

## **Delores McCourtney Penkava**

November 18, 2015

*Background: Delores was the daughter of Bruce & Bernice McCourtney. She was born in 1930, graduated from Table Rock in 1947, married Ed Penkava, and had children Janet, Mark, and Anita. She was the granddaughter of Charlie & Lulu McCourtney. Delores asked me to come scan her old photographs. While I was there, I took down some of her memories, sometimes triggered by a photograph, usually hers. Sharla Cerra*

### **Her grandpa Charlie McCourtney moving a house**

She watched the move of Ray Daniel's house. (Photo 73, below)



## **Playing at the Brickyard**

On Sundays, we used to go down to the brickyard. There used to be a bridge you could cross to get to it. Joe Tomek said it was all right for us kids to go down there. There's a pool down there but we didn't go in it. We spent a lot of time having fun, though. We used to go in the building and see where they used to make bricks -- there were a lot of mud daubers there so I'm glad we didn't get stung, and glad there weren't yellow jackets.

*Brickyard circa 1950s (abandoned)(donated by Sharla Cerra)*



## **Yellow jackets**

One time Grandpa had a lot of yellow jackets in a well below the roof. He took a great big \_\_\_\_\_ out of the boiler and put it in a flu (stove pipe), wrapped a pair of overalls around the flu, and he set it on fire, and he was going around and burning the nest down from the eaves. A lot fell on the ground but a heck of a lot on the sidewalk. I didn't like yellow jackets as I'd been stung by several so I was gonna kill them that were on the sidewalk and I started stomping on them. I was barefooted, and boy did I get stung. When I quit stomping on them, my fingers

was so swelled. I couldn't walk on my feet they were so swollen. I still don't like yellow jackets. I don't mind mud daubers.

## Raknosniks

There was Stanley and Rose and Marie Rakosnik, had a pair of twins and a boy and a girl. One of their boys was named Milo or Milan. He's the one that's been sentenced for stealing his uncle's property.

## Working at Vonasek's grocery store

She worked at Vonasek grocery store to get the money for her prom dress, 1947, \$12. Thinks it was where Jack Kalina has his shop (west side of the theater)

*Ad from 1948:*



### **Swinging on the railing at the Odd Fellows stairs**

Roger Sandusky and a bunch of used to swing on the railing at the top of the stairs at the Odd fellows building. I'd be scared to death now.

1901 photo of the building when it was new, showing the stairs on the east side.



### **At the theater, Marjorie Fellers**

Movies – four times a week! If you want to them movie on Sunday, you got in free on Wednesday. If you went Saturday, you got in free on Sunday.

I think Hulda Zelenka run it at that time, married to Rudy. We used to be neighbors to them. Her and her sister would lay out in the yard on a blanket and get suntanned.

When we went to the movies, we liked to sit under the stairway. Went with usually the Prohaska girls, Irma and Lorna – This was in high school.

### **Marjorie Fellers, going to the movies, playing**

Vic Fellers was our mail carrier, and he asked us if he would carry his daughter who was crippled to the picture show, so we would push her down to the picture

show and park her with us under the stairs. If she couldn't see the screen, they'd let her stay in the aisle. Marjorie Fellers. That was her name. When Marjorie died, they buried her with bright pink clothes on. That was her favorite color.

Marjorie was a few years older than me.. She was crippled after a car wreck. Her mother was killed in the wreck. Marjorie had a big part of her hair tore off, you could see the scar in her hair, it was bad.

She always sat on the front porch and acted like the rest of us. She'd get in her wheelchair with her pocketbook and acted like she was walking with her pocket book.

I'd get her in my wagon and bring her back to my house to play. We had a little cafe. We made water with food coloring and drank and drank and drank until we was sick! Mom had some little glasses that were like little drinking glasses.

[Marge Fellers died in 1961 at the age of 34. She is buried in the Table Rock Cemetery.]

### **Sisters Bessie Rexroth and Mary Sturgeon**

Both Bessie and Mary limped, said it was because mother carried them so much.

### **Midge the Pony**

Delores had many stories about Midge the pony, who died in 1919, before she was born. These are written down elsewhere.

### **Cousin Tom the collector**

My cousin Tom had had many collections. He collected collections. A lot of them! He had about everything.

After Tom's sale, he moved into a schoolhouse and called it Lutzville. He had a school and a caboose and a school bell and he had lanterns that they used on the

railroad and a buggy out in front. He lived in Lincoln. He had all that in Lincoln. And not a one of them was outside. He had huge buildings everywhere. Most were tin Quonsets. [Tom is her favorite cousin. She has a picture of him.] Dad's side, belonged to Aunt Hazel, dad's sister, their last name was Lutzi. [She has his card, too, with Lutzville on it.]

### **Playing groceries in the alley**

Playing groceries in the back alley with the Massey kids, Mary Martha, Sally and Ted. Back of her house in Table Rock, there was an alley between where Elmer [Penkava] lives and where his store is [the old Lang's locker], and I lived the first house west. I lived right in between them. I think Glen Freeman lives there now.

