with.

This week we need to spend a little time learning how much the railroad really contributed to this town we call home.

There are at least two theories on how Hawarden got its name. Both of them relate to the railroads.

In the 1870's and '80s the railroads were steadily making their way west. At this time according to G. Nelson Nieuwenhuis in his book SIOUXLAND: A HISTORY OF SIOUX COUNTY, IOWA, the story circulated that some of the young men working on the construction crews of the Northwestern Railroad were young Englishmen who were the sons of wealthy English Lords. The story goes that these fathers sent their strong, energetic sons to America with the hopes that the rough life on the American frontier would somehow teach these unruly young men to become more responsible members of society. Another story states that the 1st sons of the English Lords would inherit the land in England, so the 2nd sons were sent to America, "The new frontier", to claim their fortunes. Many of these young men came from the rural district in England containing the small town of Hawarden, in Flint County, Wales. The town is linked closely with the Prime Minister William Gladstone, whose home is located near this English town. This was during the reign of Queen Victoria. It is told that these young Englishmen, homesick as they were, suggested to the railroad that the new town along the Big Sioux be named after their hometown in England, and so it was.

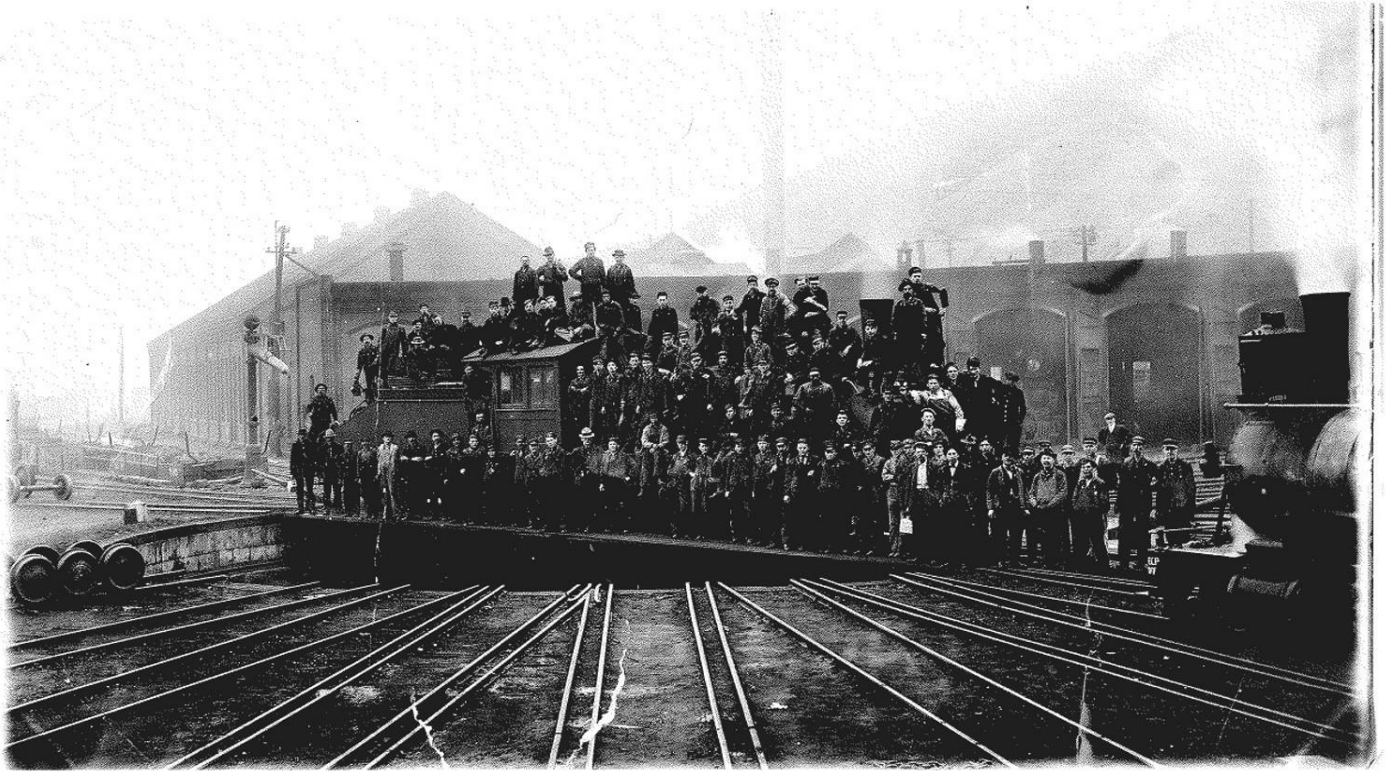
The other theory provided by Mr. Nieuwenhuis in his book stated that English capitalists who were providing the Northwestern Railroad Company with money were members of William Gladstone's Liberal political party. The railroad obviously thought it was prudent to name some of the new towns on the route English names as a tribute to Prime Minister Gladstone, and an incentive to the capitalists to continue their investments in this new land.

An Iowa historian during the 1920's wrote: "Hawarden...is one of the outstanding evidences of the force of English colonization of the early 1880's in Northwestern Iowa." The New England influence continued to shape the early days of Hawarden. Someone made the remark that, "Congregationalism rode into Hawarden on the cowcatcher of the first train into town. A church building and a round house were going up at the same time." When the Congregational Church was organized in the fall of 1882, the ladies arranged for a New England Supper which was attended by about 100 people.

The new railroad immediately started building a large repair yard and a roundhouse which could house up to nineteen engines. The base of this structure can still be found south of the former Northwestern Depot at the end of Main Street. To keep up with this activity, the Western Town Lot company was busy acquiring land and laying out town lots adjacent to the northwestern tracks. English money again was helping to shape the town of Hawarden. A bridge was constructed over the Big Sioux River allowing the rail lines to keep moving ever westward, allowing passenger and freight trains to pass through Hawarden on their way to new towns of Alcester, Beresford and Centerville in Dakota Territory...always moving west.

By 1887 when Hawarden legally became a town, the Hawarden Independent listed a total of fourteen arrivals and departures on the Northwestern line and four arrivals and departures on the Milwaukee line daily. Added to this figure could be anywhere from three to five "extras" each day as well. It is hard to believe that the activity on the railroads 125 years ago could be this intense. In the 1930's it was reported that twenty trains were running daily on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad and six daily on the Milwaukee rail line through Hawarden. All these trains were scheduled. Add three to five unscheduled trains as well, and it is easy to understand why Hawarden was aptly referred to as a "Railroad town" in its early days.

Next week: Roundhouses & more trains



Circa 1910 – Modern round house built to accommodate the largest type of engines in the Northwestern Rail Road system. The Round House of concrete construction includes an 80 foot turntable (the biggest in the state) .This completes a Quarter Million Dollar investment in Railway improvements at the Hawarden yard, as reported in the February 3, 1910 edition of the Hawarden Independent. Also constructed were new coaling sheds of the latest mechanical design which takes the place of the old “shovel and wheel barrel” sheds previously in use. The Hawarden railroad yards cover 40 acres to accommodate both storage and switching.

Photo Courtesy of Dennis Anderson

HAWARDEN.....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The Forgotten Culture of the Railroad

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson & Cathy Noble

Chapter 14

So, what did it mean to be a “railroad town”? From the sound of train whistles, the sight of steam engines, to the glowing evening campfires of the hobos, much of what it takes to answer that question has faded away. However, Hawarden was built on the framework of that disappearing culture.

Round houses – another word from the past. Familiar in the early 1900’s and rarely spoken of in the 21st century, at least not in reference to railroads. The round house at Hawarden had the distinction of being one of the oldest and largest in Iowa, making it a historic treasure of the past, and possibly the single largest reason for Hawarden’s existence.

The round house in Hawarden was one of the main hubs for major railroad repair work in this area. Rail cars, passenger cars and engines were hauled here on a daily basis for maintenance and repairs. The cement foundation of the round house can still be found south of the present railroad tracks east of Highway 12.

With the number of trains passing through Hawarden each day, railroad accidents were frequent and often had devastating results.

The Hawarden Centennial Book tells of an accident in 1903 at Six Mile Creek, which runs east of Hawarden. Due to a washout of the tracks, the engine of a passenger train headed east fell into the swollen creek. Fireman Thomas Fisher was thrown from the engine and disappeared from sight in the swirling muddy waters. Miraculously, he was able to save himself. The injured engineer and fortunate fireman were put safely in the last passenger car to rest until help arrived. A SOS was sent to Hawarden and a rescue train was immediately dispatched. The ending of the story tells that the engineer of the rescue train got up such a “head of steam,” that when he reached the stranded train, he was unable to stop. The rescue train then crashed into the stalled passenger cars, injuring many of the passengers, and killing the fireman who had just escaped from drowning.

Trains often had to share their tracks with animals both domestic and wild. In October 1907, an unfortunate mishap occurred when a cow decided to take a stroll down the Milwaukee tracks north of Hawarden. Unfortunately, a Milwaukee train was also claiming right of way on the tracks, and the resulting collision was deadly for the cow as well as to a young man from Nebraska, who unknown to the railroad employees was “bumming” a ride on the train.

“Bumming” a ride on the train brings up another colorful aspect of the romance of the railroads. A new, sometimes unwelcome visitor to town called the hobo.

Hobos started riding trains as early as the Civil War, and continued into the 1940’s. They were said to be America’s first migrant workers. Wherever the trains would go, and there was work available, these men (and sometimes women and children) would wait for their opportunity to hop on a freight train and illegally ride from one destination to another.

The life of a hobo in the early days was dangerous. The railroads hired men called “bulls” to keep the hobos off the trains, often beating them when they were caught. The romanticized image of the hobo peaked during the 1930’s. Because of the depression, there was a period of tolerance towards the hobo. Some railroads would attach an empty box car to the freight trains to accommodate the large number of hobos and to keep them from entering the sealed cars.

As the hobo culture grew, they created a lifestyle of their own. They designated symbols to inform each other where they were welcome and where they were not. They used lumps of coal found along the tracks to mark fence posts, rails or trees with these symbols showing who would give them food, work or chase them away.

The true hobos were a proud group and shared a kinship with each other. They gathered together at hobo camps along the tracks, usually close to a railroad water tower. They built campfires, told stories, sang songs and became an American legend. Hobos would emphatically tell you that they were NOT tramps and NOT bums. In hobo definitions, a hobo works and wanders. A tramp dreams and wanders, and a bum drinks and wanders.

The nearly total replacement of the steam engines by diesels in the 1950’s contributed to the decline of the hobos. Steam engines had to make regular stops to take on water and this allowed the hobos to get on or get off the trains at these stops.

So, next time you see a train, take the time to remember what the railroad meant to the demise of Calliope, and the excitement that the arrival of trains, their passengers and workers brought to the new town of Hawarden.



HAWARDEN.... HOW IT ALL BEGAN

CITY LIGHTS

Chapter 15:

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Hawarden was booming. May 5, 1887 saw the first town election and the progress began.

In 1892 two individuals with a progressive vision applied for a franchise to build and operate an electrical light plant in town. They failed to gain enough support to receive the approval they needed, but their idea gave Hawarden the “push” they needed to investigate the possibility of a municipally owned electric light company.

The City Fathers awarded a contract to build an electric plant in conjunction with its municipal water system and on April 6, 1894 Hawarden’s Municipal Electric Utility began.

The Hawarden Centennial Book gives a very detailed report. For the readers who like to deal in technical terms, the plant was to consist essentially of a 600 light dynamo, a 50 horsepower engine and two boilers to match, wiring 900 commercial accounts and 40 street lights.

The City council also adopted electric rates which were based on the number of 16 candle power lights in use. This would be about the equivalent of a 10 or 15 watt lamp of today. A 10 or 15 watt lamp does not seem very bright in comparison to the lamps of today, but can you imagine the excitement and luxury they were to the pioneers of the 1800’s? The demand for this new luxury became so great that after the original plant was put into operation in April of 1894, it was forced to increase its capacity within two years. Hawarden was one of Iowa’s earliest Municipal Electric Systems because of the dreams and perseverance of the town’s early leaders. Another example of a city on the move.

The new dynamo was to have a capacity of 1500 lights, which indicates a rapid growth in the use of electricity for the town. As far back as 118 years ago, Hawarden was a leader in providing its citizens with municipally owned electricity and has continued the trend to have lower electricity rates than other

surrounding areas, and keeping the profits in the community to finance many improvements through the years.

The first electrical plant was a steam plant located in the center of town. Its location was directly across from the City Offices/ Community Center now located at 1150 Central Avenue. The old plant was famous for its huge smoke stack and the deep tone of the fire whistle sounding its warning

The plant continued to expand to meet the ever increasing demands of the rapidly growing community. A 75KW and 100KW generating units were added as well as increased boiler capacity. By 1924 it became apparent that the original steam plant was becoming obsolete and needed to be replaced.

The new plant was built on higher ground at 724 Seventh St. and was completed in 1925. The capacity of the new plant reflected the innovative planning of the city council. The new plant was more than double the capacity of the old plant. It consisted of two Fulton Diesel generating units, 300 and 400 Horsepower with 200KW and 272 KW generators respectively.

Even the progressive planning of the City Council of 1926 could not foresee the demand for electricity. In 1928 the plant loads were beyond capacity and it was necessary to add another unit. This time it was a 750 HP Fulton Diesel with a 500KW generator.

In May of 1936, an article appeared in the Sioux City Journal titled "Taxpayers Paradise". It reported that through the first six years of diesel operation, the new plant in Hawarden, paid for all expenditures amounting to approximately \$160,000.00 plus salaries and other operating expenses. It not only accomplished the complete reduction of indebtedness, but the municipal tax levy was reduced from \$19,500.00 in 1926 to no levy of any kind in 1931, and no tax levy was made until at least 1936 for the operation of the Hawarden city government.

The years surrounding WWII were challenging for the operators and equipment of the plant. Plans were made for further expansion in 1941, but the impending war made it impossible to obtain equipment. As a result of this, the plant loads would frequently exceed the total plant capacity. During these periods only emergency repairs were possible and preventative maintenance was impossible. With the diligent attention given to the plant by its supervisors and employees, it emerged from this period without serious effects, and in 1946 a

fourth unit was installed. This was a 960HP Fulton Diesel with a 670 KW generator. The last of these engines was still running in the early 1990's.

Through the years since Hawarden had the vision of creating a municipal electric utility, the proceeds from this utility have helped increase the quality of life in our town. Some of these improvements are as follows: new pillars for Grace Hill Cemetery, colored strings of street light decorations for Main Street, purchase of an airport site on the edge of the city, modern pumper truck and firefighting equipment, flood lights for the tennis courts, outdoor skating rinks, and considerable paving projects without assessments to the property owners. The proceeds from Hawarden's Municipal Utilities continue to keep the equipment updated, as well as provide other improvements for the town.

Hawarden continues to operate its Municipal Utilities including, electric, water, gas, and its municipal communications utility, bringing telephone services, internet access and cable television to the citizens of Hawarden. This occurred as a result of a municipal election in 1994, with 44% of the residents voting giving a 95.6% approval rating to establish the new utility. As a result of this vote, Hawarden became a pioneer in changing the way the state and nation regulated the communications industry.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THREE HOTELS....MANY STORIES

Chapter 16: By Mary Truesdell Johnson

With the rapidly expanding railroad traffic and increasing activity in Hawarden, there was an immediate need for Hotels and eating establishments to accommodate the daily customers. In 1887 Hawarden boasted three hotels, the St. Nicholas, the Northwestern and the Depot.

The St Nicholas Hotel was located at 827 Kansas (approximately the location of Back to Health). It was advertised as the first brick building in Sioux County and was erected in 1883 by J.C.Brewer. The hotel changed hands several times. In 1910 it became a clothing store and has housed several businesses over the years.

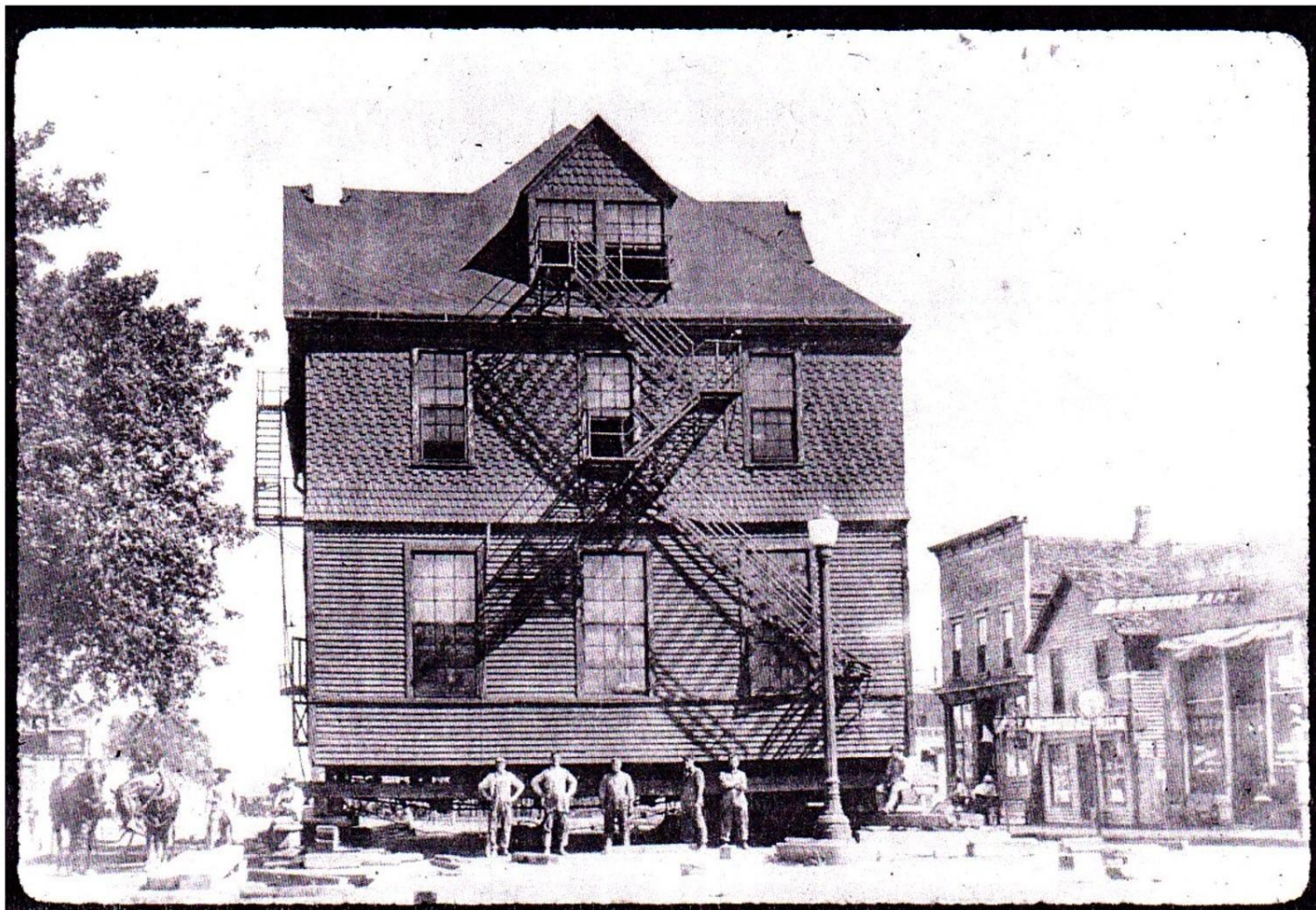
The Northwestern Hotel was built by the Northwestern Railway Co. and was located near the Northwestern Depot at 702 Kansas on the end of Main Street where the McKenney's Furniture now stands. Its location made it very convenient for passenger's arrival and departure. In 1911 the Northwestern Hotel became the Lilley Hotel under the ownership of Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Lilley.

In 1949 the Lilley Hotel was sold and operated as a rooming house for a short time. In August of 1950 the office of Otis Radio and Electric Corp. (now Coilcraft) moved into the hotel, followed by the entire Otis Plant in 1952. In 1959 Otis (Coilcraft) moved to its present facilities at 222 Avenue E. In 1962 the Lilley Hotel was torn down to provide a location for a new Jack and Jill Supermarket, later to become McKenney's Furniture.

The Depot Hotel was also erected by the Chicago and Northwestern Railway for the accommodation of their patrons. It was built in the area east of the present Northwestern Depot building for the accommodation of the railroad passengers. This was a large three story frame building and also included an "eating house". Trains stopped at this hotel daily allowing passengers to obtain breakfast and evening meals.

In 1917 D.A. Morgan purchased the Depot Hotel from the railroad, and planned to move the hotel to 722 Kansas (the present location of the First State Bank). The space for the relocated building was 75 ft frontage and 130 ft. depth. The new structure was expected to cover almost the entire space.

The man undertaking the huge project of moving the Depot Hotel was W.J. (House mover) Smith. The building was moved in three sections with guests occupying the Hotel during the moving process. No Hydraulics...only horses, wagons, and man power.



**1917 Moving one-third of
The Depot Hotel
Lamppost may cause a
problem!**

When the three sections were set in place at the new location, additions were built joining the sections into one unit and affording the space of an additional twenty five rooms. The entire building was then covered with a grey stucco to give it a substantial appearance and make the building fire proof from the outside as well as warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The new basement contained a café, the heating plant and laundry room. The lobby was refinished throughout and a beautiful terrazzo floor became one of the striking features. Large plate glass windows gave a splendid view of Hawarden's Main Street. Many people have mentioned that they grew up watching Main Street from the windows of the Gladstone Hotel. The hotel contained about 60 finely equipped rooms. All rooms were steam heated, a number had private bathrooms and all had running water. The Hotel was renamed The Gladstone Hotel, a name picked by Mr. Morgan and his partner, Pete Luchsinger from over one hundred entries submitted by friends and patrons.



Gladstone Hotel 1917 722 Kansas St

During its long existence the Gladstone Hotel entertained many distinguished guests including Congressmen and Governors. It weathered many storms such as the flood of 1926 when water filled the basement and rose to at least the second step leading to the Lobby.

The Morgan family operated the Gladstone Hotel and café until November of 1967 when they sadly locked the doors on the many untold stories and memories of "The Good Old days!"

After serving the people and visitors of Hawarden for over eighty years, the hotel was purchased by the City and demolished in the spring of 1969. The wrecking crew estimated the time to demolish the building to be three to four hours. They started the demolition on Friday, worked through the weekend and by Wednesday of that week the building was down. The demolition was attended by a full crew of "sidewalk superintendents" each day.

The most common comment during the demolition was "If those walls could talk, what stories they would tell." Stories of a young boy sneaking his pony to the third floor and galloping down the corridors, as well as the children of the hotel finding the empty rooms with the best breeze in the summer and choosing to sleep in them on the hot days. Would you believe that a light late at night in a certain third floor window would indicate a Poker game in progress? Stories tell than often after one of those nights you would probably see a disgruntled farmer in town the next day selling a wagon load of grain, or an unhappy store keeper who would slam your purchases down with never a smile. There are stories of the Billiard room and a billiard shark from the Twin Cities who was brought into town to scam the hotel proprietor. Mr. Morgan was well known as an excellent Billiards player and called his bluff. That night they each put \$1000.00 in a hat (held by the owner's 5

year old son), and played one game of three cushion billiards, with a score of 10 billiards to win. When it was over Mr. Morgan put up his cue, picked up the money and walked out. No report was given about the billiard shark's whereabouts. Among other stories, it was also reported that the Gladstone Hotel also often employed Negro jazz musicians to entertain its customers, no discrimination here! Good times, bad times, room and board for people down on their luck, sometimes repaid, most often not. Definitely happiness and sadness, all a part of the "Good Old Days." A time gone by, never to return, except in the stories handed down from one generation to another.

References: Hawarden Independent: April 12, 1917, December, 1917, March, 1969. Hawarden Centennial Book. Memories from Laurie Morgan.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Chapter 17: FIRE FIGHTERS: ANOTHER PROUD HERITAGE

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

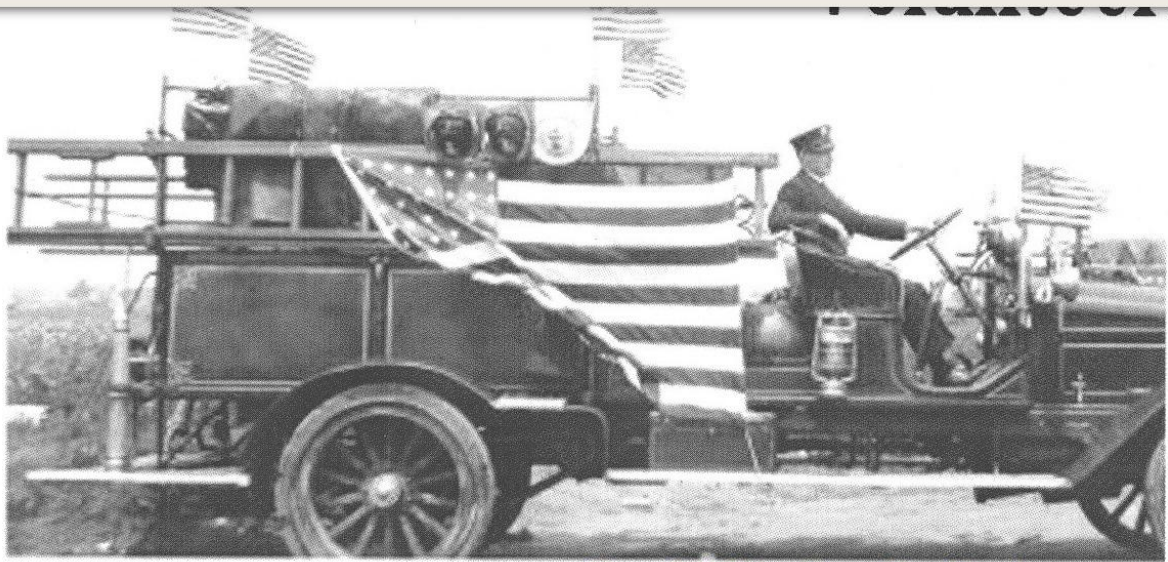
Hawarden's first City Council met on May 6, 1887 and the top of its agenda, was fire protection for Hawarden. Last week's article mentioned that the St. Nicholas Hotel erected in 1883 was the first brick structure in Sioux County. The majority of buildings in town were constructed with wood, making fire a very prevalent enemy.

In September of 1887 a petition was presented asking that a committee be appointed to approach the Chicago and Northwestern Rail Road for permission to connect their steam pump located at the round house to a water main through Kansas Street (Now Central Avenue). The petition was signed by the property owners on Kansas Street and B.T. French headed a committee to confer with the railroad.

In April, 1888, the Fire Committee moved that the council purchase a double steam hand engine, a five foot wheel hose cart, a village hook and ladder truck and five hundred feet of cotton hose. A public meeting was held to discuss this proposal. The general opinion of this group was that it was not logical to purchase a fire engine until the City established a water system, so the matter was dropped at this time.

