

Date: Tue, 9 Jul 2002 07:44:58 -0700 (PDT)

From: hometown@sheridannews.net

Subject: OUR HOME TOWN, July 1, 2002 part 2

BAKERS CORNER MEMORIES

From Jim Stuart: "My name is Jim Stuart and I grew up in Hortonville. Bakers Corner was/is a close neighboring village. My earliest recollection of Bakers Corner is going, with my dad, to the sorghum factory in 1947. To start our day we went to my Uncle Bill's farm near Westfield, and picked up a half-sized milk can. Then we went to my Uncle Merrill's farm near Hortonville, and picked up a full-sized milk can. Next, it was on to the sorghum factory. After we got there, I got a guided tour. I was amazed! They were putting what looked like corn stalks in one end of the process, and ended up with these huge vats of the sweetest, corn syrup based sorghum you ever tasted. Even though it's been 55 years, I can still smell the thick, dark, confection, slowly moving in the vats. Furthermore, everyone at this big factory knew my dad! (He had hauled cane there in prior years). We filled our milk cans with the delicacy and went back home.

That night mom fixed biscuits. You probably know the drill: Put big pat of butter on your plate. Cover the butter with a bigger pile of sorghum. Mix it up real well with your knife. Using your knife put a glob of the mixture on your biscuit. Enjoy!

I have experienced few days that were better than my sorghum factory day. Have you ever tried the butter and sorghum mixture with crackers?

Kenny Nightenhelser, (technical evangelist) - About three years after my sorghum factory tour, I met Kenny. In our little part of the world, two men were starting to bring the new medium of Television to the small farm communities, East and South of Sheridan. Those two men were Kenny Nightenhelser and my father, Bob Stuart. You see, the early television receivers were very complicated and almost always in need of adjustment. Kenny was a radioman in WWII, so he had classroom training and experience with most of the radio frequency circuitry used in TVs, at that time. My father was trained in AC and DC electricity, so he was good with the power circuits. Kenny and my father helped each other out in repairing the more difficult TV problems. Kenny was a big, boisterous, man who seemed to always be wearing a shirt that was not big enough for him. In retrospect, I think Kenny's shirts were a lot like his life, not quite big enough for him. Kenny was always well-versed in future technical breakthroughs. As I recall he had the first one of almost every new electronic device that came into use in my lifetime. I remember getting a phone call from Kenny, when he was well along in years, asking about the difficulties of connecting

a computer terminal-type device to something or other. He was always doing things just to see if it could be done. I wonder if he ever got to talk on a cell phone, or use a GPS device?

Thanks Bakers Corner, your people have expanded my world."

#####

From Curly Egler: "Since I grew up in the thirties a mile and a half south of Ekin, Bakers Corner was a light year away. But I did have contact at Boxley School with children from that area. Herb Fulton, Rosanna Harvey, Floyd Mundy, Leona Owens, etc. Which brings me to a memory that high-lites how cash-strapped farmers were in that day. I remember when we were in the fifth or sixth grade, Floyd and Leona were an item, and every evening on the bus home they sat together and he gave her a stick of gum. Gum was five cents a pack back then - I could not imagine having enough money to spend a nickel a week on anything, let alone a girl!

Another example was sorghum molasses from Hod Pickett's plant. We raised the sorghum, harvested it with a machete type knife, hauled it to the plant, Hod processed the sorghum and gave us a part of the molasses produced. We did the same thing at the Mill in Sheridan - took them wheat, they gave us flour. No cash required. Meat, veggies, fruit, eggs, milk, butter, etc. all were produced on the farm. I even wore shirts Mother made from feed sacks. Nice memories, but I wouldn't want to go back to that life.

Another memory concerning Hod Pickett: When I was in the first grade (1936) at Boxley we got snowbound. A blizzard came through during the day and several of us stayed overnight with Mr. and Mrs. Hammer (the school custodian, later owner of the famous Boxley Store). The next day Hod took us home through huge snow drifts in his brand new Buick automobile. What a thrill compared to Dad's Model A Ford!"

