

The
Gary Interstate

Established Sept. 6, 1878; the only newspaper in the world solely interested in the welfare of Gary, SD and vicinity.

Owned and Published

By The

GARY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

A monthly newspaper with news of the past and present. December 2007 issue.

www.garysd.com

“The opinions in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gary Historical Association.”

Be informed of what is going on in your town!

Meetings and Events in December

Christmas Lighting contest is December 16

GATEWAY TO SOUTH DAKOTA

By Marlene Lien

Gate City to South Dakota, Gary, South Dakota is claimed by many to be the oldest city in South Dakota. Established in 1872, it was the launching pad for the railroad to open up Dakota Territory.

Gary is located high on the Coteau Prairie, near the Buffalo Ridge left by the glacier. The Lac Qui Parle Creek meanders through the western edge of the city. One of the highest areas west of the city is known as ‘Indian Look Out.’ From this area overlooking the ‘Gary Gulch’, one can see for miles in several directions. It is believed; the Sisseton Tribe camped there on their way to and from Pipestone.

On the eastern edge of what is now Deuel County, SD, part of Gary was also in Minnesota. In 1958, when Minnesota became a state, an imaginary line went through Gary. Summit Street is now the border between the two states. Twelve other states have cities named Gary. The most famous, of course, is Gary, Indiana.

On March 22, 1857, The Minnesota Territorial Legislature amended the charter of the Transit Railroad Company giving it authority to build a railroad from St. Peter, MN to the Big Sioux River, north of Lake Kampeska near Watertown, SD.

Earlier in 1857, the US Congress had given the railroad every odd section of land on either side of the purposed line of the railroad. Time to complete this expansion was March 3, 1866. This time limit was extended by Congress to July 7, 1873.

It was either get the railroad built or lose the land grant. The push was on to get the railroad built. Between 500 and 600 men and horses were needed to build the railroad. The men lived in tents so the area was referred to as Tent City. Because of its location, the town was also called Headquarters or Stateline

Some called the town DeGraf for the Railroad Contractor and Builder. When it was determined that a post office was needed, the post office officials would not accept the name of DeGraf because there already was a DeGraf on the Winona, St. Peter Line. Finally, Captain Henry Herrick and C.H. Whitney, post master at Marshall, MN, named the town Gary, for Major Gary who ran the first train into town and was an early mail agent. The first locomotive and train reached Gary in late May, 1873.



A former riverboat captain on the Missouri River, H. H. Herrick filed a claim in 1870. Captain Herrick, often called the Father of Gary, saw a need for better housing in the community. To obtain lumber, Herrick had to go to New Ulm, MN, the closest settlement. He hauled lumber the 120 miles from New Ulm to Gary by team and wagon. In the latter part of 1872, he opened a hotel known as The Herrick House.

Herrick went back to Iowa for his family and returned to Gary on December 1, 1872. He moved westward in 1904.

In the 1870's, there were no roads, buildings or trees; just tall prairie grass as high as wagon wheels. Elk, antelope and many water fowl inhabited the area. Prairie chickens were abundant as were wolves and coyotes. Herrick reported seeing a big Black Buffalo wolf, a sub-species, which is now extinct. The Black Buffalo wolf was also called the Great Plains wolf.

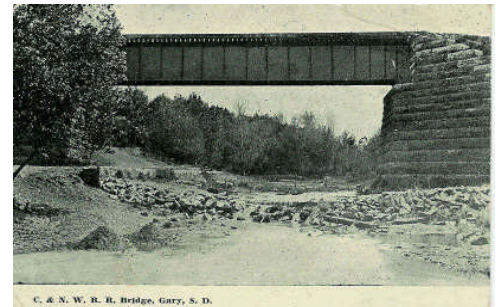
Gary has many reminders of its early history. Some of streets in the Gateway City are Herrick, Coteau, Mill and Lac Qui Parle. The brick abutments of the old railroad trestle still exist as well as a railroad monument. Inscription on the monument reads: "This monument erected by the Gary Historical Association in the Bicentennial year of 1976 honors the first permanent railroad in Dakota Territory. With land grant aid and under a charter obtained in 1854, rails were laid to Gary, the chosen section headquarters in 1872 by the Winona & St. Peter Railroad later known as the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company so providing access to the region for the thousands of homesteaders and other settlers who arrived in the years that followed."