On April 22, 1891, the Hawarden council met at a special meeting to appoint a temporary Captain of the Hose Team to organize a Fire Company. The Hawarden Fire Department and the Hawarden Hook and Ladder Company were organized at this time. And the first Hawarden Fireman's Ball was held in 1892.

According an interview of Fire Chief, C.H.Sedgwick Sr. in a 1956 Hawarden Independent article, the fire department became known as the J.W. Brewer Fire Department in the early 1900's. According to Chief Sedgwick's account, Mr. Brewer left the Fire Department \$500.00 of his estate to buy a fire truck. The stipulation in the will asked that the fire Department would be named after him. The money was left in the bank until it had grown to \$1050.00, and a Brockway chemical fire truck was purchased. This Brockway truck is still in the possession of the Hawarden Fire Department over 90 years later. The Brockway was in service until 1948 when a Ford 500 gal per minute pumper was purchased. The Brockway was put into storage until 1970 when it was reconditioned and outfitted to represent the Fire Department in parades and other celebrations. 1948 was also the year that the J.W Brewer Fire Department again became known as the Hawarden Fire Department. Mr. Brewer's name was retired along with the truck that his gift at the time of his death helped purchase.



**Circa 1917 Brockway Fire Truck
J.W.Brewer/Hawarden Fire Dept.**

Chief Sedgwick joined the Fire Department as a young man of 23 in 1905. He was elected Fire Chief in 1917 and remained in that position until his retirement in 1955 at the age of 73.

When Chief Sedgwick joined the company, the only equipment involved consisted of a two-wheel hose cart, which everyone tried to avoid pulling because of its tremendous weight. The cart was necessary at every fire because it carried all the ladders and pails. Generally, the first Dray team to arrive at the fire station pulled the hose cart to the fire and received \$5.00 per fire as payment from the city. Chief Sedgwick stated that he often pulled the hose cart with his pony by attaching the rope to the saddle horn.

At this time the fire station was an old tin shack which stood approximately where the vacant lot south of the First State Bank is located now.

Mr. Sedgwick related that a man named John "Snoggs" Conrad slept on the second floor of the fire house. Snoggs liked to boast that with him upstairs, none of the fire equipment would leave the property without his knowledge. As the story goes, one evening when the fire whistle blew, the firemen quietly sneaked the equipment out of the station, and only woke Snoggs when they returned from putting the fire out. To quote Mr. Sedgwick, "Old Snoggs was the maddest man in town."

The J.W. Brewer/Hawarden Fire Department has served the citizens of Hawarden and the surrounding area in many capacities. Saving property and lives has always been the Department's main goal, but the acts of kindness and philanthropy over the last 122 years are too numerous to be counted. During the depression of the 1930's the Hawarden Fire Department outfitted the needy children of town with shoes and underclothing. When the

hospital was built in 1936 the Fire Department furnished a room. Many years during the depression, the Fire Department sponsored the 4th of July celebrations in Hawarden to show their patriotism. The tradition of these acts of kindness and compassion continue to this date.

It was also noted that during Chief Sedgwick's long tenure on the Hawarden Fire Department, only one life was lost and none of the firemen were injured. Mr. Newt Rush was elected to the position of Chief following Mr. Sedgwick's retirement. The members of the fire department at that time voted C.H. Sedgwick honorary Fire Chief for life.

For one hundred and twenty years, the Hawarden Fire Department has stood head and shoulders above any organization when it comes to protecting our homes, our businesses and our families. The Hawarden Fire Department started out with the most meager of equipment and has developed into one of the best equipped departments in the state.

The glory that comes to a fireman is seldom public, but after a late night call, working side by side with other dedicated volunteer firemen your reward comes when you are safe at home and realize that the family and the property you just protected could have been yours.

The duty of the original firefighter was to quench fires and save lives. The firefighters of today are called upon to deal with emergencies that often do not involve a fire. The training, equipment and dedication involved is incredible. A volunteer Fire Fighter holds the security of our lives in their hands, and for 120 years the Hawarden Fire Department has always met or exceeded their goals. Another proud heritage handed down from the early citizens of our town and carried on by the generations who followed.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

SCHOOLS – ANOTHER FIRST FOR SIOUX COUNTY

Chapter 18:

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

A consistent thread that runs through all of the Hawarden and Calliope history is the fact that from the very beginning, the settlers and townspeople were always on the cutting edge of Sioux County's progression. Education was part of that early progression, and building the first school in Sioux County was certainly proof of the communities desire to offer the best advancements possible for everyone to take advantage of.

When William West came to Calliope in 1869 he found ten residents, three log houses and a frame building. He immediately decided to build the first school house in the county. The lumber for this school house was hauled by Mr. West from Sioux City. Not a small task in the 1800's. The building still stands and is the home of the Pocklington's at 1717 Avenue D. This building was used for a school for twelve years until increased enrollment called for a larger building.

In 1883 a two story school was built on the west side of 18th and Central Avenue, at the cost of \$1350.00. Within a couple of years, this school had also become too crowded and in 1885 a vote by the residents gave permission to issue bonds for \$11,000.00 for another new school to be built east of the previous building.

As was mentioned in previous articles, this was the time when Calliope and Hawarden were in the middle of a growing rivalry between the two towns. As a result of this unrest, an injunction was incurred to halt the sale of bonds for the new school. People in Hawarden felt that the location of the proposed school would influence the result of the conflict between the neighboring towns. Hawarden residents even established their own school in the Baptist Church building at this time.

The legal proceedings to stop the sale of bonds was heard by the Sioux County Court and the call for an injunction was sustained, making the residents of Hawarden very happy. As usual Calliope was not about to be denied and an appeal was made by The Calliope Independent School District to the Iowa Supreme Court. On December 9, 1886 the Iowa Supreme Court reversed the decision of the lower court and Hawarden was forced to acknowledge the Calliope Independent School District and the proposed new building. This school was constructed next to the existing building and was known as the North School. The building was later sold and made into a Nursing Home, first owned by Panska's and later Mapes. It was torn down after it was no longer used to care for the elderly.

Of course Hawarden was now unhappy and would not conform with the ruling. As a result The Hawarden School District was formed and a school was erected on "Gladstone Hill" on the site of 1122 Ninth, the location of Ken Ludwig's residence. The Hawarden School contained three study rooms and two recitation rooms. It was destroyed by fire in 1894.

An election to consolidate the two school districts was held in March of 1893 with only 3 nay votes. Another battle was won by the residents of Hawarden.

In 1895 a bond issue for \$14000.00 for a new school passed with only two dissenting votes. This election marked the first time women were allowed to vote in Hawarden.

The new Central School was constructed of "Hawarden pressed and common brick with Kasota stone trimmings." It was completed in 1895 and stood just east of the present West Sioux Elementary building.

Hawarden Central School
Built 1895 - Bond Issue \$14,000.



The new Central School was a massive structure consisting of a partially exposed lower level and two upper levels for classrooms. Its outstanding feature was the bell tower which stood high above the school and made it easy to identify from a long distance. The original school had an initial teaching staff of eleven. The Primary departments remained in the previous North School until the 1940's.

The Central School contained a newly organized high school department and it was described as the "Woodbine Normal" type of school. Many prospective teachers from Iowa and South Dakota were drawn to this school and it was responsible for a large number of the first trained teachers in the area.

Mr. May became superintendent in 1901 and remained in Hawarden for eight years. He is credited with bringing the Hawarden Schools into prominence. He extended the high school courses from three to four years and in 1905 the school was placed on the accredited list of the University of Iowa.

The early 1900's showed steady growth in the school system. In 1900 there were only 3 students graduating from high school, and by 1925 36 graduates received their diplomas. The total enrollment increased from 472 to 695 students. The greatest increase was in the high school department showing a healthy interest in higher education.

During the years between 1918 and 1925 it took four bond issues and the use of two temporary buildings to hold excess students before the voters agreed to build a new high school at the cost of over \$90,000.00. The formal opening of the new building was January 21, 1926. This building is still an important part of the Hawarden Community. Located at 1150 Central Avenue, and completely remodeled in 2005, it now is the location of the Hawarden City Government, Police Department and Hawarden's new, Community Center. It is a showcase for our community, highlighting the historical and incorporating the current trends. It is a piece of our history that stands today to preserve our past and enhance and improve our communities' quality of life for years to come.

Watch for more school stories in the weeks to come.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Chapter: 19

MIRACLE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Cell Phones, Smart phones, Apps, Android, Texting, Skype, Social Networking, all terms of the “New Generation.” For those of us who grew up in the “Good Old Days,” we remember party lines, pay phones, phones that hung on the walls, some that even needed to be cranked. Some may say things were easier then, as we only had two or three digit numbers to remember. Long distance was only used for special occasions and emergencies, and there were no Area Codes.

The twenty-first century has brought us access to communication that was never imagined in the years when Hawarden and Calliope were established.

Who would have imagined that in a little over a century we would go from letters traveling across the miles by pony express and stage coach, taking weeks to arrive at their destination, to pushing a button marked “send” and instantly talking to people around the world. Who would have thought that almost every man, woman, and yes, even children would carry a phone in their pocket, to be reached no matter the time of day or the location? Who would also have imagined that this new invention would also eliminate the need for voices and ears; all you need now are fingers and eyes so you can text whoever you want to communicate with.

Let’s look back a hundred years or more to the election of 1899 when a franchise was granted to the Mutual Telephone Co. for a phone system. By January of 1900 the first order of phones was set up and working. The plant held seventy-five phones which could be expanded to one hundred and operated both day and night. Customers were asked to ring the bell when they finished a conversation to save work and time in the central office.

By 1901 Hawarden had established direct communication with Alcester and Beresford. In 1902 a board containing one hundred fifty drops was installed and lines would be run into the rural area in all directions.

In 1911 a new Monarch Magneto multiple switch board with 600 drops was added as well as a new directory including Alcester and Chatsworth. In 1915 an underground cable project was completed and in December, Miss Anna Barnes arrived in Hawarden to instruct the telephone operators in how to effectively handle their work. “Number please” is proper and being “patient” and “sweet” was essential.

The Telephone Company was originally located on the second floor above the Hawarden State Bank, located on the NW corner of Kansas Street and Ninth. In 1939 Northwestern Bell acquired the franchise in Hawarden and built a new one story brick office at 1007 Central Avenue; thus ending forty years on the second floor at the corner of Kansas (Central) and Ninth Street.



Hawarden Telephone Office: Second floor - 1901 - 1941
Hawarden State Bank - Main Level - NW Corner of 9th & Kansas

Russ Younie retired as manager of the phone company in 1956 after 32 years of service. Joe Reinders then took over as manager. In 1956 the telephone company started a \$63,000.00 improvement program on a new pole line project in Hawarden. Approximately 735 new telephones were installed between 1941 and 1956 and all phones to homes and businesses were private lines on completion of this project. Dial service preparations began in June of 1962 but would not be completed for 18 months. The brick one story building that housed the operators and equipment was moved to 16th street and remodeled into a home. A large telephone office replaced it in 1962-1963. All new equipment was installed in the new building resulting with new telephone numbers for all customers. On November 3, 1963 dial service began and customers began hearing a “hummmmm” instead of operators asking “Number please”. In 1970 touch tone replaced dial tone and more new equipment was installed to keep pace with the demand for the many additional calls each year. During his 34 years of service with the phone company, Mr. Reinders saw the system change from operators and magneto-crank telephones with an 8 party system to modern sophisticated equipment that eliminated the need for telephone operators and party lines. Mr. Reinders retired in 1981.

As I write this article, my mind is full of memories. Memories of phone numbers; ours was 84, our business was 170 and 64. If you were on a party line, you would add a “j” or another letter to the end of the number. Party lines possibly began the evolution of social networking! With a party line, everyone on your line (sometimes up to eight families) could “rubber in” on

your conversations. A small “click” while you were talking was a sure sign that your conversation was no longer private. News would travel with the speed of sound, or at least as fast as the dial would turn. Much like Face Book; only the telephone company picked your “friends”, and put them on your party line!

However we remember the telephone, it had to be one of the most significant inventions of the 20th Century. Wires crisscrossing the country, even under the oceans, and a loved one’s voice at the other end; it was a miracle then, and in my humble opinion it is still a miracle. The twenty-first century has already exceeded everyone’s imagination with satellites and computers and “clouds” to store our information. Who knows what the future will bring; those stories will undoubtedly be told in the 2037 History Book.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

HEROES AND TRAGEDY ON THE SIOUX RIVER

Chapter 20:

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

It was a perfect day in May, 1916 and a picnic was planned for all the girls in the high school by the high school principal, Miss Davis. According to the account written by York Johnson, brother to Neva (one of the victims) there had been trouble in the high school between the principal and the superintendent, so to solicit support from the student body she planned this picnic to be held on the Sioux River across from the old mill, in the Falde pasture on the South Dakota side.

The river was swollen after recent heavy rains and it was not only high, but carried a swift current. York's father ran the shoe store in town and it was open until 8 o'clock. About 6:30 his sixteen year old daughter popped into the store asking her dad for thirty-five cents so she could join the rest of the girls at the school picnic. Mr. Johnson handed her a handful of change and told her to take what she needed. When she turned to leave, she said, "Thank You, Daddy", and those were the last words he ever heard from his daughter.

The girls and their teacher all gathered at Calliope on the bank of the river where a number of boats owned by Snoggs Conrad, the school janitor and also "John Boats" owned by a number of other local citizens were tied to a small dock under the old Calliope Bridge above the dam. The men in charge of the launching knew the river was high. They could hear the water rushing swiftly over the dam. They should have known that the river this night was not a place for young girls. None the less, they proceeded to load the excited young ladies six to a boat to paddle or row across the river a little upstream to their picnic site.

The first two boats proceeded slowly to their destination. A music teacher named McCarthney had been boasting to the girls that she was a great oarswoman and knew all about handling a boat. She was placed in the third boat with Bonita Sidwell, Alma McGlaughlin, Edna Boorman, Marjorie Fairbrother and Doris Johnson. At that moment, Doris Johnson's father called out to her that he was manning one of the other boats, and she should ride with him. Doris left to go with her father and Neva Johnson (York's sister) stepped in.

Conrad Snoggs shoved the boat off with Miss McCarthney and Marjorie Fairbrother each on a pair of oars. It was immediately evident that the teacher knew nothing about rowing as she pushed on the oars against the pull of Marjorie Fairbrother; the boat shot out into the stream and headed for the dam in the rushing water. As it approached the dam, unchecked, the girls began to panic. Bonita Sidwell and Alma McGlaughlin jumped out above the dam. Neva Johnson stood up as if to jump just as the prow of the boat hit the dam and she fell over backwards into the swirling waters below the dam. The boat hesitated a moment and then with the teacher and two other occupants went over the dam, tipped over, and spilled the young women into the dangerous waters. The Hawarden Independent of May 18, 1916 reports. *No pen can picture nor tongue describe the horror of that incident. The girls were at the utter mercy of the roaring, tumbling waters, and there was slight chance that their frail strength could withstand such a severe trial.*

John (Snoggs) Conrad immediately plunged into the water above the dam, and pulled Bonita and Alma to safety. The cries of terror by the stricken girls attracted the by-standers as well as fishermen below the dam. Gust N. Anderson was working on his boat nearby above the dam and hastened to the scene. Jess Vearrier and George Van Sickle were in a fishing boat some distance below the dam and also hastened to the scene. Not one of them hesitated an instant to plunge into the icy water in an attempt to rescue the drowning girls.

The teacher, Miss McCartney was reached first, still clinging to the submerged boat. She was brought to safety by the brave men. The other girls had all disappeared beneath the surface of the river.

Meanwhile, the news of the accident had spread like wild fire. Automobiles loaded with doctors, nurses and others rushed to the scene, hoping to be of assistance during this tragedy. Russell Metcalf was in one of the first cars to reach the river and without any definite knowledge of the precise location of the disaster, immediately plunged into the water to search for bodies. He happened on to the body of Neva Johnson just a moment after the body of Marjorie Fairbrother had been brought to the surface by Samuel Strong and George Vearrier. The body of Edna Boorman had been the first to be recovered, and rescuers felt that she had been in the water less than five minutes. Considering the swiftness of the current it is nothing short of a miracle that the bodies were all recovered in such a short space of time. Opinions vary somewhat, but it was generally agreed that they had all been recovered in a span of around twenty minutes.

Attempts at resuscitation were immediately started as soon as the bodies were brought to the shore. Doctors, trained nurses and strong men and women with willing hands stood by to assist in the attempts to find a spark of life in any of the three cherished sisters, daughters and friends. As the desperate attempt to revive the girls continued, one by one, the parents were notified and began arriving at the tragic scene. When it was finally determined that further efforts to save the girls were futile, the bodies were lifted into automobiles and sadly returned to the homes they had left so joyfully just a few hours before. Many a bitter tear was shed that night.

Sunday (sadly it was Mother's Day that year) was the day set for the triple funeral. It was determined that the Presbyterian Church was the only building large enough to accommodate the crowd. People flocked to the church the day of the service and many stood outside in spite of a steady downpour of rain.

The Hawarden Independent gave this report: *This direful calamity, which in the twinkling of an eye removed from our midst three of our best loved and most highly cherished maidens-girls in the fullness of the enjoyment of youth just blossoming into young womanhood-has enshrouded every home in the community in pallor of gloom. It is a community loss and one in which every citizen feels a vital share.*ⁱ

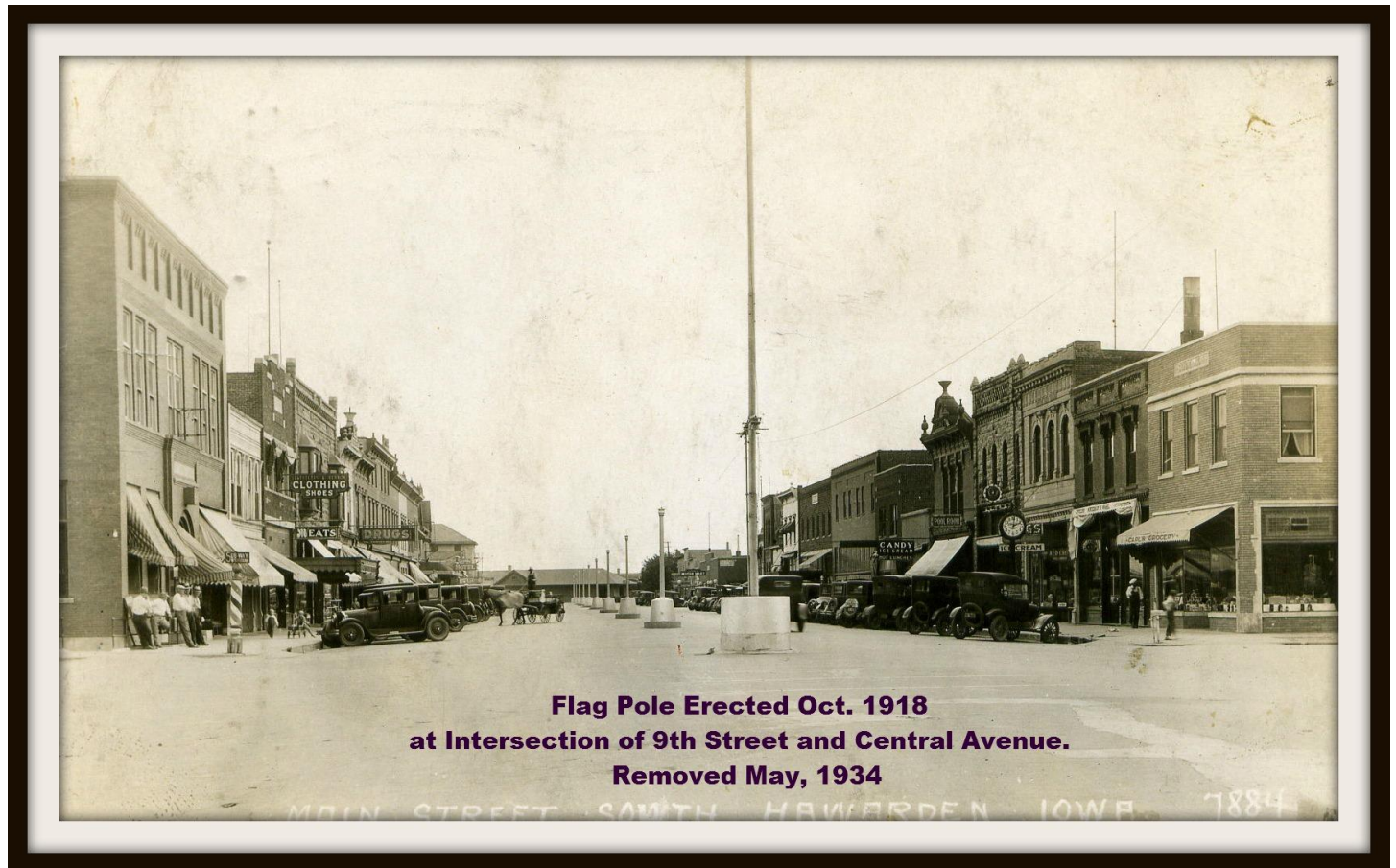
ⁱ Hawarden Centennial Book 1987 pages 894,895
Hawarden Independent: May 16, 1916

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN
THE MORNING IT RAINED CONCRETE

Chapter 21

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

From the October 3, 1918 Hawarden Independent: *"The patriotic citizens of Hawarden and the surrounding territory have arranged for the erection of an 80 foot flagpole, from the top of which Old Glory will continuously send forth a message of patriotism for all time to come. As our President has asked that October 12, 1918 be set aside as a national holiday it has been deemed a most appropriate time for the dedication of the new flag pole and the raising of the flag."*



Times change: From the May 24, 1934 Hawarden Independent (only 16 years later): *"Although never lacking in patriotic fervor, Hawarden has finally adopted a **more subdued method of exhibiting its spirit**. The huge steel flag pole which has adorned the intersection of ninth and Central since the World War was removed on Saturday....and will be placed in the City Park where Old Glory will henceforth be raised to flutter in the breeze."* The article continues; but the last sentence may surprise many of you: It certainly surprised me. It reads: *"The huge concrete base in which the pole was imbedded will be removed from the intersection. **It was felt by many that the location of the flag pole at the street intersection smacked of provincialism and was scarcely in keeping with the progress of a modern small city.**"* Definition of **provincialism**: "narrow-mindedness and lack of sophistication". UNBELIEVABLE! I can think of many reasons to relocate a flag pole, but not because it was unsophisticated and not in keeping with the progress of a modern small city. Hopefully this was only the opinion of the reporter and not the entire town.

On with the story. In the May 24, 1934 edition of the Hawarden Independent it was promised that the huge concrete base that held the 80 foot flag pole would be removed during the week. How it was removed was a surprise to everyone.

"On Friday of last week two city employees spent the entire day with pick axes and sledge hammers trying to crack and remove the cement structure that held the flag pole." By evening the two workers were exhausted and the cement

was still intact. The two men found Councilman Andrew McBride, chairman of the Street and Alley Committee and told him of their dilemma. Councilman Mc Bride was willing to assist the men and they went to the light plant and inquired about using dynamite to complete the job. Councilman McBride was told that the City did not possess any dynamite, but suggested that he contact Lou Heeren who might use dynamite in his well-drilling business. Mr. Heeren assured Councilman McBride that he had the dynamite and he could crack the base so the workmen could proceed in removing it.

Around 8 A.M. on Saturday morning, Lou Heeren and Councilman McBride met at the site of the flagpole base. There was a little discussion as to the most effective method to pursue, and Mr. Heeren concluded that the job presented no particular difficulty. The hollow steel end of the flag pole was still embedded in the concrete where it had been cut off when the pole was removed. The base was full of water. After some thought, Lou Heeren determined that **five** sticks of dynamite should do the job. He tied them together, attached a water proof fuse, dropped the dynamite into the hollow tube, told the spectators to move back, and lit the fuse. Mr. Heeren then nonchalantly walked to his truck remarking, "Well there she goes."

"There she goes" hardly describes the scene that followed. The deafening explosion shook the entire town. The huge concrete base was blown into a million pieces of every size. Huge chunks of concrete and re-enforced steel were thrown into the air to a height of more than one hundred feet, crashing through store windows and automobile windshields. Many large pieces were hurled through the air for more than one-half block and smaller pieces were found over a block and one-half away. Fortunately only a few spectators were injured and none of them seriously. A Metz Baking Company delivery truck was parked on the north side of Carl Olsen's grocery store on the south west corner of the intersection. The driver's nine year old son had remained in the truck while his dad made his deliveries. You can imagine his reaction as the windshield was shattered and pieces of concrete and glass showered down on the young boy. Luckily he escaped with only a cut hand. The early hour of the morning was credited to the small amount of injuries, as the shoppers had not yet arrived to do their business.

After the shower of concrete, the damage was assessed: eight window lights in the Masonic Hall (now the apartment above Impressions 2000) were shattered and large pieces of concrete were scattered inside of the building, two plate glass windows in the First National Bank on the first floor were broken, and even the barber shop of Earl Mallette in the basement had broken windows. The next building south was York Johnson's Shoe Store (now That Other Computer Guy). The plate glass windows as well as inner windows were broke in that store and shoes displayed in the windows were damaged. A hole about four inches in diameter was in the window of Gant's Meat Market, (now Agency One Services). The face of the large clock on the west sidewalk in front of the jewelry store (now In Weave Rugs) was smashed. The Hawarden State Bank Building across the street to the north had a long piece of re-enforced steel fly through the transom window over the door. The concrete, glass and debris that covered Main Street was unbelievable. I have been told that even now, over seventy-five years later, pieces of concrete can still be found on the roof tops of many main street stores. The concrete base that the dynamite was meant to crack was completely razed, leaving only a few pieces of steel standing upright as survivors of the battle.

Plate glass windows were rushed to Hawarden that very day and most of the windows were repaired by evening, with the City of Hawarden assuming the cost of damages. How long it took to clean up the chunks of cement and debris is any one's guess.

Stories told by residents who still remember that day report that the last anyone saw of Lou Heeren that Saturday morning was the tail lights of his truck headed west toward Alcester.ⁱ

ⁱ October 3, 1918: Hawarden Independent
May 24, 1934: Hawarden Independent
May 31, 1934: Hawarden Independent
Hawarden Centennial Book: Page 906

SATURDAY NIGHT IN HAWARDEN

"BACK IN THE DAY"

Chapter 22: By Mary Truesdell Johnson

Excerpts from the Hawarden Centennial Book relate memories from many of the early residents. Memories of Saturday nights in Hawarden are very prevalent. Miriam Dawson tells in her story that Saturday night was always the night of the week when people went out to enjoy themselves. In the 1920's and 30's the rural Midwest had its own unique way to enjoy Saturday evenings.

No matter how many hired men she had fed, or how many quarts of fruit she had canned during the week, the lady of the house always perked up for Saturday night; even the men seemed more relaxed and less fatigued on Saturday night. After baths for everyone, good clothes and some "primping" for the women, everyone piled into the family car and headed for Hawarden.



