

In appreciation to Town Chairperson, Linda Schraufnagel and Clerk, Robert Sterr who provided early reports from the Town of Le Roy archives.

Proceedings of Town Meetings

Held in the Town of Le Roy April 6<sup>th</sup> 1869  
 Proceedings of the annual Town meeting held  
 in the town of Le Roy on the sixth day of April  
 1869 All of the Supervisors not being  
 present W. B. Briggs was elected to fill  
 vacancy Notice was given that there  
 would be an adjournment at noon of  
 one hour and after that the report of  
 Supervisors would be read and Overseers  
 of highways would be elected

Voted that the report of Supervisors be adopted  
 Voted to pay the town clerk sixty dollars (\$60.00)  
 per year for his services and to raise \$400.00  
 for town expenses

E. G. Stoddard Town Clerk do certify  
 that the foregoing which is a true copy  
 of the original was recorded April 10<sup>th</sup> 1869  
 E. G. Stoddard Town Clerk

Held in the Town of Le Roy April 6<sup>th</sup> 1869 "Proceedings of the annual Town meeting held in the Town of Le Roy on the sixth day of April 1869. All of the Supervisors not being present, W.B. Briggs was elected to fill vacancy. Notice was given that there would be an adjournment at noon of one hour and after that the report of Supervisors would be read and Overseers of the highways would be elected.  
 Voted that the report of Supervisors be adopted.  
 Voted to pay the Town Clerk sixty dollars ( \$60.00 ) per year for his services and to raise \$ 400.00 for town expenses.  
 E. G. Stoddard, Town Clerk do certify that the forgoing which is true copy of the original was recorded April 10<sup>th</sup> 1869.  
 E.G. Stoddard, Town Clerk and clerk of town meeting.

Below: Real Estate tax receipt to the amount of \$ 2.79 paid by Peter Gassner dated December 31, 1869. Document offered by Erwin Gassner

\$ 2.79 No. 228

STATE OF WISCONSIN,  
 Dodge County, Town of Le Roy Decmber 31 1869

Received of Peter Gassner From

79 Dollars, in full for State, County, Town, Village, County School, Town, School, School District and Highway Taxes for the year 1869, on the following described Real Estate and Personal Property, to-wit:

DESCRIPTION.	Sec.	Town	Range.	No. Acres	Lot.	Block.	Fees	Taxes unpaid for previous years.			Total Tax
E 1/2 N.E. NW.	21	17	14	20				18	18	18	2 78
											6
											Amount \$ 2 79
Personal Property,											
											MAK Buchholder
											TOWN TREASURER.

A RECORD  
of the  
ORGANIZATION AND INCORPORATION  
of

*Le Roy Fire Department*

A CORPORATION

duly incorporated under the laws of the state of *Wisconsin* on the *20<sup>th</sup>*  
day of *October* A. D. 19*23*, in the *Town* of  
*Le Roy* county of *Dodge*, state of *Wisconsin*.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE, *members of the*  
*Le Roy Fire Department*

being all the original subscribers to the articles of incorporation of said corporation,  
for the purpose of the adoption and identification of this book, with the records con-  
tained therein, as the original record of said corporation, have hereunto subscribed our  
names and caused the corporate seal to be affixed this *20<sup>th</sup>* day of *October*  
A. D. 19*23*

*James Weinberger* Pres.

*Joe Schabel* Sec. #

*Mike Fucht* Treas.

*Al. Schmidbauer* Fire Marshal

*Ad. Schraufnager* Foreman

*Peter Fucht* Asst. Fore.

~~*John Schabel*~~ Steward.

*John Deigh*

1922

(To be signed by all the persons  
organizing the corporation.)

Trustees.

