

REMBRANDT REMEMBERS



80 Years of Small Town Life

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Rembrandt School Song

**Purple and white, we're fighting for you,
We'll fight for all things that you can do,
Basketball, baseball, any old game,
We'll stand beside you just the same,
And when our colors go by
We'll shout for you, Rembrandt High
And we'll stand and cheer and shout
We're loyal to Rembrandt High, Rah! Rah! Rah!**

School colors: Purple and White

Nickname: Raiders and Raiderettes

Rembrandt Remembers: 80 Years of Small-Town Life

**Compiled and Edited
by Helene Ducas Viall and Betty Foval Hoskins**

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Introduction - Helene Ducas Viall

"What did you do in such a small town?" "How could you get a decent education in such a small school?" "What was it like growing up on a farm?" "Why do you go back to Rembrandt reunions?"

Most of us have been asked these questions through the years but have found it very difficult to put the answers into words. Why? Maybe the answers are better expressed as stories and experiences.

Many of us raised our children in cities, so their world was very different from ours. We experienced a true "community," even though we probably didn't realize or appreciate it at the time. Many who left found that the rest of the world wasn't as trusting, encouraging, or safe as our hometown. We also discovered that the high expectations in Rembrandt were not universal.

When Eloise Mosbo Obman and I visited in preparation for the Rembrandt Centennial pageant in 2001, one idea led to another. We asked Myron Teague, our band director in the late 1950s, if he would come back to direct the band for the "Concert in the Park" scene. His response: "that would be a hoot!" When I asked a number of his former students (from 40 plus years ago) to come and play together again under his direction, I didn't think of it as being unusual—I just thought it would be fun.

As part of the pageant publicity, we contacted several radio and TV stations. After the Centennial a Des Moines radio newsperson was amazed that people actually came back to play. She asked, "Why would anyone want to come back to such a small Iowa town, especially one whose high school closed 22 years ago?" In preparation for a live interview, I sent a mass email asking the band members, "Why did you come back?" I received a wonderful response from Betty Foval Hoskins, in which she put into words the essence of what growing up in Rembrandt meant to her. I suggested that she write a book, and together we decided to compile this book of memories. I was convinced that people would be interested in knowing more about life in rural Iowa.

Contacting alumni and teachers, first by letter and then often by phone, was a real pleasure as people responded enthusiastically to the idea of a book. The element of trust amazed me. All I had to say was that I grew up in Rembrandt, and they were willing to trust Betty and me with their memories. The 158 people who wrote represent every graduating class from the mid-1920s until the high school closed in 1979.

Some were hesitant to write because they didn't think they had anything special to say. A typical comment was, "I enjoyed growing up there, but I didn't do anything different from anyone else." Then they would tell me wonderful stories about growing up in Rembrandt. Realizing that our combined effort would be special to all of us, they agreed to share their thoughts and experiences, even though many said, "I'm not much of a writer." This book is not only for us and for future generations to enjoy, but it is also a tribute to those who have gone before us.

I felt very strongly that this book needed to be written—stories of ordinary people living ordinary lives. It is a snapshot of time, of place, and of values, that is not so common anymore. As Cordy Peterson wrote, “In a small town with a small school enrollment, we didn't realize that something really good was happening to us. And weren't we lucky. The never-to-be duplicated setting of which we all were a part is priceless.”

A Note on Editing: The arrangement of the stories in this collection is according to teaching or graduation year, even if the contributor did not graduate from Rembrandt but attended school there. For the most part, the stories remain as submitted; changes have been made in order to maintain consistency in word usage, in formatting, and in grammar and punctuation. We have wanted to hear different voices by letting contributors tell their own stories in their own ways. In spite of careful proofreading, mistakes will probably surface—they seem to be inevitable, and we take full responsibility for these errors. Our greatest fear is that someone's story or photograph was omitted because it got lost in the mail or in transmission. We apologize for any such omission.

Acknowledgements: The publication of this book would not have been possible without the help of the following people: Jerry McKibben, Paul Ducas, Barb McKibben Binder, and Betty McKibben Branhagen, who said this book had to be written; Nate, Aimee, and Dan Viall for their valuable suggestions and encouragement; Marlene Foval Eddie for her encouragement and for interviewing alumni in the Storm Lake area and Robert Hoskins for his invaluable technical, editing, and moral support. Ron and Janet Haraldson are “living encyclopedias” of Rembrandt's people and history (we asked the questions and they had the answers as well as many photographs to help illustrate the text); Rolf and Valerie Mosbo graciously shared their knowledge and experience; and Fred Schneider, Des Moines attorney, volunteered his legal expertise. Three previous books on Rembrandt were invaluable resources: *A Portrait of Rembrandt* by Rolf Mosbo, *Rembrandt Alumni Album*, and the *Rembrandt Diamond Jubilee* publication.

Clifford Green - Class of 1925

The following was written by his daughter, Rose.