The main business district was three blocks long, but although the north and south blocks were equally busy, the middle block was where everyone hoped to park. It was not just the rural residents that looked forward to Saturday night, but the local town people would regularly take their cars to Main Street in the early afternoon to get a desired parking place. They then walked home and returned when the crowds started arriving.

On the west side of Main Street, parking in front of the Movie Theater was popular, because when the show was over you could see who was dating who. On the east side of the street, parking in front of Harker and Burket Drugstore and J.O. Lind's Department Store was also popular.

Saturday nights held different attractions for different ages. Babies were carried from store to store in their mother's arms as they did their shopping. When the babies and young children fell asleep, they were placed in the back seat of the family car to sleep through the evening while their mother's sat in front visiting with friends and watching the activity on the sidewalks.

If you were a school age child, no doubt your father would give you at least fifteen cents; a dime to go the the movie (usually westerns), and a nickel for popcorn.

Teenagers were a little choosier about what movie was playing, and after finding their best friends, the girls might just sit in the car or walk Main Street pretending to be window shopping, while hoping to see a particular group of boys. If mom and dad were still shopping, the teenagers might even invite the boys to join them in the car (girls in the front; boys in the back) hoping their parents didn't return too soon.

Married men usually congregated at the barber shop or pool hall. Groups could also be found on street corners discussing crops, the weather and world events.

Of course for young people fortunate enough to have access to a car, "scooping the loop" was the cool thing to do.

Over the years, Main Street on Saturday night faded away, although when I was a teenager in the '50's it was still the best night of the week. My mother owned Harker Drug Store and my friend's parents ran Evenhuis Electric, so we always had a good reason to be downtown on Saturday evenings.

High School days and "scooping the loop" were the highlight of our teenage years. Of course a gallon of gas in the 1950's was a whopping twenty-seven and 9/10s cents. If four of us chipped in a quarter a piece, we could circle Main Street for probably both Friday and Saturday nights. There were lots of places to congregate, the city park, school yard, and yes, even a haunted house or two! All the fun was harmless, and we made friends and memories to last a lifetime.

I'm not completely sure what was most responsible for the demise of Saturday night in Hawarden. Maybe the new attraction called "television" kept people at home, maybe the increased ease of travel allowed people to shop more than once a week. According to the information in the 2012 Hawarden History Calendar, the stores were still open on Saturday nights in 1963.

Every generation for the last 125 years has its memories and traditions. We all remember these as "The good Old Days", and the young people of the 21st century also are making history and memories. They may not have Main Street on Saturday night, but their opportunities have no boundaries, and the young people I am fortunate to know seem to be choosing wisely and making memories of their own. Where ever their journey through life takes them, just as the generations preceding them, Hawarden will always be their hometown, and hopefully they will remember it fondly.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOODS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

AN INTRODUCTION

Chapter 23

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Anyone who has lived in Hawarden or been a part of its history has heard of the placid, meandering, “harmless” little creek that used to wander through town. If you have lived here for more than a few years, you have probably also heard of the destruction and chaos that this “harmless” little creek has imposed on the citizens and property of this town. Where the name “Dry Creek” came from remains a mystery not solved in the history books, but it certainly has proved a misnomer through the years. I guess we could paraphrase from an old nursery rhyme: “when Dry Creek is dry, it is very, very dry and when it is wet it is horrid.”

Just where did this meandering creek come from? Some of the old, old timers say that “in the beginning” there was never a creek rambling through Hawarden. Think of the virgin prairies, with the miles and miles of flowing grass; centuries old without a sign of a plow or any machine to disturb the soil; land that had never been worked until settlers and farmers braved the wilderness to find a spot where they could settle and survive and raise food.

Stories from the “old timer’s” say that the creek was formed by the loaded grain wagon tracks from farmers bringing their harvest to the mill to be processed or sold. The hills north and east of Hawarden were impossible to climb with a loaded wagon and only one team of horses, so they went to town, cross-country following the valleys, before fences were ever thought of. They came from the northeast on the west side of the present golf course and headed south west by eighth street through the old Ball Park and then turned north again at the site of the present Hi Tec building. They proceeded north to east of the present Community Center and City Offices, and then west through the City Park on their way to the Mill on the Sioux River in Calliope. Because Hawarden is located on top of large deposits of gravel and washed-in top soil, it was easy for the water to soon wash out the tracks and make its own ditch. The other contributing factor to the origin of Dry Creek came from the dike the railroad placed across the pasture west and south of the golf course in order to divert water away from the railroad.

Morey Balcom, a close friend of ours always told the story of taking hunters who came here from Chicago to hunt prairie chickens, seven or eight miles north east of Hawarden in his dad’s livery buggy. When asked how he got across the creek, he answered that he never had a problem because there was never any water there. Dry Creek could also lay claim to another rare feature: the main part of the creek, running between 9th and 10th streets was actually on top of a knoll; its channel was on the east side of the former Heartland Motor building and the west side of the old Walter Scott home at 803 9th street: when the creek was there, the rain water ran west towards the Heartland building and east toward the Walter Scott home, showing that the creek was higher than the surrounding land.

March of 1897 gave Hawarden an early taste of the *fury* of Dry Creek. The front page of the March 25, 1897 Independent read as follows: *“Last Thursday night the placid stream which courses through Hawarden, and is misnamed Dry Creek, went on a rampage and flooded almost the entire business and about half of the residential portion of the city. All winter long, with every recurring snow, high water was predicted, but no one anticipated that a raging torrent leaping beyond the confines of its channel and high embankment would be*

the result." The report goes on to say, that on that Thursday morning, the snow was melting so gradually that the announcement was made that all danger of flood was past. During the afternoon a mist began that soon turned into rain in the night. For the next five hours, the flood-gates of heaven seemed to turn upside down and the downpour reminded residents of the days of Noah and the Ark. In a couple of hours the creek was a seething, foaming sheet of water. The church bells were rung and the fire whistle blown to warn the residents of the impending danger. Earlier in the evening, several light poles had been undermined and washed downstream, so electricity to the entire town was shut off to prevent a possible electrocution. The town was completely dark except for a few kerosene lamps which were used to survey the devastation and attempt to lessen the destruction by carrying possessions to higher ground. The cakes of ice and debris that the rushing water carried with it grated at the girders of the iron bridge on Iowa street (now tenth) emitting a continual clank and grind noise into the already eerie evening.



The attack on the business portion of town occurred around three forty-five in the morning. Within twenty minutes Kansas Street (now Main Street) from eighth street north was a raging river and from ninth street west to the Milwaukee tracks everything was rapidly submerged. In less time than it takes to tell the story, every basement in the business section of Hawarden was filled with filthy mud, water and debris. By four thirty in the morning, the maximum height was reached and the water began to recede. Daylight revealed a huge lake ranging from a few inches to several feet deep covering the entire portion of the city located in the valley. By six thirty in the morning the creek was back in its channel, but the huge lake created

by the Northwestern Railroad grade on the east side of town continued to empty its contents into the business district until late in the afternoon.

The editor of the Hawarden Independent D.O.Stone wrote in his editorial: *“Deterred in growth or spirit by a single flood? Not Hawarden! Her business men and citizens are not constructed on that plan. With that enterprise which has characterized all her work in the past Hawarden has again put her best foot forward, and although less than a week has elapsed, nearly all traces of the flood, which would have paralyzed a less vigorous community, have been wiped out of existence and business has resumed its normal condition. **THIS IS THE HAWARDEN WAY!**”*

*Author’s note: That same enterprise and vigor was recently evident when trees were damaged and uprooted in Hawarden the Sunday evening before Memorial Day 2012. The activities at the Cemetery went on Monday morning as planned, electricity was restored, yards and streets were cleared, and a week later almost all signs of damage are gone. Again: **THIS IS THE HAWARDEN WAY!** More flood stories next week.*

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOODS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

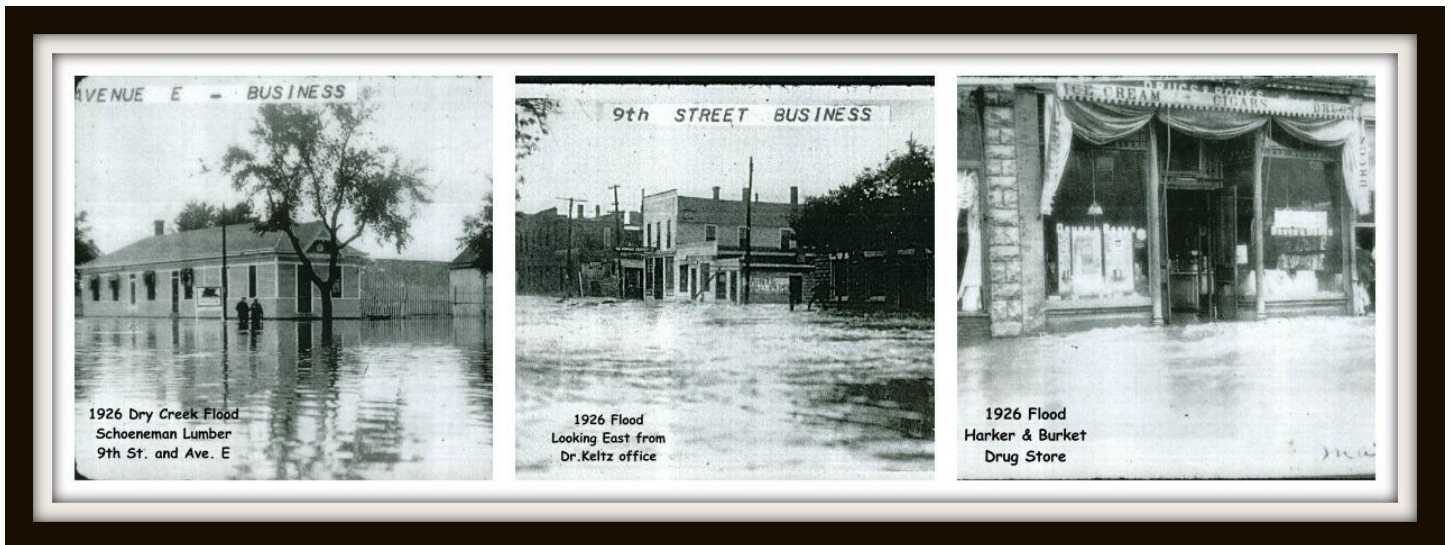
1926

Chapter 24

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Immediately after the flood of 1897, the City Council met in extra sessions to address repairs to crossings, bridges and other damage to the town. They also immediately began to discuss plans to prevent a repeat of the flooding. The Superintendent of the Northwestern Railroad came to Hawarden and expressed his willingness to meet the people of Hawarden half way on any plan they might suggest to solve the problem. The March 25, 1897 edition of the Hawarden Independent states, "They (Northwestern Railroad) had their engineers here and took a survey of the creek, made levels and other scientific observations which will be of value when it comes time to enlarge the creek, raising the embankment and devising other plans to carry off surplus water. It is the intention this time, no matter what the cost, to prevent a reoccurrence of these unpleasant visitations. AND IT WILL BE DONE !"

The railway company agreed to provide an outlet under their track to carry the water from the flat area, and it was the consensus of the Council that the flood was a blessing in disguise, as the plans mapped out would protect the City now and in the future. This was not the first or the last time that these promises were made only to find that they would not solve the problem.



The Flood of September 17, 1926, caused by the downpour of eleven inches of rain in a span of six hours, proved all the previous flood control plans inadequate and the catastrophic destruction of property was devastating. The tragedy was the loss of one of Hawarden's pioneer citizens, Charles M. Fleshman 62 years of age. Mr. Fleshman attempted to cross Main Street from the City Hall on the corner of Eighth Street to go north to the building occupied by the J.F. Keehn Billard Hall. Apparently when he stepped off the north steps of the City Hall, he was swept away in the raging current and his body was not recovered until morning when the waters started to recede. Some young men saw him swept into the water and attempted to help him regain his footing, but the water was too swift and they were powerless to rescue him. Search parties looked for him through the night with no avail. Around 7 AM Mr. Ernest Anderson found his lifeless remains in some

debris against the Anderson Auto Company's Garage a block west of where he entered the water. Since the funeral parlors were flooded, his body was taken to the home of Walter Scott (803 9th St.) where it was prepared for burial.

On that fateful day, the rain fell incessantly all afternoon, but no one really anticipated the tragic events that were to follow; families were separated, some at work, others at home, children had just been dismissed from school and a large number of them were in stores on Main Street and forced to take refuge on the second floors of the buildings. The City Hall was opened and many people stayed there all night. Parents and spouses were frantic until they could reach their loved ones. The telephone lines stayed intact in most areas of the city, and the telephone operators (located in the second level of the Hawarden Bank Building on 9th and Central) remained at their posts for the entire night helping people locate their loved ones.

Dry Creek went out of its banks east of the Earl Meeter Ball Park (the location of the present Avenue K Bridge). The wall of water that surged toward Central Avenue was unbelievable. Reports confirm that the creek overflowed its banks around six P.M., and within fifteen minutes, the water was three to four feet deep on Main Street, as well as many other streets of the city

Within a very few minutes of the occurrence of the disaster, Hawarden residents had sprung to action. Men and boys arrived to assist families caught in their homes. As they worked, many of them waist and shoulder deep in water, the rain continued to pour down with no sign of relief. Boats were drug down behind cars from the northern part of town and these men worked into the night helping families relocate to safe areas. The swiftness of the current as it swept through town made navigating very difficult. Some boats capsized, but fortunately the operators were able to rescue themselves and prevent further loss of life. Saddle horses were even called into service and several people were taken to safety on them. There were many acts of outstanding heroism by the rescuers, whose only concern was to help people to safety.

Most of the businesses were open at the time of the flood and a frantic effort to remove stock and merchandise from basements was futile. The water approached with such speed and fury, that even the merchandise on the main floors was heavily damaged, and items in the basements were totally inundated.

Houses on the creek bank were not only flooded, but many of them were undermined and fell into the water and were washed away. Reports of physically removing residents from their homes just minutes before their homes were washed away were common. Barns, garages and sheds floated away and were demolished by the current and debris. Steel bridges were undermined and some carried away. The bridge on Tenth Street by the Library was the only bridge that was accessible to cross Dry Creek for many days. The Northwestern railway yards suffered immense damage caused by undermining of their tracks, the Milwaukee pile bridge over Dry Creek was practically swept away and hung there with rails and ties waving like a suspension bridge across the widening creek channel. The damage in Hawarden's City Park changed it forever. The Creek channel that ran through the park was three times its normal width when the water receded, taking with it ornamental trees and shrubs and leaving a barren reminder of its former beauty.

Over two hundred and fifty homes were damaged or swept away. The price tag to owners for property and possessions was immeasurable. Every business in Hawarden was affected, either directly or from loss of business in the days following. One of the largest single items of financial loss caused by the flood was damage to Hawarden's streets. The flood waters literally rolled up the asphalt and broke it into pieces. The entire business district as well as large portions of the residential area had to be replaced or repaired.

The Red Cross came to the rescue with relief efforts and appeals for assistance. Their headquarters were located in the City Hall, and the first order of business was to warn residents to refrain from drinking any unboiled water or eating any uncooked food to avoid disease and infection. Citizens were encouraged to take

advantage of the free Typhoid Inoculations that were given at the Hawarden Hospital. Calls went out for clothing and bedding from surrounding communities and the response surprised even the professional Red Cross personnel. They were amazed at the quality and quantity of the donations.

The flood entered Hawarden on a Friday around supper time. As soon as the flood waters started to recede, clean up began, but little business was conducted on Saturday. On Sunday there was a regular “circus crowd” of spectators that came from as far as seventy-five miles away to view the damage. Gradually the utilities were restored to damaged areas and pumps removed the water from basements and first floors, and life became a cleanup and fix-up project. As damage was assessed, citizens took their losses stoically and continually discovered that someone else’s loss was much greater than their own.

And of course, as soon as life returned to some sort of normalcy, people started talking and planning to make sure that this WOULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOODS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

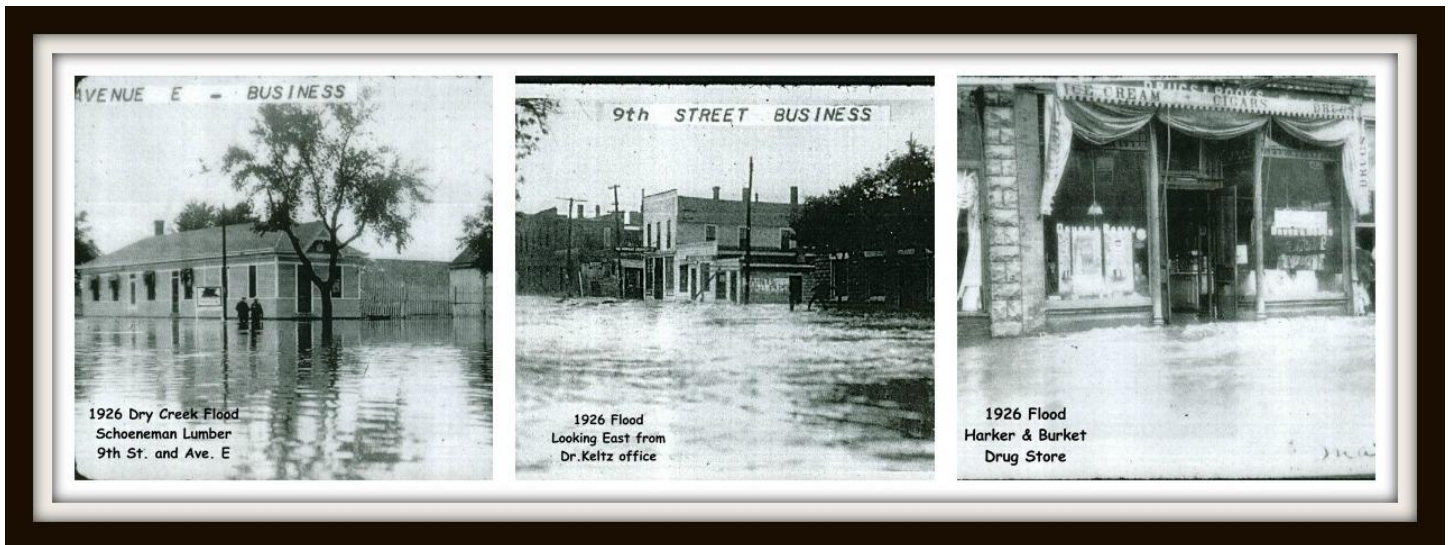
1926

Chapter 24

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Immediately after the flood of 1897, the City Council met in extra sessions to address repairs to crossings, bridges and other damage to the town. They also immediately began to discuss plans to prevent a repeat of the flooding. The Superintendent of the Northwestern Railroad came to Hawarden and expressed his willingness to meet the people of Hawarden half way on any plan they might suggest to solve the problem. The March 25, 1897 edition of the Hawarden Independent states, "They (Northwestern Railroad) had their engineers here and took a survey of the creek, made levels and other scientific observations which will be of value when it comes time to enlarge the creek, raising the embankment and devising other plans to carry off surplus water. It is the intention this time, no matter what the cost, to prevent a reoccurrence of these unpleasant visitations. AND IT WILL BE DONE !"

The railway company agreed to provide an outlet under their track to carry the water from the flat area, and it was the consensus of the Council that the flood was a blessing in disguise, as the plans mapped out would protect the City now and in the future. This was not the first or the last time that these promises were made only to find that they would not solve the problem.



The Flood of September 17, 1926, caused by the downpour of eleven inches of rain in a span of six hours, proved all the previous flood control plans inadequate and the catastrophic destruction of property was devastating. The tragedy was the loss of one of Hawarden's pioneer citizens, Charles M. Fleshman 62 years of age. Mr. Fleshman attempted to cross Main Street from the City Hall on the corner of Eighth Street to go north to the building occupied by the J.F. Keehn Billard Hall. Apparently when he stepped off the north steps of the City Hall, he was swept away in the raging current and his body was not recovered until morning when the waters started to recede. Some young men saw him swept into the water and attempted to help him regain his footing, but the water was too swift and they were powerless to rescue him. Search parties looked for him through the night with no avail. Around 7 AM Mr. Ernest Anderson found his lifeless remains in some

debris against the Anderson Auto Company's Garage a block west of where he entered the water. Since the funeral parlors were flooded, his body was taken to the home of Walter Scott (803 9th St.) where it was prepared for burial.

On that fateful day, the rain fell incessantly all afternoon, but no one really anticipated the tragic events that were to follow; families were separated, some at work, others at home, children had just been dismissed from school and a large number of them were in stores on Main Street and forced to take refuge on the second floors of the buildings. The City Hall was opened and many people stayed there all night. Parents and spouses were frantic until they could reach their loved ones. The telephone lines stayed intact in most areas of the city, and the telephone operators (located in the second level of the Hawarden Bank Building on 9th and Central) remained at their posts for the entire night helping people locate their loved ones.

Dry Creek went out of its banks east of the Earl Meeter Ball Park (the location of the present Avenue K Bridge). The wall of water that surged toward Central Avenue was unbelievable. Reports confirm that the creek overflowed its banks around six P.M., and within fifteen minutes, the water was three to four feet deep on Main Street, as well as many other streets of the city

Within a very few minutes of the occurrence of the disaster, Hawarden residents had sprung to action. Men and boys arrived to assist families caught in their homes. As they worked, many of them waist and shoulder deep in water, the rain continued to pour down with no sign of relief. Boats were drug down behind cars from the northern part of town and these men worked into the night helping families relocate to safe areas. The swiftness of the current as it swept through town made navigating very difficult. Some boats capsized, but fortunately the operators were able to rescue themselves and prevent further loss of life. Saddle horses were even called into service and several people were taken to safety on them. There were many acts of outstanding heroism by the rescuers, whose only concern was to help people to safety.

Most of the businesses were open at the time of the flood and a frantic effort to remove stock and merchandise from basements was futile. The water approached with such speed and fury, that even the merchandise on the main floors was heavily damaged, and items in the basements were totally inundated.

Houses on the creek bank were not only flooded, but many of them were undermined and fell into the water and were washed away. Reports of physically removing residents from their homes just minutes before their homes were washed away were common. Barns, garages and sheds floated away and were demolished by the current and debris. Steel bridges were undermined and some carried away. The bridge on Tenth Street by the Library was the only bridge that was accessible to cross Dry Creek for many days. The Northwestern railway yards suffered immense damage caused by undermining of their tracks, the Milwaukee pile bridge over Dry Creek was practically swept away and hung there with rails and ties waving like a suspension bridge across the widening creek channel. The damage in Hawarden's City Park changed it forever. The Creek channel that ran through the park was three times its normal width when the water receded, taking with it ornamental trees and shrubs and leaving a barren reminder of its former beauty.

Over two hundred and fifty homes were damaged or swept away. The price tag to owners for property and possessions was immeasurable. Every business in Hawarden was affected, either directly or from loss of business in the days following. One of the largest single items of financial loss caused by the flood was damage to Hawarden's streets. The flood waters literally rolled up the asphalt and broke it into pieces. The entire business district as well as large portions of the residential area had to be replaced or repaired.

The Red Cross came to the rescue with relief efforts and appeals for assistance. Their headquarters were located in the City Hall, and the first order of business was to warn residents to refrain from drinking any unboiled water or eating any uncooked food to avoid disease and infection. Citizens were encouraged to take

advantage of the free Typhoid Inoculations that were given at the Hawarden Hospital. Calls went out for clothing and bedding from surrounding communities and the response surprised even the professional Red Cross personnel. They were amazed at the quality and quantity of the donations.

The flood entered Hawarden on a Friday around supper time. As soon as the flood waters started to recede, clean up began, but little business was conducted on Saturday. On Sunday there was a regular “circus crowd” of spectators that came from as far as seventy-five miles away to view the damage. Gradually the utilities were restored to damaged areas and pumps removed the water from basements and first floors, and life became a cleanup and fix-up project. As damage was assessed, citizens took their losses stoically and continually discovered that someone else’s loss was much greater than their own.

And of course, as soon as life returned to some sort of normalcy, people started talking and planning to make sure that this WOULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOODS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

PROBLEMS AND PROMISES

Chapter 25

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

There are two reoccurring themes in the history of the floods produced by Dry Creek. The first is without question; the determination of the City fathers and citizens to "Make sure this never happens again!" The second is the Northwestern Railway Company. A company that is credited for the very existence of Hawarden, and later seemed to be the single largest contributing factor causing consistent flooding of Hawarden by Dry Creek.

In the days and years following each flood, there were countless meetings and solutions presented to solve the flooding of Hawarden. One of the first was a Hawarden Booster Club dinner held in October of 1926. At this dinner, Mayor French gave a talk about the history of Hawarden's floods and mentioned that in 1883 there were three separate and distinct floods in that summer alone. This gives credence to the previous stories revealing that the residents of Calliope could not imagine that anyone would want to live in that "swamp" called Hawarden.

