



Sainte Marie Foundation News

Celebrating our special hometown Summer 2021

Volume 14 Issue 3

SAINTE MARIE FARMERS MARKET

The Sainte Marie Farmers Market is winding down their second season which started on June 5th and ends on October 16th. Sharon Tuttle and Donna Keller, both members of the Sainte Marie Foundation Board, are running the farmers market. Sharon has her food manager's license and takes care of rules and regulations. She is there at 6 AM every Saturday to put out signs and banners and directs vendors on where to set up their booths and more. Donna takes care of the extensive advertising on social media and booking not for profit groups to have concessions during the market. She also finds entertainment. Facebook pages that she handles are *Sainte Marie, Illinois, Sainte Marie Farmers Market*. You can find information of what is happening at the farmers market and everything around Sainte Marie on those pages and also Donna's personal Facebook page. Donna is also administrator of the *Cork & Pork Festival* and the *Sainte Marie American Legion Auxiliary Unit 932* pages.

This Saturday, September 4th is St. Mary's Church picnic day. The day will begin with the Sainte Marie Farmers Market from 8 AM to Noon that will include a barn quilt sale. The Sainte Marie Foundation House and Museum will be open from 11 AM to 5 PM. The church picnic starts at 3 PM, so you can plan on spending the whole day in Sainte Marie.

The Sainte Marie Farmers Market is planning a special day the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 27th. They will be hosting a Christmas at the Sainte Marie Farmers Market at the Foundation House and Museum from 10 am to 5 pm. There will be a limited number of vendors offering gift items and baked goods for the holidays. The Foundation House and Museum is decked out for Christmas with the latest exhibit, *A Sainte Marie Vintage Christmas*. There are other things being planned in the community in conjunction with the farmers market event, by others in the community including lunch, a live reindeer and more. Details coming soon on Facebook. See you on Saturday, November 27th.

St. Mary's Picnic

It's that time of year for the 184th Pre-Labor Day Picnic. The time-honored tradition will still feature many of the familiar things we grew up with a few tweaks. Notice that the activities will be held on Saturday starting at 3:00p.m. and will feature Sainte Marie style chicken to feed the hungry crowds. 1500 halves will be prepared to ensure there will be enough to feed all. After the Picnic down at The Hill, Garrett Biggs, Nashville singer/songwriter will be performing starting at 9 PM. There is a \$5 cover charge.

184th Annual St Mary's in Ste Marie

Pre-Labor Day

PICNIC

Saturday, September 4, 2021

Food & Games 3 pm to 7 pm
Raffle Drawings at 7 pm
Beer Garden open until 9 pm

3 pm until sold out Ste Marie Style Chicken.
Potato Salad, Baked Beans & Water \$10

Eat outside on a picnic table, inside the parish center or take home

Dairy Dee Ice Cream

Pork Burgers, Chips & Pop

Big Ticket Raffle, Hand-made Quilt Raffle, Basket Raffle, Bingo, DJ, Beer Garden, Games

Come join us for lots of fun!



05 June 1908

Museum Hours

Even though the thermometer shows we are in the dog days of summer, don't forget to make a visit to see the outstanding "A Sainte Marie Vintage Christmas" exhibit at the the Foundation House. It is open on Saturday mornings during the Farmers Market from 9-11 and on the first Sunday of the month from 1-3. There will be special hours Saturday, September 4 from 11-5 to coincide with St. Mary's Pre-Labor Day Picnic. Arrangements can be made to view the exhibit outside of regular hours by contacting Mike Hartrich.

CORK & PORK FESTIVAL 2021

As most of you know, the Cork & Pork Festival this year for the most part was a rain out. All that attended had a great time despite the pouring rain! The Cork & Pork Festival committee had every detail planned and was ready to accommodate record crowds, but they had no control over the weather!

The committee is still waiting for some of the bills to be sent, but with the Cork & Pork Jeep Run and the 50/50 drawings at each stop and with the many sponsor donations we received, there will be several donations made again this year. They will have those figures at a later date after they meet to decide how to distribute the funds.

The Cork & Pork Festival, sponsored by the Sainte Marie Foundation, would like to thank the many generous sponsors who donate; Hartrich Meats and the Jasper County Pork Producers for cooking and the many volunteers it takes to put on such an event. **SAVE THE DATE: CORK & PORK FESTIVAL 2022 WILL BE SATURDAY, JULY 9, 2022**

Barn Quilt Donation

Mike and Teresa Zuber Hartrich have generously donated two barn quilts to the Foundation House. The matching wooden quilts painted by Maggie Tanner Kremer, feature three fleurs de lis, and are displayed on the Foundations House former garage.

Mike is the vice-president of the Foundation and can be found manning the museum on Saturday mornings during the Farmers Market and on the first Sunday afternoon of the month.

Thank you for all you do for the Foundation!



Farmers Market Receives Grant

The Farmers Market was awarded funds from the Orell Farley Foundation to help with the concessions stand and with advertising. The concession stand will receive monies to purchase a Blackstone griddle with accessories. This will enable groups to serve varied menu items and in larger quantities. We will also use the funds to pay for signage and magnets for the Market. Thank you to the Orell Farley Foundation for your generous funding. We appreciate the support you give to our community!



*Mardi Gras in
Sainte Marie!*



Let the Good Times Roll!