I talked to Dad (who is 96 years old), and we had fun remembering some things. The four Green brothers were all "sought-after hunks" as the story goes. They were good athletes, very good looking, and very shy. Clifford played on all the sports teams that Rembrandt offered—basketball and baseball at the time. Dad was growing tall and was



Clifford, Nolan, and Loren Green

pretty skinny, yet he wore long-legged pants to catch up with his height. Subsequently, it meant that the pockets of his long pants were pretty far off the ground, so he was called "High Pockets Green" for several seasons. Even when he was no longer playing in high school, he was asked to join what summer leagues were playing. He would become the first baseman, and the name "Hi Green" had stuck. He has carried that name into his maturing years and still smiles when

someone says hello to Hi Green. He likes to remember that fun way back then.

Daytime work for Cliff was helping his father run the farm. The mule pulled the one-row plow, the corn was all picked by hand, wood had to be cut to heat the house, and on and on. In this same period of time he was a driver of a "school bus"—an open truck bed. It had frequent flat tires, and there was no place for any of the students on the bus to get warm while a tire was being changed.

Dad and Mom (Clifford and Marie) were set up on a date because Dad was too shy to make the first move. He was brave anyway, because when Marie went to teach at Rembrandt she made it very clear to her friends that, not to worry, she would NEVER marry a farmer.

We all delight in the story that as Mom and Dad were getting started as a farm couple, Mom used her savings from teaching (she made \$30 a month) to buy their first tractor. I guess that by then she was acknowledging that indeed, she was going to be a farmer's wife.

Clifford's parents, Levi Hallet (Hal) Green and Meta Johanna (Mayme) Pingel were the first couple to be married in Rembrandt. There was no church in town at that time (1904) so they were married in the home of her parents, and everyone in town was invited. I just feel that this early family was some of the glue that helped other early families make Rembrandt and its school what it meant to so many of us. In fact, three of their four sons married Rembrandt teachers.

Dad was very willing to work as a school board member and worked very hard to help improve the quality of our beloved school for all. He served several terms including

president. The McGrew and the Green kids received plenty of grief because our dads were long-time board members.

Dad carries so many fond memories of living and farming and starting and having his family of four children grow up there. Neither he nor Mom ever missed an activity that we kids (Dolores, Ken, Rose, and Steve) were involved in.

To me the best treat for Dad was the trip back to Rembrandt for the Centennial last summer, thanks to the efforts of Dolores and Steve. He loved seeing people and remembering. All of that part of his life means a lot to him.

Hilda Hegna Odor - Class of 1927

My dad was born in Norway, as were my mother's parents, so when I was real little, we spoke Norwegian at home. We went to Norwegian school in the summertime to learn to speak Norwegian even better. We went to a little schoolhouse about a mile north of our place, and our teacher was Norwegian. But after World War I broke out, we had to quit because after that you could only speak English in public. There were quite a few Norwegians around Rembrandt that this affected.

I always went to the Norwegian country church near what is now the Little Sioux Valley Cemetery. In the wintertime we would hitch up the sled to go to church and also to the Christmas program, which was always held there.

Our horses' names were Chub and Charlie, Babe and Bob, Belle and Roy, and Max and Bird. Max and Bird were our fancy horses that we'd hitch to the sled and also to our surrey. The others were bigger ones that were used to do field work.

The flu was very bad right after World War I. My mother died from the flu in 1918 when I was nine and my youngest sister was only two. It was so contagious and everybody was so sick that I don't think they even had a funeral. I remember they burned my mother's mattress afterwards. My cousin Buelah Brandvold and one of my neighbors, Bridget McCary, also died. There were six of us kids left without our mother, which was difficult for Dad. Eventually my aunt, Anna Berger, came out and stayed with us for a number of years until she got married.

Many people married someone from the same or a nearby community, so you usually had



Hilda Hegna

relatives close by. My cousin Olive Brandvold and my sister Dorothy were together a lot and were also with the Foval girls, Ervine and Isabelle.

When I was little I went to school in a horse-drawn bus. It was a good-sized bus, so quite a few kids would fit in it. We about froze. Sometimes we'd heat bricks in the oven of the cookstove to keep our feet warm.

I started school in Rembrandt as a first grader (there was no kindergarten). I think every room had two grades. When I was in high school, we had girls' basketball for a short time. The uniforms included pants—big bloomers that were pleated around the waist and hung down to your knees.

I was in the declamatory contest when I was a senior. There were three categories—dramatic, oratory, and humorous—and you always memorized your piece. I chose a dramatic one—it was long—two pages typewritten. We spoke our pieces in front of the home crowd at the gym in the school. Our teacher had told us if we forgot something just to walk off the stage because she wasn't going to help us at all. I knew mine just perfectly—I had spoken it to my aunt just before I went to the school because she couldn't come.