*James Weinberger*  
*Rob Bonack*  
*J. J. Laughlin*  
*Art. Wild*  
*Louis Darge*

## TOWN OFFICIALS

In the past many years of town leadership, men and women answered the call of civic duty. We shall enter the names of these patriotic citizens who officially served Town Le Roy in one capacity or another, and whose names were available at the time of printing. Some officials were elected to office and some were appointed. Elected to office were the Chairman, Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, Constable and Justice of the Peace. Appointed were the Notary Public, Health Officer, Pond Master, and Weed or Thistle Commissioner.

Early 1870 records show E. G. Stoddard, Clerk. Max Bachhuber, Notary Public. Fridhrich Herrmann, Supervisor. John Fisher, Treasurer.

In 1906 we find an interesting assortment of political responsibilities. Bernhard Schabel, Chairman, J. N. Schraufnagel and George Keller, Supervisors. Andrew Schmidbauer, Clerk. Xavier Reiser, Treasurer. George Waas, Assessor. George Ertl, George Kehrmeyer and B.E.Sampson, Justices of the Peace. Edward Sterr, John Strasser, and Andrew Pammersperger (later changed to Sperger) Constables. John Sonntag, Weed Commissioner.

Democratic committee: B.Schabel, Andrew Schmidtbauer, and John Altmann.

Republican committee: L.J. Lehner, Louis Schmidt, Ernst Adelmeyer.

In 1916 the following officers served the Town of Le Roy: Joseph Bauer, Chairman. George Oechsner and Julius Martel, Supervisors. John E. Heimerl, Clerk. Otto Bauer, Treasurer. Philip Oechsner, Assessor. John Heimerl and Alois Gruber, Justice of the Peace. John Lehner and Joseph Hart, Constables. Alois Gruber, Health Commissioner, assisted by Joseph Bauer and John Heimerl. Pond Masters, Henry Ertl, Adolph Schraufnagel, Herman Wellso and Edward Snyder.

### Officers serving the Town of Le Roy since 1925

#### Chairman

Panzer	1925-1967
Kehrmeyer	1967-1973
Shirley Justman	1973-1977
Andrae Justman	1977-1980
Myron Ehrhard	1980-1992
Robert Schmidt	1992-1995
Gilbert Schmidt	1995-1999
Linda Schraufnagel	1999-

Frank  
Earl

The citizens of Le Roy remember Frank Panzer as an outstanding civil servant:

Town Chairman	41 years
Dodge County Board Chairman	26 years

Wisconsin Assemblyman	2 years
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Wisconsin Senator	30 years
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Senate President Pro Tem Emeritus	10 years
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**SUPERVISORS**

Andrew Schraufnagel	1927-1928	Philip Oechsner	1927-1928	
Jake Gittel	1930-1932	Joseph Zangl	1927-1939,	1942-1944
Louis Schmidt	1932-1946	Thomas Meyer		Oscar
Sterr	1944-1967	Kilian Wondra		Otto
Bauer	1953-1960	Joseph Schabel		Rudolph
Sternat Jr.	1962-1968	Armond Waas	1968-1982	Gordon Lehner
	1968-1972	Alois Feucht	1972-1976	Raymond Wondra
1978-1992		Robert Schmidt	1983-1992	Linus Schraufnagel
1999+		Linda Schraufnagel	1995-1999 +	Ray Collien
1999- +				

**CLERK**

Andrew Schmidtbauer	1927-1935		
Rudolph Oechsner	1935-1942		
Armin Kantin	1942-1946		Benno
Sterr	1946-1970		
Shirley Justman	1970-1973		
Robert Sterr	1973-1999+		

**TREASURER**

Weinberger	1927-1942		James
Sterr	1942-1945		Benno
Joseph Feucht	1945-1949		Peter
Feucht	1949-1959		Gilbert
Schmidt	1959-1986		
Michele Eilbes	1986-1999+		

**ASSESSOR**

Albert Adelmeyer	1927-1934		Otto
Bauer	1934 - ??		Ezra
A. Alexander	??- 1968	Rubin	Sperger
	1968-1977		Erma
Franke	1977-1999 +		