Sainte Marie's French heritage will be celebrated with a Mardi Gras event on Saturday, February 26, 2022, sponsored by the Sainte Marie American Legion Auxiliary Unit 932. This event will take the place of their annual wine tasting that they have held in December for over 16 years. Stay tuned for more details.



13 March 1903

Landmark Building in Newton Burns

Hotel has Ste. Marie Roots

In the early morning hours of August 24, 2021, a building well known to anyone who has lived in the Jasper County area was lost to fire. The building, owned by Pixie and Dale Mahaney, housed their business, Yesterday's Pub and Dining, and also their residence. The community has come forward to help the Mahaneys during this tragic time.

The original hotel in that same place was purchased by Joseph Litzelman, Sr. in 1855. Joseph was born in France in 1821 and settled in Ste. Marie. He married Barbara Ostheimer in 1845. The couple had several children during their time in Sainte Marie. They are both buried in St. Mary's Cemetery.

The hotel was named **The American House** and was a two story wooden frame building. Joseph and his wife were known to be gracious hosts and provided delicious meals to their guests. People came for miles around to enjoy their hospitality. Joseph died in 1874 and eventually, his son, Joseph, Jr. (Uncle Joe) became owner and proprietor. The New American Hotel, built around 1900, was the name of the brick building that replaced the original. Many still refer to it as the **Litzelman Hotel**.



American House,
NEWTON, ILLS.
JOSEPH LITZELMAN, Proprietor. The traveler will find at this House every attention calculated to make him comfortable.
Oct 3-ly.

Olney Times 05 Feb 1858

Sample Menu Served at the American House Hotel

To be served in Courses as follows:

- 1st Oyster Patties and Chicken Salad
 - 2nd Cold Turkey Gelatin and Cranberry Salad
 - 3rd Quail on Toast
 - 4th Sliced Ham and Tongue
 - 5th Fried Oysters
 - 6th Neopolitan Ice Cream (brick) and Assorted Cakes
 - 7th Fruit Coffee and Cocoa
- Sweet and Sour Pickles, Olives, Celery
Cheese, Salted Almonds, B & B Sandwiches
Fruit: Oranges, Bananas, California Grapes, Raisins

Taken from **the New and Complete History of Jasper County** by Glenn W. Sunderland

Sainte Marie Has Olympic Connection

You never know where Sainte Marie connections will turn up next! This time it was at the 2020 Summer Olympics held in Tokyo, Japan this past month.

The USA Women's Volleyball team ended up winning Gold against an always strong Brazilian team. The setter of the team, Jordyn Poulter, has some family roots that go quite a ways back. Her maternal grandparents, Teresa and the late Bob Ritz of Charleston, were born and raised in the Jasper County area. Bob is the son of Ed and Bertha Hartrich Ritz of Sainte Marie, and Teresa is from the Wendelin area and is the sister of the late Anna Lou Stone.

Jordyn attended the University of Illinois and has been on the USA National team since 2018. She has had many athletic honors bestowed upon her with the most recent as the Best Setter of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. She has played professionally in Italy since 2018.

Congratulations to Jordyn, her family, and the team!



Sainte Marie's Greatest Generations

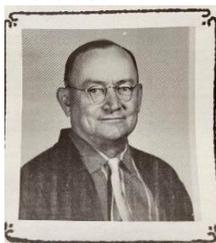
Remembering those who have made our memories
sweet and our Village strong

Henry and Lillian Kirts



If you grew up in Ste. Marie in the 1920s to the 50s, you undoubtedly had the pleasure of knowing Henry Kirts. Henry taught in the public school system for many years. In fact, he had a teaching career that lasted over 40 years. Most of Ste. Marie's youth remembered him as their 7th grade teacher at the White School. He was often described as quiet, gentle, and intelligent.

Henry was the younger son of Oren and Frances Valbert Kirts. He was born on February 27, 1897, in the Sainte Marie area. His only sibling, Lafayette, was four years older than Henry. When Henry was of elementary age, they moved to Carrier Mills in southern Illinois where Oren worked in the coal mines. Henry attended two years of high school in Harrisburg. The family moved back to Jasper County before 1917. Oren went back to farming Kirts land. This included the area where Bernard and Marcella Menke's house was and where the Bahl homes stand across the road. Henry attended two years of school at Eastern Illinois University. In 1917 when Henry was 20, he was drafted for WWI. A send-off party had already been thrown, but just before he left, he received word that the war had ended, and he would not be going after all. Henry started his teaching career soon after at the Michl School in the Bend and at the Ochs School. (The Ochs School was located where John and Teresa Ochs lived.) He taught in the Ste. Marie public school from 1927-1933 and 1937-1946. Schools were consolidated in 1946, and rural schools were brought into town. He continued teaching at Ste. Marie until he retired sometime in the 60s.



Henry, 1965

Lillian was the only daughter of George and Ruth Spencer Yager. She was born on June 16, 1903. The family lived east of the Yager Bridge and farmed in the area. Lillian had two brothers; Ernest who was 2 years older and George who was 2 years younger. They did spend some time in Davenport, Iowa for a short period of time as Lillian's mother, Ruth, had relatives in this area. George was not only a farmer and carpenter, but he worked during this time as a mechanic. Lillian attended Michl School.