#####

From Mary Ellen Hiatt: "Baker's Corner must have been about the best place to grow up in that I can think of. It was a friendly close-knit group of families, where everyone knew everyone else and visited all over town often. The kids all got together and played hide and seek, time stick and many other games until well after dark. The older kids played horseshoes and basketball. I remember many games of croquet and miniature golf in our back yard. At that time there must have been close to twenty-five kids in town, ...probably more.

They used to have church parties where the whole town turned out. The parties were pitch-in's and lot's of times we had ice cream in big round tubs from Casey's store. Casey Jone's store was where everyone congregated, ...the meeting place of the neighborhood. If

you got a few pennies or a nickel, that was where you went. He had the best looking candy and it didn't taste too bad either. And cokes in the little glass bottles from a red cooler with the built in opener. And ice cream cones and ice cream treats of all kinds helped to cool us off.

And there was Casey, the best friend a little kid had. We couldn't wait to get to Casey's to tell him everything we knew. And he always listened. I remember one dad bought his little son a new pair of shoes and told him if he went to the store and told Casey he would get a whipping. Many of you would know this little boy all grown up, but I won't tell, I'll let that be his memory. But we really did want him to know what was going on in our lives and he seemed to care.

I remember the town as a friendly, safe and carefree place to grow up. I wish all kids that kind of place to grow up in."

#####

From Bruce Johnson: "My family and I moved to Uncle Marvin's (Marvin Foulke) farm in about '61 or '62. We stayed there until we moved to Sheridan for my 8th grade year. I remember Max Jones and his two kids, Patsy and Steve, would come to help with the chores on the farm. We rented the farmhouse, they rented the land and the buildings.

As soon as I could ride my bike, I was off to the neighbors Rita and Nita (Long) and Glen Ward's, they lived with the Welchel's. We would go to the creek or their barn to play.

I rode on a school bus that was driven by James Moore. James was a very good driver and surrogate parent for those who needed some settling down from time to time.

We had a storm once that blew over the pine trees in our front yard. They had crashed into the front bedroom. We had to hire someone to cut them all down. Nowadays you can't even tell they were ever there. Even the house has had the front porch taken off. I spent some hours learning how to paint the porch with gray paint.

Some times we would go to the corner store and visit with Casey and he would tease us or just talk with us. They had an old-fashioned cooler that held bottles of coke and Nehi sodas. (Grape and Orange) The Jones family was a very nice group of people. We played "farm" and 500 at their house.

I remember one winter that it snowed so hard that the power lines were down and that my dad (Phil) couldn't make it back to the house from Indianapolis. Our furnace was out and we took us and our sled to the Welchel's too stay for awhile.

As I got older I could ride my bicycle farther and I rode it to Sheridan on the back roads and to Jeff Bennett's and John Walser's houses. John's mother was a librarian at the Sheridan library. She,

too, was very kind and nice. We would visit from time to time Uncle John Warren Hiatt and cousin Donny and his wife Barbara. They were just starting out on their own.
Bruce Johnson of Kansas City, Mo."

#####

From Jeanette Pickett Dziabis: "My name is Jeanette Pickett Dziabis. I was born and grew up in Bakers Corner, along with my brothers, Joe and Ronnie, and sister, DeAnna. My parents were Hollas "Hod" and DeVota Pickett. My dad was a farmer and made sorghum. He prided himself in having a business where he planted and nurtured the seed, harvested the stalk, pressed and cooked the juice and had an edible, sweet syrup to sell to the public. The wonderful sweet smell of boiling cane juice was a sure sign of autumn. Helpful, hard working neighbors came every fall to get things ready. Besides the family members, there was Fred "Jake" Carraway, Bert Willman (fired the boilers), both Jesse Raines, and Frankie Geiser (cooked down the juice) and our minister's Garl Shaw and later Max Kingsolver helped harvest and load wagons. In fact, just about everyone, men and women, had a job. The women prepared food, canned the syrup, labeled the cans, did the office work, answered the phone, took orders and tried to keep things clean enough to satisfy the State food inspectors.