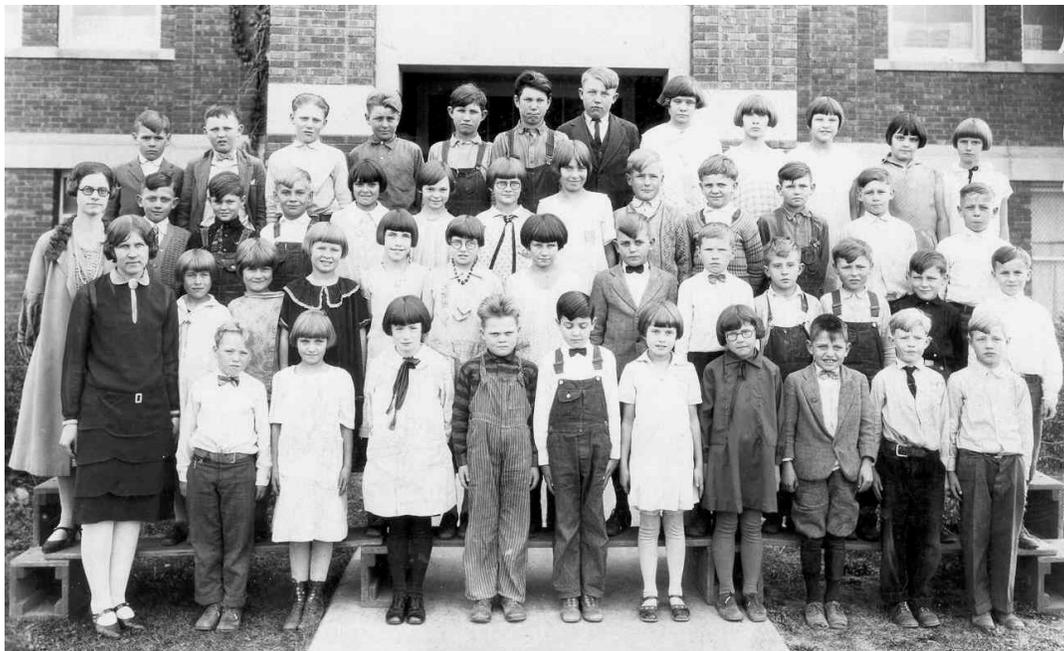
My piece was about a horse race—"How the LaRue Stakes Were Lost." I was doing just fine. Then I forgot, and I couldn't think of a thing. My teacher was in the wings but wouldn't help a bit. If she'd even given me one word, I know the rest would have come to me. There was nothing to do but walk off, which I did. It was an exciting piece—that was the worst of it—they wanted to know how it came out!

After Rembrandt

I stayed home after graduation because I was the "chief cook and bottle washer." I married Glenn Odor in 1931. He had also gone to school at Rembrandt. We had three daughters, Delores, Carol, and Lenora. Glenn's dad died in February after we were married, so we moved to his place and farmed there. We moved to Oregon for ten years and then moved back to Rembrandt and farmed my Uncle Oliver Berger's place from then on. We moved into Rembrandt and have been living here ever since. After we moved into town, Glenn had to have something to do, so he took up woodworking and enjoyed that. He passed away in 1993. I have 11 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.



Little Sioux Valley Lutheran Church in the Country



Fourth and Fifth Grades, Rembrandt, 1928

Catherine Grigsby Kestel - Class of 1928

I was born at Aurelia and then moved to Sherburn, Minnesota, at an early age. My uncle had a farm for sale four miles south of Rembrandt so we moved there. I am one of four children. My older brother Ray went to a country school south of Rembrandt and later married Zola Fairchild, who graduated from Rembrandt in 1921. My older sister Mae graduated from Rembrandt in 1923 and my younger sister Cecilia in 1930.

In those days no one had running water or electricity. I didn't have to do any chores, but Cecilia had to help with the milking before school. She always did like to be outside, however. We farmed with horses, of course; Ned was a favorite of the family.

I remember the bus ride in those days. The bus driver was Mr. Barnes, who was quite old at that time.

My good friends were Nellie Whitaker and Marjorie McKibben, who were both in my class. Whitakers lived close to our farm (the Whitaker place is where Tom Struve lives now).

I had a lot of earaches, and one of my teachers, Miss Carlson, used to put a cloth on my ear and let me be near the hot air radiator, and it felt so good!

I was in a class play where I had to wear high heels, and I borrowed them from Eva Fairchild who was older and a sister of Zola Fairchild, my brother's wife. I was so afraid that I would have trouble and fall down in them.

After my dad sold the farm, he later went into trucking. We always went to church at St. Mary's in Storm Lake, even though ten miles was a long way back then.

After Rembrandt

Following my graduation, I worked in Rembrandt at the telephone office, which was over Hegna's store then. A girlfriend of mine was working as an aide at Swallum's Hospital in Storm Lake, and I knew that she was going to quit, so I got that job. My husband-to-be and I went to many dances in the area, some at Alta and also barn dances. There used to be a lot of dances back then—we even had a barn dance at our farm once.