Henry Joseph and Lillian Catharine Yager were married at St. Valentine's Church on August 16, 1922. They settled into married life in Ste. Marie and lived in several places including the Art Helregel home and the Paul Hartrich home on Main Street. Both houses are now gone. They moved in 1940 to the house east of the Ste. Marie School where their son George and his wife Chlorine now live. George commented that it was the only house his parents owned.



Henry and Lillian's wedding in 1922
Attendants were Clarence and Alice Menke

They were the parents of four children: Freda, Ruth, Fred, and George. An emphasis on learning and education was very evident by the large number of books in the home. Henry's choice of reading leaned towards how things work and nature, although he would read just about anything as is apparent by the fact that he had read all the books in the city library of the Southern Illinois towns where he grew up. Granddaughter Ann Kirts commented that Henry thoroughly enjoyed Edgar Allen Poe and James Whitcomb Riley. He had a great sense of humor so their poetry, although very different from each other, told stories that amused and caused one to ponder. The love of learning continued in several of the next generations. Freda and Fred both became teachers, and several grandchildren have multiple college degrees.

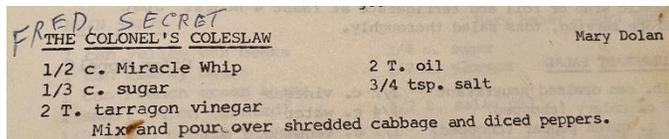


Kirts home Painting by Theresa Ikemire

They loved to travel and learn about new places in their later years. The couple enjoyed visitors and playing cards with Louis and Lenora Spannagel, Albert and Bess Geltz, and Ed and Mildred Helregel among others. Lillian was rumored to be one of the best players of the card game 7 Up in the area! They always had the most perfect garden, which is where, Henry especially, spent much of their time. Henry had an interest in grafting different types of apples and other fruits. One time he succeeded at producing five varieties of apples on one tree!

Lillian did a lot of canning of their bounty and taking care of the house. Remembered to always be wearing an apron, she was quite the cook! Ann recalls her wonderful Thanksgiving dinners which included a family favorite of oyster dressing. Christmas candies such as divinity were also specialties. Her pies were to be remembered. She was also an accomplished seamstress, sewing for others in her younger years.

They will always be remembered with much fondness as a humble, friendly, hospitable couple. Henry passed away on March 10, 1991, at the age of 94 and Lillian passed away on March 24, 1996, at the age of 93. They are both buried in St. Mary's Cemetery.



Fred Kirt's' Secret Coleslaw Recipe

Journal Excerpt of Ste. Marie Pioneer

Sister Mary John Hartrich Berchmans, 1847-1881, daughter of Ste. Marie settlers Theodore and Frances Chabel, left the area in the 1860s to join the Sisters of Charity Convent in St. Louis. She was one of several nuns who were assigned to establish a Catholic mission in Tucson, AZ. They traveled by stagecoach for two months over many different terrains. Here is the first excerpt from her journal, detailing their journey west. Entered as written.

Tucson, June 16, 1876

To our Rev. Mother and dear Sisters,

A Journal containing a little description of our journey from Carondelet to Tucson.

After bidding our dear Mother and Sisters farewell, we commenced our journey, Easter Monday April the 17th, 1876. We assisted at Mass and received holy communion at the Franciscan church about half-past five in the morning, then we ate our breakfast in the carriage. Our trip from St. Louis to Kansas was made very agreeable by some of the passengers, who entertained us by singing Methodist hymns; and a colored gentleman, who played on three instruments at the same time. We arrived in Kansas City at 11 o'clock P.M. The

sisters were all sound asleep and, of course, we had to make a loud noise to arouse them. We left Kansas City for Denver Thursday morning the 20th. The country at a distance of about 75 miles is pretty well cultivated. From Topeka to Denver the plains were like a vast wilderness, neither trees nor grass to be seen. The villages consisted of a depot and a few mud houses under ground similar to a cellar. The inhabitants numbered about ten or twelve. We saw a great number of deer and little prairie dogs, not larger than a rat. At the distance of about 30 miles from Denver we saw the first mountains. You cannot imagine what a contrast there is between the high mountains and the level plains. We reached Denver Friday evening Apr 21st. We stopped with the Sisters of Loretto, who received us very kindly. At first they took us to meet some of their Sisters whom they were expecting. The Sisters have a beautiful place; they have a great many boarders. Now, I will give you a description of the town. It is situated at the foot of the mountains; the mountains are on the northern side. The streets are very wide and shade on both sides with trees. We also visited the Cathedral, and it is very small. Really the poorest country church looks better than it did. The only thing noticing was a beautiful statue of our Lay of Lourdes. The Sisters of Charity are also building a hospital. We left Denver Sunday evening for Cheyenne; we arrived there about nine o'clock the same evening; we were obliged to remain at the hotel until the next day at one o'clock when we took the cars for Ogden. The mountains were all covered with snow. The scenery at the Rocky Mountains is grand; some of the rock looked as if they split and were almost ready to fall on us; and others appeared as if a great quantity of red paint had been spilt over them and then run down on all sides; the substance was hard. They say it is cause by volcanic eruptions. We passed another place called Devil's Gate; the name is very applicable. It is a small stream formed by the melting snow, it rushes furiously on dashing the water against the rocks, which causes it to foam and roar, it makes the cold chill run through a person, then suddenly disappear in an opening in the rock, then comes out on the other side. We passed through several tunnels and a great number of snowsheds. *Will be continued in next issue*

Needlepoints completed by Sister Mary John Hartrich Berchmans



Volunteers Make it Happen

Norma Ochs, Treasurer of the Ste. Marie Foundation has been very busy keeping the landscaping at the Foundation House looking great! She gives credit to several people who helped her with the distribution of mulch. Norma wanted to also thank Tony Litzelman for the use of his tractor and Jeff Kirts and Jeremy Geltz for their assistance.