Charlie Vanosek had a grocery store and every once in a while he wouldn't have room for a shelf, he threw it out in the alley for a truck to pick it up. We went out and got it. There was a tree with a semi circle. We put that shelf with our cans under the tree. My aunt gave me a baby buggy, that was our shopping cart. Went shopping, sure did. Then we got our cart full we'd run around and put em back on the shelf. We'd run out of cans by that time.

Mary Martha Massey died not long ago. I don't know what's happened to Sally and Ted.

### **Becky Sitzman**

I loved your mother. She was a very good friend of mine. She come to lodge one night and told us she had cancer. The last time I saw her, her arm was all swelled up with bandages. Just a little later, Termite [Larry Sitzman] called and said she was dying, and he was by her side. At least she got all her quilts made for every kid. I saw that book [with pictures of all the quilts]. I saw them at the Legion when she put them on display.

## **The public toilet next to the library**

Toilet on east side of the library. Everyone who wanted to could go potty there. It was really cold in there. The Rebekah's even came to use our toilet during their meetings, because it had three holes in it. One lady was so darn stingy, after she done her thing, she would wipe herself with her handkerchief and then put it in her purse. She was tall and if she ever smiled her face would bust. I got a picture of her husband somewhere. He died when he was 104 years old. M. H. Marble. He was a school teacher and a judge. [So the woman was Amy Marble, M.H.'s third wife..]

## **M. H. Marble**

Lived across from M. H. When M. H. went out to walk he didn't have a wheel chair so when he went out to walk, he'd walk pushing his chair like a walker. If he got tired, he'd sit down. Amy never did help him. After M. H. died, she went to Oregon with a sister.

I shook hands with him on his birthday when he was 104. Felt like mush!

When he was sitting out in the yard, I don't think he talked to anybody. Just liked sitting out there, on his chair.

## **Pet skunk Mortimer**

Had a pet skunk Mortimer. My uncle Pat found two baby skunks and he took them to be neutered, he kept the girl skunk, called her Petunia, and I kept the boy. Mortimer learned to open and shut the screen by himself, came and went.

Every time somebody didn't know would pick him up, he'd crap clear down the front of them. When Dr. Stepenback came from Humboldt one time, he picked Mortimer up and I thought oh no...Je never did crap on him. I guess he liked him, for some reason.



## **Dad's new Ford Mainline 6**

New Ford Mainline Six. When dad and grandpa went over to buy that, they came home with a whole roll of tickets, got one for each dollar you spent. At the end of the month, they'd put the tickets in a cement mixer and roll it, then stop it, and one ticket would fall out, and whoever got that got a car. So the ticket rolled out and another and they had the same numbers. So the guys went and discussed what to do. Guess which one got the car – the rich one. Dad didn't. But he had one anyway, and he had that Ford Mainline 6 for many years. It was light green.

*A 1954 Ford Mainline 6 from the internet:*



## **Grandpa's 1918 Cole Straight 8**

1918 Cole 8 car – grandpa still had it when I was growing up. I rode in it only once. It had isinglass windows and you could hardly see out of it. Lifted the ising glass curtain and looked out the window. I think I have a picture of mom and dad beside it. Edith Anderson lived in Knoxville Iowa.

Photo 2413, Delores's picture of her grandpa's Cole Straight 8, with Edith Anderson standing next to it



## **Bivans**

Charlene Bivans was grandma Lula s first husband's daughter. She married a Reinhardt and they lived at Newton Iowa. moved to California.



## **Grandma cooking for the crew - - cook wagon then a circus tent**

Grandma had that for a cook shack. Later she had a tent. Traveled with them and cooked for them.

*Photo 2460, Delores's picture of her grandma's cook wagon. Standing far left – her grandpa Charlie McCourtney. On top of the wagon 0 Sid Craig, John Grapenut, and Sam Trigge. In the door – Bruce & Maude McCourtney.*



“At Adams, a huge circus tent was grandma’s cook tent. how many men! a LOT of ‘em. These are just some of them. Graders – roads, rail lines.”

Photo 2407, Delores’s picture of the McCourtney Graders at Adams, 1909:



## **Bruce McCartney with a black eye**

Bruce McCartney with a black eye. he was at the table rock fair and they used to have a little boxing ring on the east side of the park, and where Delores and joe live, and if you could beat that guy you got a prize. Dad lost. He got that black eye in the course of losing.

*Photo 2417, Delores's dad Bruce with is black eye:*



## **Velma McCartney boxing**

My dad's sister Velma love to box. At grandpa's, a smart Alec cousin of theirs, Tippy, come up. and he was grandpa's nephew. He bet he could knock Velma down. He lost She just beat the living crap out of him. We was all glad. Tippy thought he was so much better than the rest of us.

## **Her parents' marriage day**

My folks were married on Christmas day at the courthouse in Kimball. Gordon Bethel and his wife Gertrude stood up with them, and then got married too. They got married together. It was Christmas, but they didn't close the courthouse for anything, was open 7 days a week. "Mike" Bethel and Gertrude Ray stood up with my parents as best man and maid of honor and vice versa. We always called him Mike, never Gordon. My mom was from Kimball.

*Photo 2433 – From Delores, Bernice & Bruce McCartney's wedding portrait*



*This is the end of my notes for this visit. Sharla Cerra, edited 4/20/2021*