

The  
**Gary Interstate**

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

**GARY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

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

[www.garysd.com](http://www.garysd.com)

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



**HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE GARY INTERSTATE.**

The global warming must have affected us because our winter has been later than usual this year. March winds are already licking our heels and it won't be long before all the area farmers will be anxious to get in the field. I am sure that over a cup of steaming coffee in the Alibi the farmers are already discussing the right corn and beans to plant. Many important decisions have been made over a cup or two of coffee. Must be the caffeine, don't you

think??? Or as they say, two heads are better than one!

We want to thank all of you that have contacted us and thanked us for the stories that have been submitted. We really appreciate knowing that so many of you are reading the paper and enjoying it. Some of the items in the paper have brought back many memories that have been hidden in the old memory banks and have now been brought back to life and are being talked about again.

We hope this encourages all of you to make plans to come back for the 135<sup>th</sup> celebration of the City of Gary and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gary Historical Association, June 30, July 1, 2 & 3. It will be a grand old time for all and history again will be made. By Connie Severson [keys02@frontiernet.net](mailto:keys02@frontiernet.net)

**CONSTRUCTION MEN ARRIVED**

By Connie Severson

In August of 1872, the railroad was making its way to the newly born town, which was soon to be called, Headquarters. It is presently known as Gary, South Dakota. A large construction company of about 500 people arrived in town and began to make provisions. They built several houses, a company store, handling supplies of food for both people and animals, working clothes and needed supplies to build the railroad. Stables were built for all the company horses. They built a blacksmith shop, a butcher shop, and a slaughter- house.

Captain H. H. Herrick had located a claim and moved on a homestead west of town, where Melvin and Tawne Pieper presently live.

All the grading of the road to Kampeska was nearly completed by November 11 when a three day blizzard brought the work to a halt until the spring of 1873. When the work was finished, the construction workers dismantled all the temporary buildings that had been erected and moved them to the next settlement.

The first election was held November 1872 and they elected to call the town Gary.

The first locomotive and train reached the town of Gary in May 1873.

**Do you remember?**

In a 1998 issue of the Gary Interstate, in an article written by Lynda Jensen, someone was given the title of “The Timemaster”. Do you know who that was? The first one to email [rstbaer@itctel.com](mailto:rstbaer@itctel.com) with the right name gets their name in the next Gary Inter State.

There was only one person that made the attempt to guess who “The Timemaster” was and after several guesses Travis Baer guessed the correct answer: **Edward Cornell**. Congratulations Travis!

Remember to check out the web site at [www.garysd.com](http://www.garysd.com). There is an excerpt from an autobiography there by John Stanley, a former editor of the Gary Interstate. It was submitted by Diane Bartels Doyle. It tells about his family settling in this area. It is very interesting. For those that don't have the internet, we will print parts of it in this and up coming issues of this paper.

## **A PIONEER BUSINESS**

By Connie Severson

During the pioneering days of the town of Gary, South Dakota, the railroad construction workers had built a slaughter- house and meat store to feed all the workers in 1872.

Later in March 1878, a brick building was built east of Well's Hotel and it was used as a meat market. W.J. Troup started a meat market March 17, 1886. Then, history reveals that Shaw and Manicom moved their Star Meat Market to the building next to the Inter State. In September 1886, it dissolved. Samuel Bland of Canby, Minnesota, purchased the Manicom and Peachy Star Meat Market in July 1887. He promptly moved his family into Gary, August 5, 1887, into the M. E. Parsonage in the south part of town.

September 12, 1890- 1893, L. Purinton and son owned a meat market and they added a second story to the building. The addition was intended for a dwelling.

Benjamin Benner and his three sons moved to Gary in 1901 in a brick house (now occupied by Erna Hundertmark) and engaged in the meat business with Herman Kernes and Charlie Eckart. The original meat market was located where the Gertrude Baer house now stands. The meat was kept cold in an ice house between the meat market and the Ethel Bartel property which is the vacant lot south of Baer's home. After a few years, Ben became the sole owner and called it the Benner Meat Market. After losing his wife Anna Inkley of nine years, Benjamin married Lillie Wood Walker, grandmother of James and Ralph Cole.

Behind the Benner home to the north was a barn that housed the livestock for slaughter. In the early years, the livestock were walked to a slaughter- house located on a ravine southeast of the Gary Cemetery. The livestock were butchered there and transported back to the meat market on a horse drawn platform buggy. Arthur, son of Benjamin, joined his father in the meat business after serving with the Army during World War I in France and Germany from 1917 to 1919. Art married Eva Anna Fritz in 1925.