Gary had the distinction of being the smallest city in South Dakota to be officially designated as a "historic city" for 1976 Bicentennial.

Many buildings are made of bricks from local companies using the clay from the area. One building, The Whistle /Jail House, is constructed of local blocks painted yellow. The whistle still sounds at 12:00 noon and at 6:00 p.m. The 9:00 p.m. curfew has been discontinued. Old jail cells are stored in this structure.



One of the oldest buildings is labeled, Unity Lodge # 18-I.O.O.F.-1889. Located next to it is a building with First National Bank engraved above the door. Another old building is labeled F.H. Green - 1900.



Around 1880, a grain elevator and flour mill were established. A blacksmith shop, harness shop and lumber yard helped Gary become a hub for area settlers. A newspaper, The Gary Interstate, was established on September 6, 1878. It continued its weekly publication for over one hundred years. Today, it is published monthly by the Gary Historical Association.

Many Civil War veterans lived in the Gary area. They became members of the GAR(Grand Army of the Republic). They met regularly in a hall which was referred to as the GAR or Philharmonic Hall.

By 1887, along with the depot and round house, the town boasted of the following businesses and services: four doctors, four attorneys, two undertakers, two hotels, two banks, a flour mill, a basket factory, four general stores which carried clothing, boots and shoes, two drug stores, a gun repair and jewelry store, two millinery shops, two meat markets, two hardware

stores, two blacksmith shops, two saloons, a barber shop, a harness shop, a mason work business, carriage painting business, two livery stables (one could rent a team and buggy or for a small fee one could leave a team of horses there), a post office, the newspaper, two slaughter houses, several ice houses, three carpenters, a feed store, a land office, three lumber yards, one auctioneer and two draymen.

On the counter in his general store, J.V. Wells kept a pail of fresh, cold drinking water for customers to help themselves. A young Gary boy was given candy to keep it filled.

Charles Peachy had a furniture store and an undertaker business. His advertisement in the Gary Interstate read, "We sell furniture- everything from cradle to coffin."

A school was established in 1879. Outgrowing the school, a new school was completed for classes in January of 1905. The children were picked up in a horse-drawn bus. Many additions were added to the building. During summer of 1957, the community began to build an auditorium. Due to high costs, volunteers from the community gave countless hours of assistance to project.



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Several churches were also started. Today, there are three active parishes: First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wisconsin Synod, St. Peters Catholic Church, and United Methodist Church.

Gary also had a two -story Court House, fair grounds with numerous buildings and a race track, an opera hall, and a baseball diamond.

After Clear Lake became the Deuel County Seat, the Court House building became the first building for a school for the blind. In 1900, The South Dakota School for the Blind was built on 37 acres of land in Gary. The Court House was last used as the Administration Building for the school.

The students lived in a dormitory on campus which includes classrooms, administrative offices, gym/auditorium with a stage, a boiler building and barns for cows, chickens and pigs.

The School for the Blind emphasized individualized preparation rather than a group development. An ordinary text book filled fifteen volumes of Braille. The dictionary filled 32 volumes.

Music, academic and industrial training were the three areas of focus. The outstanding music department influenced the public school resulting in numerous awards for both groups.

Weaving, broom making, basketry, furniture repair and upholstery, chair caning, leather craft, piano tuning and general shop were offered.

The school was moved to Aberdeen in 1961. Today, after several business ventures, the buildings are abandoned.

The Gary High School was a vital part of the community. Hundreds of trophies for music, forensic and sports are housed in the District #61 rural country grade school, which is a part of the Gary Historical Museum Complex. In 1986, a painful decision to close the Gary High School was made.