**JUSTICE of the PEACE**

August Stellberg	1930 ?		Milton
Hurlbert	1966		
Peter Krapfl	1966		

**CONSTABLE**

Feucht and Alvin Kohli	1930--???	Art	Mike Krapfl
	1966-1968		
Douglas Nehls	1966-1968		
Ray Collien	1966-1968		
John M.F.Feucht	1975-1979		
KennethWeinberger	1979-1984		
Lester Cook	1981-1982		Clarence
Thurk	1982-1991		
Danial Loduha	1985-1991		
Clarice Hoffman	1993 -?		

**Animal Control Officer**

Klueger	1993-1995		Dale
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**MEMORIES of the  
HISTORIC OLD COUNTRY CHURCH LOCATED ON HWY. Y  
VOLLMER'S CORNER, LE ROY, WISCONSIN.**



Photo courtesy Ray Vollmer

The old Baptist church which once served the congregation of Kekoskee was moved to a new location one mile west of Le Roy in February 1895. The church was taken down in sections and moved to Vollmer's corner on Hwy. Y. Joseph Krapfl had the contract to disassemble and reassemble the church, which later was used to serve the Methodist denomination. The church was razed in 1928 and the lumber was used to replace the Ed Lehner house which was destroyed by the marsh fires. To the left is the property of the century old family farm owned by Raymond and Elizabeth Vollmer.

### **Social Life**

What was social life all about ? What kind of entertainment satisfied the young and the restless? How did the elderly occupy their time? Many other questions surface when we think about a world without cars, radio, television etc. In the early 1900s many homes were without electricity and indoor plumbing. There were the early telephone party lines where a group of homes shared the same line. For example, when party 'A' was called, party B, C, and D could all hear the coded number ring. With the old crank telephone, one might crank one long and two short for party 'A' expecting to enjoy a private conversation. Others sharing the line were to respect the honor system and not listen in. However, occasional eavesdropping occurred..

Sunday was observed by first attending church services. In the afternoon people would visit relatives or neighbors. Visiting was spent by playing cards or just conversing.

Prohibition went into effect in 1919. As a result, many large and small entrepreneurs went underground and engaged in their own illegal bootlegging. A book could be written on this subject alone. This was a dangerous business as unskilled bootleggers mixed up concoctions that ruined their health, and the revenue agents would place heavy fines on violators they caught. Prohibition was repealed in 1931.

Below: Some of Le Roy's senior citizens of the 1940s engage in the traditional past time at Ma Schmidbauer's Saloon. The Mayville News stated, An almost daily routine in Le Roy is this gathering of old time card players. All except the kibitzer (standing) are retired farmers from the town of Le Roy. Their favorite past time is 'Herz Schafskopf,' talking over the 'good old days' and the issues of the day. They are, left to right, Lorenz Neumeyer 79, Henry Roethle 92, D.G. Koedinger 84, Martin Weix 86, and Reinhold Rost 82. Koedinger is from Mayville. The men are considered an institution in Le Roy.



Right: Le Roy Orchestra of 1901. The first orchestra in Le Roy played for parties, dances and weddings. L-R. John Ertl, William Ewald, Louis Scheberl, Mike Scheberl, Edwin Herman and Fred Darge



Photo Courtesy Irwin Gassner

## LE ROY ORGANIZED BAND



Photo courtesy Aurella Kuehl

The Le Roy Organized Band provided entertainment at picnics, weddings and other celebrations. The band wore classy green uniforms with white trim, and was in existence from 1906 until 1909.

L-R: Top row: Herman Ewald, Louis Lehner, Ralph Tidyman, Frank Lehner, John Ertl, Louis Scheberl, and Arthur Tidyman.

Front row: Frank Ewald, John Scheberl, Louis Schmidt, Louis Darge, and Willie Ewald, director of the band.