Landon Kirts, Drake Heres, and Kennadi Ochs helped with putting down mulch at the Foundation House

We remember...

Lorraine "Johnny" Ochs, 97, of Sainte Marie passed away on August 6, 2021. He was preceded in death by wife, Romonna Hunzinger Ochs earlier this year. He leaves behind eight children, Romonna's children and many grandchildren.

Connie Sue Kirts, 73, formerly of Ste. Marie passed away on June 22, 2021. She was preceded in death by husband, Charles "Bud" Kirts. She is survived by two children and four grandchildren.

Kenneth "Ken" Kocher, 64, of Houston, Texas, and formerly of Ste. Marie passed away on August 4, 2021. Arrangements were incomplete at time of publication.

C. H. & D.
 Annual Homevisitors Excursion to
Indiana, Ohio, & Louisville, Ky.
TUESDAY, SEPT. 8th.
 Low Round Trip Rates
 Good Returning 30 Days
 Through Coaches to Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus,
 Ohio. First Class Service. The popular Homevisitors
 Route to Ohio.
 Ask C. H. & D. Agents for time of trains and rates or
 write
 J. S. FERRIS, T. P. A., Decatur, Ill.

113 Years Ago Sainte Marie Tribune

To Build Concrete Walk.
 Wm. Reis who has always been abreast of the times is now hauling sand for a concrete walk to be built in front of his residence property. Mr. Reis made a proposition to the Village Board saying that if they would give him the brick from the walk he would take it up and put a concrete walk down. They accepted it. The walk will be about 250 feet long.
 Since Mr. Reis started this kind of an improvement it would be well for others to act likewise and thus add beauty to our village.
 We believe that this is the only kind of a walk that will be put down in Ste. Marie in the future.
 Of course it costs a trifle more than the brick walks but its durability, if put down right, and beauty make up the deficit.

21 August 1908

BASE BALL
 Another ball team of Olney will come up to give our boys another game
Sunday July 12th, 1908

10 July 1908

An Ice Cream Social will be given Wednesday evening on the lawn in front of the Ursuline Convent. Everyone is asked to come and spend an enjoyable evening.

10 July 1908



Mary Kathryn “Katie” Keller Wait Celebrates 100th birthday in July

Mary Kathryn Keller was born in Sainte Marie to James Keller and Louise Huber Keller on July 5, 1921. She was the ninth of ten children and the youngest daughter. Katie, as she is known, grew up in the brick house on the ridge above the Embarras River. It was built by her great-grandfather, Joseph Petar Huber, and his sons about 1877. As Katie tells it, her great-grandfather was born in Bavaria, Germany in 1824 and came to this country in 18--. He married Crescentia Rattinger in Ohio, and they moved their way westward until they came to Ste. Marie in 18--. He knew the Picquets (early settler of Ste. Marie, IL) and the family lived in a shack on the hill while building the brick house. He and his sons dug clay from the Embarras riverbank and fired bricks in a kiln. Because of this homemade process, the bricks were soft and later deteriorated. As a young man, Joseph had built a house in Germany and knew how many bricks were needed to build the house. These bricks were later distributed among family members as precious keepsakes.

She remembers that her Uncle Joe Huber also lived with the family until his death; he had the big bedroom on the main floor. When he died in the house in 1927, Katie was kept out of the room and went with her aunts and family to the parlor to pray. There was never any electricity in the house on the hill, so she would study by kerosene lantern.

Katie remembers when her younger brother, Arthur Keller, was born. The doctor (most likely Dr. Grover Cleveland Brown) put him on the open oven door to keep him warm. He told Katie, who was eight at the time, not to let him get too hot. She was so terrified that something would happen to him!

Katie told of how she and her siblings would row across the river to go to school. She recounts that she once fell in the river and almost drowned but was rescued by her sister, Elaine. After that, she was afraid of the water and never learned to swim.

She also remembers when Assumption Church in Ste. Marie burned down on March 21, 1933. Looking out the windows from their house on the Ridge, they could see the smoke and flames above the trees as the church burned. Katie and her younger brother, Art, sometimes spent the night in Ste. Marie with their grandmother, Mary Valbert Huber, when the weather was bad.

When her mother, Louise Huber Keller, tasted store-bought white bread, she never made bread again. Her mother thought the store-bought bread tasted like angel food cake. After graduating from Newton High School, Katie attended St. John's School of Nursing in Springfield, IL where she received her R.N. degree. She worked in private practice before her marriage. Katie was living in Decatur with her sister Louise Keller Wells when Louise's husband, Arthur Wells, introduced Katie to her future husband, Bill Wait. Katie and William A. Wait were married in 1944 in Decatur, IL, and lived there for many years. They then relocated to Seal Beach in Southern California. They had four children: Pam, Doug, Martha, and Carolyn. Katie and Bill loved to travel, especially on cruises, and to attend concerts, theatrical productions, and museums. Bill died in 2013.