Today, the 'old' school has been completely renovated to house the EMS, Energy Maintenance Systems, and the DES, Diversified Energy Solutions, businesses. They both work with wind energy.

The present needs of the community are met by The Alibi Café, DNB National Bank, The Gate City Store, Rob's Locker, Steele's Service station, a municipal liquor store, the US Post Office, a new fire station, the newly remodeled library and city offices.

Gary is the headquarters for Cliff Viessman Trucking which serves the lower 48 states. Midwest Converter Supply, Inc. remanufactures torque converters for a five state area. A large storage building for K.H.C. Construction, Inc., a concrete construction contractor specializing in wastewater treatment plants, makes its home in Gary.

Many other businesses are located in the Gary area. They can be found on the Internet Website at www.garysd.com and click on the link entitled businesses.

The newest business is The Gate City Lodge which was converted from the former Lutheran Church building in the summer of 2007. Along with the Creek Side Lodge, it provides year round lodging. It is part of a pheasant hunting business.

Peden-Cole American Legion maintains a large community center. Saturday night meals are served in the 109 Club to raise funds.

For many years, the community worked together to host a Buffalo Supper. Roast Buffalo and all the trimmings including a popular cranberry relish were on the menu. One year, over 1100 people were served.

Every year since 1980, an annual cattle drive takes place the last Saturday in October. The cattle are driven 16 miles and go right down the main business street of Gary. Today, they are herded by 30-40 horseback and four wheeler riders.

This vital community did not roll up the streets when the rail line was abandoned or when the school closed. Tradition, has kept this community bustling over the years. Celebrating 135 years was no trick for the 231 residents of Gary and those of the surrounding area. They have been celebrating over the Fourth of July for years and years. According to Byron Cochrane, Deuel County's first permanent homesteader, the first area celebration took place at a lake south of Gary in 1874. The lake is now known as Lake Cochrane. At the left, the parade proceeding on Coteau Street shows the red, white and blue. The highest point in the distance is called Indian Lookout.



In 1887, there was a grand Fourth of July Celebration. Arrangements had been made to seat 1000 people but that number was far exceeded. A train from Watertown brought 300 people plus horses for the horse race. The regular train from the east brought 200 people from Canby, Marshall, Porter and other towns on the rail line in Minnesota. The day before, delegations from Minneapolis, Montevideo and Dawson arrived for the big event.

At 10:00 there was an impressive mile long procession with the Gate City Concert Band, Canby, MN Drum Corps, the GAR Posts of Gary and Canby leading the way. The Gary Philharmonic Society played music, the Declaration of Independence was read and a historical oration was given.

The races began at 2:00. They included the three minute trotting race, the half mile running race, a quarter mile running race and the featured race.

This year, 2007, there were four grand days of celebrating for Gary's 135th Anniversary and Gary Historical Association's 40th Anniversary. Many events were revived from past celebrations. Soap box and bed races, a kiddies parade, games and tractor pull for children, hog

wrestling, water fights, dances, car, tractor, and cycle shows, auto demolition, work horse and mule demonstrations, and a Gary Idol contest. Royalty for the 135th were a teen queen, and a king and a queen representing the Gate City Senior Citizens.

A presentation by Rodeo Cowboy, Jerry Norton, was given at the All-School Reunion. This brought together two annual events, the annual championship rodeo and the all-school reunion.

The seventeenth annual Gary All-School Reunion gave alumni and community members a chance to socialize and reminisce. Jerry Norton, a 1986 Gary High School graduate and a well-known rodeo clown, gave two presentations. One was 'Rodeo Career Highs and Lows,' and the other was 'Laying the Groundwork for a Champion.'

Jerry is the 1998 PRCA World Champion Bullfighter. As a youngster, Jerry started his rodeo career by riding calves. Participation in the SD High School Rodeo was a stepping stone for this Champion. While in high school, Jerry also participated in football, basketball and track. He held the state Class B track record in the 100 meters for six years.

In addition to bullfighting, Jerry has steer wrestled, ridden bareback, and saddle bronc. A graduate of Dakota Wesleyan University, he makes his home in Mitchell, SD with his family.