## WHAT I REMEMBER ABOUT LE ROY

By Clarence Heimerl 1979—Editing Permission from Jim Heimerl

I was born in 1907 so what I remember about Le Roy must have taken place between 1910 and 1918. We were still living at Le Roy at the end of World War I as I remember helping to make noise on November 11 by climbing the windmill tower with a stick to beat on the windmill. In 1919 we were living at Mayville later my folks moved to Rubicon. However I spent most of my life in Chicago and Milwaukee. During a part of this time at Le Roy, my father, John Heimerl, was Town Clerk. He was a carpenter and built the old style timber frame barns. He built the square house a little south of Lehner's Corner for the Altmans. He also built the Stuckmeyer farm house in the Town of Lomira. [John Heimerl built the porch on the rectory in 1915]. Members of his crew that I can remember were Leo and Herman Neumeyer, Ervin and Adolph Sterr, Casey Kehrmeier, Jack Hausinger, and my uncle Henry Hebert. Most, if not all, of his crew were drafted or enlisted in the World War I Army, so my father wrote and passed a mail carrier's exam. He carried mail out to Knowles till he was transferred to Mayville. My uncle Henry was my Godfather and I remember him taking a picture of me pulling myself on my sled. His trip to France was one way. I remember my mother receiving his personal effects, which included a bloodstained letter, addressed to my mother, which he had not mailed. I also remember Felix Indermuehle (a son of Charlie Indermuehle the cheese maker), who used to give me some very fast rides by pulling my sled. Felix later married my first cousin, Marie Heimerl of Beaver Dam. He passed away at the age of 74 in April 1978.

I remember Jesse Schmidbauer hauling milk to the cheese factory with an old white horse hitched to a stone boat. Bobby Bonack used to stop ahead of our house in Le Roy to fill our milk pail with a dipper which hung in the inside of one of his milk cans. I don't know if the USDA put a stop to this or not, but later we went to the cheese factory and caught our pail full of milk from the end of the spout, when Bonack's milk was dumped into the vat. We left either a nickel or a dime on the table at the factory. The large straight up old style milk cans were in use at that time. After emptying the milk cans, the farmers filled them with whey, which they fed to their hogs. The cheese makers did not have the disposal problems they have today, which seems to give the ice cream manufacturers the excuse to make ice cream out of it.

We did most of our shopping at Lehner's Store on Lehner's Corner [now known as Kollman's Corner]. We didn't drag so many things home from the store as most everything was made from scratch. The clerks at the store were Louis Lehner, Rose Lehner, and I think Anna Miller. Rose Lehner is living at Hope Nursing Home at Lomira and I believe Anna Miller is married to Art Schiedemeyer. John Lehner tended bar in the saloon located in the same building. Hank Faust had a special built wagon and ice box combination painted red with gold lettering. There was a scale mounted to the rear door and he must have carried his brass bell on the seat next to him. He brought fresh meats, sausages, etc. from Mayville to Le Roy.

When he rang his bell, women came out with baskets and dishpans to buy their supply of meat. There also was a man whose name, I think, was Sam Scheir. He drove a team of mules on a wagon with a covered box and many shelves. This wagon was loaded with bolts of cloth which he sold by the yard. To him a yard was the distance between the tip of his nose and the end of the thumb of his outstretched arm.

I also remember Muck Schraufnagel's very large stallion. He used to drive this stallion, hitched to a two wheeled cart, going from farm to farm to breed mares. If I remember correctly the colts born to these mares were born black, then turned to iron gray, and when old would turn pure white. Louis Schmidt and his brother used to drive into town and to church with a beautiful team of bay ponies

Victor Bauer's parents drove a beautiful car with a lot of brass and straps from the top to the brass headlights. In those days Leonard Weinberger stirred up a lot of dust with, I think, an Overland. Fred Sterr had one with the engine under the seat and it cranked on one side. His wife, Kate Sterr, helped my mother on wash days. Our washing machine was quite a rig, powered by a one cylinder gasoline engine located about 5 feet from the machine, at the far end of a 3 inch flat belt. This rig had fold up shelves that supported two wooden tubs and it was located behind the house, under a plum tree, in which a pet crow scolded all through the washing process.