While raising her children in Decatur, Katie volunteered at Patrick's Church and School, the historic Oglesby Mansion, and the Decatur Fun Fair. She loved quilting and other handwork, enjoyed playing bridge, and was a marvelous cook. She especially noted for her pies and cookies. She has always had a lovely garden with especially beautiful roses. Katie has nine grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren who visit occasionally. She loves having company and enjoys doing FaceTime with family members who live far away. In 2014, she had a chance to sit with her younger brother, Arthur Keller, on the bench that the Keller family had donated to the Foundation House. She also toured the museum at that time. Katie especially appreciates the hanging flower baskets on the streets of Ste. Marie and reading the Sainte Marie Foundation Newsletter which reminds her of her youth.

Katie's last visit to Ste. Marie was in 2016 for Art's funeral. She has no surviving siblings. A family gathering was held at her residence in July to celebrate her 100th birthday. Katie received many cards and notes of congratulations on this momentous occasion.

Contributed by Pam Miles, daughter of Katie Wait



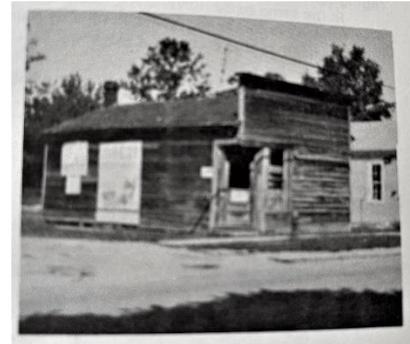
Katie at her 100th Birthday Party

[Video clip of the House on the Hill where Katie and generation before her grew up.](#)



Katie and brother, Art Keller, at Foundation House

Mike's Saloon



Keller Family outside of Brick Home c. 1938

Walking home from school, I knew the **businesses** I would pass after I crossed over to the bank heading towards the north part of town. First there was the bank with the sloped sidewalk which was great to gain speed while riding your bike. Then came Michl's garage, (walked quickly past here because I didn't want any of the old men to say something to me), Barthelme's old store, and then on the next corner, stood the building pictured above. I am not sure why it always intrigued me. I guess because it was unlike most buildings in town. It had no paint on it, there were beautiful advertising me signs on the sides, and it had a diagonal doorway. It didn't take much to impress me! I remember asking Mom several times what the purpose of the building was, and she always said it was used as storage for Barthelme's store.



Katie during high school c.1936

Come to find out many years later, it was originally a saloon owned by Mike Richards. His parents were both from Ireland and lived in the Ste. Marie area. Mike married Ed Barthelme's sister, Magdaline in 1891. She died in 1903 at the age of 36. At her death, they had six children under the age of 12 and a 8 month old baby who died two months before his mother. The couple had lived in the large house, often referred to as the Barthelme House, west of the old bank. When Magdaline died, Mike sold the house to Ed and Nora Barthelme in the early 1900s.

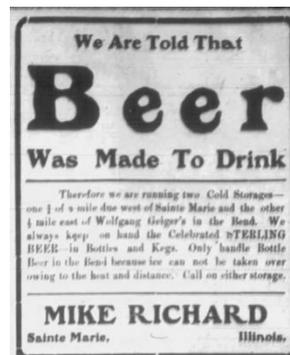
Mike moved to Terre Haute and worked there until his death in 1931. He and his wife are buried in St. Mary's Cemetery.



1908

Keller Siblings

Front Row: Art, Katie, Herm, Louise, Elaine
Back: Marion, Frank, Bernice, Bea, Bertha



10 August 1908



03 July 1908

OLD ABLINGER & KIRTS HARDWARE FINDS NEW LIFE

Since the village was founded in 1837, numerous Sainte Marie businesses have come and gone, but there are some that endured and survived for many years. One of those businesses was the Alblinger and Kirts Hardware.

The first hardware in Sainte Marie was started by Teddy Britton of Noble in 1896. In 1910, John F. Weber and Henry Weber of Teutopolis purchased the business from Mr. Britton and moved it into the Pictor building, a 2-story, wood frame building on the corner of Main and Embarras Streets. In August 1919, John J. Alblinger and Harley T. Kirts had just returned from World War I and together they purchased the business from the Weber brothers.

Under John and Harley's ownership, the hardware store continued to expand the merchandise and services that were offered. They became a franchised Chevrolet dealer in 1927 and was recognized in 1967 for being with Chevrolet for 40 consecutive years. Before that they had sold Willys-Overland, Jewett, Maxwell and Ford vehicles. In a June 13, 1939 article in the Newton Press Mentor it stated, "The firm carries a complete line of light and heavy hardware, household and farm supplies, featuring Chicago paints, Zenith radios, Crosley refrigerators. They also have a small line of furniture and maintain a garage across the street featuring Standard gas and oil, Atlas tires, U.S. Batteries and do general repair and mechanical work."