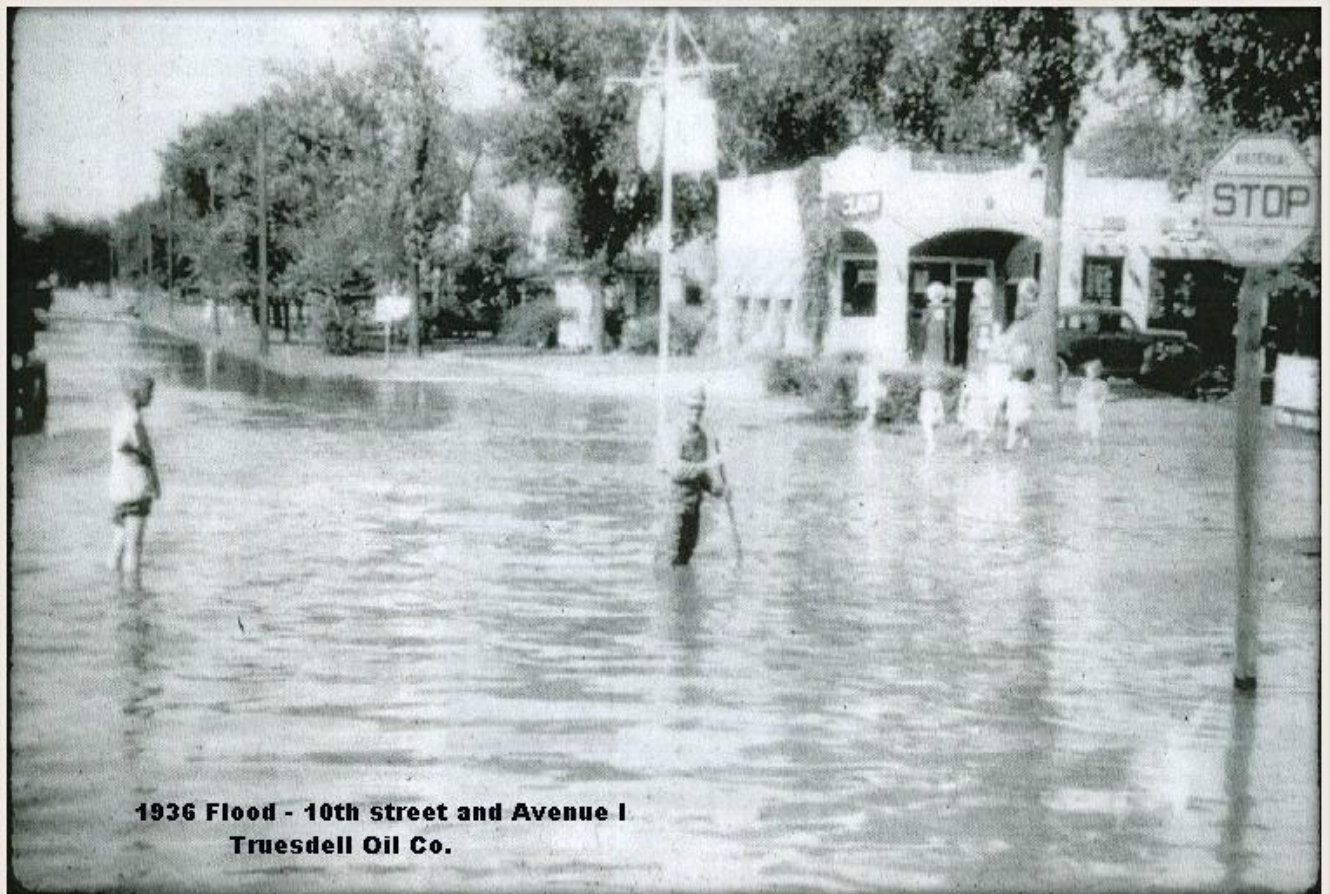
After the floods of 1883 the Western Town Lot Co., who owned most of the land in town, changed the creek channel and the town was not flooded again until 1897. The flood of 1897 was blamed on a grade constructed by the Northwestern Railway Co., and they were forced to install a sixty foot waterway under their railroad grade south east of town. Unfortunately, when the Short Line cutoff to Sioux City was constructed in 1910 the waterway was again filled with dirt. Instead of a sixty foot waterway, two small culverts were installed in its place. When city officials finally recognized the changes to the waterway they were not concerned. Heavy snow run-offs and rains since the flood of 1897 had caused the Dry Creek channel to become much wider and deeper and the popular belief was that this larger channel would accommodate any rainfall that may occur and so no attention was paid to the smaller openings under the Northwestern grade. Obviously the flood of 1926 proved them wrong.

At this same meeting an engineer from Sioux City who had been doing preliminary work on flood control for Hawarden gave several proposals for the Council to study. At the end of the meeting a Flood Committee was established and the Booster Club gave its unanimous support to do whatever it took to solve this problem.

In December of 1926 a referendum was held and a majority of citizens and taxpayers voted in favor of changing the channel of Dry Creek as the engineer had recommended. The project still had to be approved. The City Council had to pass a "resolution of necessity" which required four affirmative votes. Because of some unanswered questions concerning the outcome of the referendum, only three councilmen voted to support the "resolution of necessity" and it failed. The outcome of the meeting resulted in unanimous vote of the council to request a meeting with the railroad and demand that the railroad would open the grade that blocked the waterway. They felt that if this requirement was met, the concern of changing the channel was not necessary.

In March of 1927 the City Council received word from the Northwestern Railway that they would refuse to make an opening in their grade unless it was done under an order of the Public Authorities as a Public Improvement which would spread the cost over all the benefitted properties and protect the railway from any damages. They suggested that the City should work out the details and submit them to the railroad for approval.

Headlines in the **June 14, 1934 HAWARDEN INDEPENDENT: " DRY CREEK GOES ON RAMPAGE."** On this day over five inches of rain fell in Hawarden, and as much or more fell on the fields northeast of Hawarden where Dry Creek begins. Although not a match for the damage of the flood of 1926, this flood did substantial damage to basements and property from the Avenue K bridge north to ninth street and the west to Avenue I and on to tenth street then traveling north as far as the city park; leaving a muddy reminder of the fury of the creek.



**1936 Flood - 10th street and Avenue I
Truesdell Oil Co.**

On the front page of the same paper the column headline read:" **FLOOD CONTROL STEPS TAKEN: OFFICIALS OF NORTH WESTERN ATTEND MEETING HERE: Lack of Proper Opening in Railroad Grade Viewed as Chief Flood Menace to Hawarden.**" The article continued to report that the railroad officials at the meeting that night agreed that they would have their engineers look into the situation at once and see if a plan could be worked out to protect the city from any further flood menace that could be caused by the railroad grade in its present condition. "The meeting Wednesday night was a most harmonious gathering and there was general conviction that a satisfactory solution would be reached."

The headlines in the **HAWARDEN INDEPENDENT: September 17, 1936 "DRENCHED BY BIG DOWNPOUR".** The article told about heavy damage that was inflicted by flooding and also caving along the creek bank due to heavy rains. The opinion was expressed that widening of the channel east of the ball park on Avenue K was responsible for forcing the huge volumes of water through the narrower channel below and the increased velocity formed whirlpools that cut away the creek bank. The greatest damage was on the west side of the creek between 9th and 10th streets and in the city park.

Quoting from the above article: **"Dry Creek still continues as Hawarden's greatest menace."** Obviously despite all good will and concern, the fury of Dry Creek had not yet been harnessed.

And so the story goes, more pages of history filled with good intentions on the part of Hawarden's city government and excuses and politics used by the Railroad and their council. Decisions and tactics that continued to plague the citizens of Hawarden with the prospects and reality of one flood following another.

Will Dry Creek ever be tamed? No one has that answer. More solutions next week.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOODS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

THE LAST BIG FLOOD?

Chapter: 26

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

The floods of the '20s and '30s were in the past. With each flood and scare of a flood, the City Fathers became more determined "THIS would be the LAST." It seemed that as soon as the Flood Committee or Chamber of Commerce or City Council declared that a cure had been found, the cloudbursts from the heavens proved them wrong.

In 1942 Dry Creek greeted Hawarden with floods in both June and September. One of the bright spots of the September flood was an early warning from a farmer northeast of Hawarden where runoff water runs into Dry Creek. The farmer was George Baldwin, and he had observed that Hawarden was always flooded when the water from the creek went over his road. Mr. Baldwin's farm was located five miles east and seven miles north of Hawarden. After that first warning, businessmen in Hawarden kept a close watch on the area where Dry Creek had its start. My father, Rex Truesdell was an avid student of Dry Creek and its destruction, and he told me that when the water went over the road at Baldwin's farm, Hawarden had 11 hours to prepare for the flood. Over the many floods to follow, this information saved untold dollars in damages and destruction. When the phone rang in Hawarden with news of the overflowing creek, the whole town would spring into action filling sand bags and making dikes of sand along the doors of buildings. It also gave business men and families time to remove many of their valuables from the basements and first floors, so even though the flood water surged through town, the advance preparation helped diminish the loss. I have been told that water from as far away as Perkins Corner drains into Hawarden's creek, so the amount of rain received north of town certainly affects the intensity of the floods.

After the two floods in 1942 the City fathers were even more serious about avoiding any more damage from the creek. The October 6, 1942 issue of the Hawarden Independent reported that the City of Hawarden was attempting to purchase 31 acres of land from the Northwestern Railroad that was located south of their roundhouse. The paper wrote, "The offer was made as a step toward control of the Dry Creek floods which twice this year have inundated the Hawarden downtown district".

The article continues to state that the Railroad has agreed to open its right of way to allow the flood waters to go through if some arrangement can be made to contain the water once it gets south of the tracks. The City believes these 31 acres will handle this problem.

Almost a year later, the August 8, 1943 issue of The Hawarden Independent contained a front page picture of the 5 span 65 foot trestle that is hoped to be the key to the new Hawarden Flood Control project. The dirt removed beneath the trestle was used by the City to elevate the street grades which will serve as a dike to divert the flood waters under the trestle to the southwest. *"According to the engineers, completion of the project assures Hawarden of protection from heavy flood damage that the City has experienced during the past years."*

Ten years later, the headlines in the Hawarden Independent were forced to exclaim: **"RAMPAGING FLOOD HITS CITY"** June 11, 1953 edition.

On Sunday a total of 7.77 inches of rain, six of them coming in only 4 and one half hours were recorded in Hawarden. Heavier rains were reported in the area north and east of Hawarden. A call for help from Dick Vander Lugt who lived on the farm directly east of Dry Creek and north of the Hawarden Golf Course was the first warning of the impending disaster. Mr. Vander Lugt asked for help to rescue his cattle that were trapped in the flood waters. The siren was sounded at 4 PM and again around 6 PM.

The entire main street of Hawarden was flooded. The basements were filled to the ceiling with muddy flood water. There was at least 18 inches on the main floors. Flood waters to some of the buildings were held at bay by sand bags and in some cases even sacks of flour, but seepage from one building to another caused much of the damage. Firemen on the scene had to use axes to break down front and rear doors of the businesses of owners who could not be reached, in order to let the flood water flow through, rather than create a vacuum and collapse the exterior walls. Many businesses including the Post office reported over 6 feet of water in their basements.

My father owned the Ford Garage in 1953 (located on Main Street in the former Bomgaars building). We were not in town the week of the flood, but upon returning we heard the story of an attempted rescue of a trailer house that was located across the road to the south of the current HiTec building located in the old ball park. Employees of my father took the wrecker (a new Ford F600) down to pull the trailer to safety. While hooking the trailer to the wrecker, the water came up so fast and furious that their only option was to run to safety and abandon the large wrecker and trailer house. When the water receded and they went back to see the damage, they found a large log that had broken the windshield of the wrecker and was lodged in the cab. The water was that high and had that much force!

As you can imagine Flood control was again the topic of discussion. Answers next week.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FLOOD FREE FOR 50 YEARS

Chapter 27

By: Rexford Truesdell as told to his daughter, Mary Truesdell Johnson

Throughout my life in Hawarden, I have heard flood stories by the hundreds, mostly from my dad, Rex Truesdell and my mother, Elvina Harker Truesdell, and my maternal grandmother Louise Harker. The stories I heard over and over again had not been passed down by a previous generation, these story tellers had all lived the experience.

My dad and his family lived three doors north of the Avenue K Bridge over Dry Creek for most of his years as a young adult. He was 16 years old when he experienced the flood of 1926. My mother's family owned the Harker Drug Store (now the site of Transformations) and they experienced devastating damage and unbelievable cleanup during each of the floods mentioned since the 1900's. In the 1950's both of my parents had buildings affected by the floods, and quite frankly when they built their home at 920 Ave K and later built the Ford garage (now Hawarden Motors east of the Quick Corner), they raised the level of both structures to keep them above the recorded flood levels. This was done because they both had given up any hope of anything being done to the creek that would really help. Many things had been tried but none had worked.

The story I am about to tell will be my dad's story. The words are his as told to me many times, but especially in 1987 when he was asked to document the Flood Control project for the Hawarden Centennial Book. This is his story.

After life had returned to normal following the flood of 1953, I was asked to join the Toastmaster Club. I thought this would be a good experience and would help me to express my thoughts. After several meetings, each of us was asked to give a five minute talk. One of the suggestions for a subject was to talk about your town and the good qualities as well as what needed to be changed. I spoke on Dry Creek. I spoke about all the remedies that had failed and how after living through several floods it was becoming discouraging. Several members complimented me after the meeting.

A short time later it was my turn to have the 15 to 20 minute program at the local Rotary Club. Again I talked about the creek and expressed several of my opinions about what I thought should be done to correct the problem. After the program one of the members approached me with this comment, "a nice talk, Rex, but that is all it amounts to." This made me mad and that night I committed myself to prove him wrong.

I started asking questions of all the "old timers" who had lived their entire lives in Hawarden. All of them mentioned the railroad as the largest contributor to the problem.

I knew from experience that the dike constructed by the railroad sent the water north through town. Why not make a dike and send the water south under the tracks and then west to L.G.Everist Gravel pit, and in the southwest corner of the Everist Pit make a spillway into the river? When I mentioned this to several of the "old timers," they replied, "Rex, you get the dike built and you won't have to dig the channel. Just keep it plowed and the water will do the rest."

My next job was to convince the people who were going to have a creek or a lake close to them that the water would be at a lower level than their yards and would not cause the trouble that they already experienced from the floods.

To help convince the doubters and to better illustrate my plan, I took my camera and walked from the mouth of the creek upstream to the golf course taking pictures of the past efforts to control the creek that actually made the flooding worse. After taking many ground level pictures by walking up and down the creek, I asked Milo Engelbritsen to fly me over the town and the creek for aerial views. I then arranged a meeting with some local business men who had experienced the floods since 1926. I showed them my slides and explained my plan to build a dike from highway 10 southwest to the Northwestern Railroad and on the south side of the railroad build a spillway to the L.G.Everist Gravel Pit south and west of Hawarden. I explained that I had talked to Mr. Steve Everist and he looked over my plans and said that if Hawarden would let L.G.Everist take the gravel from the land south of Avenue B, they would take our flood water. They would also build the dikes for a reasonable amount of money. The group was speechless; it was hard for them to believe that our flooding could be solved so easily. Some of them wanted more assurance so the Army Corp of Engineers from Omaha was contacted. The plan impressed them and when they were advised of the offers made by Mr. Steve Everist, felt that it could be done for under \$400,000, which was the limit we could get for Federal Aid.

The rest is history, L.G.Everist got the dirt contract and sublet it to locally owned Keiser Construction Co. The project was completed in 1963.

My dad and all the others who were involved in this project have much to be proud of. As of this date in 2012 the channel has lived up to expectations and protected the property and lives of Hawarden citizens for 50 years.

It is the duty of our generation and the generations to come to maintain the dike and vigilantly watch for any type of damage or construction that could weaken it or divert the flow of water. Signs are posted to keep motorized vehicles off the dike and this is very important. Any type of rut has the possibility of turning into a crevice or channel that could weaken the barrier and send the flood waters back into the City limits. My father passed away in 1997 and continued to be proud of this accomplishment, but whenever floods were discussed, we were reminded that the channel has never been tested as in 1926 when 11 inches of rain fell in 6 hours, or 1953 when almost 8 inches fell in the span of an afternoon. The fury of uncontrolled water is something to fear. Hopefully we have conquered Dry creek and now as the remains of the old channel runs through Hawarden as walking paths and park areas it is really DRY for good. Only time will tell.

For more details go to: Hawarden Centennial Book, pages 354-358

New Channel going south



**Old Channel headed north
from Avenue K**



HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

DO YOU REMEMBER THE '50'S?

Chapter 28

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

The 1950's, fondly referred to by those of us now on Social Security as America's Favorite Decade.

If you were lucky enough to be a teenager during the '50's, you cannot remember a time as carefree and magical as that decade. Life was "simple" back then. Not "simple" in terms that nothing happened, but "simple" as America was a safer place. It was the age of "Leave it to Beaver", and the "Cleavers" and "Father knows Best." The family unit was basically intact, and normal was the rule, not the exception. Divorce was hardly heard of, and living together before marriage was taboo. The '50's were a time of conformity and without 24/7 Cable news channels, the alternatives were just a distant rumor.



The decade of the '50s contributed more to our modern lifestyle than any other time period in the 20th century. Some of the most dearly loved icons of pop culture had their best years in the '50's. Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Lucille Ball, Buddy Holly. Prize winning novels that we still read and quote: "*Catcher in the Rye*,

Caine Mutiny, Anne Frank, Diary of a Young Girl”, “Dr.Zhivago”even the first copy of “Lord of the Rings”, by J.R.R. Tolkein.

Television came into its own in the ‘50s and we still love to watch “*I Love Lucy*” “*Ozzie and Harriet*” “*The Honeymooners*” and “*Gun smoke*”.

In the 1950’s Papermate introduced the first ballpoint pen that didn’t leak! Diners Club issued the first Credit Card with American Express and Visa to follow. Swanson thrilled everyone with their individual CHICKEN POT PIES in the nifty tin foil baking dishes. Would you believe my mother served them at our wedding reception in the late ‘50’s! Everyone thought they were the greatest thing they had seen. (Note: Back then they actually had chicken in them and the vegetables were easy to recognize and not crunchy); sometimes progress goes backwards.

Tupperware was introduced in the ‘50’s as well as Saran Wrap and Radial Tires. The first 3-D movie was shown: *BWANA DEVIL*. This decade gave us Area Codes on the telephone, Holiday Inns, Mr. Potato Head and Kellogg Frosted Flakes (the beginning of the sugar craze), and two new states, Alaska and Hawaii.

It was a perfect decade to be a kid. Playing outside was in; no fear of abductions by strangers. Toys were affordable, such as hula hoops, boomerangs, bats and balls, Silly Putty, etc. Teenagers were still kids, and dared to do such radical things as see how many could cram into a phone booth, or the trunk of a car going to the Wigwam drive in movie. Some teenagers were even bold enough to go to neighboring communities on scavenger hunts and ask for tulips. College age students invented “panty raids”, and the local teenagers wore bobby socks and Saddle Shoes with “rolled up jeans” or Poodle Skirts and starched petticoats. Girls had ponytails and boys either had crew cuts or greased-back “Duck Butt” hairstyles. “*Bryl creme: A little dab will do ya! You’ll look so debonair. The girls will all pursue you...they love to run their fingers through your hair.*” was a favorite jingle on the radio and TV.

Riding our bikes to Oak Grove for a day of exploring was a summer tradition, and climbing to Big Rock was the goal of the day. Sometimes these outings were well remembered....especially if you happened to encounter some poison ivy on the trip.

The 1950’s had some unsettling times as well. In 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea. President Truman sent United States Soldiers to war. The Soviet Union announced that they had an Atomic Bomb. The 1951 Hawarden Independent reported that the Draft Call for Sioux County had doubled. The war even got closer to Hawarden when the call went out asking for volunteers to man Observer Posts around the nation. This group of volunteers was called the Ground Observer Corps and next week’s article will deal with this little known fact about Hawarden’s call to service to help protect our Nation.

1952 also brought tragedy and suffering to our community with the unbelievable Polio Epidemic that struck some of our youngest children. Pictures of parents on the outside of the Sioux City Hospital trying to look in windows to get a glimpse of their child lying helpless in an iron lung were published in the Sioux city Journal and haunt me to this day. Classmates were stricken and several passed away. My parents kept me very close to home during that period and for a time I did not even attend school. One of the miracles of the 20th century was Jonas Salk’s discovery of a polio vaccine which has saved countless lives and all but eradicated the disease.

Life moves on. Gone are the days of innocence and tight censorship on TV, gone is the norm of a traditional family, and the days of uncomplicated heroes like The Lone Ranger, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, Gene Autry and Sky King. These times have faded, but the contributions to our society will continue to be remembered. The 50's gave us Rosa Parks who refused to give her seat on a bus in Alabama to a white man...breaking the law, but ushering in the Civil Rights movement. It gave us the first state to issue a Seat Belt Law. The Soviets launched their satellite Sputnik, beginning the international space race. Velcro was patented, the Edsel was born (and later died), President Eisenhower inserted "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Presidential plane was named Air Force One, for clarity and security. We were blessed with Mc Donald's, Burger King, Disneyland, Peanut M & Ms, Butterball Turkey, and TV dinners. JFK married Jackie, Marilyn Monroe married Pulitzer Prize winner Arthur Miller, Jackie Robinson retired from baseball, and Grace Kelly married her Prince Ranier of Monaco.

And so goes the 1950's.....good and bad....a decade of progress and a lifetime of memories.
Next week: Hawarden's Ground Observer Corp.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN
EYES ON THE SKIES
HAWARDEN'S GROUND OBSERVER CORPS

Chapter 29:

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

In the early 1950's headlines in the national papers were filled with worries about strained relations with the Soviet Union and their threat of using an atomic bomb.

Before electronic sensors guarded the approaches to North America and satellite warning systems peered down from space the United States depended entirely on civilian volunteers to be the first line of defense against an attack on our country.

Due to budget constraints and shortage of manpower, the Military was not able to fund the necessary men and equipment to carry out the early detection and warning system. The solution was to go to the American citizens and obtain volunteers to handle the program.

The original goal, established in the 1950's was set at 500,000 volunteers to man 19,500 Observer Posts who reported to 49 Filter Centers. The Observer's worked from any site that offered a clear and unobstructed view of the skies.

The front page of the Hawarden Independent on April 9, 1953 announced a Ground Observer Corps meeting at the American Legion Hall. All interested citizens were urged to attend. The American Legion had agreed to sponsor the Ground Observer Corps in Hawarden and Don Dowdey agreed to be the supervisor. Air Force Officers would be present to explain the program and to show a moving picture on the subject. Mr. Dowdey reported that the bell tower at the Central school would be the site for the observers and a telephone with a direct line to the Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Neb. was being installed.

Across the United States, men, women and teenagers volunteered to watch the skies on a 24/7 basis to protect their beloved country. As of 1954 13,000 Iowans gave their time and effort so that trained eyes and ears might detect enemy planes in the event of an attack on the US.

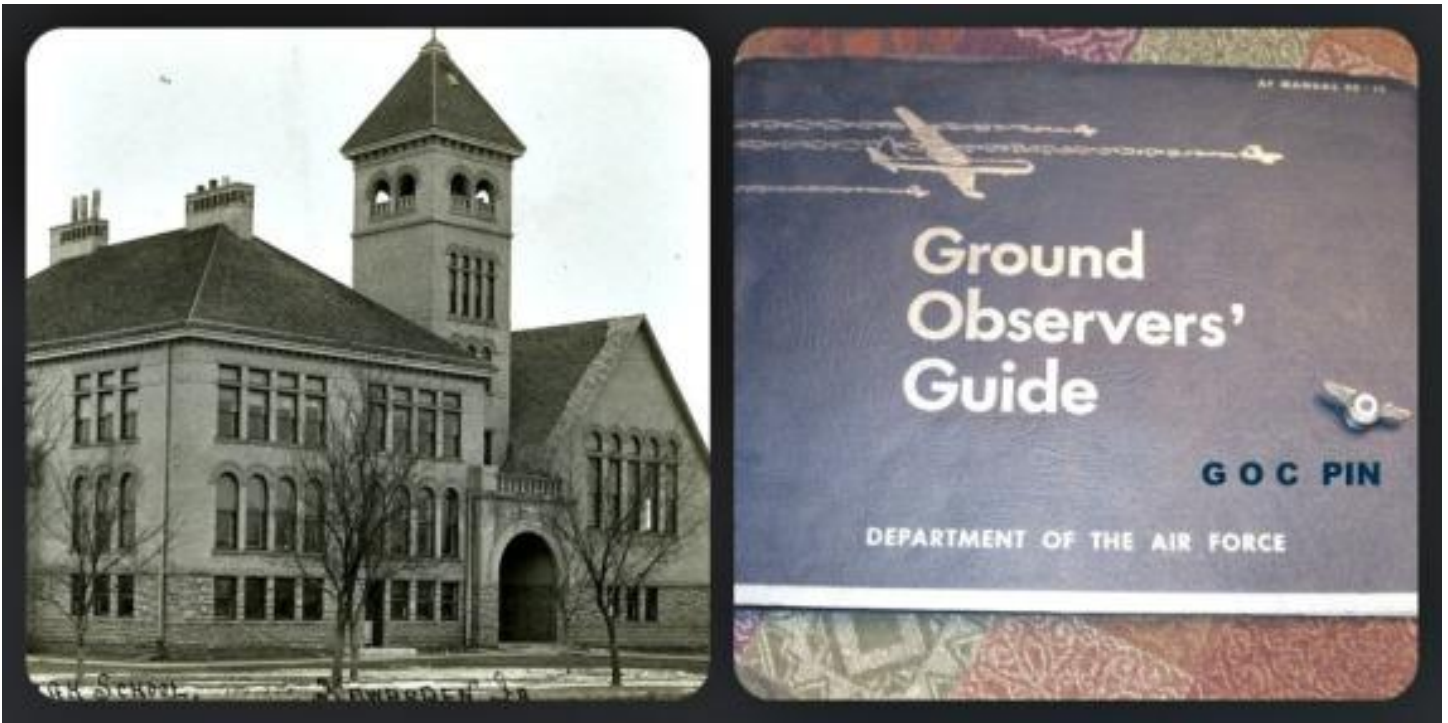
I have not been able to find a list of the volunteers from the Hawarden area, but I do know that several of them were teenagers and to this day talk of the experience with pride and emotion.

Written by Ron Thompson - 1957 graduate of Hawarden High School:

I was fourteen years of age and proud to be a member of the Hawarden Ground Observer Corps when it was formed in 1953. Like all the volunteers I took the responsibility that the Corps shouldered very seriously. We were part of our Country's early warning system against an enemy warplanes invasion. The USSR had "The Bomb" and we were doing our part to fight "the Cold War."

After induction into the Corps, I was given a "rigorous" (about 1 or 2 hours) training on how to identify airplanes, both friendly and foe. Then I pledged allegiance to the flag, made a solemn promise to be vigilant and keep my eyes peeled for enemy aircraft when on duty, and pinned on my silver GOC Wings. I was ready for duty and proud to serve my country.

The observation post was high up in the Central School bell tower. When my team of observers was scheduled for duty, I made sure that I was on time to relieve the previous observers. No one in the Corps wanted to be responsible for breaking the continuity of our air watch patrol and allow an enemy plane to slip by without being reported to GOC central at Offutt Air Force Base.



To reach the Bell Tower, we used the east ground floor entrance of the school. Once inside I climbed the two flights of stairs to the third floor and then climbed a narrow ladder leading up to the open air belfry; a little square room with a small table in the center. On the table sat our observation gear; a pair of binoculars, a duty roster, and a black telephone. Next to the phone was a GOC AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION book containing silhouettes of planes we needed to identify. It was a very complete manual. It contained profiles of every plane ever built. Nothing was left to chance. We were prepared!

The following comes from the recollections of **Stuart Flynn: 1956 graduate of Hawarden High School**: I remember being on duty in the school tower and at various times reported one of our B 36 bombers flying high overhead. When we picked up the phone to give a report, we first said something like, "Aircraft Flash" then we repeated our post identification, which was : **Juliet, Nectar Three Five Black**. We then proceeded with repeating the things we had written down on the official form such as how many aircraft, approximate altitude, direction, etc.

Another vivid memory I have was on "Armed Forces Day". Jules Johnson and I were on duty and all of a sudden the grade school tower was being "buzzed" by two thundering P-51 Mustang Fighters. The roar of those two fighters was deafening as they came close to the tower. They were probably less than 500 feet off the ground and made at least a couple of passes at us. For a brief moment I thought we were under attack by the Russians!! Jules stayed pretty calm and we were eventually able to determine that they were friendly aircraft. As I remember, Jules called the report in to Offutt. Later it was decided that they were Air National Guard Planes from the Sioux City base.

I also remember how windy and cold it often was while on duty in the tower. There were no windows or walls to protect us from the weather.