John Sterr had the steam powered threshing rig that threshed most of the grain in our neighborhood. I can still smell the combination of hot grease, sweat, soft-coal smoke, steam and grain. Threshing always reminds me of beer as it did now. I forgot to mention that on wash days I had to get a pail of beer for the women before going to school. For 10 cents John Lehner filled a one gallon pail with beer and after the foam settled a little, he dropped in a piece of ice to keep it cool. The John S. Wild blacksmith shop always fascinated me. I think I could still draw a fairly accurate picture of it. Behind the blacksmith shop Louis Wild had a wagon shop. My father and Pete Feucht built the little garage that was located on the northwest corner of Lehner's Corner. Pete Feucht operated it for a while and later Pete Krapfl operated it for a long time. My father and Pete Feucht sold Fords and Dodges through this garage. They got the Fords from the Bachhuber Bros. and the Dodges from the Pioneer Auto Co. at Mayville. Pioneer Auto was at the time owned by my uncle, Frank Bauer. Muck Schraufnagel lived on the northeast corner of Lehner's Corner and a little brick one room school house was on the southwest corner. This was where I received my first year of schooling. It was much closer than St. Andrew's where I started the next year. Every school I ever attended has been torn down. After the two Le Roy schools, I attended the one room Golden Glow School which was east of Kekoskee, St. Mary's at Mayville, and the old square red brick Mayville High School. At St. Andrew's we had both English and German readers and our Catechism and Bible History books were in English on one side and German on the other.

They may have changed that when the name Schlesingerville was changed to Slinger. I'll never forget the time when I was one of the smallest altar boys and was participating in the Corpus Christi procession in St. Andrew's cemetery. We were going from one altar to the other and when Sister clapped her hands we were to kneel, so I knelt right on an ant hill. Sister had quite a time ridding me of the ants. When I received first Holy Communion, one of the girls held her candle too close to her veil and the Sister had to put out the fire. (The above sentence is in reference to story about Alvina---Shatzie---Schraufnagel tells about her dilemma when her veil and hair caught on fire.) I received First Holy Communion at St. Andrew's and was confirmed at St. Mary's in Mayville. Our pastor at Le Roy was Fr. Pischery and later Fr. Delles. At Mayville we had Fr. Ritger and Fr. Cramer. When serving Mass my partner usually was Sepple Hall. There was a long shed on the line between the church property and the Hoffman's. The west side of this building was open so the farmers could drive their horses into the shed and tie them to the manger. Now and then, after school, we visited Aunt Hausinger, one of my grandfather's sisters. She had a little black and tan dog that was struck by lightning under the bed.

The little store now operated by the Weinberger's was at that time operated by Martin Pfeil while at this end of town there was a saloon operated by Sepple Hall's parents, and back at the other end of town there was Lehner's saloon. Across the street was Krapfl's saloon and between Krapfl's and the cheese factory was Mike Schmidbauer's saloon. There was a hall above Lehner's saloon. There also was a dance hall at Schmidbauer's Park and Lehner's park. Lehner's park was about ¼ mile north of Le Roy and Schmidbauer's park about ¾ mile southeast of Le Roy.

One year after we moved to a small 10 acre farm south of Le Roy and across the road from the Neumeyer farm we had what they called a cyclone. Part of Adolph Schraufnagel's barn roof was carried over our house and dropped in our pasture. One of the 2x4s from this roof was driven through one corner of Schraufnagel's house and stayed lodged over the top of the baby's bed. I think the baby was in the bed at the time. This cyclone also picked up the octagon dance hall in Schmidbauer's park, and dropped it not far from where it was. There were also broken trees sticking up through the floor. Our 10 acre farm must have been part of a large farm as it had a very large barn. This was a timber frame barn that was held together with hardwood pegs. My father sold this barn, took it apart, and reassembled it for the new owner. This left only the stone foundation of the old barn, and after the cyclone sightseers thought the cyclone had taken the old barn, so some of us kids sat on this old foundation and gave out all the information we knew about the cyclone damage.