I was married in 1930 (my sister Mae and I married brothers), and we all lived on farms we owned southwest of the Storm Lake airport. For our honeymoon we traveled by car, an old Model A Ford, to Twin Falls, Idaho, a long trip that took a long time to get there and back. I was really an outdoors person and did a lot of work outside which I loved. I helped my husband sow oats and did the yard work. He died in 1971, and I stayed on the farm for many years until moving to Methodist Manor two years ago. My family consists of sons Dick in Okoboji, Iowa, Norman (now deceased), and daughter Phyllis in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I have 15 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. My sister, Cecilia, lives in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Genevieve Rystad Boese - Class of 1929

I was born in 1912 to August and Clara Rystad at their home here in Rembrandt. My dad came to Rembrandt with his parents in 1888 (his father was a minister). My dad homesteaded a farm near here, and then he was a carpenter and built several houses here in town. In 1916 he bought half interest in the Edwall and Dempewolf Hardware Store here in Rembrandt. He had the hardware store for over 50 years, many of those years in partnership with Mr. Edwall. He never did really retire—he always liked to have something to do.

The hardware store always had a good inventory on hand. Many times when people bought something, he would say, "We'll just write it down today." Then when people would come in to pay their bill, he'd often tell them to pick something out of the case, and he'd give them something free. He was honest and had a good reputation.

On Saturday nights the stores were open. People would come in and buy their groceries and make their order and then go see the movie. We had to stay open until they'd come back from the movie. It got to be kind of late sometimes, but we had some good customers.

We sewed a lot and made our clothes. We didn't know what it was to go to Storm Lake and buy clothes. Mother crocheted until the day before she died.

Since all the relatives lived around here then, we had a lot of family dinners. We didn't know what it was to go out to eat.

I remember going to the band concerts in town—we used to get a nickel or dime to buy an ice cream cone or something.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I stayed home for a year and then went to Waldorf College for a year, worked in the Statehouse in Des Moines, and came back to Rembrandt and worked at Rystad Bros. Store until I got married. I married Leonard Boese from Linn Grove during wartime when he was in the Navy. There were lots of wartime marriages then. We have four children and seven grandchildren.

Rembrandt Town Square



Waldo Pingel - Class of 1929

I was born on a farm two miles east of Rembrandt. My father, John Pingel, was born in Germany and my mother, Bertha, in Chicago. Her father was a bricklayer and moved to Iowa. I had two brothers, Art and Leo, and one sister Marie, all now deceased.

We had the normal farm childhood of those days, helping with the chores around the farm. We used lanterns both in the house and outside getting to the barn. Each of us boys had three cows to milk before going to school. We rode to school in a horse-drawn cart. It was very full, and when I was young I often had to sit on Marie Fairchild's lap for the ride into town. The school bus came into the picture as the modern way when I was in high school; I also drove the bus.

We boys were allowed to help pick corn in the fall; I think we got excused from two weeks of school to help. Art thought mules would be better than the horses, so he

bought a pair. They were stubborn and seemed to want to go when they wanted to . . . so Art made them run around the field twice at their top speed. They were so tired that they did behave when they were picking the corn. My father was ready to buy a corn picker, but then Sam Radke from near Lincoln Lee School was caught in the power take-off, so my dad decided it was too dangerous and changed his mind.

We got our first car—a Patterson—when I was in high school. We bought it from J.K. Haraldson. Everyone used the one car and took their turns.

Art didn't graduate from Rembrandt, but the rest of us did. Art quit after he and six or so other boys were caught smoking in the basement of the school. They were out for six weeks and he never went back, but I think the rest did.

Art bought his farm on Highway 71 for \$105 an acre, and Leo stayed on the family farm. Our father died of cancer at the age of 56, but our mother lived a long life, passing away at the age of 94. My dad's brother, Lou Pingel, was in the bank at Rembrandt with H. Lloyd Haraldson, and later Lou and a partner started the bank at Sioux Rapids, First State Bank, and also one in Linn Grove. My dad's sister was Mayme Green, mother of Merle, Cliff, Nolan and Loren.

We went to a rural church, Zion Lutheran, in the German settlement east of Truesdale.

After Graduation

In 1938 I married Renata Gutz, a girl from Zion, whose father was a teacher at the Zion Lutheran School. After we were married, we lived on a Mickelson farm west of Rembrandt (west of Johnnie McGrew's), and later moved to a farm south of Sioux Rapids where our three children went to school. Corrine is married and lives in California, Karolyn is married and lives in Lexington, Kentucky, and Galen is also married and lives in Little Rock, Arkansas. We retired to Storm Lake and now are residing in Methodist Manor. I'm in the residential area, and my wife is in the care unit because of painful arthritis.



Orva Kaasa Goodman - Class of 1930

I am from the Class of 1930, and there are only three of us left now. When we were in school there were usually 12 or so. There are some funny stories that I remember, but I also wanted to tell you what school life was like then.

My family and I lived one and a half miles out of town back then, and we had to ride the school bus. The first bus I rode on was horse drawn. There were long benches along the sides and back. The older kids liked to sit in the back. The bus driver would have to get after us sometimes. When we got a motorized bus, we had the same driver.