During W.W. II when sugar was rationed, farmers all over Indiana grew sorghum cane. They would come with their trucks and wagons loaded. Both sides of State Road 47 through town east and a quarter of a mile west were filled for days and weeks. The mill ran day and night. The men slept in their trucks and waited their turn. My grandmother McCarty and aunt Elizabeth Moore always had hot food for them. There were no complaints, everyone was happy and helpful and generous with their time and talents.

There was a bunch of us kids, all about the same age. We grew up working and playing and did both with equal fervor. We hoe'd cane, learned to make a wheat/oat shock for threshing days, tended garden (which was large enough for the whole town), mowed yards (for 50 cents) and still had time for "time-stick" (a hide and seek game), basketball, baseball, ride our bikes to the flowing well (on the Laura Clark property east on 47 across 31), or roller skate until dark. We would usually meet at Casey Jones general store for an ice cream or pop and decide what to do. The ice cream -dream-sickles were a treat because there was always a chance the word FREE would be etched on the stick, and we would get another one FREE.

The men would meet at Casey's store in the evening to catch up on the latest news. The women would meet at one of their houses and crochet, sew, quilt, or trade recipes.

The telephone switchboard was above the store. Usually Rosella or

Teresa Jackson was on duty. There was a bed for them to sleep on and be available in case of an emergency. All fires, deaths, accidents, etc. were heard about on the crank phone (our ring was three shorts and a long). Several households could be on the same line and we always knew who was getting a call. If we were quiet, we could listen in on the calls. We usually got our news from Gertie Campbell who wrote local items for the Sheridan News.

There were many Picketts in the area (all related). Russell and Lena's family -Bob and Charlie, Mary, Martha, Frances, and Barbara. Bob and Charlie seldom rode the school bus and I think they drove a Model A Ford coupe so they could practice/play football. Anyway, when Charlie married Joanna, several of us kids got to go to their chiverree(sp?). All I remember is that the neighbors got them out of bed and Charlie in his pajamas, had to push Joanna down the center of State Road 47 (thru town) in a wheelbarrow. There were other things that went on, but those things were kept from us kids. Along with my brother Joe, our Uncle Don McCarty, Max Jones, Dale Jones, Robert Jones (non-related), Robert and Kenny Ross (whose parents were Lawrence and Gladys and had the Bakers Corner Jeep dealership), Robert and Mary Jane Shaw, Betty Spurgeon, Walter "Bugs" Pawlak, Jerry and John Hiatt made enough for two teams for any game. Our minister, Rev. Garl and wife Virgie Shaw kept us busy with picnics, caroling, etc.

World WarII was quite a learning experience for 10-12-14 year olds. Rationing was implemented. Sugar, coffee, chocolate, cigarettes, gasoline, rubber tires, silk stockings, and many other things were rationed. We could drive only 35 MPH on the highway. We saved tin foil, tin cans, gathered milkweed pods (a school project) to fill lifejackets and bought savings bonds and stamps. We had Victory gardens, preserved our own food and listened to the war news on the radio everyday at noon. When the war ended, my first thought was "there won't be any more news-nothing to talk about".

My dad was one of a kind. He loved fast cars and built his own version of today's dunebuggy. It was 4-wheeled (no fenders) open-aired (no top or windshield) a two-seater and would it ever run! We called it "the skeeter". He even wore his cap with the bill in the back when he drove it. Being too young to drive, we weren't to bother it, but everyday we checked and if dad happened to leave the key in it, we notified all the kids, and we would all pile on, take turns driving it around the sorghum factory until it ran out of gas. No one ever got hurt, and that was truly a miracle. We had the first TV in the community and the first Cushman motor scooter (apple green), During WWII dad took a welding course at Sheridan, bought the needed equipment and fixed every farmers broken farm equipment better than when it was new. It was as if he was given a license to build whatever he needed. He always taught us that we

could do whatever we wanted to do but to stay within the law (God's and man's)

It was difficult to write a few lines, I think I could have written a book. However, we were never bored, everyone always got along and we were tired enough to go to bed at the end of the day."