Note: Dad (Clarence J. Heimerl) had written this by hand in 1979 on an old Dairy Farm Record. It showed up while going through Mom's things after she passed away in 1993. Dad passed away in 1982 on the farm near Lomira, about 5 miles from Le Roy. *Bill Heimerl*. Thanks to the Heimerl family for sharing this story of early Le Roy.





Photos Courtesy Roger Gassner

Twisted wreckage caused by the tornado on May 9, 1918 is all that remained of the Schmidbauer Park .

Photo on the right :L-R Rose Lehner, Mamie Schiedemeyer, and Peter Feucht

### **Teaching In A One Room Schoolhouse**

The Mayville News article was provided by Joan Nitschke, written by Anita Zahn

Before I started teaching in a one room rural schoolhouse over 60 years ago, I knew practically nothing about the goings on that type of educational facility. My elementary and secondary education was received in a Lutheran parochial school in Fond du Lac. After graduating from high school at the close of the Great Depression, employment was hard to find. A well meaning friend encouraged me to enroll at the Dodge County Normal School and I have never been sorry .

During the two year course we ‘would –be –teachers’ were required to spend two weeks in a rural school setting teaching under the supervision of the experience teacher at the school. With that cadet teaching, and teaching classes in the practice school at the Normal School plus all the methods classes, we supposedly were ready to face a room of youngsters. They ranged from five or six year old first graders to 14-15 year old eight graders.

At the annual school district meeting in August I signed a contract to teach at the Wuthnow School in Le Roy Township in Dodge County for a nine months school year at \$ 55.00 a month. (The former Wuthnow School has been renovated into the pleasant residence now owned by Peter and Catherine Quinn) In addition to teaching the three R’s, I was expected to do the janitorial work, but I had helpers with that.

The older boys carried water from the neighboring farm and brought in wood from the woodshed for the stove in the winter. The girls cleaned blackboards, pounded the blackboard erasers, and swept the floor. On Friday night , however, it was the teachers turn. A sweeping compound was sprinkled on the floor to cut down the dust. In the winter the water cooler had to be sure to be emptied so the left over water wouldn’t freeze over night and crack the cooler. The first day of school arrived. I admit I was a little more than nervous. The children began arriving, placing their lunch pails on a shelf in the entry way. There were lard pails, honey pails, syrup and tobacco pails. In the winter they were brought into the classroom so the contents wouldn’t freeze. I was responsible for making the fire so that it would be warm by the time the children arrived. That meant getting to school early, and sometimes the fire didn’t cooperate. There were mornings when we sat around the stove with our book learning until the room warmed enough to take our regular places. Wet mittens were placed on the fire resistant pad under the stove. As the steamy mittens dried, they gave a peculiar odor. But that was a part of the one room school era. It didn’t take long for roll call that first morning. Many of the district children were enrolled at St. Andrew’s Catholic School in Le Roy. That first year there were two in the eighth grade, two in seventh grade, two in fourth grade, one in second grade, and one in first grade.

A daily schedule was established when one or the other of the graders came up front for recitation, maybe first grade reading, or forth grade arithmetic, or seventh grade and eighth grade geography. Meanwhile those at their desk were busy ( or were supposed to be ) on assignments or special seat work or projects all prepared by the teacher. Some of the older girls dictated spelling words to the younger children or helped out with a difficult reading word or arithmetic problem.

Morning and afternoon recess and lunch broke up the learning process. Pupils and teacher played games such as Red Rover, Anti-Anti Over, and Captain May I. Rainy days found us playing board games, or chalk games on the blackboard. And so the days became routine. That was broken several times a year when the supervising teacher from the County Superintendent’s Officer dropped in unannounced. She offered criticism both constructive or destructive and helped with problems we might have.