Harley's sons, Ron and Larry Kirts started helping at the hardware store at an early age. Ron remembers: "When I was around 10 or 12 years of age, bolts came in a box of 50 without nuts. Since the bolts were sold with the nuts on, Dad would have Larry and I screw the nuts on the bolts, that had to be purchased separately. I learned electricity and plumbing from my uncle, John Alblinger, and by reading books and learning from my many mistakes."



Eventually the old hardware building was torn down and a new modern 110' x 50' building, designed by Mr. Henry Specht of Newton, Illinois was erected with a brick front with vitreous tile sides. Carpenters and bricklayers Joseph Keller, Walter Shoffstall and Charles Joseph worked on the project. Ron Kirts stated, "At the time it was considered one of the

state-of-the-art stores in the surrounding counties." The Grand Opening was held on October 22, 1955, to a huge crowd who enjoyed refreshments, door prizes and music along with a tour of the new facility. Employees at that time were, Gerald Geltz, bookkeeper; Bernard L. Huff, garage foreman; James Ochs, mechanic; Richard Hunzinger, mechanic; Ralph Weber, plumbing and heating; and Floyd Weber, mechanic with owners John Alblinger and Harley Kirts and Ron and Larry Kirts, junior members of the firm.



Alblinger & Kirts continued to provide the same services as before, but added a heating, electrical and plumbing department. Ron said, "I started working full time when I returned from the service in 1959." After that Ron and Larry gradually took over the operation. In 1971, a second hardware store was purchased in Oblong by the company and at that time Larry Kirts left the Sainte Marie store to take over the management of the new store.



Christine Alblinger, Mary Jean Huss, Geneva and George Shoffstall, and Bertha Ritz at opening celebration



Van and the Barons played at opening celebration Larry Kirts on drums, Donna (Grove) McCrillis on the piano L to R Jerry Massey, Paul Keller, Ronnie Von Fossen, and Red Walden

In 1972, after 45 years, the Chevrolet dealership was discontinued, and co-owner John Ablinger retired. 1974 saw the closing of the garage and gas station, and Harley Kirts' retirement. Others who worked through the years in the Ablinger & Kirts Hardware store were Colmore Miller, Romonna Hunzinger, Warren Stuart, John Moran, Carolyn Reis Keller, Melvin Kocher, Leonard Kaufmann, Delmar Radke, Mike Ferguson.

Since 1974, Ron Kirts was the manager of the Sainte Marie store. He closed the hardware store in 1986 but continued to offer plumbing and electrical services until 2005. During the later years, Paul Kaufmann also helped Ron with the electrical services. Bill Mattingly, who after almost 30 years, was the last Ablinger & Kirts employee to retired in September of 1993. According to Ron, "As years went by, shopping trends began to change and with that change, business started to fall off and the store closed." "It was an end of an era after 86 years of being part of the Sainte Marie community." Short-lived businesses that later inhabited the hardware building were a resale shop and an auction house. After that the Sainte Marie Community Club and then later the Sainte Marie Foundation used the building to display various seasonal displays in the windows. Ron Kirts sold the old hardware building in 2015 to Rob Ablinger, who used it for storage, but he continued to permit the Foundation to use the east windows for displays.

A young entrepreneur, Brad Ederer, owner of B & B Transport, Deuces Wild Saloon, etc. in Olney, formally from Sainte Marie, decided that he and his wife Becky, would like to invest some money in his hometown. Brad thought Sainte Marie once again needed a restaurant and approached the Ablingers about selling the old Ablinger & Kirts Hardware property. The last restaurant in Sainte Marie, the Hideout, housed in the old Hartrich Grocery building, closed in 2012, immediately after Sainte Marie's 175 anniversary.

Negotiations were started and Brad and Becky Ederer are now the proud owners of the old hardware and have already started the cleanup/renovation process.

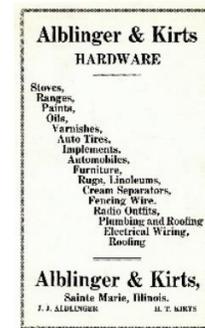
The Ederers are remodeling the building to house a family-oriented restaurant featuring steaks, fish and burgers in a friendly atmosphere where good friends and family can gather to eat delicious food. They plan on also providing a full bar menu for people to enjoy with their meals if they want, but the bar will not be their main focus. Brad stated, "We are excited to be a part of the village where I grew up and we want to honor and preserve the history of Sainte Marie, while providing the area with a business that has been greatly missed in the community and surrounding area."

The Sainte Marie Foundation is excited that the old hardware will be getting a new life and hope to help Brad and Becky Ederer spread the word about their new business venture on social media and through their website and newsletter to keep people abreast on the progress. They are also providing them with access to pictures from the hardware's past to use

to decorate the walls of their establishment. We wish them great success.

Information used from the history book *"Sainte Marie Illinois Sesquicentennial A Chronicle of the Years 1837 – 1987."*
Information from papers, pictures and remembrances of Ron Kirts
Compiled by: Donna M. Keller, Sainte Marie Foundation board member

Advertisement in 1923



Vintage post card of the old Ablinger & Kirts Hdw. building



Old Ablinger & Kirts Hardware just before it was torn down in order to build a new building



Harley Kirts inside the old Ablinger & Kirts Hardware building



Staying Healthy



The Home of the Holy Name of Mary

Sainte Marie Hospital c. 1913

Due to the generosity and forward thinking of Joseph Picquet, Sainte Marie was a village that was far ahead of surrounding towns, even those that had a much larger population. Those advancements included a sawmill, grist mill, earliest post offices, stores, schools, and a hospital.