The 35th Annual Championship Rodeo was sponsored by the Gary Rodeo Association and is Co-Sanctioned by SDRA-MRA and NRCA. All the net profits from the rodeo go to the Make-A Wish Foundation of South Dakota.

A new event this year, Gateway to the West Art Show gave local artists a chance to display their work. Awards were given for Peoples Choice, Best of Show for fiber art, and two-dimensional and three-dimension art.

The 4 Moons Rising Rendezvous which depicts frontier life is also held this time of the year in the Gary Gulch. It was open to the public on July 4.

The Gary Historical Association sponsored reminiscing programs and an Old Settlers Picnic. Following the annual parade on Sunday evening, the community celebrated with an anniversary cake. The Callens Family Entertainment from nearby Minneota, MN closed the celebration.

The Gary Historical Association (GHA) maintains a museum complex which contains old farm machinery, the District #61 school house, a pioneer log cabin, and a post office which was the General Store in Burr, MN. A large metal building houses many local pioneer artifacts. The Whistle/Jail House which GHA restored this year will be used as an informational center.

Every year, family reunions are common as many former community members return for the celebration.

The community is already preparing for next year's coming home event. Next year, the Gary Gulch will be featured at the all-school reunion. This will surely be a time of telling stories of the past, and keeping the history of Gary, SD, The Gateway City, alive for the next generation.

Some information for this article was obtained from The Gary Interstate, Gary, South Dakota, Gate City to the Dakotas 1872-1972 by William L. Stone.



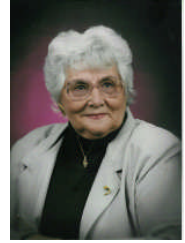
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BECOME A MEMBER of the Gary Historical Association. It is only \$10 per year and you can be a part of a growing organization. We believe in preserving buildings and artifacts pertinent to the preservation of the history of Gary, SD and community. Have you sent your membership dues yet?

Down Memory Lane, by Bernice Jensen

Dear Friends,

Due to illness, I am in the hospital and wasn't able to contribute my story this month, but look for my next story in the January issue. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR. I have submitted a poem that I wrote and hope that you enjoy it.



SILENT FORGIVENESS

This is what I saw in the old gentleman's face.
A smile on his lips,
He shook his head with absolute grace.
Don't excuse yourself young man,
Somehow I seem to understand.
I too, was young like you, you know.
Anxious when the light said go.
My feet were nimble, and I walked with pride,
My arms swinging, I seemed to glide,
Anxious to reach the other side.
My head was busy and light,
Dreams of ambition that made my life right.
Now I look down at this body tired and old.
Thinking, this is the age they call gold?
He looked around, took a deep sigh,
My life has gone by like the wink of an eye.
Then he thought to himself in his own silent way,
Young man, someday at another time,
You will stand on a street corner tired and gray,
Tomorrow's young man will approach you and say,
Excuse me sir, you are blocking my way.
With a twinkle in your eye,
And a smile of memories gone by,
With unspoken forgiveness you will hear yourself say,
Don't excuse yourself young man,
Somehow I seem to understand.

Written by:

Bernice Jensen

Montevideo, Minnesota now back to Gary, SD

Come along down Memory Lane and we will have a great time.

Would you like to contribute a story to the Gary Interstate? Just email rstbaer@itctel.com or write to us at Box 705 Lac Qui Parle Street, Gary, SD 57237 and we will consider it.
Roger Baer, President, Gary Historical Association.

MEMORIES FROM THE HEART

By Betty Schaefer McCormick

This time of the year I always think back and remember when our cousin's wife, Bertha Johnson, would bake and have a box of goodies brought to our house. She would make all the traditional Scandinavian treats that our family so enjoyed, especially the Krumkake, Rosettes, and Lefse.

Today, I was shopping and found a Krumkake Iron in the kitchen store and it instantly brought back those wonderful memories. I could almost smell them and imagine their buttery taste. . I know I will be going back to the store and purchasing that Krumkake Iron so my family can experience those delicacies.