#####

From Don McCarty: "My parents moved from Ekin community to Bakers Corner in December 1942. I had to change schools from Boxley to Sheridan. That was the middle of the 5th grade. The war was gaining momentum and all the young men were leaving for the military. One of my fondest memories was concerning the Moss twins. Jeanette (Pickett) and I got the word at school that they were home on furlough and we skipped school that afternoon and went to Aunt Zonda's to see them. We decided the noon hour wasn't long enough time and we didn't go back. When the roll was taken after lunch, Jeanette and I were missing. After a brief inquiry, Mrs. Foust said, "I can tell you where they are. They are at the Mosses." The next morning when asked where we were, we told them we went to see Fredrick and William Moss. Not another word was said, and that ended the dilemma.

We lived in the house on the hill, the Baker estate, owned by my brother-in-law and sister, Hod and DeVota Pickett. I lived there through the rest of grade and high school and until I was married to Phyllis in December 1951.

To remember everything in writing would require volumes! That 10-year period was one event after another. No TV, a little radio, and a lot of loafing at Casey Jones's store in the evening, and high, low, jack and games in the heated office of the sorghum factory. We called it pitch. There was a whole gang of kids in the village of all ages which didn't matter, ..we all played together, usually time-stick. Or taking someone new on a snipe hunt, which I was initiated by the veterans. I was left holding the sack in the middle of the thicket while the veterans were making their way home. I finally caught on and raced for home too.

There was the yard mowing, the making hay, hoeing cane and helping make sorghum. One winter, Hod and Jesse (Raines) were sawing logs into lumber and Joe (Pickett) and I were in the mill watching. All of a sudden the belt broke on the steam engine governor and it took off, revving by the second. The last I remember was the engine jumping up and down and Jesse trying to shut off the steam. Joe and I ended up running when we got outside, and hiding in the log pile. It stopped before the steam pipe broke.

My second term at Bakers Corner began shortly after a tour of duty with the U.S. Army during the Korean War. Phyllis and I moved from Fort Knox, Kentucky, back home in March 1956. We had a daughter,

Jetta, and later had Jodie. During that time, Joe and Mary Lou had served in the Army and lived in the Baker Estate after service. We lived in my mother's house across the street. Our most challenging times then was our heated croquet games after work each evening. The boys versus the girls. We were all good. Sometimes the boys won and sometimes the girls won. The games got so long that the porch light didn't provide enough light so Joe and I electrified our court for night croquet. We had many wonderful time taking care of our kids, playing croquet and arguing over the rules. I know Mary Lou sorely misses Joe, however, so do I."

#####

From Judy Johnson Schmidt: "We just read the email Sheridan News up here in Alaska (We're on a 7-week trip.) and when I saw "Bakers Corner as the top, I wanted to participate. This will definitely be random!

My grandparents, John and Edith (Teter) Hiatt, lived on the SW corner of old 47 (now 236th Street, I believe) and 31 from 193? until Edith's death in 1960, so Bakers Corner was a second home for Phil, Leah, Eric and me --Judy Johnson. If mom (Mildred Hiatt Johnson) couldn't take us from Sheridan to Bakers Corner, we'd catch Bill King's bus at Elliott's Drugstore and ride out.

We moved to Bakers Corner, March 18, 1945; it was my birthday, so mom (dad, James Maurice Johnson was stationed in the Philippines) moved with the help of many of her friends and gave a birthday party for me --all the same day! The most memorable occurrence happened as we kids walked the half mile from Bakers Corner to my grandparents. We found the nicest long white "balloons" and had the best time blowing them up (remember, we didn't have balloons during WWII, so these were a real treat! Well, my mom turned absolutely pale when she saw us with the long white balloons! (We didn't have condoms in the rest rooms back then, so we didn't know what we were playing with!))