Joseph's house was originally a two-room cabin built in 1839. Over the years, rooms were added so that it did not much resemble those humble beginnings. This house was where the Novitiate was on the very northwest part of town. Joseph along with his daughter, Marie, built a new brown brick Prairie style house east of their former home. He donated their former house and surrounding 30 acres to The Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis of Springfield, IL. A 12 to 14 room addition was added at a cost of around \$5000. This was due to the large demand to house the elderly. Over the next several years, the hospital opened its doors to tuberculosis patients.

In an article dated 15 Oct 1915, the Newton Press described the hospital and its location:

"It is situated in the northwest part of town in a forest grove near the banks of the Embarras River. The rooms are large, well-ventilated and arranged so as to receive an abundance of sunlight and heated by a system of steam-heating. Each floor has a lavatory and bath. Large, screened porches on the north and south of the building

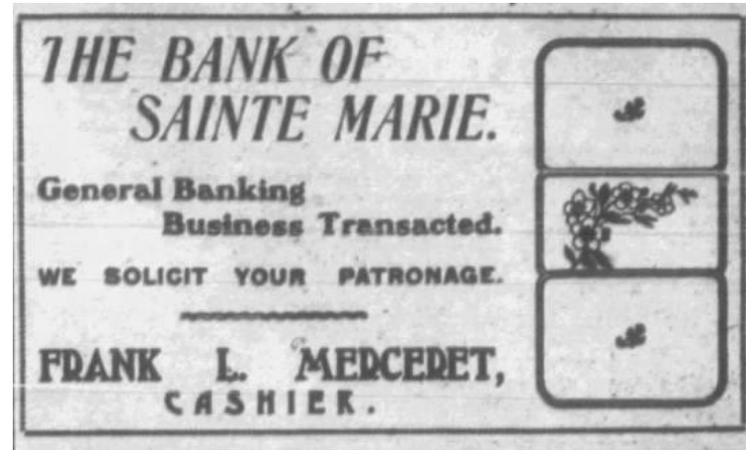
affording patients an opportunity to remain in the open air.

Concrete walks through the grove can be utilized for exercising. The food is of the freshest, coming from the dairy and farm conducted in connection with the hospital. The patients will be under the care of Dr. G. C. Brown and a corps of trained nurses."

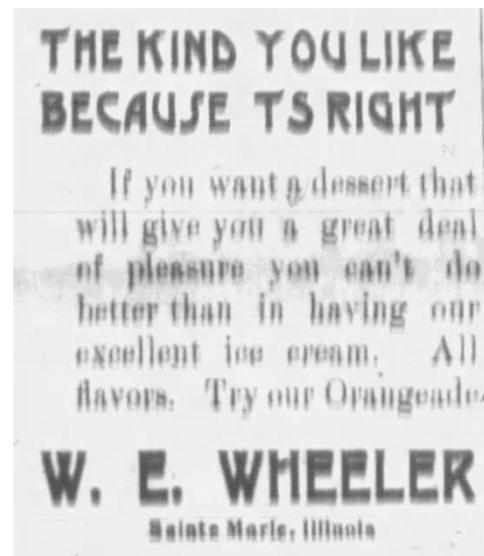
The hospital remained in operation for another two years after the above article. It was closed in the fall of 1917 citing financial reasons. Although the hospital was usually full, most of the patients were "charity cases" and the financial losses were too great to incur.

The property was then donated to the Sacred Heart Missionaries to be used as a school for novices.

An earlier hospital was housed in the former schoolhouse and home for Sisters of St. Joseph. The Sisters cared for the ill, orphans, and elderly. It was started by Rev. A. J. Pennartz in 1880 and the hospital remained in operation for ten years when the Sisters of Charity were called back to Springfield.



