



Sainte Marie Foundation News

Celebrating our special hometown Summer 2023

Volume 16 Issue 2

9th Annual Cork and Pork Festival and

John Lybarger Memorial Jeep Run

Stormy weather threatened, but the Cork and Pork Festival was the winner on the Eve of July 9. Roger Wheat, owner of The Hill bar graciously offered to offer his business for the site of the longstanding festival after a forecast suggesting thunderstorm and rain for the day was received. A jeep run in memory of John Lybarger, longtime supporter of the Foundation, began the day at 10:00 am at Picquet Park. Stops along the way were MVP, Muddy Saloon, BJ's, SKY Saloon, and ended at The Hill. The main event moved to The Hill, about 2.5 miles southeast of Sainte Marie. People came out to hear Flat Mountain from 4:30-6:30 and then Feudin Hillbillies from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. On hand to provide guests with tastes of their various wines were eight local wineries. Festival goers were also able to purchase many tasty pork products such as pulled pork sandwiches, porky mac, the Porkcicle, pulled pork nachos, and of course, the infamous porkburger. Proceeds from the event are distributed among local qualifying non-profit organizations who apply for funding. To date, over \$200,000 has been given over the 9-year history of the Cork and Pork Festival.



Next Farmers Market Saturday, August 5



Sunday, September 3, 2023

Sainte Marie Style Chicken 3-6 pm



Meal - \$12 Includes Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Dessert & Water
1/2 Chicken only \$12
Serving inside the Parish Center in to-go containers
Leftover chicken will be sold from 6-7 pm inside also



Patrick Finley enjoys some Porky Mac



SOCO

'a little southern comfort'
Playing 6 - 9 PM

FOOD & GAMES - 3-7 PM

- Pork Burgers - Chips - Pop
- Dairy Dee Ice Cream
- Big Ticket Raffle
- Hand-Made Quilt Raffle
- Bingo
- Kids Games
- Basket Raffle
- Beer Garden - 3-9 PM**

A pic-nic and dance will be held at the Reppeto grove in the Dark Bend, Saturday July 28th. The committee in charge are making ample arrangements for a pleasant time and will no doubt have a good crowd present.

**Sainte Marie Business
Celebrates 70th Year**



1953-2023



**Front from L to R Janet, Dan, and Brian Hartrich
Back Row Tony, Mark, Mike Hartrich and Amy Frohning**

Generations have had the opportunity to put the freshest quality meats on their table thanks to Hartrich Meats in Sainte Marie.

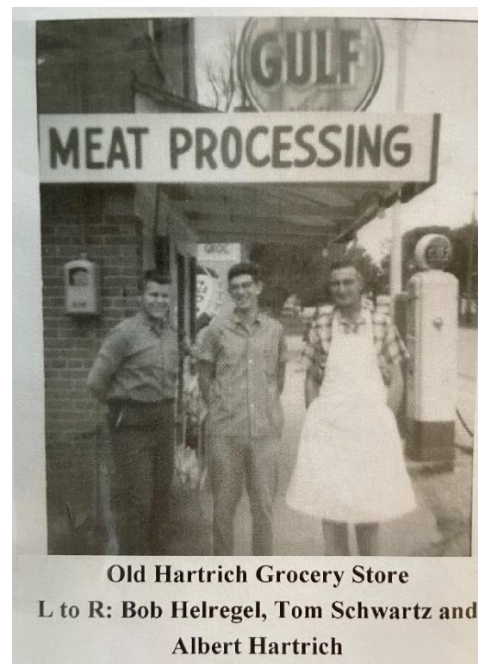
Albert “Snook” and Harold “Wally” Hartrich opened a meat processing plant in order to provide their newly opened grocery store with fresh meat in May of 1953. The grocery part of the store was in the former Sainte Marie Electric plant, while the processing plant was in a building behind the family home on Embarras Street.

Snook ran the grocery side of things while Wally supervised the meat business. They soon had to add more employees as people were asking them to butcher livestock for them. Butchering had usually been done on the farm, but it was a labor-intensive job and required many people to help.



The First Hartrich Grocery and Meats

The first employee was Bob Helregel. He was the meat cutter at the grocery store for years. Others who have worked for a long time were Don Bogard, Joe Nix, Orville (Pat) Ochs, Betty Ochs (Pat’s wife), and Jeff Hatten. Pat worked there for 47 years, Betty for 42, and Jeff for 30. Jeff now runs his own small processing company. Tyler Finney has worked there for 20 years, and in an odd twist, owns the home where Pat and Betty lived. Over the years, many young people were hired to work on cleanup detail. That would include most of the Faltemier kids and all of Ron and Nancy Zwilling’s boys. Currently they employ nine full-time and six part-time employees.



**Old Hartrich Grocery Store
L to R: Bob Helregel, Tom Schwartz and
Albert Hartrich**

In the late 1960s, Farm Advisor Larry Casey asked Wally to develop a fundraising idea using local pork. They came up with a product that has become a legend in the community; the porkburger! Thousands upon thousands have been served at festivals, fundraisers, football games, and family tables. Incredibly, they process over 25,000 pounds of delectable porkburgers each year. The savory grilled patty covered in Doug McCains barbecue sauce is something that is synonymous with Jasper County.



Hartrich Grocery and Meats built in 1967

Upon Wally's passing in 1984, sons Tony and Mark took over the operation of the business. The following year they bought out their uncle, Snook, as the grocery store was closing, and he was retiring. The men expanded the processing area and added a small grocery store to accommodate the community. Tony's son, Dan, and Mark's son, Brian, have also joined the business.