So, we moved into the 1st house north of old 47 on Dunbar Road, owned by Casey (Wavren) and Adah Jones. There wasn't any inside plumbing, but we had a roof over our heads (even if it did leak!), and that meant a lot.

We rode Everett Goff's school bus - it passed our house to pick up Kenny, Robert, and Carolyn Ross, so if we missed that chance, we could catch it the second round. Poor Everett --he was a good man, but the kids really gave him a hard time, so he played dumb --"see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil" must've been his motto! Ballpoint pens had just been invested and were inky messes, but we all pitched in and bought Everett a ballpoint pen --I suppose it cost around \$20 or so!

Casey's General Store, Mundy's garage in the old schoolhouse,

Pickett's Sorghum Mill, and Nightenhelser's TV shop were the Bakers Corner businesses. Casey's store was "the" gathering place - the local fellows would sit "round the stove and talk, spit, chew, smoke and "hold court" in general --they all loved to tease, especially Jesse Raines and I could never tell whether he was teasing or not! Since we didn't have running water, it was my brother, Philip's job to fill 2 milk cans after school at Casey's and haul them home in our red wagon. I think the fellows kibitzing in the store gave him a pretty hard time! Phil would've been eleven. He liked spending time in Mundy's garage.

Casey's store had an aroma all of it's own --from the old creaky wooden floor, stove smoke, bacon and other meats, the fruit, and other pungent items. His candy case was empty most of WWII, but he always seemed to have a plentiful supply of cough drops, so we ate cough drops.

Above the store, was the local phone office, reached by rickety, long, old wooden steps which creaked and swayed. People would apprehensively grasp the railing and creep upstairs to pay their bills, come to work or carry up wood for the stove --mother worked there right out of high school and again in 1945 when we moved. She taught Phil and me how to run the switchboard, then she'd walk across the road and fix supper cause we kids didn't like messing with the old wood-burning cookstove. If we got a long-distance call to put thru though, we'd yell out the window for mom to come back over and put the call through. Lottie Baker worked weekends; her husband Tony would help "move" her in. They'd make several precarious trips on the old stairs, carrying up food, water, bedding, and a pot because there wasn't anything but the woodstove and bedframe in the room. It always amazed me as a child, how much "stuff" Lottie managed to bring, and to this day, we use the expression, "you look like Lottie Baker moving in!" Now, by Sunday afternoon, Lottie was tired, probably bored (no TV then) and she'd just turn off the switchboard and take a nap! That's what most everybody else did on Sunday afternoons, so no one minded being without phone service for a couple of hours.

It was the people that made Bakers Corner a place of memories. On the west end was Hod, Devota, Jeanette, Joe, Ronnie (Doc) and Deanna. Pickett's Sorghum Mill --ah, the wonderful fragrance wafting through the air when the sorghum was cooking and the mouth watering flavor of fresh sorghum. What a page from the past to STILL have the sorghum available!! The sorghum cane wagons would pass our house, ...if a stalk or two fell off, we'd take it to school and at recess, we'd get out our pocket knives (shades of being expelled today!) and cut stalks into chunks, pop 'em into our mouths and chew and spit to our heart's content!

I think Bert Cross (or Campbell --I forget) lived just west of Pickett's. The story was that in his later years, Bert couldn't see

to drive. His wife couldn't drive, but she'd direct and tell him when to stop, start, slow down, turn, etc. and when they drove to town, people got out of the way!!

The Wesleyan Church parsonage was across from the church. Robert and Mary Jane Shaw were the "P.K.'s" at that time. Robert was quite a character, ...scared us to death when he turned up with some blasting caps one day!