I remember there was one boy from the country who had a car, and he would drive us country kids out to see one of the boys whose dad had taken him out of school to do farm work. We would meet him at the end of one of the field rows, but then his dad would come out and run us all off.

At noon we all brought sack lunches; there wasn't school lunch like now. We had enough time so we would go uptown to Hegna's grocery store to buy candy and gum. You could get both for a nickel in those days. I also remember the time we had our report cards with us and one of the kids dropped his into the big box of men's dress hats, so all the rest of us did too. Mr. Hegna wasn't happy having to take them all out to rescue our report cards for us.

Report cards in that day were blue. Grades were pretty much the same as now. Seventy five per cent was a failing grade. Everyone aimed for the 90s, and we were sure disappointed if we got an 89% or 88%. If anyone was having trouble with grades, we would all help out. I remember the most mischief we ever got into was for chewing gum or writing notes.

We had a Glee Club in those days, like chorus. I remember that there were only two of us who didn't make it; one of them was me. I remember taking Domestic Science (Home Ec.), and we had to make white uniforms for our sewing project. The dress part turned out too tight, and the bloomers were too big, but I got a very good grade.

There wasn't a lot of time for social activities. Social things were mainly picnics with family, but we did a lot of plays through school. Everyone participated. There was also basketball. The boys practiced all the time. We did have a Junior-Senior Banquet. It was a formal dinner, no dancing, but the girls got new dresses and the boys dressed up.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went on to nurses' training in Sioux City and had courses at the University of Iowa. I enjoyed a long career as a registered nurse in Newton, Iowa, where I married Tom Goodman.

In years past I have always enjoyed attending the Alumni Banquets.

Alvin Mosbo - Class of 1931

The Mosbo farm, on which I grew up, was one-half mile north of Rembrandt. We had a closely knit family with my father John and mother Tina Mosbo, my brother Alton Mosbo, my grandmother Anne Mosbo who spoke and wrote only Norwegian, and my uncles Halvor and Ole Mosbo. Ole married Anna Berger, a former Rembrandt teacher, in 1926 and left our home. Religion and concerns for each other and for other people were in our family, as they also were among the people in Rembrandt and in the community.

In 1919 I began school in first grade with Anne Kettleon, one of my favorite teachers. George Brooks, the Rembrandt town band director, taught me to play my cornet, and when I was nine years old, I played a cornet solo, *Cupid Charms*, at the 1922 high school graduation exercises.

In school I was sometimes mischievous. In eighth grade, I attached roll-your-own cigarette papers to pins and tossed them to the backs of classmates sitting in front of me. In eighth-grade music when singing out of the *Twice Fifty-Five* song books, we were permitted to select the songs to sing. One time I selected a page number which was beyond the numbered pages in the song book. When the teacher turned to the back of the song book and saw there was no such numbered song, the class and I laughed. This incident the teacher did not consider as being humorous. On my next report card was a red F in conduct and the words "Rude and discourteous at times." My parents were displeased and told me to apologize to the teacher. I did state an apology but not loudly enough for the teacher to hear it or even to know that I was apologizing. In one incident in high school I took a shoe off a girl's foot and passed the shoe around the class without the teacher noticing it. In history class I signed my papers "Alvin The Great."

A few years after her retirement, former Rembrandt teacher Thelma Lillig returned for a visit. She asked a person where I was and what I was doing. She said that I always had a good time in class but knew when to stop and that she enjoyed having me in class.

High school activities in which I enjoyed participating included class plays, declamatory contests in humorous and oratory (received county awards in humorous), and playing basketball in my junior and senior years (being captain during my senior year). English teacher Thelma Lillig assisted me in declamatory speech preparations.

There were eight of us graduating from high school in 1931: Olive Nancy Bork, Gladys Conrad, Rosella Kidman Avansino, Louise Koons, Alvin Mosbo, Carvel Risvold, Edith Wellmerling, and Marjorie Whitaker.

After Rembrandt

The Rembrandt School gave me such a good education that I received a scholarship from Luther College. In the fall of 1931 I enrolled at Luther and continued the music which George Brooks had instilled in me. After graduation in the spring of 1935, I attended summer school at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, to study music further and to play in the University of Wisconsin summer band. Although I had graduated from Luther College in the spring of 1935, I played in the Luther College

Concert Band on the tour to Norway, Denmark, and England in the summer of 1936. I played in the University of Iowa summer bands the summers I attended graduate school at that university. Summers when I did not attend college, I played cornet in the Rembrandt, Sioux Rapids, and Albert City town bands.



My first two years of teaching, 1935-37, were at Lincoln Lee Consolidated School near Rembrandt. Those years I also was choir director at the Rembrandt Lutheran Church. How fortunate I was and am that the Rembrandt School Board employed excellent people as teachers. In 1939 I robbed Rembrandt of a teacher when Marie Lindeen (pictured) and I were married. We have been and are enjoying 62 years together as of August 12, 2001. Several other Rembrandt-ites also married Rembrandt teachers.