Stuart's other story about the GOC was a story he heard about Ken Bode being injured with a gash on his head caused by an overhanging wood beam. On researching this story, Ken reported to me that his injury came from a 2x4 that came flying through the hole where the ladder to reach the tower was located. His head was indeed gashed and he later received a 'GOC lavender heart' to recognize his war injury.

I know many others from the Hawarden area were volunteers to this prestigious group. I have made attempts to locate more stories about this period of Hawarden's history, and would still love to hear them. They should be recorded for posterity.

Fifty years later, the wings and badges of the GOC are collector's items enshrined in museums or sold on e bay. The teenagers who helped man the ramshackle observation posts are now drawing social security. Only a few of the towers from which they phoned their reports have survived the ravages of time. What a wonderful legacy for America....1,000's of volunteers reported to be of service to their country without any thought of recognition or compensation.

There is no way to tell if an imminent air attack on the US was deterred by this band of patriotic volunteers, just as it is impossible to tell how different things could have been without them. Their dedication and commitment to their country deserves a word of thanks....even at this late date.

“KEEP YOUR EYES TO THE SKIES! YOUR COUNTRY IS COUNTING ON YOU!”

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN
QUARRELING CITY EMPLOYEES OUT CLOWN
CIRCUS BUFFOONS

Chapter 30

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson (see disclaimer below)

I must confess that the article this week is copied almost word for word from the article written in the July 4, 1946 edition of the Hawarden Independent. Some things can just not be improved and need to be reported as written. It is important to know, however that this is a true story, but the names have been omitted to protect the innocent as well as the guilty. And so it is written:

It might have been just a clownish spirit inspired by those circus billboards around town that prompted a City Street Employee painting parking stripes to swipe the City Police Chief across the side of his head with a large brush heavily laden with orange colored pavement paint. The affair was comical enough to make any of the Big Tops funny men hide their faces in shame.

None of the carefully rehearsed slap-stick stuff put on by the Bell Bros. Circus Clowns was as mirth provoking as when an employee of the Hawarden Street Department massaged the right side of the Police Chief's face with that dripping paint brush.

People who were fortunate enough to have been witnesses of the fracas on Central Avenue between the two City employees say that they felt cheated later when they paid out real money to see the professional buffoons do their stuff on Circus day.

After the Police Chief deputized the aid of "Big John" (a by-stander) to subdue the paint brush wielder and the trio started the swaying, block-long jaunt down the main drag to put this "stripe painter" in the clink, the kids really thought the circus had already come to town, and no one could blame them. There was the big burly clown and the Cop Clown, bedaubed with orange paint, his hat awry and his shirt torn half off, taking the skinny clown with his paint brush to the calaboose.

It should have happened only under a circus tent, but it did happen here on the City's main avenue. It gave Hawarden the biggest and heartiest community belly laugh that it has had in many a year.

To review the whole silly affair, it seems that a quarrel between the Chief and the line painter had been brewing for some time, for a number of reasons. It flared up anew that fateful morning, when the line painter and his crew, including his two sons, started to repaint the automobile parking stripes in the business district. It was necessary to move a number of cars and the street department appealed to the police department for help. Co operation was not readily forthcoming, and there were arguments.

Shortly after noon, the line painters started to paint the middle of the street parking places on Central Avenue, north of Ninth Street. The painter in charge parked the city truck carrying his painting equipment partly in the intersection. The Police Chief seized the opportunity to wield the authority of the Police Department against the Street Department and ordered them to move the City truck. The Paint Brush wielder replied that he needed the truck there to have available the equipment needed for the job.



The Police Chief seized the Painter by the arm and told him he was under arrest. Then things happened: the painter had just dipped his four inch brush in the paint supply can, he gave the cop “the works” and a tussle started. With his shirt and undershirt torn down the front, the Chief was “getting the worst of it”, so he called on “Big John” for help. John and the Chief marched the Paint brush villain down the street to the city jail and placed him in a cell, still waving his paint brush. He stayed in jail while the Police Chief discussed the situation with Mayor Clayton Thompson. The villain was released about an hour later, and went back painting the parking stripes with the same brush.

Both the Chief and the Painter were verbally spanked by the City Fathers. At an executive session of the council, held behind closed doors, each of the culprits was allowed to give his version of the scrape. Following a lengthy discussion the Council decided that both men could retain their jobs, providing they don’t “pop off” in public anymore. Also it was decided to define more clearly the duties of the various departments in an effort to avoid further clashes between City employees.

The July 11, 1946 issue of the Hawarden Independent had headlines stating: CITY EMPLOYEE FINED \$50.00 FOR PAINT EPISODE. The article reported that “Some of Hawarden’s soiled city laundry was washed out in the Sioux County District Court at Orange City when a city employee was fined \$50.00 and costs and given a suspended 90 day jail sentence on the charge of resisting an officer, the complainant being Hawarden’s Chief of Police.”

Evidently the executive session of the council and their decision to “smooth over” the incident did not set well with the Chief of Police. The Chief went to Orange City and filed charges against the Street Employee. The sheriff came to Hawarden and served the warrant to the painter. After appearing in Sioux County District Court the Painter entered a plea of guilty

It is interesting to report that in the edition of the paper reporting the painting episode and the council’s decision, there was a separate article stating the following: “The City Council is planning to increase the pay of Hawarden’s Police Force, \$10.00 per month all the way around. The Chief now receives \$120.00 and the two Marshalls draw \$110.00 a month. Nothing was mentioned about pay increases for the Street Department employees.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT TURNS THE PAST INTO A LANDMARK FOR HAWARDEN

Chapter 31

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

1976 was a year of reflection for America. It was during this year that we celebrated America's 200th Birthday. Hawarden was hardly middle aged in 1976 boasting 89 years since its incorporation. Calliope was much older and would have been 116 on our Bicentennial year.

History and patriotism was the theme of the year in 1976 and it was at this time that many historians of our area, including Nelson Neiuwenhuis, author of "Sioux land, A History of Sioux County," visited with members of Hawarden's Bicentennial Committee and helped them locate the historical sites and treasurers in the Calliope area. This may have been the birth of the first vision of a village replicating the landmarks of the past. Landmarks that not only helped form our City of Hawarden, but were the foundation of the entire area we now call Sioux County.

The adults of the community were not the only ones with a vision, a teenager, Ronald Hill also had a vision, and this is his story.

Ron was a social young man and loved to visit. One of his favorite people to spend time with was Grandma Carr. She was a very interesting lady who lived in Calliope in a home with no electricity, no running water, and chickens that she raised in her back yard. Her home was lit by lanterns, and the well out back was her source for water. She had lived in this home for many years, and at the time Ron visited her was probably in her 80's and seemed to love to have company and share her stories. When Ron stopped by she usually invited him in and offered him some tea and of course he accepted. She told of the days when she raised chickens in her back yard and cared for many of her grandchildren. Ron continued to visit and heard many stories of her life. Grandma Carr died later that year and after her death the house stood empty.

After the house had been empty for a time, Ron was visiting with Grace Melvin who was a member of the Bicentennial Committee and one of Hawarden's historians. She told him that Grandma Carr's home had been built in 1856 and it had served as a stage coach depot in those early days. Records show that Pinkey Davis was one of the drivers and the building was made out of cottonwood.

It was at this time in Ron's Boy Scout career that he was beginning to think of a project to work on to earn his Eagle Scout Badge. Ron spoke to his Scouting Commissioner, Don Dowdey about his vision for the restoration of the Stage Coach Depot. Scoutmaster Dowdey agreed that it would be a difficult project, but a great fortune for the future.

Ron's first task was to talk the City fathers into acquiring the property. Harry Lankhorst was the Mayor at the time, so he was the first person Ron contacted. He loved Ron's idea and encouraged him to approach the City Council with his idea. The Council was not as receptive to the idea as Ron had hoped and they tabled the discussion for the next meeting. Even at the age of fourteen, Ron was not one to give up easily, so he was in attendance at the next council meeting. At this meeting, Mayor Lankhorst spoke up in his behalf and said that he would monitor the project on the cities behalf. At that time the Council gave \$1000.00 to start the renovation. Mayor Lankhorst also pledged \$500.00 to the project, and Ron Hill began his search to find a group of people to work with him. This group of people became the early Calliope Stage Coach Depot Committee and included Don and Matie Rienking, Grace Melvin, Don Dowdy, Shirley Hill and Ron Hill and Grandma Carr's daughter. Ron was elected president of the newly formed group, and others got involved with the committee.

With the help of Ron's fellow Boy Scouts, Troop 209, the project and the clean up began. There had been an addition to the house built in later years that needed to be torn down as well as removing old plaster and seventeen coats of wall paper. Under some of that wall paper they discovered planks for the walls that had been white washed in what was no doubt the waiting room of the depot. The outside of the building was scraped down to the bare wood and

then painted with several coats of paint. Ron's brother, Dennis Hill was the electrician for the project and added lighting for security. The Hawarden J.C's added a wood roof to replicate the original, and Leo Anderson helped replace all the broken windows.

The City agreed to place the building on a brick foundation which was done by Waterman Construction. The project continued to receive donations from community members interested in preserving Calliope's history and the Sioux City Journal and Channel Nine News were also interested in reporting the progress that was being made on this historical building.



This story is the story of a young teenager working on his Eagle Scout badge with a vision for the future. Many people over the years have continued this vision and made Calliope Village in Hawarden a reality and a source of pride for the entire community. Every project whether large or small has its beginning, and this dream of restoring an old abandoned house to its former glory was no doubt the beginning of what is now Hawarden's most famous landmark, Calliope Village.

These are the words written by Ronald Hill last June when we discussed this story.

"If only those walls could speak, they would tell us lots of stories. I had hopes and dreams of adding other buildings from Hawarden's history. Hundreds of hours were put into the Stage Coach building by many to save it. A few people thought the building should be leveled. Many thought I was crazy for trying to save it. But through a very tough and hard working, soon to be Eagle Scout, a part of Hawarden's history has been saved and a village was born. A vision of a fourteen year old boy in 1976. Thanks to the many after him, a dream and a vision has become a reality for many generations to enjoy. Now after 155 years, the Stage Coach Depot, that is one of a kind left standing in the United States, still has the echoes of horses, stage coaches and wild Indian attacks that have helped make Calliope so famous. A small village that will never be lost in history." Written by Ronald Hill, age 50, June 30th 2011.

More information on the creation of Calliope Village is found on page thirteen of the Hawarden Centennial Book. This is only one person's story. The vision and hard work of countless volunteers since 1976 are a testimony to the dedication and resolve of Hawarden and Calliope residents to show with pride the contributions that this area has made to our history. Thanks to Ronald Hill for his memories of this project.

HAWARDEN....WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

RAGBRAI: IOWA HOSPITALITY AT ITS' BEST

CHAPTER: 32

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

When RAGBRAI began in 1973, it was actually just an idea that turned into a challenge between John Karras, a feature writer and copy editor for the Des Moines Register and his fellow employee Don Kaul who wrote the column "Over the Coffee" from his office in the Des Moines Register bureau in Washington DC. These two men were both avid bicyclists and thought a bike ride across Iowa would give them a world of material to use in their columns. And so it began.

The two men enlisted the help of Don Benson Public Relations Director for the Des Moines Register to help plan the route and the schedule. Mention of the upcoming "Great Six Day Bicycle Ride" appeared in the columns, etc. in the Des Moines Register, and when they met in Sioux City to start the ride 300 of their "closest friends, aka the public" were there to join them. By actual count one hundred and fourteen riders made the entire distance that year. Between Des Moines and Ames the crowd swelled to around five hundred riders. Articles describing the ride were published daily in the Des Moines Register and when the ride was over, the paper was flooded with phone calls and letters asking for more advanced information for the next ride, so vacations could be planned and arrangements made.

The "Second Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa " or SAGBRAI was immediately in the planning stages. This year Don Benson enhanced the preparations by involving the Iowa State Patrol, and actually driving the route ahead of time as well as contacting the communities on the route. This year 2700 riders showed up in Council Bluffs that Sunday morning and an estimated 1700 made it all the way to Dubuque.

1975 was the year that RAGBRAI became the official name for the "Registers Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa" and it has become a household word in every city and town in the state since. The 1974 ride across Iowa included an overnight stay in Guthrie Center. This was the first town of its size to be a host community for the ride. The small town experience was so enjoyable that the organizers decided that small communities should not be over looked as host communities, and in 1975 Hawarden was chosen as the starting point of RAGBRAI III. Starting in Hawarden, was also the first year that the bikers would not be dipping their front wheels in the Missouri River, but since the Sioux River is on the western border and also a branch of the Missouri it qualified.

I mentioned earlier that RAGBRAI has become an everyday word in the towns and homes of Iowa. That has happened over the last thirty nine years. When RAGBRAI III decided to start in Hawarden, no one knew what to expect.

Elwood Bolster, Hawarden Chamber of Commerce Chairman in 1975 announced that 3200 bicyclists and possibly twice that number of visitors were expected to arrive in Hawarden on August 2, 1975. It was estimated that approximately 85% of the visitors would be campers; others were requesting overnight accommodations in homes, churches, etc. Bolster mentioned that many letters had been received from doctors, lawyers and other professional people. Mr. Bolster said, "This isn't a bunch of kids, and riding that far isn't for a bunch of panty-waists either." A Saturday night Bar-B-Que in the park (served 1100) as well as a Sunday morning breakfast (served 1300) for the bicyclists was held. Mr. Bolster ended the interview by saying, "It's not just the Chamber of Commerce, its ALL OF HAWARDEN that need to participate."

And participate they did. Comments after the event were as follows: "Is it over? I guess it is, but what a time it was while they were here!" People came from all over; California, New York and everywhere in between. The oldest was 85 from Indianola, Iowa and the youngest was 8 from Walnut Grove.

The final numbers showed on the RAGBRAI web site indicated there were 3200 registered bikers and approximately 2400 made it to Fort Madison and the Mississippi River. The Mayor of Hawarden, William Hill presented John Karras with a plaque and a gavel to be delivered to the Mayor of Ft. Madison at the end of the trip as well as a bottle of

champagne, and a “golden tire pump.” At Hawarden’s Annual Chamber Banquet Elwood “Elle” Bolster was presented with an appreciation award for his work with RAGBRAI III which made it a huge success.

Five riders from Hawarden left town with the RAGBRAI bicyclists. They were, Mary Dow, Dave Gregg, Glen Parker, Dick Smith and Shelly Van Egdom.

A few superstitious types wanted to change the 1985 ride to some number other than XIII, but RAGBRAI officials held out. Hawarden had been such a good starting point 10 years before that RAGBRAI went back again that year. Almost 40 communities had written, asking to be included in the RAGBRAI XIII route, so RAGBRAI officials tried to include as many of them as possible. With the gloomy farm economy, RAGBRAI provided a lift to lowans’ spirits, especially in the rural areas. (RAGBRAI web site history page)

In 1985, Hawarden was advised, or warned to expect 10,000 or more people with 7,500 of them on bikes. There will be influential media people with wide audiences along on the ride. In the last two years, 1983 & 84 the ride has been featured in READERS DIGEST, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, BICYCLING MAGAZINE, and others. It has been said that no one can ever truly explain RAGBRAI; it has to be witnessed to be understood. The ride this year was 540 miles to Clinton. The longest ride in RAGBRAI’s history to date.

Larry Epperly led the various committees that prepared for RAGBRAI XIII. All the individual committees handled their assignments well and when an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 people left Hawarden, they left with good feelings and full stomachs.

It has been reported that starting in a small town rather than a large city is actually advantageous. Iowa’s small towns have something that the big ones don’t – a rural background of hard work, commitment and pride in their town.

1985 was the year that retired farmer; 72 year old Lee Liston joined the riders on their way to Clinton. Ten years earlier Lee and his wife came to town to watch the bikers leave. He wished he could have joined them then, but thought he was too old. Later he learned of an 80 year old man who was riding, and decided then that he would start training to join them the next time they came to Hawarden.



Hawarden’s most recent visit from RAGBRAI was in 1998 and Don Nolan was appointed chairman of RAGBRAI XXVI. This year it was expected that over 12,000 – 15,000 riders and people would be spending the night in Hawarden. The town was given 27 weeks’ notice to plan the event, find spaces for 7,000 campers, campground space for groups from 10 to 400 including toilets and shower facilities, not to mention food, entertainment, safety, medical facilities, and as was needed this year, storm shelters when the warning sirens start to blow. Most citizens of Hawarden, whether they had planned to or not, opened their homes and basements to complete strangers to give them refuge from the threatening

storms that hit the town around 10:30 PM, just at the height of the entertainment and activity. People who had planned to spend their evening in tents and campers were given shelter in homes, churches and even businesses.

Many letters were received following the event thanking Hawarden and its citizens for their hospitality and friendship.

1998 was the year that the “Great Bicycle” that is now sitting on the corner of tenth and Central to call attention to the 125th Celebration was built by Boyer Machine. It was Hawarden’s symbol for RAGBRAI XXVI.

Hawarden and the entire community can speak with pride of their hospitality and friendship whenever RAGBRAI chose to begin its yearly journey across Iowa here. It certainly “put us on the map”; whenever you mention Hawarden in a crowd of strangers, there is always someone there who speaks up, “I know where Hawarden is, I stayed there when we went on RAGBRAI!”

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FROM OLD TO NEW

Chapter 33

By : Mary Truesdell Johnson

Remember Y2K? A once in a lifetime experience. Some people will NEVER see the turn of a century, but unless you are under the age of 12, you did, and you survived the experience. The biggest worry as the calendar turned from 1999 to 2000 was caused by the electronic age. One hundred years before; midnight struck; the pages of the calendar were turned to January, 1900; and that was that.

With each day approaching the year 2000, more fears were uncovered. Would the computers worldwide all shut down and cause mass confusion? Some people withdrew their money from the banks, some bought generators, some predicted chaos and mayhem, some even predicted the end of the world. Cities and towns put contingency plans on standby just in case there was loss of electricity and heat. Generators for hospitals and nursing homes were on checked out, and disaster plans were dusted off and reviewed; just in case.

Of course, none of that happened in Hawarden, and life went on with little more adjustment than changing the calendars. Oh, we did get a new mayor, George Jacobs, and Hawarden's first City Administrator, Craig Coffey, who actually started his job in November of 1999

It was also in 2000 that West Sioux completed their new addition that resulted in closing the old middle school and moving the students and teachers into the newly constructed space at the site of West Sioux High School.

In March of 2000, Wee Care, Hawarden's child care facility, received a \$375,000 grant to relocate into a new facility. Talk began about possible sites for the new building, and the site of the old Middle School on Central Avenue was chosen as a perfect spot due to its location; close to the elementary school, parks, and convenient for everyone. Discussion then began among the City Council, as well as community members, about the fate of the 1926 School. Public informational meetings were held, and at a November, 2000 Council Meeting the council was presented a petition with 341 signatures asking the council to reconsider their decision to not let the new Wee Care facility attach to the old Middle School. The council was split on the decision. Those who did not want to attach the new building to the old felt that the 75 year old building should not be saved, and should be demolished. Those who were in favor of incorporating the two facilities had a vision of saving the historic landmark and providing the community with a long needed new Community Center.

At the December 18, 2000 Hawarden Council meeting the council unanimously passed a resolution calling for a vote of the community for a \$950,000 bond issue, which would save the 1926 building and renovate it into new City Offices including police department, meeting rooms, council chambers, and a Community Center which would accommodate 200 – 300 guests.

After many public meetings, articles pro and con, mailings and very spirited discussions at the coffee shops and dinner tables, February 27, 2001 was the day the Citizens of Hawarden decided the fate of our old school. The City Council was very emphatic that if the bond issue failed, the school would be demolished. The council had support from many citizens that the school should not be kept, so the results of the vote would please many and upset many, no matter what the decision.

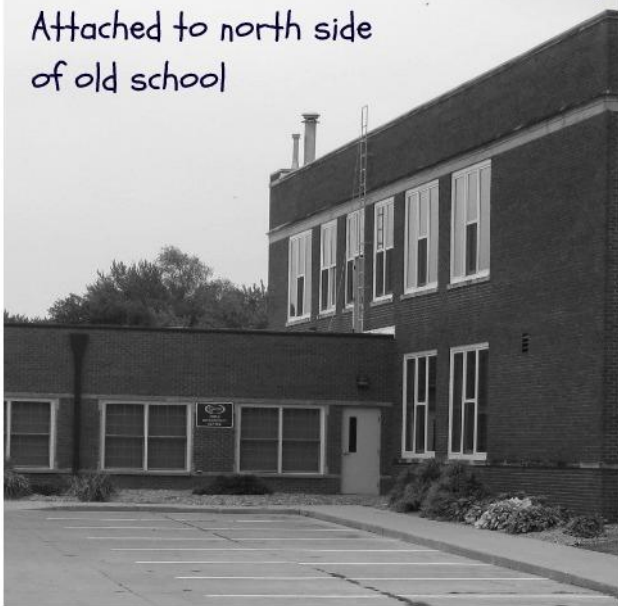
Five hundred eighty- eight voters went to the polls on that cold February day, with 359 voting to save the school and 229 for demolishing it. (That was not how it was printed on the ballot, but that was the purpose of the election.) When the votes were counted, the required 60 % majority was attained by 6 votes! The School was saved! Basically, 6 people saved the school. Had they not shown up to vote it would only be a memory.

East Entrance to Hawarden
Community Center
Formerly area of gymnasium
and stage in old school

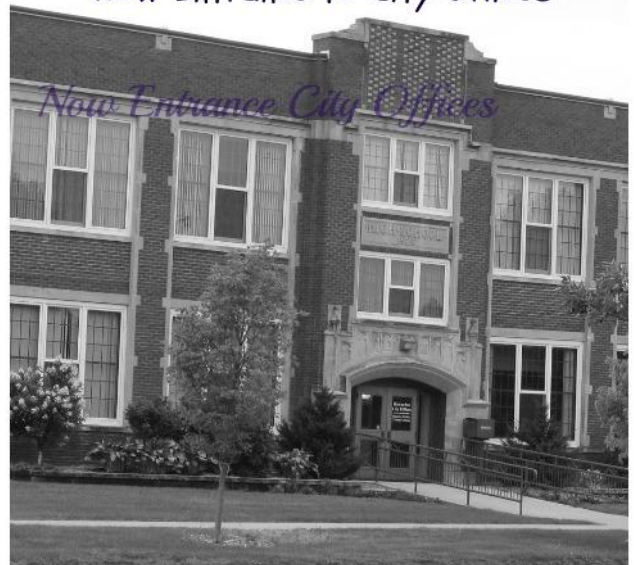


Original West Entrance to School

Wee Care (Hawarden Child Care Facility)
Attached to north side
of old school



Original West Entrance to School
Now Entrance to City Offices



Now Entrance City Offices

The City Council had wanted input from the voters on the issue, and as soon as they received it, Councilman Mike Dorhout expressed his excitement and said they were ready to move forward with the renovation.

The renovation was done in two phases; the first was the building of the Wee Care addition and the Community Center with its new canopied entrance that reflected the architecture of the era of the 21st century. The parking lot for the Community Center was reclaimed land where Dry Creek once flowed and often threatened the town. With the flood diversion project of the 60's the old creek bed had been filled in and gave the Community Center a large parking lot.

The second phase was the restoration of the west side of the school to incorporate the Hawarden City Offices. New windows were installed in the entire building to replicate its' original appearance, and the entire west side including the entrance is historically correct. The architects were very careful to preserve the arched halls, terrazzo floors, period

lighting and windows, keeping the buildings best components while adding modern amenities, including a public elevator, making the second floor accessible to everyone.

On January 15, 1925 Hawarden voters passed a \$93,000 bond issue to build a new high school. The students were so happy they held a parade. Over 76 years later the residents of Hawarden went to the polls to vote on a \$950,000 bond issue to save that same school. On February 4, 2005, eighty years later, the former school reopened as a Community Center and home of the Hawarden City Govt.

¹At the open house, Mayor Ric Porter presided over the festivities with one word: WOW. Mayor Porter exclaimed that you just have to practice saying “wow” as you walk through the building. This is one of the biggest “wows” to hit Hawarden in a long time.

For the 359 voters who helped make this vision a reality, they are proud and grateful for the vision and planning that went into securing their dream. For the 229 voters who opposed it, they are also grateful for the results of the project. At almost any event that is held at the Community Center, when the discussion of the process is revisited, you will hear someone admit, “I voted against it, but I’m sure glad it passed.”

Preserving our history while enhancing our present and future. What better way to show that the pioneering spirit of our town’s forefathers is still alive and well in our community.

¹ Hawarden Independent/Examiner Feb. 5, 2005 by Tim Gallager

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THE HEART OF HAWARDEN

Chapter 34

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

The Heart of Hawarden Project; what better name could be given to the biggest project seen in Hawarden in over a decade. A project that incorporated the entire town; north, south, east and west. A project made possible by a group of City officials and citizens that presented their vision with passion and enthusiasm to the Vision Iowa Board in Des Moines in July of 2004, and received a Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant of \$300,000 to make the Heart of Hawarden a reality.

When word was received from Des Moines that the grant had been approved the Heart of Hawarden Project went into action. Many of the projects were already in the planning stages and were just waiting for the funding to become a reality. The projects that were started immediately were; new playground equipment for the city park, plans to move the McNally Town Hall to Calliope for a Veteran's Museum, addition of handicapped accessible restrooms at Calliope Village, and filling in and piping the remainder of the Dry Creek bed. There were also plans for developing an outdoor ice skating rink as well as a rollerblade hockey arena.

The spring of 2005 saw the removal of the Central Avenue Bridge and the construction of an Outdoor Pavilion in the Dry Creek area north and east of the new Community Center.

The newly renovated 1926 School on Central Avenue into the City Offices and Community Center along with the nearby City Park, Swimming Pool, Day Care Center and basketball courts made this area the foundation of the Heart of Hawarden Project. Landscaping, flower beds, benches, new lamp posts on the street and through the park, the walking path through the creek bed linking the two parks, and the extended walking path through the creek bed south of ninth street, extending to the dike east of Hawarden and continuing north east of Grace Hill Cemetery and returning west on 23rd Street to Calliope Village gives walkers and bikers over 3 miles of wide, smooth trails to enjoy and explore. Along these trails have been planted, trees native to this area. The final section of trails will be added in 2013.

New pink granite boulder entrance signs at all four entrances of town welcome visitors and residents. Using these boulders to designate Central Park, French Park and Veterans Memorial Park portray strong, sturdy and enduring symbols, just like the residents of Hawarden.

It was during this period of volunteerism, and progress that the American Legion formed a committee consisting of six men: Dallas Huebner, Roger Johnson, Jim Kinney, Armando Ortiz, Jim Skogman and Harlan Van Egdom, to spearhead an ambitious venture to build a permanent monument to honor all those soldiers that courageously sacrificed themselves to keep our freedoms alive. The land for the monument was provided by the City of Hawarden, and the park where the monument now stands has been appropriately named Veteran's Memorial Park. The Veteran's Memorial contains the names of over 1000 men and women who served their country from the Civil War to the present. Many of these names, now inscribed for all to honor, made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their life for their country. All the money needed to construct this memorial was donated and provided by citizens of the area and family members of soldiers whose names appear on one of the four polished black granite blocks. Much of the labor on the monument was also donated. The total cost to achieve this permanent, inspiring and emotional monument was said to be \$60,000. Another prominent piece of "The Heart of Hawarden", dedicated on August 31, 2003.