Albert "Snook" Hartrich

Processing 2,000 pounds of meat a day used to be quite an accomplishment. Now they average 4,000 pounds a day! In addition to the quality beef and pork they provide, they also handle over 1200 deer orders and 40,000 pounds of deer sausage and meat sticks. To complement their meats, they sell Smoking Brothers wood pellet grills and grilled meat seasonings. Janet has also started a successful catering business that serves 75 to 100 events a year. People come from miles around to obtain the wonderful Hartrich Meats which keeps employees busy. Over the years they have won countless awards for their innovative and outstanding products. They have over 20 varieties of sausage and brats and six kinds of marinated chicken breasts.



The plant was built around this building located on the Xavier and Elizabeth Hartrich Picquet estate.

It is still used as the cutting room.

They have also started to branch out into products for pets including butcher's blend of ground meat, smoked and marrow bones, and dehydrated beef trachea.



Wally with hopeful market pig owner

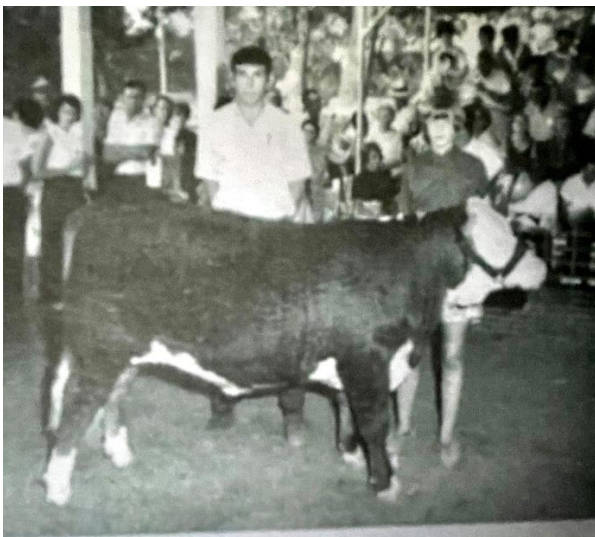
The Hartrich family was recognized by the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce for their community service in 2016. They generously volunteer hours, products, and services to support the community and the county. They are supportive of local FFA clubs and 4-H clubs. Many meat grading demonstrations and classes have been graciously offered by the business. They have helped numerous 4-H kids by buying their livestock projects at area county fairs. They genuinely believe in giving back to the community. Hartrich Meats is an important and appreciated part of Sainte Marie. We wish them years of continued success.



Jerry Hartrich, father of Albert and Harold, at the plant



Earlier days at the plant



Mark Hartrich with Shannon Pitcher Nosbich

Hartrich Meats takes honors at convention

Mark and Tony Hartrich from Hartrich Meats in St. Marie were among the hundreds of people in attendance at the Illinois Association of Meat Processors (IAMP) annual convention and trade show at Hilton Garden Inn, Champaign on Feb. 22-25.

On Feb. 23, in conjunction with the convention, the Illinois Cured Meat Competition was held and Hartrich Meats received the following awards out of over 200 entries: reserve grand champion, BBQ pork; reserve grand champion, Italian beef; champion, jalapeno cheese venison summer sausage; champion, venison pepper-jack stix; champion, beef slim jims; runner up innovative beef award, Hungarian pepper-roast beef salad.

Meats judging contest set

A meats judging and evaluation contest for Cumberland County 4-H'ers will be at 6:30 p.m. March 8 at the Hartrich Meat Processing Plant in St. Marie.

There will be junior and senior divisions. This contest is prior to the state FFA meats judging contest in Champaign on March 10.



Sainte Marie Foundation House adorned in its summer best!

Ever wonder how you or your organization can help? The Foundation would welcome families, groups or individuals to sponsor garden beds at the Foundation House. Duties would involve basic maintenance – weeding, trimming, laying mulch, etc. Contact a Board Member if you are interested.

Life in 1953

Writing the article about Hartrich Meats had me wondering what life was like 70 years ago for people in Sainte Marie. Life was resuming normalcy after World War II. Men had returned from the service and were ready to start families. Most married women no longer worked outside the home. Construction was booming as people started building houses to hold their expanding families. Ike was president, and people were happy to be moving forward after the fraught war years. I thought the best way to capture society was to look at the newspaper and see what was in vogue.

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- Full 8 cu. ft. warranty on sealed compartment
- Adjustable shelves
- Most storage trays

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Double shelves...
Adjustable shelves...

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EXAMPLE

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Trade in for your old refrigerator on the new one	\$50.00
YOU PAY ONLY	\$239.95

For the most modern refrigerator in the world

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Dresses and jackets you'll love to wear...

COME IN TOMORROW, SEE OUR HUGE STOCK — FASHIONS, SECOND FLOOR, BERGNER'S

New Faces in Village Government

Jack Thompson and Annette Kirts have stepped down from their long-held positions on the Village Board. Jack served ten years as Village President and Annette has held the position of Village Clerk for 38 years! Their many years of service are greatly appreciated.

Stepping in to replace them will be Jason Kuhl as president and Tracey Lybarger as clerk.



Helpful Little Hands 4-H Club

The Helpful Little Hands 4-H Club has certainly been living up to their name! In late May, the Club helped put flags on the graves of veterans at St. Mary's Cemetery. They made the most of the day and headed to Picquet Park to paint dugouts and bleachers. We thank them for their efforts to keep our town looking good and for honoring our veterans!