Three other members and I of the 1931 Rembrandt graduates are living, and I urged that we get together at the Rembrandt Centennial Celebration. Rosella Kidman from Reno, Nevada; Nancy Bork Lind from McAllen, Texas; Marjorie Whitaker Pritchard from Willmar, Minnesota; and I from Greeley, Colorado, enjoyed being together at the Centennial Supper on Saturday evening, July 21, 2001, and being an honored class celebrating our 70th year.

The enjoyable three-day Rembrandt Centennial Celebration, July 20 - 22, 2001, exceeded my expectations. The content of the *We Cherish The Past* Friday evening pageant, written by Eloise Mosbo Obman, was outstanding. Approximately 50, many descendants of persons depicted in the pageant, provided information and interesting presentations from 1901 to 2001. Others ably assisted with many items in the presentation of the pageant.

Additional interesting and enjoyable Centennial events included The Nordic Dancers, White Horse Patrol, Farmall Promenade, parades, displays, and much more. The book *A Portrait of Rembrandt* by Rolf Mosbo provides excellent historical information about Rembrandt from 1901 to 2001.

I am pleased and fortunate to have grown up in the Rembrandt vicinity and am proud of the Rembrandt accomplishments in Celebrating the Centennial.

Family Information

Marie and I have a daughter, Joan, married to David Binkley, and a son, John, married to Anna Amato.

Joan is an elementary school music teacher in Frederick, Colorado, and David is a high school teacher and track and cross-country coach in Erie, Colorado. They live in a housing development between Frederick and Erie. Their son Peter is in construction work, and their son Craig is a graduate assistant at Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas.

John is Dean of Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, a position he moved to in July 2001 from being

Provost at the University of Central Arkansas. Anna is on the faculty at the University of Central Arkansas and will join John after completing the fall semester. Their daughter Kristina, window display designer for a store, is married to Gustavo Acevedo, and they live in the Chicago area. John and Anna's daughter Julie will graduate as a fine arts major from the University of Central Arkansas in December and plans to attend graduate school.

I retired from the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado, in 1978 where I had served as Chairman of the Department of Elementary Education and Reading. Marie, a homemaker, and I participate in church activities, enjoy Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra Concerts, University of Northern Colorado music programs, and the mountains. I am a member of Greeley Golden K Kiwanis and the University of Northern Colorado Emeritus Association.

Marjorie Whitaker Pritchard - Class of 1931

My first three years and part of the fourth year of my schooling were in a one-room school southeast of Rembrandt. In the spring of 1923 our family moved to a farm three miles south of Rembrandt, which was in the Rembrandt school district. To me the new school was very big. However, it didn't take long to adjust.

By today's standards the school was small. When my class entered high school, there were 15 or 16 of us. Within the next few years some moved away and others dropped out of school. When we graduated in 1931 there were eight of us. That was 70 years ago last May! Now there are four of us still living (50%). I think that is really a good record.

We all four attended the 70th year of our graduation in 2001. Those who were there were Nancy Olive Bork Lind, Alvin Mosbo, Rosella Kidman Avansino, and I, Marjorie Whitaker Pritchard.

We had very good teachers in our school, which was very helpful to us. Also there was very little trouble among the students.

After Rembrandt

On September 4, 1935, I married Walter Pritchard of Sioux Rapids, Iowa. We both grew up on farms, and we continued to farm for 32 years. We were blessed with two sons and two daughters, for which I'm very thankful. I lost my husband very suddenly the day before our 44th wedding anniversary. My children are very good to me and very helpful. After we left the farming behind, I worked for 17 years in a department store in Willmar.

I have good friends who are also alone. We get together often to play cards, go out to eat, etc. We all attend the same church. I live in an apartment building which is close to uptown and close to church. Also I'm not far from two malls.



Patriotic Celebration on Main Street

Nancy Bork Lind - Class of 1931

My first memory of the Rembrandt School was in January of 1919. I was a bit over six years old and had attended a one-room school in Illinois. The Rembrandt School was quite new, and to me, very large. I was in second grade.

My dad, Herman L. Bork, was a farmer and farmed three miles east of Rembrandt. He drove the school bus, a square-like affair with a team of horses. And in winter it was



Horse-drawn School Buses

very cold. Mother would heat bricks and wrap them with paper to keep our feet warm, and we had blankets to help. My dad lived to be 100 years old.

I have great memories of growing up in Rembrandt. On long winter evenings, my mother read novels to us around the pot-bellied stove. We

played a domino game called 42. My cousin, Walter Bork, who lived with us at the time, and I have great memories of growing up in Rembrandt. On long winter evenings, my mother read novels to us around the pot-bellied stove. We played a domino game called "42." My cousin Walter Bork, (who lived with us at the time) and I would usually win. We had a radio and listened to programs when all the chores were done. We especially liked *Fibber Magee and Molly*. I played violin in high school. I also participated in Declaratory Competition for four years and won first and second place pins.