The Heart of Hawarden Project does not just describe its location. The money received from the Vision Iowa Project was just a catalyst for many projects. Volunteers were enlisted from groups and the community to install playground equipment, and fix up buildings. City Administrator Craig Coffey proposed volunteer dates at least once a month to help with projects. At a celebration dinner held shortly after receiving the grant, Mayor Porter announced that now CAT would stand for "Community Action Team". A pledge of community support to help make Hawarden's grant application a success.

The Boy Scouts and West Sioux Students stepped forward to help plant trees in the Tree arboretum, and money and displays and volunteer labor were pledged by the Big Sioux River Historical Society to restore the Ruth Suckow house. The Hawarden Area Partnership for Progress pledged money for advertising. In addition Sioux County pledged \$15,000 over three years and the County Board of Supervisors offered \$10,000 in kind services to help remove the Central Avenue Bridge.

The actual cost of the Heart of Hawarden project was estimated at 1.5 million and although the Vision Iowa Grant was substantial, much of the money came from right here in the community through volunteerism and donations.

Not everything that happened in the Heart of Hawarden program was planned in advance and some things were the result of tragedy and misfortune, such as the fire on February 6, 2003 which destroyed two businesses in the center of Main Street. The fire completely destroyed the La Tapatia Hispanic Grocery store and the Bonderson Auto Parts businesses. In May of 2003 Dave and Pauline Bonderson of Le Mars donated the damaged property to the City of Hawarden and the demolition of the necessary structures began. Time passed and the large hole in the heart of Main Street remained as a sad reminder of businesses that were no longer there. City manager Craig Coffey along with the Development Committee of the Hawarden Area Partnership for Progress quickly committed to the renovation of the Bonderson Building that was still standing, and plans were made to create the interior of the building into a new modern facility. Eventually the building was leased to Missy Eilts and Heather Schwiesow who opened up a unique specialty

shop, offering gifts and items of all descriptions. Missy Eilts remains in the building as sole owner of the Willow Tree home décor and gift shop. The building has also been given new windows to compete the restoration.

The empty hole took a little longer to fill. The HAPP Development Committee spent time deciding what would be the best fit for our town. Hawarden’s previous Dental Office had closed due to retirement and relocation, so the quest began to find dental services for our community. In 2006, Family First Dental Association started construction on its new Dental Office occupying the space left by the two demolished victims of the fire. This beautiful new, modern Dental Office opened in February, 2007 and is a valuable partner in Hawarden’s business and professional community.

These are only a few examples of the commitment and dedication of the leaders and residents of our community. At least three other downtown buildings have had new windows installed by the Development Committee of Happ and the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce in a continuing project to renew the face of Main Street and bring the buildings back to their former glory.



Yes, Hawarden does have a Heart! Not only in location, but in the minds of the former and present residents of Hawarden who continue to work to keep the community viable and energetic. Pride that comes from the Heart of the people who love this town and are determined to continue the spirit of our fore fathers.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Chapter 35

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

By the time this story is printed, Labor Day 2012 will be a memory. Memories that will be forever be a part of our lives.

The various Fire departments will have their results from the Scott Fire Fighter Combat Challenge, winners will proudly display their rewards, and other teams will go back to their departments with renewed determination to “do better next time.” You can be sure that each squad of Fireman will continue to give their best to keep their communities safe

The three farm business that invited tours to view their successful farming and livestock operations, will return to normal daily activities and plans to prepare for the fall harvest, and approaching winter weather.

The Hawarden Public Library will continue to offer the citizens of Hawarden and surrounding towns and area the most advanced and convenient resources available in this digital age. It has become a social outlet for many community members, book clubs, weekly movies, visiting authors, home delivery for shut ins, classes for computers, and other activities that encourage people to join in groups that encourage companionship, conversation, and great adventures through books. In this age of texting, Face book, and e mails, we need to be reminded that face to face contact is the medium that sends us home with thoughts and experiences that enrich our lives and keep us connected. Those of us who were able to visit at the Face book Coffee over Labor Day are going home to our computers feeling just a little closer to those we enjoy visiting with.

Hopefully, the Alumni Artists that came to share their work and creations with us will realize how much we enjoyed seeing their beautiful designs and visiting with them about their art, lives, families and hometowns. It always amazes me how much talent originates in our community, and how each generation continues to develop their abilities to higher and higher levels.

We not only saw talent revealed in wood, steel, pottery and art, but the quilts at the Methodist Church Quilt Show were works of Art in themselves. Art in design and hundreds of hours devoted to making the design a priceless possession, one stitch at a time.

Was there anyone at the Style show that didn't chuckle at the styles of clothing worn through the years? How many of the spectators shed a tear when they saw their mother's or grandmother's wedding dress or “house” dress walk across the stage? Did you recognize your prom dress, and wonder how you ever fit into that small waistline? Thank you to the models and committee for giving us such an enjoyable afternoon.

The Tractor Poker Run was a popular event returning from last year. This event was sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion, and proceeds were earmarked to bring the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall to Hawarden.

This was the second year for the 5k/10k Calliope Challenge. Calliope Village will not rest on their laurels. I am sure they are already starting to plan for next year. Calliope Village has developed into one of the major tourist attractions in the area. Its historical value is immeasurable to this area. The devoted volunteers that work countless hours to keep the village maintained and improved could never be paid the wages that they deserve. The Big Sioux River Valley Historical Society is also responsible for the museum quality contents of the Historical House. If you missed visiting this interesting home full of historical photos and memorabilia, then you will need to plan a return visit to Hawarden. It is worth the trip.

The Hawarden Chamber of Commerce started celebrating Hawarden's 125th birthday last November with a Living Windows celebration on the evening following Thanksgiving when Hawarden traditionally turns on their Christmas

lights. Stores on Main Street filled their windows with scenes depicting 125 years of Christmas. This event was followed by the Festival of Trees which also carried out the Birthday of Hawarden theme. Every event sponsored by the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce in 2012 carried the theme of Hawarden's 125 years.

The Parade, the activities in the park, the advertising, the brochures, the entire weekend was co-ordinated by the Hawarden Chamber, as they do every year for Big Sioux River Days. Now that this year's event is over the Chamber will begin work on the Holiday Season, Lighting Ceremonies, and Festival of Trees, a Home show for 2013 and another busy year.

Joel and Debra Fluit are probably the most relieved people in Hawarden now that the weekend is over. Joel and Debra are not natives of Hawarden and have only lived here for a few years. They showed a huge interest in the 125th Celebration and had many good ideas from the very first meeting. They graciously agreed to co-chair the 125th Committee and their organization and dedication were indispensable ingredients necessary to make the weekend a success. They will go down in Hawarden's History as valuable assets to our community.

The West Sioux Educational Foundation has been working continuously on the All School Reunion of 2012. Their mailings, dedication and planning are responsible for many facets of the weekend. The WSEF not only sponsors All School Reunions, but they are a Foundation to support our schools. Their goal is to reach One-half Million dollars by the end of 2012 and they are close to their goal. Let's hope that it will soon be reached or hopefully has been reached at the climax of this weekend. If you did not have an opportunity to support the Foundation now, remember that your support to the WSEF is tax deductible.

No one could ever thank all the people or organizations involved in Hawarden's 125th Birthday Celebration. I hesitate to mention names of people or organizations because I know that I will never be able to remember them all. Hopefully, now that the weekend is over everyone that had a part in making it possible will have the knowledge that their part, large or small was a gift of love to our community and those who gave their time and talent will feel the reward that they justly deserve.

The people who came "home" for the weekend are the invaluable components that made all the meetings and planning worthwhile. We will always consider you as a part of our Hawarden Family and are anxious to have you return as often as possible. If you were neighbors, class mates, family, friends or just visiting, you made the weekend SPECIAL. You were the catalyst that drove the committees and chairpersons to do everything within their power to make the old saying "You can't go Home again," untrue. "Home" is a relative term. Nothing stays the same. Hopefully your stay in Hawarden revived some precious memories and helped you realize that the town may change; main street no longer needs center parking, the Sioux theatre and Wigwam are gone, Emil Schoenrock and his popcorn stand are only memories, but the same mid western values and quality of life in this small town is surprisingly similar to what you remember from the years you spent in Hawarden. We are proud to know that most of you do still think of this small, northwestern Iowa town as HOME.

To the volunteers and tireless workers of Hawarden and to the many visitors and returning Alumni, thanks for the memories!

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Hawarden Festivals and Celebrations

Chapter 36

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

If you have lived in Sioux County, Iowa for longer than a year, you have no doubt heard of the Tulip Festival in Orange City. Other towns have music festivals, band festivals and jazz festivals; festivals of every kind. Have you ever heard of Hawarden's most famous festival: The Calf Festival!

According to my research, 1952 was the year that introduced this popular festival to Hawarden and Sioux County. When you really think about the concept; why not a Calf Festival? We live in the middle of livestock country – let's celebrate one of our best commodities –Beef and the young Future Farmers that raise them. A great idea!

Parents who were interested in having their son or daughter raise a calf would contact a Hawarden Chamber of Commerce member to indicate their intentions. The son or daughter was then enrolled in the Hawarden Community Calf Club. The Hawarden Chamber secured a number of calves and on a date in October the calves were distributed. Each member of the Calf Club drew a number to determine his or her calf. That calf was weighed and recorded, and only that calf was eligible to participate in the Calf Festival. Through the next eleven months the calves were fed and pampered by their young owners. Each owner dreaming of showing the Champion Calf at the Labor Day Event.

As the weekend festivities approached the calves were bathed and groomed and brought to the Northwestern Stockyards east of the light plant to be on display to spectators over Saturday and Sunday of the Labor Day Weekend. On Saturday afternoon the calves were judged and the winners announced. The judges were skilled in their field and came from as far away as Vermillion and Yankton to pick the yearly Champion.

On Labor Day morning a large auction was held to sell the prime beef calves raised by the youth of the Hawarden area.

In 1952 the Hawarden Independent reported that prices paid for the calves that year, were believed to be the highest average per hundred weight in Iowa or South Dakota.

The prize winning calf, which previously had won all top honors at the Sioux County Youth Fair brought a price of \$50.00 per hundred weight for a total of \$412.50. The total of the thirty calves auctioned off that year was \$11836.30, for an average price of \$37.82 per hundred weight.

Hawarden business men were the majority of the bidders at the auction. The young owner who raised the Championship calf that first year was Jack Krusen with his 825 pound Black Angus.

In the rate of gain division high honors were won by Darrel Noble with a 755 pound gain and Stanly Venard with 715 pound gain.

This first Calf Festival was such a success and so popular that the Festival continued to be held on Labor Day weekend for over a decade.

Some of the FFA youth who showed the yearly champions were: Dudley Jans, 1953 – Randal Rozell, 1957, Dallas Rozell, 1960 and Arden Wiksen, 1963 to name just a few. Edith Milbrodt was crowned Queen that 1st year.

The weekend festivities of the Calf Festival were very similar to our present Big Sioux River Days. There were Flower Shows, the crowning of a Queen, prizes for the largest family attending and a prize for the person traveling the furthest distance to attend. Other activities at the first Calf Festival was a parade reported to be three miles long, First prize in the float division was awarded to employees of the City of Hawarden who constructed a float depicting the various municipal enterprises.

The evening of the Calf Festival in 1952 featured a baseball game between the rivaling communities of Hudson and Ireton. When the game ended Hudson defeated Ireton 7 -2, but all the spectators had been driven away by the cold weather and the two teams were building bonfires in their dugouts to keep warm. The street dance that followed the game was moved indoors because of the weather and the dance hall was reported "filled to capacity".

1957 Calf Festival festivities included a Soap Box Derby where it was estimated that over 1,000 people lined up on both sides of Tenth Street to watch Jim Tausz and his brother Terry win the Championship trophies in the two classes of the race. Other activities that year included a Carnival on main street, airplane rides given to 350 people with the proceeds benefiting the airport improvement project. Pilots donating their services were, Ben Boyer, Pete Sauer, Lou Heeren, Warren French, Milo Engelbritson, and Rex Burington. It was reported that Ben Boyer started giving rides at 9:30 AM and continued until dark. A swimming meet was held in the afternoon, drawing a capacity crowd. In the diving contest, Rusty Schoeneman took first and Roger Strong received second. An amusing event at the meet saw the "Bloomer Girls" (teachers) defeat a bunch of farmers in a tug of war, over and into the pool. A crowd estimated to be over 2,000 attended the Horse Show sponsored by the Hawarden Saddle Club. Clubs from Hudson and Canton were awarded first and second prizes in the parade, with the Hawarden Saddle Club declaring itself not a contender. Virlene Williams was Queen of the show, based on her riding ability.

The October 1961 edition of the Hawarden Independent reported that the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce had voted to continue the Calf Festival in 1962. That festival was held in October, 1962 and I could not find a record of a Labor Day Celebration. Thus the demise of the Calf Festival.

The next mention of a Labor Day Celebration was the 1965 Fun Festival, which boasted a Rocking Chair Marathon in front of the Farmers State Bank. Contestants brought their own rocking chairs and rocked day and night, starting Saturday at 10 AM with 5 minute breaks every 2 hours. The world record at that time was 70 consecutive hours. Hawarden had two winners who agreed to stop after 55 hours breaking the state record. The winners of \$30 in prize money were Kevin Richmond and Ken Marshall. Wilbert Verros and Doug Finch were the youth who remained the longest, stopping after 53 ¼ hours on Monday at 3:11 PM. The other participants who dropped out earlier were victims of the unusually cold evenings that weekend.

Labor Day Celebrations continued through the years in Hawarden celebrating the last weekend of summer.

1986 heralded the FIRST Big Sioux River Days with the combined efforts of The Hawarden Chamber of Commerce, Border Bandits Car Club, Hawarden Jaycees, Hawarden Ministerial Association, Hawarden Kiwanis, Hawarden Area Arts Council, South Pit Recreation Club, Calliope Village Committee, Hawarden Fire Department and several other organizations, providing Hawarden area residents with a wide variety of activities. It was at this 1st Big Sioux River Days Celebration that the White Horse Patrol first appeared in Hawarden. How appropriate that they also appeared on our 125th Birthday in 2012.

Hawarden has always loved their celebrations, no matter what they were called. The Big Sioux River Days are now 26 years old and judging by the large turnout in 2012 they still do !!

HAWARDEN.....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

THEATRES ON MAIN STREET

Chapter 37

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Before the advent of television, videos, DVD's TiVo, DVR's. Play station and X box, people entertained themselves at home with table games, outdoor activities, social gatherings and lots of family time.

In 1908 Seal Van Sickle, Seal Van Sickle, Jr. and G.J.Anderson decided to offer Hawarden and area residents another form of entertainment.

In the location of the former Streit Pharmacy building, 809 Central, south of Central Auto Parts, they constructed an "air dome". It was an open air summer playhouse with comfortable chairs and a stage. The outdoor theatre greeted customers with an artistically decorated entrance and the cost for admittance was 5 cents. The theatre also offered one of Edison's animated picture machines, which changed its venue twice a week. There was also a piano on site and Ella Freshman and the soon to be movie star, Hope Emerson often sang and played before the shows and during intermissions.

Other theatres sprang up during this era. The Electric Theatre was on the east side of Kansas Street (Central Ave.) and later the Lyric Theatre presented weekly silent movies to capacity audiences under various managers and owners.

In 1921 E.T.Dunlap acquired the Lyric Theatre and another silent movie theatre, The Auditorium (so named because it was located in the new City Hall building and auditorium built in 1918). Mr. Dunlap entertained audiences with movies at these locations until 1924 when the new Dunlap Theatre opened its doors at 809 Central (the previous site of the open air theatre). Mr. Dunlap had purchased the property and built a large two story building there. The Dunlap name is still evident on the top of the building today. This new theater boasted 400 seats and reportedly cost \$35000.00.

The first film shown in this new theatre was "Boy of Mine" and the last movie to play in this building was The Pleasure of His Company with Fred Astaire in October 1961.

When the theatre opened in 1924, Mr. Dunlap arranged for the Hawarden Concert Band to play outside on Central Avenue as the people entered. A very elegant event. The second floor of the building was also filled with offices, studios and shops as were most of the buildings on Main Street at that time. Long, steep stairways did not seem to be a problem as these second story businesses thrived in the early 1900's.

This new modern theatre, called the Dunlap Theatre, also boasted a large canopy covering its entrance which looked very impressive; especially at night when its many lights were lit.

Mr. Dunlap ran the theatre until 1928 when the equipment and picture contracts were sold to new owners. The theatre was named the Tivoli. Excitement and curiosity spread through the area when it was announced that a new talking machine had been installed. In May 1929 the first talkie movie Coquette was shown to a full house and a pleased audience. At this time a matinee tickets were \$.35 and \$.15.

In 1933 the owners of the furnishings and equipment of the Tivoli were J.H.C. Schoeneman and Philip March. Their partnership was called Marschoene Theatres Inc. Air conditioning came to the theatre in 1936 and Shirley Temple appeared in Poor Little Rich Girl.

Harry Lankhorst was hired by Marschoene Theatres to manage the Tivoli theatre in the early 1930's. After managing the theatre for six years, Mr. & Mrs. Harry Lankhorst purchased the business in 1939 and changed the name to the Sioux Theatre. A large Indian Chief Head was installed as the marquee and it soon became a landmark in Hawarden. That neon lighted Indian remains a vivid memory to anyone who grew up in the 40's thru 70's in Hawarden. The Sioux

Theatre remained on the west side of Main Street until the fall of 1961 when it was sold to Jerry Streit to house Streit Pharmacy. Mr. Lankhorst used clay and cement fill to level the theatre floors and the ceiling was also lowered to accommodate the new ultra modern drug store. Sadly it now sits empty.

Harry Lankhorst also owned a theatre at the corner of 8th and F Street. This theatre was known as Our Theatre and was purchased by the Lankhorsts in 1942 and in 1944 was completely destroyed by fire. Mr. Lankhorst then opened the Comet Theatre at 710 Central, just south of the present 1st State Bank. The Comet Theatre was also damaged by fire in 1951, but was able to be remodeled.

Hawarden was filled with entertainment. Two theatres with weekend matinees gave everyone in the area a chance to enjoy the entertainment. In the 1940's it is reported that out of a population of 130 million in the United States, it was estimated that 55-60 million Americans went to the movies every week. There was approximately one movie theatre for every 8,000 people. Hawarden certainly exceeded that quota. For several decades Hawarden could boast two or more theatres.

The Newsreels of the 1940's were a popular attraction. These Newsreels were an "eye to the world" for most Americans. Now, instead of newspaper reports and radio commentators, every theatre brought moving pictures of the destruction and horror of war to its audiences. These newsreel segments were filmed by cameramen and reporters who defied dangers to capture moments of history on film for moviegoers. For over 50 years newsreels informed and entertained whole generations of Americans until the new technology called television arrived on the scene.

When Harry Lankhorst sold the Sioux Theatre at 809 Central to Streit Pharmacy he announced that the Sioux Theatre would be moved across the street to the site of the former Comet Theatre. The Indian Head Marquee was quickly moved, the building remodeled, a large wall to wall, ceiling to floor movie screen was installed and the theatre held a capacity of 250 spectators. November 10, 1961 was the opening date showing the movie Tammy Tell Me True. A new generation of movie goers attended movies at this location, and continued to be entertained there until December 31, 1982 when E.T. was shown to a packed house. When the movie ended, the doors were locked, and movie theatres in Hawarden became only a memory. At the time the Sioux Theatre closed it was owned by B.N. Brown. Mr. Brown also owned the Wigwam Drive In theatre which he purchased from Mr. Lankhorst and it continued to show movies in the summer and fall for several years.

The last report of the mammoth Indian Head Marquee indicates that is resting safely in a local barn. The Hawarden Historical Society is keeping a close watch over it, and plans and dreams are circulating that some day it may find a home of distinction at Calliope Village or some other prominent site. Hopefully those of us who remember it so well will still be around to see its "rebirth".



HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

BARBERS AND THE “NEW DEAL”

Chapter: 38

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Of all the businesses that have started and flourished, in the pages of history for Calliope and Hawarden, I doubt if there has been any business with a longer list of proprietors than those men who came to practice their skill with scissors, clippers and razors to improve the appearance of young and old. The 1887 records show one barbershop in Calliope and one located in Hawarden. The Hawarden Centennial Book lists the names of at least eleven barbers between the years of 1899 and 1900. One of them had the distinction of reducing shaves to five cents. An obvious price war, causing the others to join in the lower price.

In the 1900's even more barbers came to town. At one time 14 barbers were in business to keep all gentlemen neat and trim. Among the names of barbers during the period 1930 to 1940 are such familiar names as Earl Mallette, Keaven Kane, George Niehaus (who retired after 50 years in the business) and many others.

During the Great Depression and the New Deal the NRA (National Recovery Administration) was the primary agency established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933. The goal of this agency was to eliminate “cut throat competition” (pardon the pun) by creating codes of fair practices and set prices. It was intended to reduce destructive competition by setting minimum wages, maximum weekly hours and minimum prices at which products could be sold.

In 1935 nine members of the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously declared that the NRA was unconstitutional because it fostered restraint of trade and limited individual liberties in conducting business.

Hawarden barbers obviously did not agree with the Supreme Court. In 1936 they established an NRA of their own in Hawarden and forced the ordinance through the City Council with a petition signed by all the members of the “haircut community”. The little “NRA” passed by the City Council fixed the minimum prices charged for barber services as well as establishing the hours that barbers must observe as closing times. The ordinance became law on July 30, 1936 on the day of its publication.

The prices set for barber services were generally already the normal prices charged including forty-cents for a haircut and twenty-cents for a shave. Prices lower than these were not allowed; no more price wars as in the 1900's. The unusual portion of the ordinance called for closing hours for barber Shops at 6 PM except on Saturdays and the days preceding a holiday when it shall be 11 P.M. and Wednesdays from May 15 to October 15 when they shall close at 9 P.M.

Ironically the same day that the ordinance went into effect, the Retail Committee of the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce announced that effective the following week, the stores would no longer stay open on Wednesday nights, leaving the barbers the duty of remaining in their shops until 9 PM while the other business men were free to relax and spend the evening away from their stores. If the barbers chose to ignore the ordinance they would be subject to the penalties incurred by the ordinance. The ordinance called for penalties for violations of not more than \$100 or imprisonment for not more than 30 days, and each day that the violation existed was an additional offense. The ordinance also called for General Hugh Johnson to administer the ordinance and the City health physician, Dr. F.F. Null to enforce it.

The Hawarden barbers, although petitioning for the ordinance, were soon offered a reprieve by the Iowa Supreme Court. Just as the US Supreme Court had declared the law unconstitutional in 1935 the Iowa Supreme Court declared the “Barber NRA” ordinance that was enacted by the Iowa legislature unconstitutional as well. This action automatically nullified the City ordinance and the individual barbers were again able to regulate their own business without fear of punishment.

Barber Shops in Hawarden were located wherever there was a location to hang their barber pole and locate their chairs. There were barbershops in the basement of banks and buildings as well as on Main Street.

Andy Johnson came to Hawarden in 1948 and retired in 1978 after 30 years of serving his customers. Andy was a colorful part of Main Street. He was an avid baseball fan, and many of his customers knew that if Andy's team, the Minnesota Twins were losing, it was not a good day for a haircut. Early morning visitors to Main Street, such as paperboys, etc. would often get a view of Andy doing what he did so well. Lathered with shaving foam in front of the mirror, giving himself a shave.



Earl Mallette retired after 34 years of barbering and Harvey Peters came in 1954. He closed in 1975 after 21 years in the business. He sold his business to Lester Schneider.

Lester Schneider eventually became Hawarden's only barber. His casual, unhurried style as well as his traditional haircut "The Flat-top" from the '60s will be remembered by the generation who knew that Barbershops were for men and Beauty shops were for women. When Lester started his shop in Hawarden there were five barbers in town. When Lester retired he was the last barber to operate in Hawarden.

Lester returned to Hawarden after his retirement on a part time basis. He had cut hair at the Hillcrest Care Center once a month for several years and wanted to continue. To the delight of his former customers, Lester started working by appointment only at Linde's Beauty Salon one day a week and continued to cut hair there until he put his scissors down for good in 2010.

Hawarden men are now served by the several Beauty Shops in Hawarden. All of the operators have become proficient at giving the gentlemen who come to them the haircut of their choice.

Like the Barber Shops, Beauty Shops in Hawarden appeared around the 1900's. The shop that holds the title of distinction today would be Linde's Beauty Shop who first opened in the lower level of the Dowdey Furniture Building, now owned by Rodney's Studio, on March 18, 1965. Linde has been a beautician in the Hawarden area for over 50 years and is still operating her shop on Main Street.

HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

TRAGEDY ON THE ICE FIELDS

Chapter 39

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Several months ago I wrote an article on one of Calliope and Hawarden's most fascinating and historic industries, the Ice Harvest. The article talked about the young men who worked on the ice harvests each year. A cold hard job. When the ice was ready to harvest a crew of men were hired to cut, break and move the cakes of ice to the large ice houses that would hold around 5,000 tons of ice. As you can imagine this work was difficult as well as dangerous.

Soon after the article on the Icehouses was published there was a knock on my front door. When I opened it I was greeted by Judy Danielson. In her hand she held a yellowed copy of her grandfather's obituary. Judy's mother had sent her to my house to show me this sad, but historical accounting of the tragedy of harvesting ice. Judy's mother is Lois DeVries who is now residing at Hillcrest Care Center and the obituary carried the headlines: SAD DEATH OF WAYNE HEDDEN: Wayne was Lois's father.

I am quoting from the obituary from the Hawarden Independent dated January 19, 1928, over eighty-four years ago.

Wayne Hedden, a lifelong resident of this community, was accidentally drowned in the icy waters of the Hawarden Sand and Gravel Co's pit in the west part of town about 7:30 last Friday morning. He was working for the Hawarden Ice Co., assisting in putting up ice in the new ice house which has recently been constructed at the gravel pit. A considerable quantity of ice had been cut loose and this was being floated in blocks or rafts to the chute leading to the ice house. Wayne was working along the edge of the solid ice near the shore, pushing these ice rafts along with a 30 foot pike pole. A dozen or more men were employed at various phases of the work, but none of them happened to be near when the accident occurred and the first they knew he was in the water was when they heard his cries for help and saw him struggling. It was believed that while pushing the raft along the shore, he must have lost his footing and pitched head first into the water.