The club also helped cleanup after the Cork and Pork Festival



Jasper County - This is Our Story

Many familiar residents came together to tell the story of Jasper County. WEIU at Eastern Illinois University provided the opportunity for area storytellers to relate different aspects of life in the county.

Among the group were some of Sainte Marie's own! Mike Hartrich relayed the founding of our town, his brother, Mark, told how the infamous porkburger came about, and Foundation Board Member Jason Warfel gave information on Lowell Bayles and the history of Newton and Jasper County. A red-carpet premier was held at West End Events Center for those who presented, and an opening night event was held at EIU and online on July 18. CDs are available for purchase.

Transitions

Ronald Kirts, 86, October 2, 1936 – April 8, 2023 (See article below)

Surviving is his wife of 59 years, Carolyn Litzelman Kirts, children Rhonda Kirts, Karla Hutchinson, John Kirts, Terry Kirts, seven grandchildren, and sister Joan Heneberry.

Preceding Ron in death were his parents, Lena and Harley Kirts, in-laws, George and Viola Litzelman, son-in-law, Dave Burdette, and brother and sister-in-law, Larry and Donna Kirts

Donald Kevin Maginn, 59 June 1, 1963 – May 31, 2023

Surviving is wife Kathy Maginn, children Steve, Rachel Mann, and Wayne Stennett, and eight grandchildren.

Kevin was preceded in death by parents, Don and Marilyn Maginn and brother, Michael Maginn.

Judith Wagner, 72, October 14, 1950 – June 19, 2023

Judy worked at Richland Memorial Hospital for many years and as the office manager at St. Mary's Catholic Church.

Surviving are Judy's sisters Caroline Gibson, Marie Wagner, Pat Denham, Nancy Zwilling, and Mary Ochs. Also surviving are brother-in-law Fred Ochs and many nieces and nephews.

Judy was preceded in death by her parents, Frances and Maude Wagner and sister, Barbara Ochs.

Frank Geiger, 84, September 6, 1938-June 20, 2023

Frank and his wife, Shirley, owned and operated Hi-Benders Tavern in Sainte Marie since 1993. Preceding Frank in death were Shirley and their son, Ronnie.

Pat Reis – Sainte Marie Foundation Board members recently received notice that the Foundation founder and first president of the board of directors had passed away.

Pat was passionate about her hometown of Sainte Marie even though she had lived elsewhere for many years. Pat was a visionary who saw the uniqueness of our village. Through her tenacity and persistence, the Foundation came into being and remains strong today. She was able to see what was needed and put people with special skill sets where they were suited best. When the Foundation began in 2007, there were three board members: Pat as president, Maxine Calvert, treasurer, and Gina Fox as secretary. Today we have an active board with ten directors.

Pat used her many connections to get things accomplished. During her years she led the Board in acquiring property through a tax sale, expanding the board, working out an agreement to obtain ownership of the current Foundation House, assembling many volunteers to make the house "our home", and many other projects she headed.

Pat set us up for success. We are very grateful to her for her determination and vision.

A Servant's Heart

Words fall short at the passing of someone of great stature. Ron Kirts was one of those people. He wasn't a large man; he was slight, always moving, and quiet! He shied away from the spotlight, awards, and special recognition. But when adding up all that he did for others and the Village of Sainte Marie, he was a giant.



Ron was always in the background, but he was always there; he always showed up. He was at the swimming pool checking the pumps or handling a problem with some of the equipment. He was hanging Christmas decorations for the town. He was taking care of the electrical needs at the Pre-Labor Day Picnic. And that just is a small part of his volunteer work. He served as Village President, watered the town's flower baskets, served as Sainte Marie Fire Chief, was a parish council member, and taught religious education. He was treasurer and board member of the Sainte Marie Foundation and helped oversee the transfer of his boyhood home to the Sainte Foundation. He was instrumental in the restoration of the home.

Even in his work he was in the business of helping people. Ron wired and plumbed many houses, farms, and businesses in the area, and often could be seen going out after hours to remedy someone's electrical or plumbing problems. Ron was the Grand Marshall of Sainte Marie's 175th celebration parade, and in 2013, on August 13, he was named Illinoisan of the Day at the Illinois State Fairgrounds for all his volunteer work.

Albert Strutner has opened up a restaurant in our little burg. Cheese, crackers, bologna, tobacco and hot meals once a week, and ice cream when he can get ice. If you are not hungry give Al a call.

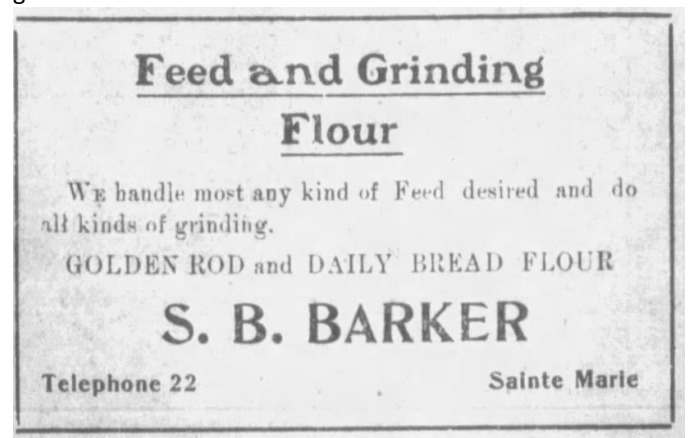
Newton Press 1896

Flower Baskets Brighten the Village



We were surprised to see such similar flower baskets at the train station in Ghent, Belgium.