That first year was one of heavy snow. Up until Christmas I walked to school, one to two miles. After that I boarded with the school board clerk’s family (Rubin Sperger ) just down the road a ways. With six -foot snow drifts in the road, the roads was closed. Weekends a friend came to get me and bring me back with his team of horses and sled over the drifts of snow in the fields. The pupils and I hastened outside when we heard the area farmers with their teams and shovels opening the road in front of the big snow plow. It was good to see traffic again.

Weekends a friend came to get me and bring me back with his team of horses and sled over the drifts of snow in the fields. The pupils and I hastened outside when we heard the area farmers with their teams and shovels opening the road in front of the big snow plow. It was good to see traffic again.

School closed for Christmas vacation with the annual Christmas program. A little temporary stage was constructed with the help of the school board members and their wives. Bed sheets were hung on a wire stretched across the room for a curtain. The children had practiced songs and skits since Thanksgiving. Since the enrollment was small some of the district children attending St. Andrew's were willing to help and participated also. The evening of the program the little school-room was filled to capacity. Dads, moms, grandpa, grandma, big and little siblings, relatives, and friends all came to see what the new teacher could come up with by way of a program. (And the teacher was more nervous than she was the first day of school. The program ended with the arrival of Santa and his pack of goodies. Fortunately the bags of goodies were checked earlier. A quick trip to town for more goodies had to be made. The mice had found Santa's pack of goodies and had sampled the contents.

The long days of winter passed slowly, but then came spring and the end of the school year was in sight. That meant the annual school picnic. The entire district was invited, whether they had children in school or not. Although it was the busy season of planting, most of the farmers took a few hours off for relaxing and visiting with their neighbors. Long boards were placed on saw horses. Each homemaker brought food, trying to outdo herself, with her favorite recipes-potato salad, baked beans, casseroles, or all sorts of desserts. The afternoon was spent visiting, card playing, games and contests. Chores time brought the festivity to an end to my first year of teaching.

The era of the one room schoolhouse is now a memory. But those memories are dear in the hearts of all who ever were a pupil or a teacher in such a school. The living style and all the modern technology in teaching and business has brought a great change from the one room school to more sophisticated methods of education.

But the education in the one room school had its merits. Younger pupils had a review of what to expect and the older ones had a review of what they had learned. There was more relaxed atmosphere. It was like one big family. Teachers and pupil had respect for one another. I wouldn't exchange my teaching days of 60 years ago with those of today's teachers.

In a interview with Anita she relates how she walked more than 5-1/2 miles round trip from her uncle's farm, August Panzer to the Wuthnow school every day except rainy or stormy days. Anita continues, "On those days Frank Panzer would drive me to school". However, except for the winter of 1936 when I stayed at the Rubin Sperger home.

Anita taught at the Wuthnow school from 1936-1941.

**Wuthnow School 1936-1937**

Students

Left row: Adeline Meyer, David Weinberger.

Center row: Donald Sperger, Henrietta Sperger, and Rosemary Thurk

Right row: Charles Thurk and Clarice Thurk.

Not present Alice Meyer

Teacher: Anita Zahn



Photo: Courtesy Rosemary Sukowatey

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

“The Great Depression” was written by Angela Youngbeck as a High School assignment. The text is a combination of historical research and an interview with her grandfather. Senior citizens may recall those years of 1929 to 1936 as the era of national and natural turmoil. The national economic foundation collapsed, and the unnatural lack of rainfall throughout the United States in those 7 to 10 years added to the “The Great Depression”