There was only a few feet of open water between the shore ice and the floating ice raft. The footing on the shore ice was very slippery and slanted towards the water. Guy Krull and Charles Armstrong were the nearest workmen to him, but they were at least 100 yards away. The two men immediately rushed to save him, and if they had reached the point a little sooner, they could undoubtedly have rescued him as he was not over two or three feet from the edge of the ice. Just as Guy Krull reached the edge of the ice near him, Wayne sank out of sight and did not re-appear. The water was about 12 feet deep at the point where the drowning occurred. Other workmen quickly rushed to the scene but there were no tools at hand with which to immediately recover the body. The pole that Wayne was using was lying on the floating raft of ice and a boat was obtained to retrieve it. It is estimated that over twenty minutes elapsed before the body was retrieved. Dr A.J. Meyer had been summoned by telephone and was there when the body was recovered. Attempts to revive Mr.Hedden were made by the use of a pulmotor, but these were to no avail.

Wayne had informed fellow workmen the day before that he could not swim. It was believed that if he had been able to swim at all he could have kept himself afloat until help arrived. This was his first winter at work with the ice crew. In December he had assisted in the filling of the ice houses on the north side and work at the gravel pit had started only two days before the accident. Following the accident on Friday, all work was suspended until the next Tuesday.

Wayne Hedden was born April 30, 1894 and died January 13, 1928 at the age of 33 years, 8 months and 13 days. His entire life was spent in this community. He was married to Anna Kavanaugh of Spink in 1916. He was the father of eight children. He was preceded in death by a 7 month old daughter. The seven children who were left fatherless ranged in age from 10 years to just a few months old. Six daughters and one son.

It is amazing that when Lois DeVries read the stories about the ice houses earlier this year, she could go directly to this treasured obituary and share it with me. She was less than 10 years old at the time of her father's death so I am sure that this yellowed piece of paper contains most of her memories of her dad. Imagine the struggles of the mother, widowed after only 12 years of marriage with seven young children, headed for the depression years of the 30's and facing the future of raising her family alone.

This story needs to be told if for no other reason than to impress on our present generation the hardships that families have faced from the earliest days until now. Hardships that have made our country strong and its people unshakeable. Hardships that continue to teach us lessons about love and family and endurance.

Hawarden...How it All Began

HAWARDEN TURNS 100

Chapter 40

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Long ago: in the 1880's to be exact, Hawarden was unknown and Calliope was experiencing a surge of growth and excitement. The disappointment of losing the County Seat to Orange City was subsiding, and prospects of a bright future loomed on the horizon. In 1881 business improvements were plentiful and the "boom" continued until the middle of the century when the location of the railroad produced a new city called Hawarden. Hawarden, our home for the past 125 years.

The 1880's gave birth to our City; what do we remember about the 1980's when Hawarden celebrated its 100th birthday?

Some historians consider the 1980's to be the Me! Me! Me! Generation. The 1980's produced the mega millionaires and yes, billionaires like Donald Trump. Binge buying and credit became a way of life and "Shop til you drop" was the new favorite phrase. Labels were the new attraction for our clothes and accessories, especially for our children and teenagers. The baby boomers of the 80's were dubbed as the "splurge generation".

The decade of the 80's began with double digit inflation and the word AIDs rapidly became a description of sadness and fear as we lost many of our talented artists to this devastating disease.

President Carter started the decade with an embargo on the sale of grain to the Soviet Union due to the invasion of Afghanistan.

While the world was changing in the 1980's, Hawarden was changing as well. The City Council started researching adding Cable TV to its list of utilities, and it was also the decade when our garbage collection was contracted out to D & E Sanitation, instead of being handled by City employees.

Skywarn, a group of citizens dedicated to watch the skies for tornados, etc., was formed in the 80's and has kept our city safe through the years with advance warnings of approaching storms.

Kiwanis Pancake Days were a Christmas Season tradition as well as weekly drawings for prizes and money. Sleigh rides with Santa and Saturday afternoon parties for the kids were a yearly event.

The Big Sioux River Valley Historical Society was active and working on a Historical Photo Display to be exhibited at the City Hall in November of 1981. This display continues to be a treasure to Hawarden and in 2012 was digitized and is now available on the internet to preserve our history as well as give everyone access to the photos. History was on everyone's minds, as the decade of the 80's saw the birth of Calliope Village and thanks to dedicated volunteers, it has grown and flourished to be one of Hawarden's greatest attractions. This was also the time that the historic Northwestern Depot was renovated to accommodate the City Offices.

January 1981 issued in the 40th President of the United States, Ronald Regan. It was also the year that IBM introduced the personal computer which sold for a mere \$1565.00. In 1982 Hawarden imposed a leash law for dogs and cats, sparking lively discussions where ever you went. The Sioux Theatre closed forever on Dec. 31, 1982 after showing ET to a full house.

October of 1983 introduced the world to terrorism as a truck bomb killed 241 United States Peace-keeping troops at the Beirut International Airport. Production began at the Iowa Lamb plant in Hawarden, and Joe Maher sold the Hawarden Independent to Larry Meints. The Wigwam Drive In showed its last movie after 30 years of summer entertainment.

1984 was the year that the Hawarden Airport runway and facility improvements were dedicated and it was the year that Hawarden's Popcorn King & Queen, Emil and Ellen Schoenrock retired after 45 years of delicious popcorn on Main Street. In 1984 the City of Hawarden adopted a \$4.14 Million dollar budget, and SECO, Hawarden's Junior College was playing in the Region 11 basketball playoffs at Waldorf College.

1985 saw Pete Rose break Ty Cobb's record for most career hits in major league baseball history, and also saw him banned from baseball and the Hall of Fame in 1989 for gambling. Hawarden Lanes and the Red Flair Beauty Shop burned down and the Sioux Theatre was torn down to make way for a parking lot. The Area Arts Council was formed and Sioux Empire College closed its' doors after 18 years as Hawarden's Junior College. The middle of the decade also ushered in the Farm Crisis in the Midwest which saw the demise of some Century old farms as well as many small banks that invested in them. RAGBRAI came to Hawarden for the second time, and that same year, busses of concerned farmers and citizens departed from Hawarden to attend a Farm Crisis Rally held in Ames, Iowa.

In 1986 Dowdey's Furniture Store closed and gasoline prices dropped below \$1.00. The Quick Corner (Hawarden's Only Locally Owned Convenience Store) opened, and the Labor Day Celebration was renamed Big Sioux River Days. Fluoride was added to Hawarden's drinking water and K Products expanded Hawarden's plant while closing two others. The Iowa Seat Belt Law went into effect and Earl and Edith Slife donated \$10,000.00 to establish and renovate the Historical House at 803 Ave. H.

1987 was Hawarden's 100th Birthday Celebration and it was also the year that President Ronald Regan spoke at the Berlin Wall Brandenburg Gate with the words, "Tear down this wall." On November of 1989 the wall was opened and dismantled by enthusiastic crowds.

In 1987 Hawarden got its third Convenience Store, Kum and Go and also its first 24 hour business.

West Sioux joined the War Eagle Conference in 1989 and the City tiled the Dry Creek bed between 9th and 10th streets. The Hawarden Public Library expansion program was well underway at the end of the decade.

The 80's turned into the 90's and Hawarden started on its' journey toward the next century of achievements and disappointments.

As of 2012, Hawarden has not turned into the metropolitan area that was predicted one hundred years ago, but Hawarden is thriving and enjoying a quality of life for its citizens that is peaceful, eventful and continues to advance the traditions, facilities and infrastructures that keep pace with the world around us.

As it has been in the past and will be in the future, Hawarden continues to be more than just a town; it is our Hometown.



HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

HISTORY OF COLLEGES IN HAWARDEN

Chapter 41

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

As we have discussed in earlier articles, Sioux County schools originated in Calliope, Iowa in 1869. Did you know that as early as in 1883 a school was established in Calliope for higher education? This school was called Calliope Academy and was located at 2105 Avenue F.

Schools were always a passionate and complex topic through the years, as Calliope and Hawarden developed each in their own way. The Calliope Academy did not have a long life in Calliope and information about it is scarce. We do know that it moved to Storm Lake in 1884 and was associated with the Presbyterian Church. Logical opinion would agree that it was the early stages of Buena Vista College.

Any other discussion of a school of higher learning that continues after high school was not mentioned again until the 1960's.

It was during the decade of the 60's that the quest for higher education was becoming the normal rather than the exception. It was during this period that the state funded colleges in Iowa, i.e.: the University of Iowa and Iowa State University were experiencing an influx of freshman and sophomores beyond their capacities. It was because of this, the State Board of Regents recommended that the state supported schools raise their admission standards and only accept those who met the higher standards. The recommendation of the Board of Regents was to enforce these higher standards at the beginning of the 1967-68 school years. They also recommended that the students not meeting these higher requirements begin their journey into higher education at a smaller two year college.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson passed the Economic Opportunity Act. This was the centerpiece of the "War on Poverty" which was the legislative agenda of his administration.

When President Johnson signed this bill into law on August 20, 1964, he cited education, job training and relearning for the men and women who were facing hard times and needed a program to offer opportunity and preparation for productive lives. I quote President Johnson. "Our American answer to poverty is not to make the poor more secure in their poverty but to reach poverty and move with the large majority along the high road of hope and prosperity."

It was with these two obvious opportunities in mind that the forward-thinking community leaders of Hawarden in 1965 appointed a committee of three men, Harlan Hummel, E.V.Slife Jr. and Supt. Robert O. Blake to go to Washington, D.C. in February, 1965 to investigate the possibility of establishing a two year college in Hawarden. Upon their return, a report of the trip was given to the board of men who had expressed an interest in developing Sioux Empire College. They were all impressed and encouraged with the information they were given.

Research on area communities who had previously established two year colleges was gathered and in all cases, examples of self-development and self-improvement were cited for the cities as well as entire communities that participated. In an editorial in the February 20, 1965 Hawarden Independent Superintendent Roger Blake wrote: "We need to look for "new fields to conquer". We need to search out the true leadership in our area and put it into positions where it will do the most good. The challenge is ours, each and everyone in the area. What will we do with it?"

The answer was clear: by September of 1965 Directors of the proposed Sioux Empire College agreed on a letter of intent to enter into a contract with a Des Moines firm to provide architects and engineers for the college.

The Sioux Empire College Board and the Hawarden Industrial Development Corporation had already researched and interviewed Dr. Ray Wellborne, a promoter with a high educational background and a keen knowledge of economics to come to Hawarden as an Industrial Public Relations person with the purpose of establishing a Junior College for

Hawarden and to encourage industry to locate here. Dr. Wellborn cited the fall of 1966 as a date when the college would start educating its' first students. This time frame was eventually realized a year later when the college opened its doors to incoming freshmen.

In November, 1965 the Sioux Empire College Fund Campaign was announced. The SECO Board of Directors set \$105,000.00 as its target goal. This was the minimum amount needed to assure full operation of the college through its' first three years, after which it was expected that the college would be self-sustaining.

A week after the Fund Drive was announced, \$18,060 had been pledged by the eighteen members of the SECO Board; a legal corporation formed ten months earlier. It was decided by the Board that anyone contributing \$100.00 or more would be issued a certificate showing they were eligible to vote on any major issue before the Board.

The intention of these forward thinking leaders of Hawarden was for the college to be a private, nonprofit, tax free and self sustaining enterprise. It was also the intention and hope of the people involved to give the youth of this area the opportunity to expand their education at a location close to home and provide it at an affordable price. The indirect result of the college would also be to advance the economic opportunities of the businesses and residents of the area.

In May, 1966, HIDCO (Hawarden Industrial Development Corporation) agreed to purchase the farms of Calvin Smith and Cleone Dewey on the north edge of Hawarden for the Sioux Empire College site. Other sites considered earlier were dismissed for various reasons. Smith's farm consisted of 145 acres and the Dewey land was 5 acres. This land was located across the intersection of 23rd street and Avenue L. Dave Gearhart, representing HIDCO stated that they had the funds available to purchase the land, and would resell whatever land needed to the college. With this co-operation between the Hawarden Industrial Development Corporation and the SECO board of directors, the dream of so many citizens and friends of Hawarden was taking shape; it now had a home

By June of 1966 pledges had been secured reaching the goal of \$105,000.00, thus allowing contracts to be let for construction of buildings. Trustees anticipated an enrollment of 300 students in the fall of 1967 when the school hoped to open.

Mountains of red tape, meetings, disappointments and delay, challenges and success, the courage of a few brave men, now joined by an enthusiastic group of investors and help from HIDCO to purchase the land were all ingredients necessary to make this dream come true.

Next week: Sioux Empire College becomes a reality.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

SIOUX EMPIRE COLLEGE BECOMES A REALITY

Chapter 42:

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

As work began on the site finally chosen for the Sioux Empire College, even more citizens of the Hawarden community became involved; this time not with money, but with physical labor and moral support.

The Hawarden Explorer Scouts were enlisted to join with members of the community as well as the SECO Board to help clean up the site where the buildings for the college would be located. Men and women, business owners and farmers, all volunteered to help with the work and it resulted in the saving of thousands of dollars by eliminating the need to hire the work done.

During this period in the mid 1960's, Hawarden was in a very energetic and progressive era. At this time in history Hawarden had a hospital expansion fund drive in progress as well as the college drive. The hospital expansion was ready for new equipment and furnishings, but money was still needed to provide all these necessities. This was also the time when plans were discussed to hire a Hospital Administrator to replace Ruth Kennedy who had not only been Director of Nursing but also in charge of the financial applications of the Hospital. In 1967 HIDCO purchased the Medical Clinic and plans were approved to apply for a Sears Foundation Grant to build a new building to house the Clinic. Other activities on the Hawarden City Council's agenda were the purchase of the Golf Course and improvements to the Hawarden Airport site. This was an exciting time for the entire community. Progress and expansion were the two operative words of the era.

In June of 1966 it was reported in the *Hawarden Independent* that SECO had received its first grant. This grant came from the Federal Government and the \$5,000.00 would be used for library materials. It was also reported that the college would be eligible for a similar grant in the next year if progress goes as expected and will continue for an additional three years if Congress continues to appropriate the funds.

With work progressing on the college site, the members of the SECO Board were rapidly making plans and obtaining the necessary permits and contracts for the ground breaking of the first college building.

The board had made contact with four financial firms, three located in Iowa, who were prepared to construct the necessary buildings and then lease them back to the Sioux Empire College Corporation over a thirty year period of time. There was even the possibility of including the price of the land in the lease agreement. Everything seemed to be falling into place.

Dr. Wellborne did not renew his contract with the City and College in 1966 and Dr. George S. Reuter was installed as the new president. Excitement was high in November of 1966 when ground was broken for the new 7,000 sq.foot classroom building. The original farm house on the property was converted into the Sioux Empire Administration and Library Center. As with all projects, large and small, the building of a college was a huge task and delays and disappointments were commonplace.

By September, 1967 there were six full time and 4 part time faculty members for the college as well as 55 excited students; but no buildings. The fall semester began with the students housed in the homes of generous members of the community and classes were held in the First Methodist Church Educational unit. By November 1, the classroom building was completed. By December 1, the students were living in the new dormitories.

In February, 1968 SECO was officially dedicated and in May the first spring banquet, prom and graduation for seven graduates was held. In June, SECO received confirmation that the state schools would accept credits from this new college; a necessary requirement for a two year school. September of 1968 saw an enrollment of 108 fulltime students for its second year of operation.

Growing pains would be an understatement for this small struggling college. By the end of the decade of the 60's the school was in serious financial trouble. Enter Dr. Al Hudek who was hired to be Dean of the college. Dr. Hudek spearheaded a fund drive. Again Hawarden and area residents responded and \$80,000 was raised which allowed the college to pay off and settle all past debts and allow a contingency fund for a continued program.

When the fall 1970 classes began there was new hope that the college could still be a viable force in the Hawarden Community. The student body numbered 65 students. Dr. Hudek was president of the college and Marian Ryger Dean of Instruction. Classes were taught by the president, the dean and several part time instructors. Saturday and evening classes were emphasized and attracted students of all ages from the surrounding area. Once again the future was looking bright and Sioux Empire College was entering a time of growth.

By the mid 70's Sioux Empire College could boast several sports teams such as, Girls and Boys Basketball, Volley Ball and Baseball. Other programs were also listed in their curriculums such as Choir, Speech, Theatre and more; their school newspaper THE TITAN was published weekly in the Hawarden Independentⁱ. In 1974 a multipurpose building was under construction which would house a gymnasium as well as other amenities.

In 1977 one of the biggest announcements of the college was the news that approximately 300 veterans had been accepted to their enrollment in addition to their regular admissions. Classes for these Veterans would be held on the Hawarden Campus as well as three satellite campuses in the area. Classes for veterans would allow them to receive an Association in Arts Degree upon finishing the requirements. At this same time in history, President Nixon made higher education a possibility for qualifying Native Americans with expanded federal grants, and Sioux Empire College was a recipient of many Native American students from nearby areas who chose Hawarden to attend a two year school.

The 1980's saw the Sioux Empire College Theatre present Gore Vidal's "Visit to a Small Planet", and the Art Department exhibited their collections. In 1984 the Titans (SECO Boys Basketball Team) played in the Region II Jr. College playoffs at Waldorf College, eventually losing to the number one seeded college; Iowa Central Community College of Fort Dodge, Iowa. May of 1984 was SECO's 17th Annual Graduation. It would be its next to the last.

Next week: Sioux Empire College: Twenty years of Dreams and Disappointments. The Final Chapter.

ⁱ Hawarden Independent
Hawarden Centennial Book

HAWARDEN....NOT SO LONG AGO

SECO: THE FINAL CHAPTER

CHAPTER 43

BY: Mary Truesdell Johnson

The fall of the 1984-85 school year at Sioux Empire College started with the anticipation of another busy and productive year. As reported in last week's column, the classes were numerous and varied, including nights and weekends. The extra circular activities boasted success from the previous year's competition in sports; and the art department and theatre were looking forward to more productions and exhibits. All signs that things were going well.

B.N. Brown began his second year as President of SECO, after his appointment in 1983 to fill the position vacated by Al Hudek. President Hudek had assumed the President's position in 1969 and resigned in June of 1983. Also resigning at the same time was Dan Hudek, Dean of Students, and Leo Hallman, business manager.

May 15, 1985 was graduation day. The graduates were completely unaware that they would be the final graduating class of Sioux Empire College. After twenty years of planning, eighteen graduating classes, and over 1000 students receiving their Associate of Arts Degree, Sioux Empire College of Hawarden, Iowa entered the pages of history. The day following graduation, May 16, 1985 the Board of Trustees held a meeting and voted to close the college immediately; leaving 41 employees without jobs.

The closing was a shock to the entire community. Sadly, the clouds rolled in faster than anyone could imagine. Rumors of financial problems and mishandling of funds spread like wild fire; the naysayers were quick to say "I told you so!" and the supporters and contributors to SECO were shocked and disappointed.

It was reported in the June 27, 1985 issue of The Independent that the college had been subject to a Federal Audit over eighteen months before its closing. Officials and Board members had made several attempts to receive the results of this audit, but as usual, government red tape seemed to block their many efforts. For some unknown reason, the Des Moines Register obtained the audit report and published it before anyone in Hawarden had knowledge of its contents.

The officials of Sioux Empire College were stunned with the accusations in the newspaper, but could not affirm or deny any of the charges as they had not seen the report. It soon became apparent that the three men who had resigned in 1983 may be the only ones that could verify or disclaim the audit. The charges included questionable education and recruitment practices. It was immediately apparent that President Brown and the current board members were presented the huge task to struggle to explain the facts of the audit report even though the incidents in question took place from 1978 – 1983; before many of them were even a part of the college staff.

President Brown, in an article in the July 18, 1985 The Independent blamed the Department of Education Auditing Branch for delays in preparing their audit as one of the reasons Sioux Empire College was forced to close in May of 1985. During this period Federal Funds for the next school year were delayed which resulted in loss of enrollment. The final blow came when the North Central Association denied further continuation of candidacy status due to the lack of financial backing. At its peak, SECO had 470 full and part time students in one year and its maximum graduation was 120 graduates. As much as 12% of West Sioux Graduating students attended the college yearly and of the 1000 graduates of the school during its existence, around 75% went on to finish their four year degree.

THE INDEPENDENT: July 17, 1986 - COLLEGE OFFICIALS INDICTED FOR FRAUD

A Federal Grand Jury in Sioux Falls has indicted the former president and two other administrators of Sioux Empire College in Hawarden, Iowa on mail fraud and other charges.

Albert D. Hudek 49 of Council Bluffs president of the two year college until 1983; Daniel L. Hudek 40 of Sioux City, former Dean of Student Services; and Leo Hallman 35 of Pocahontas, former business manager of the college.

Albert Hudek said the charges are unfair in that Sioux Empire was trying to serve a disadvantaged group of students that other colleges didn't want to help.

Philip Hogan, U.S. attorney for South Dakota said the charges stem from the college's recruitment of Native American Indians from South Dakota Reservations and arranging for them to receive federal grants and federally backed loans.

THE INDEPENDENT: July 24, 1986 – EX-SIOUX EMPIRE COLLEGE OFFICIALS PLEAD NOT GUILTY *At this time a trial has not been set.*

THE INDEPENDENT: January 1, 1987 – EX-SIOUX EMPIRE COLLEGE OFFICIALS RECEIVE PENALTIES

On November 12, 1986 the Hudeks each entered pleas of guilty to misdemeanor charges of three counts of misapplication of Federal Student Financial Assistance and Hallman entered a plea of guilty to one count of misapplication of Federal Student Financial Assistance funds.

The changed felony charges to misdemeanor charges carried maximum penalties of a \$1000.00 fine and/or one year imprisonment on each count.

In statements made to Judge Jones, the three defendants and their lawyers emphasized the fact that while they agreed there had been some errors made on their part, that the college in fact had saved the government many thousands of dollars by educating students at a less expensive cost than in state institutions and by helping many disadvantaged persons become wage earners, thus eliminating them from possible inclusion on government social programs.

The issues of THE INDEPENDENT that I have referenced contain many more paragraphs with descriptions of the charges, and the comments of the individuals. Copies of these can be found on the internet in siouxcounty.newspaperarchive.com or at the Hawarden Public Library. If I have aroused your curiosity, I would direct you to those two sources to read the entire accounts.

In conclusion; I have spent many hours weighing the pros and cons of Hawarden's endeavor into higher education. Was it a monumental challenge that in spite of its short existence was a success; or was it doomed to failure from the very beginning? A few quotes come to mind; "What doesn't kill us only makes us stronger." And "If you risk nothing, then you risk everything."

In 1965 a few forward thinking men had a vision; a vision to make Hawarden a vibrant and active community and offer affordable higher education to those who would pursue it. The vision became a reality when the community and its people decided to support the idea of the college with their time and money. This effort gave one thousand graduates of SECO a chance for a better life; an education that was close to home and affordable.

As we know, everything did not go as planned, mistakes were made and consequences were imposed; the college closed much too soon, but was it a mistake? I vote NO. Nothing worthwhile is ever a mistake; what price tag can be put on education? My children benefited from the SECO experience by taking summer classes to lighten their load during the school year; my husband was able to get his two year degree while managing a business and supporting his family. SECO was a stepping stone for veterans, high school graduates, Native Americans and more, that leaves a legacy to be proud of.

If you are one of the people who helped the college in its infancy and mourned when it closed, I applaud you. Sometimes it takes many to help a few, but all are rewarded for the effort.

HAWARDEN ...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

PATRIOTISM AND HEROES

Chapter 44

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Patriotism and Heroes are not words exclusive to Hawarden or to any community or city in our great United States of America.; but Hawarden and Calliope can certainly be proud of their heroes who have fought for our liberty and freedom since the Civil War. Hawarden paid tribute to one of these men on February 12, 1942 when John H. Huyck (the last Civil War Veteran in Sioux County) was laid to rest at Grace Hill Cemetery in Hawarden, Iowa.

John H. Huyck was not a Hawarden native; he was born in Watertown, Wisconsin in 1846. He joined the Wisconsin Volunteers as a cook's helper at the age of 15 at the start of the Civil war. His tour of duty was cut short when someone discovered his age and he was discharged. The young John Huyck immediately left for Illinois and joined the 134th Illinois Infantry of the Union Army. Mr. Huyck stayed with this group through several minor scrimmages until the age of 19 when he was discharged. At this time he found himself in Lincoln, Neb. in the early 1870's, at the time Calliope was becoming settled. John Huyck visited the area as a member of the gang surveying for the Sioux City and Pembina railroad. He often spoke of a very unhappy Irishman he met whose property was in the direct path of the railroad. Could this man be the answer to why the route of the tracks veered away from Calliope and ended in Hawarden? We may never know that answer, but Huyck remembered him protesting vigorously against the intrusion.

Mr. J.H. Huyck passed away at the age of 95. He was blessed throughout his life with a rugged, erect, active body and an even more active mind. Those who remember Mr. Huyck will always associate him with his Model T Ford which at the age of 88 he drove by himself to Watertown, Wisconsin to revisit his childhood home. In 1938 he was accompanied by his son to the 75th Anniversary of Gettysburg in Gettysburg, Pa. This celebration was attended by veterans of both the Union and Confederate Armies. It was the only meeting of these old soldiers that had opposed one another on the battlefield three quarters of a century earlier. At the age of 93 John Huyck quit driving –after strong protests – and when the state refused to renew his driver's license.

John Huyck was an aviation enthusiast and for many years, on his birthday, he would fly commercially from Sioux City, Iowa to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to commemorate the day.

John H. Huyck, Sioux County's last Civil War Veteran was laid to rest on February 12, 1942. It seemed a fitting day to say goodbye to this man whose life had spanned almost a century and fought in the Civil War with President Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief. He also lived to see the United States fight in three more wars. To respect Mr. Huyck's duty to his country, the business establishments in Hawarden were closed during the time of the funeral. The flags that were flown in honor of President Lincoln's birthday were lowered to half mast during the funeral. John H. Huyck's grave is located just west of the large memorial at Grace Hill Cemetery.

John Herrick Huyck was a step-grandfather to Clayton B. Thompson, well-known lawyer and Mayor of Hawarden. He was a step great grandfather to Dann Thompson and Ronald Thompson. Mr. Huyck lived in a house on the same property as his son's at 1208 Ninth Street in Hawarden.