Thank you to all the sponsors of the beautiful baskets that adorn the Village. Special thanks to our dependable waterers; Mike Hartrich, Marie Kuhl, and Jason Warfel. The baskets look great!



Sainte Marie Tribune October 3. 1913

nothing at S. C. Andrews' drug store.

St. Marie.

With the mercury at 98 and no rain in four weeks the average corn crop will be about 75 per cent.

Threshing has begun; plenty of straw but yield not equal to expectation.

Col. J. J. Rider is in Chicago taking in the World's Fair and visiting his son Charles.

We notice that work has begun on the R. R. Bridge and soon the C. & O. will have an iron structure spanning the Ambraw here.

Henry Faller, of Newton, is at work with the carpenters at the church; in about three weeks the plasterers will commence work.

Conrad Bender, who has the contract for completing the interior of the church, was down from Indianapolis last week.

The sad news was received here that John Rohr, formerly a St. Marie boy but of late years a coal miner in the Indian Territory, had both his legs broken and one badly crushed while at work, and amputation it is feared will be necessary.

Since the saloons closed peace and harmony reigns supreme and consequently we have but very little use for a marshal or police magistrate but are in need of a good physician, as since the death of Dr. James Picquet we have no resident physician and at present there is quite a lot of sickness.



Waiting on the school bus – Mary Ellen Spannagel Wagner, Fred Kirts, Leola Copper, and Betty Rodgers circa 1945

110 Years Ago

Base Ball!
Newton Highlanders
Vs
Sainte Marie
Sunday, July 20-2:30 p m
South Side Park, Sainte Marie
Second game of series. Look for a better team and consequently better game than last Sun.

Theodore Ochs lost the largest mule of his fine mule team Saturday morning. Teddy had been getting a load of sand at the river when the animal collapsed and fell dead.

130 Years Ago July 1893

Church Name Changed
 Henceforth the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer of the Bend will be known as the St. Valentine Catholic Church, the change of name having been approved of by Bishop Ryan.

Sainte Marie Tribune 1913

140 Years Ago

GRADED COTSWOLD SHEEP FOR SALE.
 I have for sale 20 head of Cotswold Bucks, bred from imported Canadian buck, "WILLIE." Also, a few graded Ewes. Prices reasonable, to suit the times. Call on, or address, **EUGENE HARTRICH, St. Marie, Ill.**

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE!
SCHIFFERSTEIN & OSTHEIMER,
 For the last 2 or 3 months, Have missed THOUSANDS of dollars worth of goods, which were bought but a few days before, and goods are still disappearing in the same mysterious way.
WHY IS IT?
Our prices sell them!
 AND
 We have made further REDUCTIONS for our **CLEARING SALE!**
 This is distinctively a sale of **Summer Goods**
 To clear the decks for fall action. **REDUCTION IN PRICES** HAVE BEEN MADE FROM OUR **Regular Low Prices,** Acknowledged by everybody
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THE LOWEST IN THE CITY.
CALL AT ONCE.
SCHIFFERSTEIN & OSTHEIMER,
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Newton, - - - Illinois.

Newton Press July 18, 1883

It's Reunion Time

Helregel Reunion 2023



Descendants of Charles and Margaret Burgund Helregel met on June 25 at St. Mary's Parish Center in Sainte Marie. Games, food, and catching up with relatives made for a great day. Thanks to Judy Millsap for the pictures!





Faltemier Reunion

On July 2, the descendants of Edward and Jennie Faltemier and their five children, Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward, and Paul met at Saint Mary's Parish Center for their 3rd reunion.



2nd Cousins - 3rd Faltemier Reunion July 2, 2023
 5 Children of Edward and Jennie Faltemier:
 Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward (Buck), Paul (Mouse)
 Listed Below are the Grand Children of Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward, and Paul - "THE 2nd COUSINS"
Row 1: Julie Turner (Bud), Haley Griffin (Marlene), Kate Wilkens (Julie), Hunter Griffin (Marlene), Taylor Barker (Marlene), Emily Faltemier (Tom), Jordan Pfouts (Marlene), Ellen Finer (Ron)
Row 2: Billie Woods Wyatt (Bill), Fred Woods (Donna), Tyler Stone (Pat), Nancy Plane (Pat), Ken Griffin (Marlene), Emilia (Janet), Stephen (Jim), John Anderson (Ron), Julie Benedict (Ron), Dave Stone (Bud)
Row 3: Ronald Woods (Bill), Brian Stone (Pat), Danny Woods (Donna), Jake Faltemier (Tom), Daniel Faltemier (Tom), Antonio Ortiz (Janet), Tom Anderson (Ron)
 Did Not Attend: Ken Stone, Mary Stone, Tim Faltemier
 Deceased: Joe Faltemier (Leo), Ronald Anderson (Stella), Edward (Martha), James (Martha), Shirley (Martha), William (Martha), Theodore (Martha), Patrick (Martha)



1st Cousins With Spouses 3rd Faltemier Reunion July 2, 2023 5 Children of Edward and Jennie Faltemier: Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward (Buck), Paul (Mouse)

Listed Below are the Children of Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward, and Paul - "THE 1st COUSINS" AND their spouses:

- Row 1:** Sharon Faltemier (Jim), Steve Emmerich (Julie), Julie Emmerich, Donna Kelley, Marlene Faltemier, Sharon Faltemier (Ed), Janet Sitkewich, Jorge Sitkewich (Janet), Rita Faltemier (Bill)
Row 2: Jim Faltemier, Buzz Kelley (Donna), Patty Caton, Tom Faltemier, Valerie Faltemier (Tom), Ed Faltemier, Bill Faltemier

Did Not Attend: Ken Stone, Mary Stone, Tim Faltemier

Deceased: Joe Faltemier (Leo), Ronald Anderson (Stella), Edward (Martha), James (Martha), Shirley (Martha), William (Martha), Theodore (Martha), Patrick (Martha)



3rd Cousins - 3rd Faltemier Reunion July 2, 2023
 5 Children of Edward and Jennie Faltemier:
 Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward (Buck), Paul (Mouse)
 Listed Below are the Great Grand Children of Leo, Stella, Martha, Edward, and Paul - "THE 3rd COUSINS"
Row 1: Macallister Wilkens (Kate), Trevor Lloyd (Emillia), Ella Pfouts (Jordan), Tessa Burdanowicz (Taylor), Bennett Wilkens (Kate), Eleanor Faltemier (Stephen), Ainsley Joyce Faltemier (Stephen), Margaret Faltemier (Stephen) - in stroller
Row 2: Max Ortiz (Antonio), Dalton Pfouts (Jordan), Peyton Chatfield (Haley), Zoey Lloyd (Emillia), Holding Beckham Pfouts (Jordan), Bentley Chatfield (Haley), Virginia Ortiz (Antonio), Madison Lloyd (Emillia)
Row 3: Simon Wilkens (Kate), Ava Burdanowicz (Taylor), Kate Stone (Brian), Lucy Woods (Danny), Gracie Woods (Fred), Tanner Woods (Fred), Hudson Plane (Nancy)
 Did Not Attend: Ken Stone, Mary Stone, Tim Faltemier
 Deceased: Joe Faltemier (Leo), Ronald Anderson (Stella), Edward (Martha), James (Martha), Shirley (Martha), William (Martha), Theodore (Martha), Patrick (Martha)

130 Years Ago July 1893

Church Name Changed
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Hartrich/Picquet Reunion

Coming July 7, 2024

Save the Date

A Trip of a Lifetime

A Trip Back Home



Poppies in the Wild

Brilliant wildflowers, groves of thickly growing trees, green rolling hills, pastures of wildflowers and acres of tillable, fertile soil that grows abundant crops of wheat and corn...the above description gives an accurate picture of the beautiful Alsatian region of France. Remarkably, it also describes an area most of us know well, Sainte Marie. The only thing missing in our small corner of the world would be mountains off in the distance.



Group exploring ancestral home

Where We Were

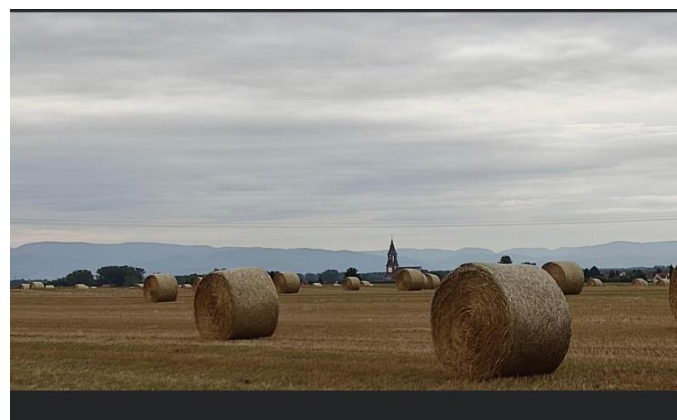
The Alsace Region, or as it now known Grand Est, is bordered by the Rhine, Germany, and Switzerland to the east and the Vosges Mountains in the west. Some familiar surnames from this area are Barthelme, Bolander, Boos, Fallier, Frauli, Hartrich, Huss, Keller, Kocher, and Spitzer, among others.

Why They Left

So why did our ancestors leave this northwestern region of France and settle in an area that is so similar? This question was answered when a group of 13 traveled to Alsace in early June to stand where our ancestors did. All the travelers were related by blood or marriage to Theodore and Frances Chable Hartrich. Theodore had just experienced the death of his first wife and all four of their infants. He joined his brother, Ferdinand, and a small group who had left Alsace in search of religious freedom. The name of the planned settlement was Colonie des Freres, or Colony of Brothers.

Unrest was rampant in late 18th Century France. The French Revolution was from 1789-1799. Napoleon rose to the top in the military and after taking power in 1799, declared himself emperor in 1804. Not only did the revolutionists declare war on the royalty, but they also dismantled the Catholic Church. Churches were burned and looted, ties were cut off with Rome, and priests were murdered. What did not change in this era was our ancestors' faith. They wanted a place to practice their religion and to raise their children in the Church as they knew it. They could not do that in France.

What gave them such courage? They were going to something that was completely unknown and uncivilized, but they had faith in God and the leadership of Joseph Picquet, a mere teenager! The land would have to be cleared, houses built, and a new language learned. The only things that were familiar were relatives by blood or marriage and the land. They overcame these fears and took the chance that the unfamiliar they were heading towards would provide a better life and afford more freedoms for their descendants.



Weyersheim countryside – could be Sainte Marie if it weren't for the mountains in the background!