Thank you, Bertha, for all those great treats and memories.

I usually make hundreds of cookies and candies, many of the same ones our family would make, and a fruit cake that my husband's family would make, so we keep the traditions going.

My Dad always purchased a bottle of Mogen David wine, chocolates, pickled herring, cheeses, mixed nuts, Christmas ribbon candy, along with all the cookies and candies that were homemade, and then the traditional turkey dinner.

This year, we have our Russian daughter in law joining us for the holidays, so we will be starting more traditions. It is important that she keep her traditions and that we learn to enjoy her traditions. She is most anxious to see how we spend our holidays and take part in our festivities. Last week when my husband and I were helping her and my son pack and move, we had Lefse and honey for snacks. she loved it, so now she is sharing one of my Norwegian traditions. We also had her Russian honey cookies and tea. Even in moving, there will be wonderful memories. Our family will enjoy Norwegian German, English and Irish and now Russian foods this holiday . Two daughters will be coming from Ohio, and Missouri.and they bring their traditions. They have so many friends of different nationalities and they always send some of their foods along. They know our family loves tasting and enjoying different foods beers, and wines from other countries.

We always serve Hot and Sour Soup and Egg Rolls on Christmas Eve , a tradition our son has started from his college days.

This week Jim and I stopped at Tomah, WI., and purchased fresh cranberries from a grower. How wonderful they will taste in breads, jams and sauces this holiday. I always buy enough to keep in the freezer to use during the year. My Mom always had to have fresh cranberries for the holidays, no canned ones.

When I was in college I lived with a family and the lady of the house taught me how to make peanut brittle, so I always make peanut brittle in her honor. She was a great candy maker and cake decorator. I came home from college that winter and my sisters and I made pounds of peanut brittle, and I still make peanut brittle, Jim's favorite candy.

When I taught young girls in our church's youth group, all six and seven year olds, I would have them make fudge for their parents. Each girl would take home a batch of fudge for their gift. On occasion when I meet them now, they still talk about the fudge making sessions. About thirty batches of fudge were made in one evening. Each young girl so proudly displaying her wrapped box of fudge.

I am sure many of you readers also have enjoyed these traditions. It is so important that we keep traditions alive. Nowadays, families are so busy that a person doesn't take time to bake or make something that their family enjoyed years ago.

Take the time to make something special, write down the recipe or instructions and share it with friends and loved ones. You will be glad you did. It makes a fabulous "Memory From the Heart". Happy Holidays to all our family and friends, near and far, and especially our American Soldiers. God Bless You All.

Betty McCormick

Just a few more "Memories from the Heart".

Frederick W. Battles dies in Eugene, Oregon

Frederick W. Battles, who was born and raised at Gary, has passed away at the age of 79 in Eugene, Oregon—Friday evening, Oct. 25. He was suffering from cancer.

He was born on April Fools Day, April 1, 1928, to William H. and Lucille “Lucy” Hundertmark Battles. He will be remembered as a very active youth who worked in Gary as a projectionist at The Prom Theater, who mowed the lawns at the State School for the Blind, and who was a “printers devil” at The Gary Interstate. He was a busy kid.

After graduating from Gary High School in 1946, he attended General Beadle State College for one year and was certified to teach, but instead he worked in printing associated with newspapers for his entire career. This journey took him from Gary to Canby, MN, to Westbrook, MN, to Lawrence, IN, to Sauk Center, MN, (all fill-in positions) and then to Mandan, ND, where he stayed two years. Then he went to Bismarck where he met and married Ruth Ulmer of Wishek, ND. They were in Bismarck for a few years. Their first daughter Beverly was born there in 1955.

His career journey then took the Battles to the *St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press* for one year. Ruth wanted to move West and to give Portland, OR, a try. Upon getting there, Fred could find only part-time work in the big city, split between the two rival newspapers, as a substitute, so they moved to Pasco, WA, where they stayed for nearly seven years. Daughter Becky was born there in 1960.