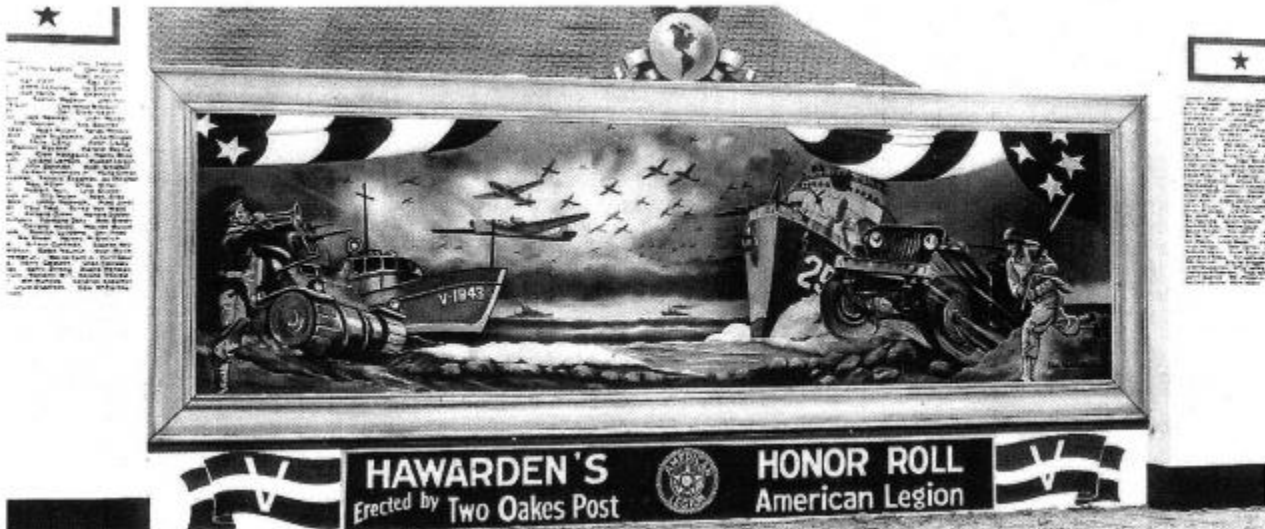
This story is only one of hundreds that could be told of the countless veterans that have served their country and returned to Hawarden and the area to live their lives. Their love of country is an everlasting legacy.

The Two Oakes Post 254 of Hawarden is an example of the companionship these veterans have formed and fostered through the years. On October 17, 1919 a Charter was granted to organize the American Legion Post in Hawarden for the purpose of fellowship and aiding and assisting Veterans and their families. The Hawarden Post was named in Honor of Glenn Oakes, a sergeant in the Canadian Army and his brother Harry a lieutenant in the US Army. Both boys were

killed in action in France during WW1. They were the sons of Henry Oakes of Hawarden; thus the name "Two Oakes Post 254".

The Commander of Two Oakes Post 254 in 1920 was Seal Van Sickle. Seal was also a talented artist, having studied in Chicago. In 1943, members of Two Oakes Post erected a Honor Roll Board at the south end of Main Street to honor the men and women from this area who were serving in WWII. This large billboard was a work of art; names of all service men and women were printed on each end and the large scene in the middle, painted by Seal Van Sickle, depicted each branch of the military in action and in vivid color. How many years it remained at the south end of Main Street, I do not know; I have never been able to find what happened to it. I am sure at one time it was appropriate to dismantle it and remove it from its place of prominence. I know things do not last forever, but what a treasure that painting would be for the Veterans Museum at Calliope Village.

Two Oakes Post has been a part of Hawarden for over ninety three years. Their projects are many and their service to the community invaluable. A recent accomplishment is the WWII Memorial at Veterans Memorial Park on Avenue E. The Avenue of Flags displayed each year at Grace Hill Cemetery on Memorial Day and July 4th weekends to honor deceased Veterans now totals over three hundred and eighty flags. These flags blowing in the wind are a silent reminder of the loved ones who have served their county, many giving the ultimate price. They also remind us each time they fly that "FREEDOM IS NOT FREE".



SCRIP MONEY BRINGS FAME TO HAWARDEN

Chapter 45

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

The infamous election of 2012 is now history. Television can be watched without the incessant commercials and when the phone rings, there may actually be a friendly voice on the other end.

Of course the morning after an election is not a magical day; it may feel magical to the victors, but morning had hardly turned to afternoon before all the challenges facing America were being discussed; not in some political ad, but by the congressmen, senators and administration. These are the members of our government who have campaigned so hard to earn the right to "fix" what is wrong with our economy.

This year, the buzz word seems to be "The Fiscal Cliff." What that means is not really known, at least not to me. Whatever it means it sounds ominous and one wonders if we will all jump over the fiscal cliff or if we will be pushed.

I am sure this is not America's first "Fiscal Cliff". When the Great Depression of the 1930's hit everyone felt that they were at a point of no return. There was no money and no jobs. It was hard for most people to buy even the necessities; prices were low, but people could not afford to go to the store.

A resident of Hawarden, Charles J. Zylstra, a student of economics and the U.S. Monetary system, was elected to the Iowa State Legislature from Sioux County in 1932. Zylstra strongly believed that bonding of, or borrowing by the United States' government was not a policy that should be used to solve this Depression. Obviously, policies have changed immensely since 1932.

Mr. Zylstra presented a plan to the Hawarden City officials in October of 1932. The City and Chamber agreed to give Mr. Zylstra's plan a try and that was a decision that immediately placed Hawarden on the national map, and brought camera crews, reporters, businessmen, as well as just the curious, traveling to Hawarden to cross-examine this unusual plan. A Pathe news crew came and interviewed residents and merchants, and soon the Pathe Newsreels put Hawarden, Iowa on the big screen, reaching most of the United States as well as many foreign countries.

Charles Zylstra's plan was to print and issue a new form of currency called Hawarden Scrip Money. The first issue of this money was three hundred pieces of Scrip Money that would each be worth one dollar. The City of Hawarden used this Scrip as wages to unemployed men who were looking for work and were willing to do such jobs as work on streets and alleys, shovel snow, mow city property, and any maintenance work and duties that they were assigned. The men were paid one dollar in scrip money and sixty cents in cash for each day's work. This money could be spent at participating merchants as well as to the City for payment of city utilities.

The principle of the Scrip Money was to put the unemployed back to work and to stimulate the City's economy with money that would circulate throughout the community.

Each piece of Scrip Money was worth \$1.00. On the back of each piece were spots for thirty six three cent stamps. Every time the money exchanged hands, as well as at the end of each week, a three cent stamp had to be placed on the back of each one dollar certificate. Merchants purchased these stamps from the City of Hawarden and when all thirty six stamps were affixed to the back of the Scrip, it could be redeemed at the City for one dollar. The thirty six three cent stamps equaled \$1.08, which paid for the Scrip issued, and an additional eight cents to pay for printing and advertising. The money paid to the City for the purchase of the three-cent stamps went in to an account to redeem the Scrip. Thus funding the program.

By the time each Scrip dollar was redeemed, it had circulated thirty six times and generated \$36.00 in sales. When the three hundred Scrip dollars were all redeemed with the required thirty-six stamps on the back, they had produced \$10,800.00 worth of wages and business transactions. The first issue of Scrip Money was so well received that the merchants immediately requested that a second issue of three hundred coupons be printed.

Not everyone was thrilled with the new money. Merle Stone publisher of the Hawarden Independent was critical of the plan; he thought the purchase of the three-cent stamps by the merchants was an unfair burden and resulted in the businessmen paying more than their share for relief to the unemployed.

In reality, the success of Charles Zylstra's scrip money program was primarily due to its wide spread publicity. One of the many visitors who came to Hawarden to investigate the plan was Dr. Irving Fisher, an economist from Yale University. Dr Fisher was quoted, "Stamp money is hot money. It burns the pocket of every person who has it and they want to get rid of it before another stamp is required." He also reported that if such a plan was adopted nationwide it would end the depression in short order.

People from every state of the union as well as many foreign countries either came to Hawarden personally or inquired about it through the mail, and many implemented their own "scrip plan" modeled after Hawarden's. Hawarden's scrip plan was also written up in Liberty and Collier's magazines and in many news articles. A request was received from Chase Manhattan Bank of New York for one of the certificates for its collection of unusual money specimens.

Zylstra eventually was able to pilot a bill into law at the Iowa State Legislature that gave Iowa's ninety-nine counties the right to issue state-sanctioned stamp scrip as a way of providing relief for the unemployed.

Because of the wide spread publicity, much of Hawarden's second issue of Scrip money actually was never redeemed as it became a collector's item by the many tourists who came to Hawarden to research and experience the Scrip Money Program.

During the past several years, as well as in 2012, Hawarden has again offered Scrip Money to encourage residents to "Shop at home". Christmas Scrip allows each adult to purchase \$100.00 in Scrip Dollars for \$85.00; a 15% discount funded by the participating merchants. Each year \$20,000.00 of Christmas Scrip is circulated in the community.

Printing money to alleviate poor economic conditions, sounds good; but as many communities unfortunately discovered during the 1930's, you cannot print money unless you can guarantee funds to cover its' value. When money is printed without financial backing, a Fiscal Cliff looms in the future. ⁱ

ⁱ Hawarden Centennial Book



HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

DO YOU REMEMBER THE FOOTBRIDGE?

Chapter 46

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Much has been written about the Hawarden Footbridge. Sadly, the bridge that for many decades joined the high school /middle school and the grade school is rapidly becoming a distant memory. With the completion of the Dry Creek Flood Control Project, the creek bed that held so much intrigue for past generations was filled and landscaped; turned into streets and parking lots; eliminating the need for any type of a bridge.

This may be a sign of progress for some, but to others it was the equivalent of losing an old friend. A friend that was always there to provide a place of solitary or a place of excitement; a place to patrol for enemy soldiers or a place to hold hands and maybe steal a first kiss without the whole world watching. To the children it was a world without adults a world where kids could be kids.

Stories of escapades around or under the bridge are as varied and numerous as the students who walked over it multiple times each day.

"No running on the bridge!", "No climbing on the rails!", "No balancing on the top boards!", NO, NO, NO; words that just added to the magnetism of the bridge and lured the young people there to do just what they had been told not to.

Dry Creek was a very real "crick" in those days, and it was not always dry! Water ran under the footbridge at a very swift rate at times of high water and ice melt, but during the summer and quiet times, it meandered under the bridge with clear water and clouds reflecting in its clear pools.

The school years were made more memorable because of Dry Creek. When the creek was calm anyone who lived south of dry creek usually followed the path to its' banks and walked home next to the water, rather than following the sidewalks. Many students walked as far as the tenth street bridge, but some were lucky enough to walk as far as the 9th street bridge and others followed the creek banks to eighth street by the old ball park and then followed it east as far as Avenue O. Skipping rocks in the water, testing the depth with limbs and sticks, walking on the ice in the winter, and sometimes finding it too thin to hold you; sliding down the banks on cardboard after a heavy snow, and playing Tarzan in the summer. Any season of the year was a time of fun and memories for those of us lucky enough to grow up and walk across that cherished wooden bridge.

Just as in the loss of a loved one; a parent, spouse, child, or even a pet, the memories become even more vivid and precious as the years pass. The generations of students who remember the bridge are rapidly disappearing. For those of us who crossed the bridge from the huge old grade school with the tubular fire escapes to the ominous high school that held so many mysteries, the bridge became a rite of passage. Freshman boys were often surrounded by upper classmen and forced to walk the top rail as an initiation ritual....many of them did not pass the test, falling into the muddy waters below. Football players loved running across the wooden planks just to hear the sound of their cleats on the bridge. Without a doubt for the alumni of Hawarden High School, the bridge was a journey to adulthood.

Once the Old Central School was demolished and the new lower, sleeker grade school was built, the bridge provided a pathway for the children; rain or shine, snow or wind the entire grade school trudged across that bridge for lunch every day and physical education at least a couple of times a week. One student reminisced that when they had physical education in the gym at the high school and then had to return over the bridge to the grade school, he would leave his hair wet after the shower to see if it would freeze on the way back to the classroom. Other students talked about the spring ice thaws and huge chunks of ice to float on. On one particular day, a huge chunk broke loose with one of them on it, headed at a swift rate towards the river. Fortunately, I have never heard of a serious injury on the bridge or the creek. I'm sure there were cuts and bruises, but no fatalities, other than during the flood of 26.

Of course we can't remember Dry Creek without visions of sitting on the banks with a homemade fishing pole waiting to catch that trophy fish. The Spike Club of the 40's and 50's was originated by a group of young boys who lived on Ninth Street. The club was named after one of the member's dogs, Spike. The club had an Air Force piloted by club dogs in orange crate biplanes powered by old truck tire inner tubes. The dogs and their owners patrolled Dry Creek at night during the Korean War Conflict, looking for spies and saboteurs. The dog named Pal that was the Squadron leader unfortunately had a lot of white hair on his coat, so the members of the club used shoe polish to dye him brown so he would not be detected by the enemy. They were not taking a chance of losing their Squadron Leader. Many of these secrets have just recently become declassified according to a member of the club.

These are only a few of the stories of adventures on Dry Creek or on the Footbridge that spanned it for over eighty years. The wooden bridge and Dry Creek are now gone, but the memories will live on as long as there is someone to tell the story. I hope I have done just that.



HAWARDEN....HOW IT ALL BEGAN

HOLIDAYS

Chapter 47

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Can there be a happier or sadder time of the year than the Holiday Season?

Thanksgiving arrives with children home from college and families reunited. Often an empty spot at the table signifies a loss of a loved one in the past, or all too often, just recently. The gatherings that will never be the same without Grandpa's hearty laugh and Grandma's special apple salad or pumpkin pie; memories that are so vivid and precious that they fill the occasion with the presence of our loved ones to the point you can almost feel them in the room.

If the loss of a loved one is current, there are bound to be tears, but as time passes, the memories bring forth smiles and laughter. Scenes of Thanksgivings past, games of touch football when weather permitted; family traditions that continue from one generation to another. Laughter and happy tears signifying love and respect remain a part of each family long after the loved one is gone. Life goes on: new babies are born, new members join the family, new memories are made; someone else makes the turkey this year, lives change and for all we give Thanks.

The dishes are hardly done from Thanksgiving before the newspaper arrives on the scene with its' plentiful supply of Black Friday ads; visions of unbelievable bargains and unyielding crowds dance through our heads. Not always happy, but rapidly becoming a tradition.

The Christmas decorating has become an art form. For those who are really serious about "lighting up the holiday", every warm day from Halloween to Thanksgiving is an opportunity to hang lights, put up the star, and generally turn yards and homes into the "Griswold Family Christmas," or a calmer less overdone version. If you happened to pass up those warm days, you are now faced with the choice of freezing while decorating outside, or hoping that the weekend provides at least one warm day to bring Joseph, Mary and the Baby from their resting spot for the last 11 months.

Decorating inside the home is a labor of love; not always approached with enthusiasm, but none the less always done in spite of the frequent promises that "I will not go overboard this year."

Once the decorating starts, my home becomes a plethora of rubber maid containers; each container contains objects that I just am not quite ready for; thus the original idea of doing a box at a time flies out the window. No; every box needs to be out to decide what goes where. I must confess, in the last few years I have started to cheat; I take pictures and refer to them when my feeble memory fails me. Of course, some years I decide that I have a better idea and the pictures are no help at all.

If you have a "traditional" or "diverse" tree like mine, the decorating becomes a stroll through memory lane. Each decoration that is taken from the box has a significance known only to you and your loved ones. The Hawaiian angel sent from a childhood friend now living thousands of miles away in Hawaii; but as close as a telephone call when I need to hear her voice. Sleds made from popsicle sticks and proudly brought home from school by three little girls. A gas station ornament given to me by a former employee because I gave her girls a ride to dance lessons a couple of times. A fire engine for my husband, and airplane for my dad. A duck hunter for all my grand sons and a Hallmark rocking horse Collection that dates back to the early '70s. Pink plastic balls that were purchased when our oldest daughter was eleven months old; her first Christmas. They had to be unbreakable; six grandchildren later they have always been placed on the lower branches so they could be handled and explored; none broken yet 50+ years later.

We still have our first Christmas tree, an aluminum one purchased in 1957. It was just the right size for our single wide trailer house at Forest View Trailer Park in Iowa City, Iowa. Charcoal and grey were the "in" colors, so we had a string of pink lights with a pink cord and of course the pink balls. The lights had to lay around the base of the tree as

they could not be put on the aluminum branches. Hardly traditional but very stylish for the times and certainly unforgettable.

Fifty five years have passed since that first tree decorated our trailer house. Fifty plus Christmas' filled with memories and love that could not have been happier. Three daughters with great husbands, six wonderful grandchildren and this year we will celebrate with our first great grandchild. A little boy born a few days before Thanksgiving to fill spots in our hearts that we never knew were empty.

This is how it all began; so many years ago. A star in the sky, a baby in the manger, shepherds watching their sheep and kings bringing gifts. A story of love and sacrifice told and lived through the ages, magnifying itself in the lives of humble people who realize that life is a gift; a gift from our ancestors who showed us the importance of honor, respect and especially love for one another. A gift so powerful that it found its way to places like Calliope and Hawarden over a century ago and continues today in the hearts of our friends and neighbors. A gift that preceded us and will follow us into the next generation. Merry Christmas and may 2013 bring love and happiness to all as Hawarden continues its journey toward it's 150th Birthday.

HAWARDEN...HOW IT ALL BEGAN

CHRISTMAS IN HAWARDEN

Chapter 48

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

Christmas has always been a festive time in Hawarden. Even back in the 1800's Christmas was a time for celebration.

In 1883 a Christmas Ball was held at the Northwestern Eating House on Christmas night. History tells us that the approaching Leap year made all the girls giddy with anticipation.

1888 also reports holding a dance in the Hawarden Opera Hall on Christmas night sponsored by the Knights of Pythia's Lodge. Unlike present times when Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are reserved for Church and family events, the 19th century residents seemed to enjoy large gatherings which included all who wanted to participate. Obviously in that era travel was not an option during an Iowa, South Dakota winter, so the solution was to gather together and spend the holidays with your "community family".

In 1908, the Palace Roller Rink opened on Christmas afternoon for skating and in 1916 Mrs. Irvin Finch opened her home to over 125 people to enjoy and view her decorated tree.

In 1923 history reports a large gathering of people assembled around the Flag pole on main street at 6:30 PM Christmas Eve for singing Christmas Carols, a Christmas Service, and last but not least, the arrival of Santa Claus and his wagon full of treats for the children.

1928 heralded the city's First Annual Store Window Display contest. Bray's Furniture was the recipient of the first award, and merchants have continued to please customers and visitors with their yearly Christmas Window Displays. Window Displays became so popular that in 1995, the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce sponsored its first Living Windows Celebration which continued for several years. The stores on Main Street had live window displays and Santa Claus strolling, handing out treats to the anxious children. The high light of the evening was the Living Nativity complete with animals including 2 camels and at least ten local citizens who depicted the Holy Family, Shepherds and Wisemen. Other activities included special "Hi Tec" letters to Santa that could be faxed to the North Pole at Bomgaars, Pamida and the Hub. There were horse drawn wagon rides, and an electric train display at the old City Hall as well as bonfires located in the middle of Main Street to roast marshmallows; one of the last years there was even a Piñata to break at the end of Main Street. Living Windows was recently held in 2011 to welcome Hawarden's upcoming 125th Birthday.

The Depression of the 1930's did not dampen Hawarden's Christmas spirit. The Hawarden Chamber of Commerce sponsored "Window Shopping Days" and Hawarden Christmas lights were described as "brilliant". At this time, the Christmas lights consisted of several strings of colored lights strung across Main Street, sometimes covered with evergreen roping. 1936 was the year that Santa appeared with his sleigh pulled by six Shetland ponies. In 1939 Seal Van Sickle painted a Christmas scene depicting wisemen on the way to Bethlehem that was placed on the south end of Main Street.

The 1950's brought Chamber of Commerce Pancake days'; feeding 4500 pancakes to 2000 hungry shoppers, Saturday night weekly drawings, and free Saturday afternoon movies for the kids.

The decade of the '60s may be the decade that everyone loves best. Why? Not because of Santa Claus, not because of merchant programs, not because of contests and gifts. The "greatest gift" Hawarden ever received for Christmas happened in 1965 and was given to the residents and visitors by the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce and the City of

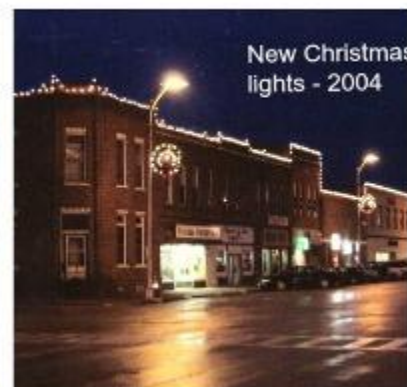
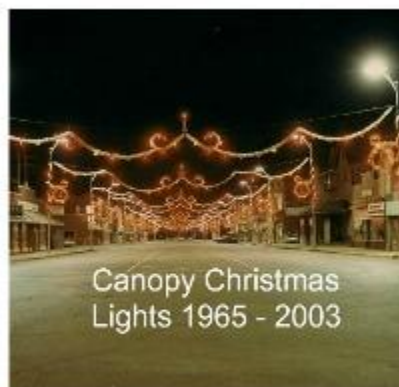
Hawarden; each paying one half the cost. The gift was one dozen strings of Christmas lights strung from lamppost to lamppost forming a canopy over Central Avenue. Looking at them from one end to the other gave the appearance that the lights continued on into infinity. The cost of the lights in 1965 was \$6000.00, but a 25% discount was given because all the lights were purchased in one year. Definitely one of Hawarden's BEST Christmas presents. The picture of the Christmas lights was posted on Face Book this year (2012) and there were over forty comments in just a few days. Comments like; "Main Street at its loveliest", "Love this", "One of my favorite memories of Hawarden", "The best", "I was just transported back to my childhood" and finally, "I will always miss these." It only takes a picture, or a memory to fill our hearts with warm thoughts of Hawarden and our time spent there. These lights lit up Hawarden for thirty-eight years from 1965 to 2003.

Sadly, age took its toll on our beautiful Christmas lights, and although they continued to look beautiful at night, their daytime appearance looked less than lovely or festive. The lights had deteriorated to the point that there were safety issues and needed to be replaced. A volunteer committee was formed to work as a group to earn money to purchase replacement lights for the community. "The Hawarden Lighting Committee" began a series of fundraising projects and within a year new lights were ready for Main Street. The committee continued a second year to provide lights for adjoining streets. The new lights consisted of outlining the Hawarden business district with over three thousand feet of white lights for the top of the main street buildings. These lights were installed by city employees on a volunteer basis in their free time; more evidence of Hawarden's volunteer spirit. Main street was also adorned with 24 wreaths with white lights and red bows during phase one of the project. Phase two in 2005 added additional lights going east and west on Tenth Street. The total cost of the project was \$15000.00

The Polar Express was held in 2004 and 2005 to sold-out crowds. Parents, grandparents, and children of all ages and sizes came to Hawarden in their pajamas with their favorite stuffed animal to ride the train and hear the story. Passengers boarded the train at Calliope Village. On the trains were helpers who passed out hot chocolate and cookies while The Polar Express story was read aloud by story tellers in each car. The decorated train traveled north over the bridge into South Dakota and returned to Calliope. Santa Claus handed out "Magic Bells" to all "who believed". L.G.Everist was the essential part of this successful project. They furnished the train, the tracks, the engineers and everything else needed to implement this train ride. The money raised from the Polar Express helped purchase Hawarden's new Christmas lights and was sponsored by the Lighting Committee.

The Hawarden Chamber of Commerce continues to promote Christmas in Hawarden. For many years, Christmas Scrip has been sponsored by the Hawarden merchants allowing customers to purchase \$100.00 in Scrip money for \$85.00. The Festival of Trees has become an annual event in Hawarden and has included an "Advance Preview Luncheon" in the past several years. Each year the exhibitors and the community are amazed with the new ideas and artistic designs that make up the beautiful trees.

Christmas in Hawarden; lights and decorations, churches, fellowship, fun, family, memories. That's what Christmas is to me. Merry Christmas Everyone.



Hawarden.....How it all Began

The Final Chapter for year 125

Chapter 49

By: Mary Truesdell Johnson

As I sit down to write this last article of 2012, and the last column of this series, I have many mixed emotions. My biggest accomplishment of the year was that I did not miss a deadline! Not since my school days and homework assignments have I had 52 weeks of deadlines. Friday at noon was embedded in my brain.

This is column 49. If you include the Introduction on week one that makes 50. Two weeks of the year my column was held over a week because of lack of space in the paper. I guess those two weeks were my vacation. It was a great year, and I have many acknowledgements to make.

First I want to thank the 125th Committee for pushing me into this project and having faith that I could do it. I was not so sure of myself and my nerves were letting me know that I had entered something new.

Thank you to my daughter, Cathy Noble – the eternal teacher who has kept encouraging me and helping me with each article. The articles are always read by her first for her expertise and suggestions. Her help has been invaluable.

Thank you to Hawarden and my friends and acquaintances who have read my stories and then elaborated on their own experiences on the same subject. I loved hearing all of your stories as well.

Maybe it is my age (Senior Citizen) or maybe I just love to tell stories, but the stories had to come from somewhere and I couldn't find a better setting to write about than my "forever" home, Hawarden. These stories belong to each of the readers. Senior Citizens like me who "remember when", and people who have made Hawarden their home even though it was not their birthplace. People who spent years here and moved away. All these people have impressed me with their thirst for knowledge about "How it all began".

2012 was a year of great memories; memories of our ancestors, our families and friends, our heritage. 2012 was also a year to make new memories; the birthday celebrations, Labor Day festivities and the All School Reunion. We now have the 125th History Book and Cookbook to read and reread and remember. It was a good year; a great send off to start thinking about 2037 and making new memories to celebrate in 25 years at our 150th birthday. NOW THAT SOUNDS OLD!

Last but not least I want to thank Bruce Odsen and *The Independent Examiner* for giving me space each week to publish my stories and allow me to actually see them in print. I really enjoyed the task; the weeks flew by and the pages of history always gave me something I was anxious to write about. The Sioux County Newspaper Archives on the internet were an invaluable source of information and verifies the fact that this newspaper has recorded history from the very first days of Calliope and Hawarden's existence. Without the printed word all the stories and verbal accounts would be just that; only stories. *The Independent Examiner* has been the one constant in the beginning and present history of our town. Back issues have been preserved and the history is there for all to read. I know the information highway of the 21st Century leads us to cyberspace, but I feel blessed that even though I accessed the Archives over the internet, the words had been written on paper and saved through the decades; tangible proof that events and decisions really took place in this town we all at one time have called home.

I cannot imagine a world without newspapers; how will we make our scrapbooks, how will history be preserved for each small town; will the words just be out there floating in space, or on a million micro chips stored in a vault? I cannot even imagine. I encourage everyone to support our local newspapers; send them information that needs to be

recorded, good and bad; activities and events that happen daily, but will be lost forever without the newspaper to record it.

Nooks & Kindle's are great; I love mine, but they are not tangible information. If I want information or a clipping of something from the past, I want to go to my stack of old Hawarden Independents or to the Archives on the Internet. I want to find the actual page with the news written on it so I can print it out. I can't imagine looking for it in some cyber cloud. When I look at a sky full of clouds, I certainly am not thinking of a storehouse of information located in them; my thoughts when I see clouds are either how beautiful the sky is or how threatening the skies look. Either way they were created by God for His purpose.

Last but not least, thank you to all the people who have stopped me on the street, e mailed me or written on Face Book to comment on my columns. You have given me encouragement, supplied me with valuable information and mostly just "made my day." That is what makes Hawarden a great place to live or a great place to call my hometown; the people are the BEST and it has been great fun . Thank you again for all your kind words and interesting stories. Have a wonderful 2013.