I was raised and confirmed in the Lutheran Church. One of the sad things that happened while attending Confirmation was that a classmate, Orville Hegna, was in an auto accident and died shortly before we were confirmed. We marched as a class behind the casket the day of his funeral.

After Rembrandt

After high school, I went to Des Moines, Iowa, and became a baby nurse for a little girl. She was two years old when I left to care for a small baby boy. I cared for him almost two years.

I attended a church with a friend, and there I met my beloved husband, Harold Lind. He formed a business there, and we lived in Des Moines for 30 years. In 1939, we were blessed with a daughter, Barbara. She was three and a half when Harold was called into the service (World War II). He was gone two years. In 1946 we had our son, John. We now have six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

We sold our company and moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to live and form a business partnership.

We retired and spent several years wintering in McAllen, Texas. In 1996 we built a home in Westlake Village and moved there permanently. In 1999 my husband died of cancer. We had 62 years together. I go to a church and have many friends in both the village and church.

I graduated from high school in 1931 with a class of eight students. I am one of four who attended our Alumni Year Reunion in July of 2001. We planned to attend the Rembrandt Celebration by flying in a small plane with my son as the pilot. But when we got to the airfield, we were warned of severe storms. So we got in the car and drove. We were stopped just into Iowa by a heavy downpour. We were late getting there, but thankfully we were in time for the banquet. My daughter and son were with me. It was a great reunion for me, and whether I'll be able to go again is in the hands of my Lord.

Rosella Kidman Avansino - Class of 1931

I was born to Carl and Mabel Krout Kidman at the home of my grandparents, John and Amanda Krout, on September 1, 1912. My dad was very busy with threshing machines and road graders. When I was six years old and in the first grade, World War I ended, and as I remember, our school had a "Kaiser" dummy and took it uptown to the square, hoisted him up the flagpole, and burned it.

For a time in the 1920s my dad managed the theatre. We had silent movies, roller skating, and public dances there.

During my school years I worked at night at the telephone office over the Hegna store with Eva and Ethel McGrew. It was later in the new brick building between the old First National Bank and Mrs. Robbins' store. Also, I sold magazines and sold the Sunday Sioux City paper delivered by Bill Lauman. I popped popcorn at home, put plenty of butter on it, sacked it, took it uptown in my basket, walked into the business places, and sold it for ten cents a sack.

We were the only Catholic family and attended church in Sioux Rapids with the help of Grandpa and Grandma Kidman, who drove in from the farm six miles east of town.

My best friend was Lucille Rystad Halverson. She worked at her dad's store, Rystad's Dry Goods.

To make a little money I did housework for many families. In the fall of 1934 I worked at the Jim Little farm for \$2.50 per week. I drove Jim to the cornfield south of the Bill Wellmerling farm. Jim got out of the Model T Ford and started to shoot as the pheasants flew up. He then rested the double-barreled shotgun on the ground pointed up to the car, and it went off, blowing a four-inch round hole above the lower hinge on the open door. I yelled as I got shot in the legs. Since Jim was older and didn't drive, I drove the car back to the farm and his son Bob took me to Sioux Rapids to Dr. Campbell. I spent ten days at Mrs. Sickel's hospital, which is now the care center.

In 1915 we moved to the big house between J.K. Haraldson and Mrs. Engebretson (Buelah Craig Hegna lives there now). In 1921 we moved to the farm on the northeast side of old 71 across from the Oscar Peterson farm. Leah was born there. We then moved back to the big house of 1915 and lived there until May 1933.

My brothers and sisters were delivered by midwives, Mrs. Harvey Engebretson and Mrs. Norby. My brothers and sisters and the years they were born are Marvin (Bud) 1916; Dorothy 1919; Richard 1921; Leah 1922; and Elizabeth 1929 (the only one born in a hospital). Marvin, Elizabeth, and I graduated from Rembrandt High. We moved to Storm Lake in 1933 (Dorothy, Richard, and Leah graduated from there) and moved back to Rembrandt in 1940.

I always liked Rembrandt, as my mother lived there (where Mrs. Rex lives now) until she died in 1976. Many relatives were also my best reason to visit. I have attended many alumni reunions in July. The first one I attended was at Stub's Ranch Kitchen south of Spencer; only women attended. My husband, Al, has enjoyed visiting in Iowa with my friends, especially with Harold Halverson. We hope to come many more times to the One and Only Rembrandt in this USA.

In July 2001 I attended my 70th class reunion. In my class of eight students the four still living, Alvin Mosbo, Nancy Lind, Marjorie Pritchard, and I attended. My daughter, Betty Manfredi, and my sister, Elizabeth Gunn, attended with me.

I ALWAYS LIKE TO COME TO REMBRANDT—IT'S HOME!!!