‘Devastating’ is the only word that comes to mind when my grandfather thinks about The Great Depression. The Great Depression caused the worst economic crisis the United States has ever experienced. It started in October, 1929 and lasted until 1937. The Great Depression was the only time in history where one of every four Americans was unemployed. Prices of productive goods dropped to lower production costs. The depression affected everyone from the United States to Germany, unfortunately, the United States was affected the most. The most believed cause of the Great Depression was the Stock Market crash on October 29, 1929. In September 1929, a trend started that led to the crash of the stock market. From September to October the stocks continued to drop. Sadly enough on Tuesday, October 29, 1929 the stock market crashed. This was known as ‘Black Tuesday’ and was viewed as the start of the depression. The cause of the crash was that people had bought stocks on a narrow margin. When the stocks began to fall, the brokers could not pay back their loans. After the market crashed more and more banks started to fail because they could not pay the depositors. After the banks closed, people began to hoard money in their mattresses and walls in their houses. When people started doing this, more and more people had to declare bankruptcy.

Another cause of the Great Depression was the severe drought that caused the dust bowls in the Midwest. In those years farm crops starved from needed moisture for crops to grow. The winds from the western states sucked up the dry earth high into the atmosphere and blew this brown earth dust eastward over the Midwest including Wisconsin reaching all the way to Washington, DC. For weeks and in the heat of the summer one could look at the sun with the naked eye and see a pale orange disc as densely fine particles of dust in the sky obscured the sun.

The Dust Bowl caused many farmers that lived in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, North and South Dakota to move to the cities. The farmers that dared to stay usually had to declare bankruptcy. The Great Depression affected city workers, farmers, miners, and all who lived in North America. Milk prices were the lowest in the history. My grandfather family farm milk check for the month of December of 1933 amounted to \$6.00 as Christmas was approaching. Produce sold below production costs. For an example, hogs were sold only for 5 cents a pound. Farmers raised their own food where their city counterpart stood in line for bread.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1933 many useful programs such as the CCC, NRA, WPA and the New Deal were put in place. The New Deal included social and economic proposals to help the people. FDR started Welfare, Social Security, and repelled prohibition, which created jobs at breweries. The President also called for programs such as: The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), The Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.), and The National Recovery Administration (N.R.A.) The CCC gave jobs for men to work in planting forests and draining swamps. The WPA gave jobs building highways and roads. The NRA worked at establishing minimum wages and codes of fair competition in every industry. FDR also made changes in our banking system. FDR declared “A Bank Holiday” and close the banks for two weeks or whatever it took for each bank to become financially secure. When the banks reopened FDR started a program called the ‘Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation’ (FDIC). The program protects depositors by insuring their bank accounts.

### Foreclosures

Grandfather’s worst memory of the depression was when his father was threatened by a money loaner that he would foreclose on the family farm. Money had to be found from a private source as banks would not lend money. That memory was all too real for him and many farmers were in the same situation and lost everything.

There were times the depression brought out the worst in people. It turned brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor, best friends into enemies because of the milk strikes in the early thirties. Milk income was far below production costs squeezing farmers into a financial bind. Milk strikes erupted throughout the country. Some farmers boldly grouped together and dumped their neighbors milk, hoping this action would bring a higher price. Not everyone could afford to follow this action as individual rights were violated.

### How did the Le Roy Farmers Cope with the Drought

The farmers living near the perimeter of the Horicon marsh and from bordering towns moved their hay equipment to the lowland marsh for harvesting marsh hay. High land grasses for hay were virtually none existent. Marsh hay grew in abundance, however, it was not the best quality hay but it kept the animals alive. Some farmers stacked hay on the marsh harvest site for winter baling, either to be fed or to be sold. At this time the marsh was not controlled by the Federal Government.

In 1928 at the beginning of the drought the marsh grasses fires moved toward the Eddy Lehner farm and consumed the entire farm. The fire also burned down into the marsh peat, burning pot-holes deep enough to bury a horse. Some potholes burned all winter. The marsh fires usually burnt in the fall after the frost when grass was dry and brittle. Year after year during the drought season the marsh burned through the winter.