What We Experienced

Miles and miles of wheat were such a familiar sight! The difference was the addition of rows upon rows of well-pruned grapevines marching up the hill hoping to catch as much sun as possible. The soil was obviously fertile and carefully conserved.

The food was while very delicious was not so different than what we are familiar with. The food is a unique mixture of French and German influences. The constant changing of national lines is very evident in the cuisine. There was a heavy emphasis on pork, with plenty of beef and veal to go around. We had torte flambe (see picture on following pages), cordon bleu, kugelhoph, a special sauerkraut, and Quiche Lorraine.



and animal hair in between. Even the farmers lived in town and traveled out to the fields to work.



While all the flowers were beautiful, the climbing roses were stunning. Huge saucer shaped blooms grew on the sturdy stems and the bushes were everywhere. Smelling roses was a frequent activity!

Although we visited some of the larger cities in Alsace, we were particularly drawn to the small villages. The people were so warm and hospitable and tried their best to communicate with a group that knew just enough French to make it confusing! They were excited (we want to believe) to hear that our families were once from the area. The villages were numerous, and all had a similar setup; the church was in the middle of the tidy and flower-decked town square, small businesses surrounded the church, and the neatly shuttered houses branched off that. Many houses were half-timber...wooden beams with brick or a mixture of straw, lime,





Storks on the rooftops



Another stork nest



A surprise to most was the large steel structures on the roof of buildings, mostly churches. These were filled with nesting material and to our astonishment, storks feeding their young. What a special sight! Villagers encourage the storks to build nests partly because storks are a thought to bring good luck and are Christian symbols of maternal instincts, and paternal responsibility. Roosters were everywhere...on weathervanes and signs and in gardens. The rooster has been a symbol of France for many hundreds of years, but during the First World War the rooster was their patriotic response of resistance and bravery to the Prussian eagle. It is also a Catholic symbol of Peter's betrayal of Christ. Pope Nicholas in the 9th Century ordered all churches to display the rooster on the steeples of churches. Many incorporated the rooster with a weathervane.



Saint Michel Church in Weyersheim

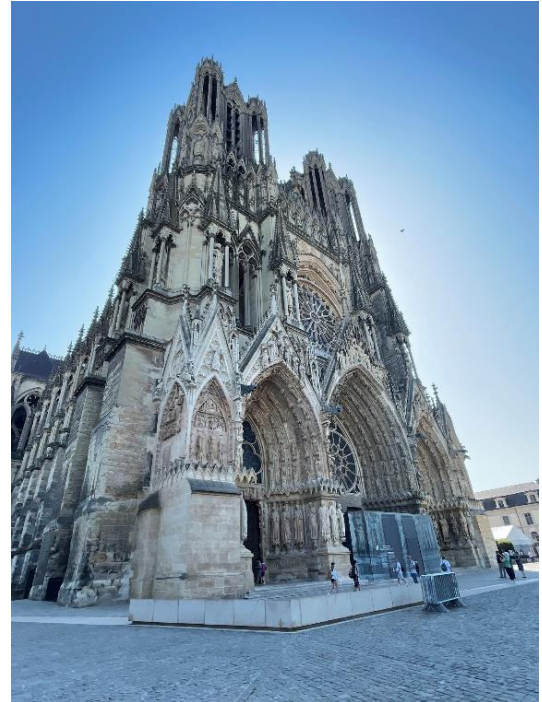


A stonemason or carpenter would most likely never see the work completed – even his great-great-grandson might not see the completion.

As most of the villagers were illiterate at the time the churches were built, carvings, paintings and stained glass told Bible stories so they could understand through pictures...the more details, the better.



Graves were decorated with living plants.

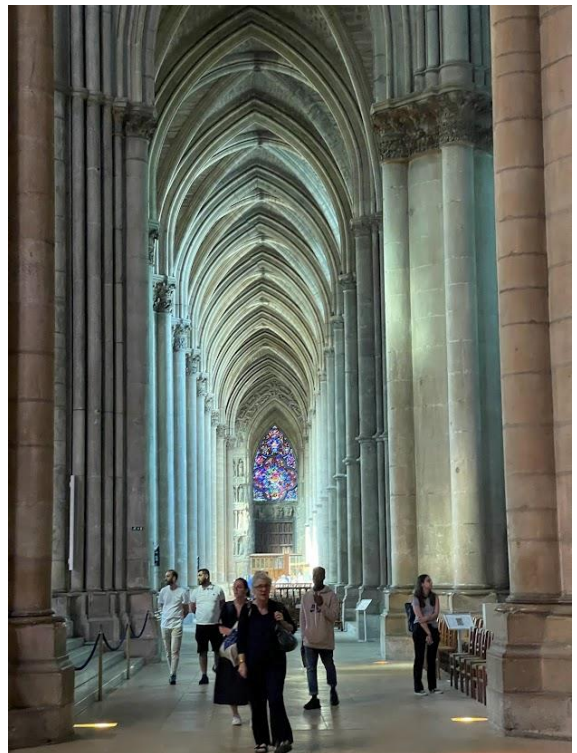


Strasbourg Cathedral

The churches and cathedrals were exquisite! The amount of detail on just one entryway was mindboggling! We were told that many of the cathedrals took over 300 years to build.



Interior of Saint-Michel Church in Weyersheim



Interior of Strasbourg Cathedral



Torte Flambe, a traditional Alsatian food



Muffin and Kougelhoff, a traditional Alsatian bread

What We Came Away With

Walking on the same streets our ancestors walked, eating the same food they would have prepared, and particularly being in the same church they worshipped in will be memories I cherish forever.