Before Eva was married, she was a bookkeeper for F. W. Banwarth Garage. After she married Art, she helped her husband in the meat market and also played the piano for the sound effects for the Silent Movies held in the theatre above the Old Gary Liquor Store. Eva ran the linotype for the Inter State editors, Charles Cobb, J.M. Mortenson and Reinie Miottel. She was organist for the St. Peter's Catholic Church for many years.

Benjamin worked with his son Art in the Benner Meat Market until his death in July 1932. Art Benner was an avid baseball player, pitcher, and umpire for Gary for many years.

Art and his wife Eva started a frozen meat locker plant in the old First National Bank, January 1941. He stocked fresh meats and groceries. Art trained Bernard Anderson and Herbert Hunt to be meat cutters along with his wife, son and daughters. Art worked in the Benner Meats and Lockers until he died of bone cancer, December 26, 1959. Eva and son Dennis operated the business until March 1960 when Herbert Hunt purchased the market. Living descendents of Art and Eva Benner are: Mrs William (LaMorne) Wiest of Canby, Minnesota, Mavis Johnson of Watertown, South Dakota and Dennis Benner of Iowa City, Iowa. Owners since then have been Jerry Squashingroff, 1968 and Walt Ochsendorf who owned it from 1968-1981. Robert , Norbert and Myron Deslauriers purchased the meat market in 1981. Robert and wife Julie became the sole owners in February 1995. He installed a smoke house and started a catering business with his wife Julie. Rob and Julie added butchering chickens in 2006. They processed 6,000 chickens and plan to continue.

This is one of the remaining commercial businesses on Gary's North- South Main Street, which is located on the west side of Coteau Street.

### **Do you remember:**

That in 1934 Lake Elsie was developed, and  
that in 1935 the Gate City Golf Course moved to 2 miles south of Gary, (where was it before that?), and  
that in 1947 the R.E.A. comes to Deuel County.

A few thoughts from  
**Memories of the Heart**  
By Betty McCormick

**A Touch of Kindness**

Every now and then there are people who have entered our lives whom we just can't get out of our minds. As a student in Gary High School, we were most fortunate to have had some very dedicated teachers. One couple comes to mind a great deal. They were Mr. and Mrs. Overgaard. He was the Superintendent and Math teacher and she was our Business and Foreign Language teacher. I don't think at the time we students really appreciated them. As I look back, they were highly educated, well read, much traveled, intelligent people and most kind. As most of us now realize, high school years are brutal. They could have retired and enjoyed their senior years. He had his Doctorate and she her Masters. They enjoyed traveling, had raised a fine, educated family and could have just relaxed and traveled. I believe an angel sent them to our community.

There is one incident that comes to mind, especially, since we are now experiencing this severe cold weather.

One morning a young student in Gary Grade School, I believe he was in kindergarten or first grade, had walked to school. It was a rather long walk, within the city limits, but a very long walk for such a little boy. He lived out on the edge of town. There was no busing for students within the city, even though the walks could be quite long.

This little boy came into school looking like an ice berg. He was so poorly dressed and so cold. Mrs Overgaard saw him as he emerged through the main doors going up the steps before turning into his homeroom. She immediately went into Mr. Overgaard's office, the old lunchroom before the auditorium era.

A short time later she emerged and said "Betty you and Mr. Overgaard are going to Canby, so you will miss a few classes this morning." I really didn't know what was going on but called my parents and told them and received their permission. I went upstairs to the high school lockers got my coat and went back downstairs and met Mr. Overgaard. We went out to his car and drove to Canby. On the way there, I was told I would be helping pick out warm clothing for this boy. We went to Anthonys Store where they sold clothing, anything a person would need. Mr. Overgaard said to pick out warm clothes and not to worry about the price. I know the final price made me gasp as I couldn't believe this man's generosity.

We picked out a wool coat, boots, gloves, everything this little guy would need to stay warm and be able to walk to and from school. When back in Gary the gifts were given to his teacher and she helped him with his new clothes, done in such a way, that no other students would know he had received these wonderful warm gifts from two of our devoted staff members. I don't even think other students in high school were aware of the situation.

These two teachers came into our lives when our school was having a hard time filling positions. The salaries were not the greatest and much was demanded of our teachers.

We as students may not have always believed or enjoyed how they taught, or the rules they set. I know there were many of us students who dearly loved them. We would tease around but you could tell they really enjoyed the moments They were so kind to me, personally. So many odd jobs to do around their house which either one of them could have done, but hired me so I would have spending money. One such memory was when I was helping her clean the bedrooms after holiday guests. There was a box with beautiful silk pajamas in it. "Oh," she says, I must have forgotten to give them to my daughter-in-law for Christmas. Try them on and see if they fit. Of course, a perfect fit, so I now had beautiful silk pajamas. I wore them with such pride for years. They were kept for special occasions when I would stay over at someone's house. I still think of them. I had those pajamas after I was married and finally, I had to say good bye and dedicate them to the rag bag.