Jake Carraway lived next door. I think he was Devota Pickett and Nellie McCarty's brother. The house next to him was a rental and had numerous families come and go. The Phifer's were a large family that were there a while. I remember dark haired Olive, golden ringleted Crystal, Bobby,and I forget the rest. Then, a "South" family was there, ...Jane and her brother, and I learned to play "Authors" and since we'd disobeyed and gotten into a large patch of poison ivy and suffered quite a while for our disobedience, we played "Authors" to take our minds off the itching and scratching.

Guy and Rosella and Teresa Jackson lived there the longest. (Then they moved over on 31, south of the junction.) Every time we had the least little bit of rain, that house looked like Noah's Ark ...always surrounded by water and I always felt sorry for whoever was living there at the time.

Next door was the vacant lot, the site of many impromptu ballgames. There were 12 to 20 kids available, depending on if Pawlaks and/or Ross's joined us from "down the road."

After Casey's and Mundy's, going east, was a long field owned by John and Edith Hiatt. John was the last farmer around to use horses for farming and when he sold "Pet and Baldy," and they trotted past our house one last time, I felt so bereft for granddad and all of us grandkids. But, Uncle Fred Hiatt wanted to use a tractor with the big lug wheels and my brother helped drive it all that summer.

"Mama and Granddad Hiatt's" East Brookside Farm ...the many, many memories made there. We always had our Sunday School parties out there in the woods, playing hockey on the pond (with tin cans and limbs), weiner roasts, swimming in the creek, ..you name it, we did it!! Grandma mowed the whole huge yard by hand and kept it looking like a park. They never did have indoor plumbing, and just a light bulb in each room.

During WWII, a large Army convoy was moving troops. It went on all day, and I can remember people driving out, bringing picnic lunches, spreading blankets and cheering the troops. Also, at night, when we grandkids would be spending the night, if it was warm, we'd open the windows (no air conditioning and only cheesecloth net "window screens"), and we could hear the hitch hiking service men down at the intersection, talking and smoking.

After Goodwinds moved from the large white farm house on the south east corner of 31 and old 47, Roger and Elizabeth Burton moved in, renovated and made a beautiful home there. Roger died in 1985,

Elizabeth lives in a Westfield nursing home. They befriended so many people through the years, ...and my children, Lyle and I are among those.

Elmer Hessong was on the north east corner and had a little one-pump "filling station." From his one pump to Frank Wallwork's 2 pumps, there's now a huge new several pumps station on the north west corner.

Walter and Edna Pawlak, "Bugs," Arlene (Polly), Billy, Barbara and ?, owned the corner before Wallworks. Polly and I were good friends and spent hours in my grandparent's woods; 3 or 4 years ago, I had the best time visiting Arlene (Freeman Bidgood) in San Antonio. Bugs (Walter Jr.) has died; I think Bill and Barb live in Texas too now.

Going west back to Bakers Corner was Myrna Stapleton's big house. She lived with her folks, the Hodson's, and taught school. Across the road was Casey and Adah's house. Adah loved flowers and had beautiful flower beds. Their son, Max was a good looking football player, and his friends were Joe Bilby and Paul Waitt, ...a very impressive lineup to a little girl when they were all together at Max's house. That house is no longer there.

Casey's dad, "Speed" Jones had a little two-room stucco house next door. He must have died about 1944 because he and my granddad were good friends, and Granddad went to "Speed's" auction and bought a beautiful wash bowl and pitcher set. We used it for several years at my grandmother's, carrying a bucket of hot water up the long, narrow, very steep stairs to put in the pitcher. And now I have the wash bowl and pitcher set setting on top of my grandmother's china cupboard.

Speed's house was just a good height to play "Andy Over" so if there weren't enough kids for a ball game on the vacant lot, we'd move across the street and play "Andy Over." After "Speed" died, Harry and Mitzi Johnson moved into the house. They had a baby boy and mother let me babysit since she was close enough if I needed help. I think Harry was the son of the Johnson's who owned "Twin Pines" on 31, north of the intersection. "Speed's" home is long gone.