The family they left behind, the comfort of the familiar, and the language they would rarely speak again truly left me humbled and very overwhelmed. The sacrifices they made for their beliefs and descendants were truly an unselfish gift and one of utmost bravery.

“It’s a special feeling to walk in the same footsteps as our ancestors – and to see many of the same architectural wonders that were part of their daily lives like the magnificent Strasbourg Cathedral and the Abbey of Mont Sainte-Odile, and the many other churches preserved and still being used today.” says Glenn Picquet, organizer of the group.

He continues by saying, “And the medieval castles – all up and down the Valley – it seemed there was one on almost every strategic vantage point up and down the Vosges range!”

“I think they were fortunate to live in such a beautiful and fertile valley like that of the Rhine, framed by the Black Forest on one side and the Vosges mountains on the other. With plenty of water and wild game, and the ability to manage productive vineyards, it is easy to see why they chose that place...and why it was the objective of so many wars throughout history – it is such a desirable place.”



Sainte Marie "kids' meet in Paris

Renee Brangeon, (Judy Ablinger Brangeon's husband) Gina Fox, Judy Ablinger Brangeon, Tony Hartrich, and Mike Hartrich

Minnie and Joe Keller



Joseph Philip Keller and Minnie Ethel Stark Keller epitomized a core value of Sainte Marie residents...being a good neighbor. You know the value of having a good neighbor, but more importantly, being one! Neighbors in Sainte Marie look out for each other, they provide you with extra produce, get your mail at the post office, and help you in times of need. Joe and Minnie were these kinds of people. They may not have had much, but they were more than willing to share what they had. Who was this couple?

[Correspondence of the PRESS.]
P. Yager is building an addition to his dwelling.
Professor Wise, of this locality, has turned detective.
Jos. Reney is building a two-story "bird cage" for his wife.
John Michel has got the matrimonial fever—and is building him a two-story framed-log house.
Valentine Michel has the best mule team in the Bend; so they say.
John Krause is the king of the Bend, and "Hans" K. is the champion violinist of the neighborhood.
Found, at the residence of Xavier Michel, after seven years' experimenting, a boy baby. Oh, how proud!
Martin Michel don't wear the smallest boot in the Bend, as was supposed. Thirteens fit him very comfortably.
J. J. and W. S. recently went out on a "wild goose chase." After buying some cider of a farmer, they proceeded down the river in a boat and killed P. Y.'s tame geese. They were tipsy, and could not tell tame geese from wild ones.
BOOTJACK.

Newton Press Feb. 25, 1880



Joseph Phillip was the eighth of nine children born to Joseph and Catharine Rohr Keller on September 21, 1892. Tragically, his father died when he was just seven years old. Catharine was left to support all those children on her own. They had

little more than the land they farmed and the two-story wooden house on their homestead southwest of Sainte Marie. Times were exceptionally hard, but neighbors and family helped the struggling family. The Kellers depended on the kindness of others; a lesson Joe learned that carried over for the rest of his life.



Minnie Ethel Stark, the eldest of ten children born to Perry E. and Amanda S. Woodard Stark was born on October 17, 1894. Her siblings were Wilmer, Mae, Ervin, Charles, Bertha, Harry, Elma, Edward, and Woodrow. Wow! Their farm was in Smallwood Township, south of Newton. Life on the farm was difficult. There was so much to do with twelve in the family...gardening, washing, cleaning, sewing, cooking, preserving, much less all the farm chores that had to be done daily. Being the oldest, Minnie was sure to have had a big hand in helping her mother keep everything running. How Minnie and Joe met is not known for sure, but they lived close to each other (as country neighbors go). Joe lived just a mile from the township line, so they could have known each other from socials, dances, barn raisings, etc. Regardless of their meeting, they fell in love and were married on November 3, 1915. Minnie was 21, Joe, 23. Life was good for the newlyweds and then in August of 1916, they were blessed with a daughter, Evelyn Catherine. Unfortunately, it was soon discovered that Minnie's health was at risk; she was diagnosed with tuberculosis. It was suggested that they move to Colorado as the mountain air would be beneficial to her. Around the same time, her sister-in-law, Fanny Hoffman, was told she also had TB. Joe, Minnie, Fannie, and her husband Pete decided to move to Greeley, Colorado. Joe would work in the beet fields, and Pete would use his tonsorial skills to barber. Pete and Fannie would most likely move back in the spring of 1917, as Pete would need to get back to his barber shop.

PUBLIC SALE
Sat., Sept. 22d

HORSES and MULES
 4 head of horses and mules. 1 black horse 9 yrs old, 1 bay horse coming 4 yrs old, 1 span of mules 2 and 3 yrs old measuring 15 and 16 hands

6 HEAD of COWS
 2 milch cows to be fresh in November, 2 coming two yrs old heifers, 2 spring calves. 1 sow to farrow in October.

FARMING IMPLEMENTS
 1 Wagon, Buggy, Sulky Plow, 90-tooth steel harrow, Riding cultivator, Deering mower, Disc, 2 sets of work harness, set of single harness saddle, all in good repairs.
200 Bushels of Good Oats.

Davenport, Organ, Rugs, Library table, Dresser, Beds and springs, Dining table, Kitchen Cabinet, Safe, Oil stove, Coal stove, Cook stove and many other things too numerous to mention.