Looking back on my years of growing up in Gary, I have just been so fortunate to have had such wonderful people come into my life. I know all of you have had such people also. Please remember them warmly in your thoughts and prayers. Thank goodness for the warm generosity of the Overgaard's and all the other kind people who have passed our way. I have tried to locate them over the years but have failed to do so. My memories are warm and kind, thank you for putting retirement on hold and being such a big part of my life and the lives of other Gary students. God Bless.

*Did you know that the Gary City council meets the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.?*

## March

It soon will be the first of March  
That time of year we dread,  
We do not know the weather then  
And only guess instead

The first of month may usher in  
Like a little gentle lamb,  
Or with a deafening lion's roar,  
As tumbling water o'er a dam.

It is a time when folks will move  
To their new homes from their old,  
Some will have to rent again  
And some their homes have sold.

Generally the snow is deep  
And ice upon the ground,  
Drifting snow will block the roads  
And hard to get around.

We are thankful for the moisture  
That the crops will need next spring,  
And help the land and pastures  
And lots of satisfaction bring.

So soon it will be springtime  
And our birds return once more,  
The trees will leaf and flowers bloom  
And all beauty will restore.

--Marietta Thomas

### The ides of March are upon us!

I would like to say **thank you** to all that have given to the tin ceiling and the band shell projects so far. We are very fortunate to have citizens in our community, alumni and members that are so willing to help preserve the history of this town. I hope that you will be pleased when you see the results of your efforts when we get these projects finished. We can still use another \$2000 in donations for these projects. We are two thirds of the way to our goal. Please help us if you can. Your donation is tax deductible and we will give you a receipt for your donation.

Roger Baer

President, Gary Historical Association

One of our alumni, **Angie Keimig**, has started a fund raiser to help raise funds for the City of Gary's 135th celebration and Gary Historical Association's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. All you have to do is click on the site just below. Once there, click on "find a project". Then click on the drop down box and click on South Dakota. Then enter "Gary" into the empty box right next to it. Just click on SEARCH and it will take you to the "Fix Up Gary" slot. Just click on that and it will take you to the Gary project. At the bottom of the page just enter your name, your email address and your comments. There is no cost to you and it just takes a few minutes of your time. Let's win that money!!

[www.myhometownhelper.com](http://www.myhometownhelper.com)

### In Past Issues:

Contributed by Eldeen Baer

**March 15, 1901:** Gary now has another newspaper. The Deuel County News which started up in Clear Lake a few weeks ago, moved over last Monday and are our next door neighbors. The Inter State believes in competition. The Inter State was the first newspaper in Deuel County and one of the first in the state, and we see no reason at this time but what it will be one of the last.

We have always believed that this country will some day be found to be rich in petroleum. Several shallow wells which have been sunk near Cobb Creek at different times were so flavored with kerosene that no one could use the water. If there is anyone who knows anything about prosperity for oil, they should be consulted on the water and make an investigation.

**March 22, 1901:** Mr. Waters believed that he has found irrefutable evidence of the whereabouts of Captain Kidds wealth. It seems that Mr. Waters has stumbled upon a piece of trap rock with almost illegible characters upon it which would indicate that there is a cave near here in which this vast wealth is secreted, probably Captain Kidd took a preemption near Gary and deposited the proceeds of his first coop here.

Dear Friends,

Today we will visit the State School for the Blind in the Grandeur Days. To the City of Gary in Deuel County, it was the center of our City Parade. I worked there when I was 18 yrs old.

The administrative building where the superintendent and his family lived reminded me of a mansion. It also provided space for class rooms. The music rooms were in the lower level of the girl's dormitory. The boy's dormitory was the far north building. They were all connected by under ground tunnels.

In the very early days teachers with families lived in apartments over the Administration building. They were very attractive and comfortable. There were no handicap accessibility accommodations and yes, there were a few falls when I worked at the school.

Otis Rule was the superintendent when my parents worked at the school. My father was an Assistant to Joe Woodbury, the engineer in 1925. My mother was the maid to Mr. and Mrs. Rule. My parents met there and married in 1927.

There was a new dairy barn built in 1935, and across the drive on the west was a man made Lake named for the superintendents wife Elsie in the late 1920's. I cannot describe how beautiful it was. The lake had a bridge that connected the west side of the park with a large picnic area. Many family reunions and organizations held their annual picnics there as well as school picnics. The band stand served many musical evenings.

The auditorium was in the lower level of the girl's dormitory which held many activities such as Farmer's night every spring, Memorial Day services as well as Gary High School graduations. My class graduated in 1946. I remember a funeral was also held in the auditorium there.

