

## Down Memory Lane

By

Bernice Jensen

Last month I identified the houses that are no longer a part of Gary on the West side of Main Street. This month I will identify the vacant lots on the east side of Main Street.

Starting at the North end of Summit Street we will go south. The first vacant lot on the east and to my left is the house where the Stangland family lived. This was the only family that I remember living there. I wish I knew who built it. The next house on the corner was a two story frame home. Many people lived there. I believe it was a Kenyon home. Years ago Barney and Lena Hunt lived in the home, also Tom Mc Lains, and the last people I remember living there was the Kenny Theisen family. Across the street on the corner was a small frame one story house. Cecilia Kenyon and her sister Barbara and husband lived there. The ladies were pleasant and charming. Cecelia was a bookkeeper in the office of the State School for the Blind. Now we will go over to Laura Street. At the north end of the street stood a small one story house built by Mr. and Mrs. Jim Wurtz. It was sold in the last ten years to Clark Dessler. Across the road on the Minnesota side stood a farm home owned and built by Barney and Frances Felsheim. They had a son George who built a filling station on the south west corner of the farm. There was a station and a small home that are no longer there. Several families operated the station. The last family was the Gerald and Rose Mason family. They left many of us with good memories. Other owners were Joe and Lil Miester. They came from Detroit and went back. They too were good business people as well as the Herbie Meyer family.

Across the road stood the Donaldson family home; Jim and Agnes and their son and two daughters lived there. They also ran a filling station and Jim had the most beautiful garden and flowers. Agnes was an active lady in the community. Jim was a boxer and taught his son to box. Visiting with Agnes was so interesting, telling me of her family coming to this country. These families were in Minnesota but were a real part of Gary. Now we will go up the hill as we usually address the part of town we are talking about. We turn left on Main Avenue on the right side of the street where Gate City Senior Citizens building now stands, was a small frame home. They only people I remember living there was Julius Bekaert. They moved to Gary when they retired. They had several children, with Albert and Don living in Gary. Don passed away a few years ago and Albert lives in the Minnesota side. On the left side of the street was a two story home. The only family I recall living there was Albert and Anne Larson. Annie was a mid wife and many babies were born in that home. After their passing, Ed and Lavonne Lorenzen and their family lived there for many years. To my knowledge no other family lived there. It was taken down and the Schmachers purchased it. The next house beside the Lorenzen home going east was a small frame one story house that I remember my parents talking about Bob Drew and his family living in the home. Bob was the music teacher in the public school and School for the Blind.

Dr. and Effie Gross and son Dennis lived in the home. Doc was the dentist and brought a good business to Gary. Elsie loved to entertain and was a good hostess. Their son Dennis was a handsome little fellow and was a very busy little man. I remember when he climbed the water tower to the platform and waved at the people below. I was told about this. John Hiney brought him down. It was a grand reunion between Dennis and his parents.

After the Gross family, Pat and Mary Fitzpatrick purchased and lived in the home. After Pat's death, Mary moved to Sioux Falls to live with her son Joseph. Ida Johnson purchased the home and Ida rented it to Sophia Kenyon and her brother while she assisted in the care of Mary

Fitzpatrick in Sioux Falls at the Joe Fitzpatrick home. After Mary's death, Ida moved back to her home and lived there until she moved to the Nursing home in Canby. Lars Johnson purchased the house and Lars lived there until it burned down.

I believe this is the end of the vacant lots that were at one time home to many families. Some of the older homes are no longer standing, but there are many older homes that have been renovated and are looking great. Many new homes have been built in Gary. Gary is a remarkable small town and the Former State School for the Blind is coming back to be even more beautiful than I remember it to be. It is great to call Gary my home town.

PS Harry Helmbolt had a stucco house where Angel built her home north of the City.

If you have any knowledge of the original owners or builders of a home in town, please contact Roger or Shar Baer at 272-2207 or email [rstbaer@itctel.com](mailto:rstbaer@itctel.com). Identifying these homes is only what I remember and what my parents and their friends talked about. I liked to listen to stories from my parents generation. If you have any comments, please let me know.