Sale Terms: All items of five dollars and under, cash in hand; all over this amount, a credit of 9 months will be given, purchaser to give note, with approved security. Note to draw 7 per cent interest from date if not paid at maturity. 5 per cent off for cash on all time purchases.

HENRY C. JAMES
 Auctioneer.

JOS. I. KELLER

The plans were set, an auction was held, and the group headed off to Colorado. It is assumed that the couples headed back as soon as possible...it was difficult being so far from family and the prairie they had left.



Joe, Evelyn, Minnie, Fannie, and Pete

Joe, Minnie, and Evelyn made the long trip back in a Model T that Joe bought for \$400.00 and settled in a house south of Newton the following year. In December of 1919 another daughter, Dorothy Mary, was born. Joe worked hard raising corn, wheat, and livestock, while Minnie, now fully recuperated, took care of the house and the two little girls. The Great War had ended, the Spanish Influenza left them unscathed, and times for the most part were good. In November of 1921, the family grew again with the addition of Helen Laverne. The expanding family was quickly

outgrowing their house. They moved to the Keller homestead to care for Joe's ailing mother.

In January of 1925, the family was completed with the birth of Freda Geneva. Six weeks later Catharine Rohr Keller passed away.



Joe working with his pigs.

The family, while not prosperous, worked hard and always had plenty to eat. They had a large flock of chickens, cows and pigs Joes raised, and a bountiful garden from which Minnie canned everything she could. When work needed to be done, the girls and Minnie pitched in to help until it was done. Farm families usually did okay because of their self-sufficiency. Helen was quoted as saying that she took after her dad, Joe, "independent and determined as hell!".



Joe, Minnie, and Robert Shoffstall, their first grandchild

The girls attended Ochs school which was a few miles north of their home. Walking to school and back in all kinds of weather was a natural expectation for kids who lived in the country. Evelyn and Dorothy both completed eighth grade at

the school, while Helen and Freda both continued their education at the two-year high school in Sainte Marie.



Ochs School painting by Helen Keller Graham

One day as the three older girls were walking back home after a day in school, they saw a huge plume of smoke and bright orange flames coming from the house. Joe was returning from Indianapolis where he had driven a stock truck full of animals to sell. He also saw the horrible plume of smoke rising high into the air. As he rushed home, he was relieved to see his girls, all five of them watching the house burn from across the road. That was all that mattered to him. They had lost all their possessions, but friends and family quickly reached out to cover their needs. Another example of people helping his family, and one he never forgot. A new house was quickly rebuilt with the help of Charles Rohr, a local carpenter. Joe learned many skills from Charles, so much so that Joe became one of the best carpenters around. He built three of his daughters' homes, usually with only a rough sketch to go by. He could fix anything, and his skills were in great demand around Sainte Marie. He also built the hardware store in Sainte Marie and the new sanctuary in the church.



The new house on the Keller homestead

Even with all the work, there was always time for fun. Joe obtained a piano for Minnie, who was musically talented, something she must have inherited from her Grandpa Woodard. He and his brother were well known in the area for their fiddle playing abilities. Two of the girls, Helen and Evelyn, were also very musical. Joe bought one of the first radios in the area, and neighbors would often come to listen

to certain programs. Singing and dancing were frequently seen in the cheerful house. The girls had many pets to care for throughout the years. Minnie taught her daughters the joys of raising flowers and vegetables. She had a large rose garden and many irises, peonies and other flowers in her flower beds throughout the property. Her favorite flower, however, was the simple zinnia. Minnie so loved growing things, that Joe added a sunroom on the front of the house for her ferns.



**Joe and Minnie surrounded by their girls:
Freda, Dorothy, Evelyn, and Helen**

Things were changing in the Keller household. World War II was on the horizon, and the girls were starting to find their future husbands. Evelyn was the first to marry. She married Walter Shoffstall in 1936, and they lived with the Kellers for several years. Helen married Charles Graham in November of 1941, mere weeks before Pearl Harbor. Dorothy married Jam Hahn in 1942, and Freda married Bob Swisher in 1944. During this time of great uncertainty, the Kellers took care of their girls until all the husbands had returned home from the military. Joe also helped his sister-in-law, Louise and her young son, Art, after his brother, Jim, passed away in 1945. Joe started farming less and did carpentry with his son-in-law, Walter.



Joe and his stocktruck

The girls were now all grown and having children of their own. Joe and Minnie had seventeen grandchildren in all. They all loved going to Grandma and Grandpa Keller's house for fresh buns, homemade noodles, and sugar cookies. Joe kept himself busy after the girls were grown. He helped many of his neighbors by using his position as chairman of the AAA farmers and working with REA to get rural electricity.

Joseph Keller Elected Jasper AAA Chairman

By Staff Correspondent.

NEWTON—Joseph P. Keller, of Fox township, has been elected as county chairman of the AAA farmers of Jasper county. Mr. Keller, who has been employed the past year in the county AAA office, succeeds Dale McKinney of Smallwood township. Clarence Krick of Grove township was elected secretary, succeeding John Mammoser of Grove township, who has held that office for some time.

Joe's health began to fail in the late 60s, and he started to slow down. He had a series of strokes and spent the rest of his time with his beloved Minnie and their dog, Dusty. He passed in 1974 at the age of 81, living a good and generous life. Minnie spent the next few years of her life staying with each of her daughters for a time. She missed Joe terribly and died five years after him in 1979.

Joe and Minnie, a great example of how to be a good neighbor.



Joe and Minnie on their 50th anniversary