30 Mar 1906



03 Mar 1908



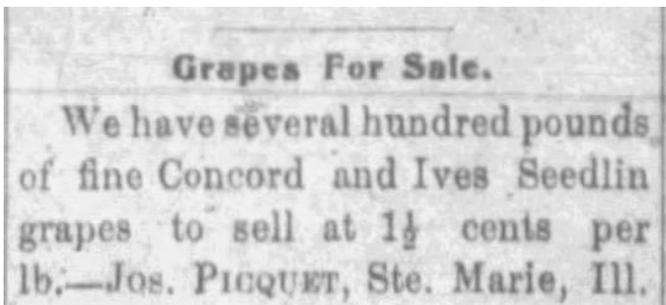
18 Jan 1918



Yager Families 1904

Numbered and named by Lilian Yager Kirts

1904 YAGER CLAN	
1. Alois Lobmier	31. Frank Kidwell
2. Johnny Miller	32. Maggie Rennie
3. Sam Weiler	33. Ruth McCough
4. Jake Kidwell & William	34. Liz Lobmier Bahl
5. Kate Miller	35. Emma Lobmier Fowler
6. Maggie Weiler & Mary	36. Mary Menacher Goss
7. John Fisher	37. George Menacher
8. Mary Lobmier	38. George (Fin) Yager
9. Mike Menacher	39. Gertrude Yager Jackson
10. Mary Menacher	40. Ray Yager -
11. Unknown	41. Johny Yager -
12. Pete Yager -	42. Joe Menacher
13. Kate Fisher & Joe Boy	43. Elmer Kidwell
14. Aunt Mary Herr	44. Katie Kidwell Miller
15. Rose Bahl	45. Ernest Yager
16. Aunt Jossie Yager -	
17. Uncle John Yager -	
18. Kate Gowin -	
19. Pete Kidwell	
20. Mary Michl -	
21. Gurtrude Kidwell	
22. Grahanna Yager ?	
23. Rose Hentgan	
24. Pete Yager - Grandpa -	
25. Ruth Yager - My Mom -	
26. George Yager Holding Lillian -	
27. Kate Bogard Harris	
28. Ben Bogard	
29. Pete Yager -	
30. Mary Goss ?	



13 Sept 1901

The Stone Family



Back in Ste. Marie in the 60s, 70s, 80s, and maybe even the 90s, there was always one of the Stone kids riding bikes, swimming at the pool, playing a game of neighborhood baseball/softball, or just being onery. It was very unusual to go through town and not see one of them. They were a rambunctious, gregarious family with dad, Bud, leading the way with quiet, soft-spoken, sweet Anna Lou keeping everyone and everything together. They were an integral part of the town.

After three in the family suffered aortic dissections, brother Steve was not satisfied with a doctor's advice to come back in six months after he had some issues., He acquired records from many family members. After much research and testing, the family found answer to some questions. Click on the link below to read the story in *Connect Issues Spring 2021*.

[Stone Family Diagnosis](#)

Keller Grain & Livestock Designate Monetary Award to Sainte Marie Foundation and Sainte Marie Farmers Market

Earlier this year, Keller Grain & Livestock, a third-generation farm owned by Bob and Donna Keller and Jason and Anna Keller, applied for the Bayer Fund - America's Farmers Grow Communities program. They were awarded \$1500 to go to the not-for-profit of their choice. They chose the Sainte Marie Foundation, who they gave \$500 and the Sainte Marie Farmers Market (which is under the Foundation) \$1000.



THE PICNIC

Was a Grand Success.—Every One is Pleased.

The picnic, under the management of the ladies of the Catholic church, Wednesday, was a grand success from start to finish. The ladies had been working faithfully for the past two weeks, therefore the grand success.

There were some 525 people at dinner, counting the band and a few complimentary tickets that were out.

PICNIC NOTES.

Everyone had a good dinner.

Father Vinnich donated the heating stove.

A. A. Albright, of Newton, donated the tea-kettle.

Nicholas Reis held the lucky number that draw the stove.

The Willow Hill Band furnished the music. The band is a good one, and the boys are all gentlemen.

Father Molitor, of Newton, Father Roth, of Wendalin and Father Schnelton, of Olney, were in attendance.

\$363.05 was taken in, which goes to show that all brought their pocket books. The expenses were \$103.61, leaving a net profit of \$259.44.

The citizens of Stringtown turned out in a body and spent the day. It is claimed that the largest crowd came from there this year that had ever attended before.

At these picnics everyone works hard, and at noon-time all pay for their dinners. This is the correct way to, as we have seen persons at such places who only come in to work about meal time.

Uncle Joe Cooley, of Bible Grove, who was in attendance, dropped into our office after dinner and patted us on the back, and said: "That's the place to get a good dinner." Of course we won't tell, about Uncle Joe smiling on the girls.

Mrs. F. X. Geltz won the prize, which was a tea-kettle, as being the best cook in attendance. In presenting her with the tea-kettle, Father Vinnich made a motion, which was seconded by Jacob Rolander, that when tea was made for the first time with the new kettle, all present should be invited to attend.

Church Picnic Article and Profit Statement September 1901

Picnic Statment.

Following we give a statment of the receipts and expenses of the picnic held last week under the management of the ladies of the Catholic Church:

INCOME.	
Dinner	\$99.25
Supper	13.25
Total	\$112.50
Soda and cigar stand	\$66.40
Ice cream stand	54.00
Cooks contest	41.65
Heating stove	20.50
Target practice	12.40
Auction and various sales	18.80
Donation of Richard & Strutner	10.00
Donation of Martin & Curtright	10.00
Cash collections for picnic	16.80
Total	\$363.15
EXPENSES.	
Soda and ice	\$11.62
Cigars, candy, etc.	37.92
Barthelme & Spitzer bill	1.70
Tribune printing	1.50
Drayage	2.00
Target and expenses	2.50
Beef	17.00
Music, by band,	30.00
Total expense	\$103.61
Income	\$363.15
Expenses	103.61
Net proceeds	259.54

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SHOES FOR MISSES AND WOMEN

We Want
Every Woman
to See Our
New Stock of Shoes



All of the
Best and Latest
Styles and Patterns
Prices Low

They combine so many good qualities we hardly know how to describe them, so the best thing to do is to come and see them.
That is all we ask, for we know they will sell themselves. Of course the price will suit you.

Leinhart & Company
St. Marie, Illinois

19 May 19

Some of the Regular Vendors at the Farmers Market



BOSS GOSS PRODUCE



Hazel-Basil
custom apparel.



Barn n Backyard Plunder
Phillip Chapman