In 1963 they moved to The Dalles, OR, where *The Dalles Chronicle* gave Fred the opportunity to work with “cold type” which was generated from a computer. No longer was he working with metal type. It was quite a change for him. Daughter Billy Ann was born in The Dalles in 1965.

In 1968 the family moved to Eugene where Fred worked at *The Register-Guard* for the rest of his career.

His wife Ruth died in 1997, leaving a giant void in his life. He missed her very much.

In early 2004, Fred was visiting with a friend who had done extensive genealogical research and was lamenting that he knew virtually nothing of his father’s lineage. The friend said, “Maybe we can discover something.” Within six weeks, with terrific luck, they had unraveled one thousand years of Fred’s lineage on the Battle’s line, the whole way back to the Viking colony of Normandy in France.

In the two years that followed, Fred and his friend assembled a 270-page book on the family entitled *The Battles of Puckwana*. It is available at the Gary Library. Fred was very proud of this achievement.

Fred is survived by his daughters Beverly of Eugene, Becky (Ted) Isham of Fall Creek, OR, and Billy Ann (Richard) Bergthold of Arlington, VA. There are also five grandchildren and two great grandchildren and two sisters, Viola Haas of Madison, MN, and Edith Fairchild of Watertown, SD.

A memorial service for Mr. Battles will be held on Friday, Nov. 30, at 2:00 PM at Immanuel Baptist Church in Springfield, OR. His daughter Becky Isham's address is 40425 Fall Creek Rd., Fall Creek, OR 97438.

GARY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Newsletter from the President

Our November Meeting was held on November 10, 2007 at the Gate City Lodge.

We are pushing to get some last minute outside work done before the cold weather sets in. An exhaust fan has been purchased to be installed in the jail house information center. We will also be considering the purchase of a 10' step ladder to be use in our facilities.

The furniture committee has finalized the purchase of 13 chairs and an oak table from the Madison, Mn. library.

Randy Meyer has agreed to paint a new sign for us at the three mile corner south of Gary.

The cemetery history project has started. Jim and Kellie Lewis have agreed to be a part of that committee. Jim Cochrane will also be helping us.

We have decided to move the monument and flag pole at the museum park to a different location so they will be more visible.

The new shades for the school house and the jail house information are here and ready to be installed as time permits.

We continue our efforts to make contacts with state officials on our part of the creek cleanup.

We want to do our part to help make the creek the only trout stream in eastern South Dakota.

There were reports from the cemetery repair committee, the cemetery history committee, and the land title history committee. Would you like to submit an obituary or short story of a family member buried at Grandview? We would be glad to have it as part of our cemetery history project.

Roger Baer, President, Gary Historical Association

Would you like to contribute a story to the Gary Interstate? Just email rstbaer@itctel.com or write to us at Box 705 Lac Qui Parle Street, Gary, SD 57237 and we will consider it.

Roger Baer, President, Gary Historical Association.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

M stands for merry, the Christmas time each year,
E is for everyone who joins within the cheer,
R is for the reindeer who drives Santa Claus around,
R is for the ringing bells that make the merry sound,
Y is for the yuletide with the logs upon the fire.

C is for Christmas that makes our spirit higher,
H is for the happy folks in every home around us,
R is for the ringing bells with their metallic sounds,
I is for the ice that covers up the land,

S is for the snow that lays like sifted sand,
T is for the time that scurries by so fast,
M is for the memories that will forever last,
A is for the asking of our Savior up above,
S is for the sins we hope he rejects with all his love.

TO wish you all a Merry Christmas is the least we can say,

And all around the country have a Merry Christmas Day,
L stands for the last of the year that's nearly done
Lets hope that everyone around has the best in 1971.

Marietta Thomas

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST.

CELL PHONES are pretty important in our fast moving world. Gary's tower is up and Alltel has also bought the tower in Clear Lake. That tower has been reprogrammed and we have reception from it also. Do you have an old cell phone that you are not using? Give it to a senior citizen to use for emergencies. It won't cost you or them a dime and it may save a life.

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