Edith Sower's lovely home was next ..it was beautiful and it breaks my heart to see it now. Her granddaughter, Evelyn Ann Harvey, was there a lot. We all loved Evelyn Ann's dollhouse ...big enough for little girls to actually play in.

One summer, croquet was all the rage. We played constantly at Mrs. Sower's. Evelyn's cousin, Jeanie Wilson, from Connersville was there a lot. I don't remember who had the little English bulldog, but I was terrified of him, ..actually climbed a tree when he cornered me! Everyone but me thought it was hilarious.

Another Hiatt family lived on the west end of Bakers Corner. Clifford and Ruby (Harbaugh) Hiatt had John, Jerry, Sara, Mary and Susan. I remember one Valentine's Day, they came to our house for a

Valentine's Day party and had to leave early because a blizzard had set in.

We always went to the Sheridan Methodist Church on Sundays, but the Bakers Corner Wesleyan church had a lady evangelist there after school one time. We'd all get off the school bus and troop into the church. She did chalk talk and flannel graph and I still remember her talk 'bout "putting on the whole armor of the Lord."

Nellie and Don McCarty lived west of the church where Mary Lou Burtron Pickett lives today. I didn't know Don's dad --I think he died of diabetes.

Jesse, Hannah, Randy and Mark Raines were the last house. Jesse loved to tell jokes. Hannah had a sweet smile and Randy's curly hair was cute. I didn't know Mark.

Other friends and family lived outside of Bakers Corner,Odie and Daisy Baker, down Dunbar Road by the little cemetery, then Ross's, and the Nightenhelser's. Esther Nightenhelser made the best pickles. She'd let us pull our little red wagon down the mile or so to her house and pick tomatoes for mother to can. Esther and her husband had lost a son, Edwin, in WWII. Their other son, Ken, made it back and opened a radio and TV shop. He was a whiz with electronics!

My uncle, John Warren and Aunt Ruby (Baker) Hiatt and their boys, John, Don and Jake, lived north of Nightenhelser's. The boys grew up and still live in and around Hamilton County with their families. My great uncle, Marvin Foulke and great Aunt Vern (Philips) lived south of Casey's. They had inside plumbing and I loved to visit there, ...also, a malt machine and a refrigerator that my great granddad Philips kept orange Nehi pop in. Plus, Uncle Marvin had a great big old barn to play in and a gravel pit where you could find arrowheads 'cause it was rumored that there used to be an Indian village there. Later my brother, Phil and his wife Pat, bought the house, so we had some more good times there.

Well, this has gone on much too long, but once the "well of my pen began flowing," there was no stopping it, 'sides, it stays light in Alaska now till 2 AM, so I'm prone to stay up till I drop!"

#####

From Barb Robbins Hiatt: "My earliest memories of Bakers Corner would have been in the mid to late forties when visiting my grandmother, Bessie Brown. She lived a mile south of Bakers Corner in a big square white farm house on a hill. Some of her neighbors in that area were the Homer Carsons, the Ernest Hodsons, the Clarence Fultons, Ambi Simmonds, and the Kenneth Mundys. We lived near Boxley so to call my grandmother on the phone, we would have to tell "Central" to connect us to Bakers Corner. I don't remember her number but ours was 14F22 and was 2 longs and 2 shorts.

During high school, I sometimes visited with one of my best friends, Susan Hiatt, who lived next to the church. In 1965, I married her brother in that same church. We immediately bought and moved into a tiny house on the south side and just a little west of the store. There was a vacant lot between our house and the store. I was told that several very large families had lived in the house over the years and I was amazed. I couldn't see how it was humanly possible to get that many people in it. It was snug with just the two of us. We remodeled the house and put in it's first plumbing. Until then, water was piped from the store to our's and Rosella and Teresa Jackson's house next door. It consisted of a pipe coming out of the ground with a turn-off pipe. Shortly afterward, we had a new well drilled, 112 feet deep, by Pete Carson. It took at least a week and it was his last well as he must have been in his eighties.