The music rooms were also on the front lower level of the girl's auditorium. Gladys Woodbury's music room was on the right.

The stone lamp posts with the large white globes made the grounds look so welcoming. I was always told that a time capsule was placed under or beside one of the stone lamp posts. My father and a Mr. Collins said this.

It was heartbreaking to many in the community, myself and my parents when the building was no longer used as a School for the Blind and was moved to Aberdeen. After the school was vacated, it was never without security as watchmen were hired day and night by the state since it was their property. My father, Jack Schaeffer, was a night watchman until it was purchased by Orrin Ryan of Clear Lake.

Father made the statement, "You can not leave a building unattended or someone will destroy it." It is not the City's property nor is it the tax payer's property.

Orrin and Mrs. Ryan converted the building into a rest home and did a great job. The rooms were attractive and well maintained. The meals were great, the exterior of the building was kept up and the grounds were well manicured and landscaped with flowers, a fish pond, vegetable garden, and fruit trees as well. They took great pride in ownership of this property.

Today the school itself is just a memory. The property is still talked about because it is so much a part of the community.

The Gary community and its people take great pride in curb appeal, beautiful flowers and well groomed lawns.



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

# **GARY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

## **Newsletter from the president**

We have been very busy at the Gary Historical Association organizing for the celebration. More and more community members are getting involved, and that is a wonderful thing to see. The Historical Association continues to do fund raisers to raise needed funds to do our share.

I would also like to thank some of our members and members of the community for the things they do to help get the Gary Interstate out to the public. Gertrude Baer and Joyce Keimig deliver some over 100 copies to Canby on first Monday of the month. Amy Nickel delivers papers to Clear Lake. Charlotte Baer does the editing. We also want to thank the merchants in Gary, Clear Lake and Canby for letting us put the papers in their business place. There are 250 total printed each month. There are 110 delivered in Gary. There are around 80 delivered by internet.

Another note from the past from the March 22, 1901 Gary Inter State and pertains to Bernice Jensen's article: **We** have every reason to believe, had it not been for Doane Robinson, neither Gary or South Dakota's blind, would be received the benefits of a school for the blind. When Doane, stepped into Purinton's one afternoon in the summer of 1894, and sprung the blind asylum proposition, quite a number of Garyites were inclined to think that Doane had gone daft. But never the less Doane (like Dewey) "steamed ahead" on the asylum proposition, irrespective of the discouragements thrown in his pathway. We next find Doane at Pierre during the legislature of 1895, and here he also meets with considerable opposition to his undertaking.

### **Pioneering in Dakota Territory** ***Homesteading In Dakota Territory***

A reprint from an autobiography by John Stanley

Contributed by Diane Bartels Doyle

In 1878 father's longing for pioneering overpowered him again. There was extensive publicity about Dakota Territory, which railroads were penetrating and where new settlers were going. Mother's brother, David Aiken, and a few other friends of our family decided to join father in going west on an inspection trip. The Winona & St. Peter railroad (now C. & N. W.) had been granted by the government every other section of land extending ten miles on both side of their railroad all the way from a point in Minnesota to Lake Kampeska, in Dakota, where Watertown, South Dakota, now is; hence the railroad was doubly interested in settling up that vast uninhabited domain. The railroad at that time was offering its government-given lands mostly at three to four dollars an acre, which speculators were rapidly buying, while hordes of settlers were taking advantage of locating on the government lands.

The temporary terminus of the railroad was Gary, on the Dakota side of the state line, where immigrant cars filled the sidetracks; everything was exciting and apparently inviting. Here Captain H. H. Herrick, an old Mississippi river steamboat captain, had a few years previously "squatted" upon a tract of government land (before it had been offered for homesteading). It was an attractive location along the Lac Qui Parle creek, fringed with a growth of oak, elm and cottonwood trees, which presented an inviting scene in that vast prairie region. This was on the first railroad to extend into the central portion of Dakota Territory, and therefore was attracting widespread attention. Captain Herrick had hunted and trapped over a large portion of that region and had visions of a rapid settlement upon the free land the government was offering to settlers in 1877, when he built a hotel and established himself as land locator-for he knew the quality of about every quarter section. Father was not slow in becoming acquainted with the old captain, who had been hoping for a physician to locate there. It developed that Captain Herrick had not yet located anyone on a choice half section of land only two miles from his town site on the railroad, but he showed it to father, who made a homestead and tree claim filing thereon, 320 acres, in the spring of 1878.

**If anyone would like to enter family history on the web site**, just email the information to us. We will be glad to add your family history to our community history as time and space permits. We do reserve the right to edit all information sent.

Roger Baer, President