An interesting thing about the house was that at one time, it was the toll house for the road. It originally sat on the same spot as the store building, then later was moved to the vacant lot, and then again, moved to the site that it still sits on today. It is probably one of the oldest buildings around there. The back section seemed much older than the front, using black walnut timber approximately 2 inches thick and 12 to 16 inches wide. It was the toughest lumber in the world to try to cut!! When I moved there, I was not familiar with the drainage problems. I planted a garden but a heavy rain would completely cover the yard. I planted and lost 3 gardens that year. Eventually, Hod Pickett put in a ditch through the yard to a drain next to the road and from then on, we didn't have a water problem.

One of my nearest and dearest neighbors was Casey and Adah Jones who lived across the street from us. Adah and I raised roses together and enjoyed visits talking about needle work, glassware and cooking. She was a great cook and a wonderful housewife. She often sent over a sample of a new recipe that she was making. Once, I was painting our garage and she yelled across the street, asking me to come over for a minute. I put down my brush and walked over. She had sat a plate at the table for me with leftovers from their recent lunch, ...fried chicken, mashed potatoes, etc. When my mother passed away, she packed an entire basket of food and sent over.

It was really handy living next door to a store. If I ran out of something, I could be there and back in less than five minutes. One problem though was that there was usually just one brand. Whatever brand Adah used is what they sold.

I had lived there for some time before I found out what a strange noise was that I heard quite often. It was a whistle. As it turned out, the whistle was kept hanging beside Adah's front door and when she needed to communicate with Casey or it was time for his lunch, she would stick her head out the front door and blow it.

On Halloween, we usually only got about 6 or so trick or treaters.

One Halloween, it was getting late, about 9:00 or so, and I heard a knock on my door. I looked out and there was a ghost. I thought it was getting a little late for trick or treaters and I could not guess who it would possibly be. It was Adah. She had pulled the sheet off her bed at bedtime and told Casey she was coming over to trick or treat. She was such a fun lady. After my mother passed away, she became a surrogate grandma to my two children. I still have the lap quilts that she made me, my son, and my daughter. I remember Casey too. I don't believe I ever saw him without a smile and twinkling blue eyes. I remember him telling about someone who came to the store and was "shop lifting" several items. When they were ready to pay for the items they were buying, he figured the amount and then said, "And, that will be 20 cents for the bar of soap in your pocket."

In 1978, my dad married Mary Elizabeth Stewart who lived across from the church. As he moved to Bakers Corner, my husband and I purchased his home and moved there. I like to think that I left someone behind to take our place when we moved.

One thing that happened not long after my dad moved to Bakers Corner was that one night there was a large tank truck, that hauled milk, parked in front of the church. It did this quite often, I forget why, but the semi would disconnect from the tanker. Upon disconnecting, one end of the tanker was supported by small wheels. It had rained quite a lot recently and when those wheels hit the asphalt pavement, they went right through it. The big lid on the top of the tanker, popped off, and as the truck tipped, thousands of gallons of milk flew out like a geyser! Milk surrounded the truck, flowed across the road and filled all surrounding yards.

The good news-- that lawn fertilizer was not needed that year!
The bad news-- that you could see a line where the the milk had stopped.

The good new-- every dog got free milk at each puddle for days!
The bad news-- that you could smell sour milk for weeks!
I'll always remember the friendly people of Bakers Corner. I use to joke that I wasn't able to do my yard work. It would always take much longer to do because everyone in town would stop to talk. I think I miss that more than anything else now. I also think about the golden maple trees lining the road in the fall, along with the yellow and white mums growing in my yard and the smell of sorghum cooking. Certainly autumn must have been my most favorite time while living there."

To remove yourself instantly from OUR HOME TOWN
simply visit

<http://www.ourhometown.addr.com/cgi-bin/easylst.cgi?action=unsubscribe&submitemail=>

hometown@sheridannews.net07:44 AM 7/9/02, OUR HOME TOWN, July 1, 2002

Webmaster services by Dale Robbins - <http://www.qualitywebmasters.net>