Clayton Olson - Class of 1932

I was raised on a farm right near the railroad about two miles north of Rembrandt. The train went by quite often. What interested me was that the flat cars were loaded with hobos sitting all around the edges. One night a neighbor had a bunch of sheep that got out onto the track. There was a low place between the tracks called a draw, which made it difficult for the animals to get out quickly. Since it was dark and the sheep couldn't be seen, the train went through, and in the process, slaughtered lots of them. Another time during the winter we had so much snow that the train got stalled, and they just had to

leave it there. It stayed there for almost a week, and then men came with scoop shovels and just scooped the train out by hand.

In those days there weren't very many trucks so some of the farmers drove their cattle and hogs to town by herding them down the roads. You could drive your cattle to either Sioux Rapids or Rembrandt, depending on which was closer to your farm. During this time some drove their cattle right down through the streets of Sioux Rapids. People who lived on those streets leading to the railroad came out and tried to keep the cattle from going into their yards and gardens. The cattle were then loaded onto the freight car and sent away to some buyer. Also, back then there was only two-row equipment for the farmers.

In those days most of the roads in the country were mud roads, so when I went to school, they sometimes had horses pulling the bus. Other times in the winter these horses were hooked to a bobsled, and we went to school in the bobsled. To keep warm we brought our own heavy blanket. Sometimes they had lots of straw on the bottom of the bobsled, and that would help a little bit. Also sometimes I believe they heated some bricks, and we'd use those to keep warm. We took it in stride—that was just a way of life. Later they progressed some and got a school bus that was motor-driven. Our education was very important; the kids seemed to realize that, and we did our very best. We never stayed home from school, except during harvest time when I sometimes stayed home to help harvest the corn.

In my school days it was Depression time. I came from a big family (there were eight of us children), and in those days we boys had to wear pants that came to our knees. Later they came out with long pants, but since I was from a big family, I had to wear those pants until they wore out, even though other boys my age were already permitted to wear long pants.

After Rembrandt

I graduated in 1932, stayed home, and helped my father on the farm for three years, and then worked for another farmer for three years. I was courting this girl for three years before I decided I wanted to get married.

Our son, Leland, was born on the day my brother Vernon was lost at sea during a hurricane in World War II—September 9, 1944. One thing I recollect was I came home, leaving my wife and son at the hospital, and when I walked into the house and turned our radio on, the first thing I heard was that the *USS Warrington* was lost at sea and destroyed. I knew that Vernon was on that ship. We have always said that our son took the place of my brother. One of Vernon's shipmates who was on this same destroyer was one of the survivors (out of 250 on the destroyer only 50 survived). He was from Storm Lake, and he came out to the farm and told my folks all about the incident.

Fun fact—Joyce, my wife, is six years younger than I am, but we share the same birthday and the same doctor delivered us—Dr. Smith from Sioux Rapids. We farmed for 46 years, the last 32 near Rembrandt, and raised hogs, cattle, and chickens. The last 12 years of our farming years, we traveled to Texas and spent three or four months there

each winter. I was 76 when we quit traveling and retired. The last two years we've lived in an apartment in Laurens and are still living together after 63 years of married life. We have one son, Leland, and two grandsons. One grandson got married this summer out on the farm where Leland lives now and where we had previously farmed.

Agnes Rystad Enderson - Class of 1933

I was born in 1914 at our home here in Rembrandt. My parents were August and Clara Rystad. When we were kids our entertainment was roller skating, playing "pom-pom-pullaway," and playing croquet. Many times kids played ball games in the pasture in back of the house.

We took piano lessons from Mrs. Brooks. We'd walk to her house right north of the station.

We sewed our clothes and crocheted a lot. My mother made quilts, including a double wedding ring quilt.

G.A. (my dad's brother) and Dad owned a cow together—G.A. had a barn back then. They'd take turns milking it—I think Dad milked it in the mornings and we'd skim the cream off. When G.A.'s boys got big enough, they had to do the milking. We also had chickens so we would have eggs. It was something for us kids to do. We always had a big garden.

It was a real treat to buy a quart of hand-packed ice cream at the café on Sundays. On July 4th we'd have a picnic, and Dad liked to get fireworks, because you could shoot fireworks in Rembrandt back then.

You couldn't miss church. I remember that whole families went to church together on Sundays.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to Waldorf College. I worked at the Rembrandt Bank for quite a few years and also worked in Des Moines and Storm Lake. Derald Enderson and I had been confirmed together and always had been friends. We married in 1958, and he was the Superintendent in Ruthven and then Albert City.

Alice Haroldson Halverson - Class of 1934

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, our Sunday afternoon fun activity in the winter with neighbors, relatives, and friends was riding in a bobsled pulled by a team of gentle horses. We also enjoyed horseback riding or riding on a smaller sled pulled by a single horse or pony. Occasionally we went the five miles southeast to Rembrandt to

give our town friends rides. Often we were rewarded with hot chocolate and cookies from a mother of a town friend. Oh, what a treat!

During Wednesday nights in the summers of the late 1920s and early 1930s, our family enjoyed the band concerts from the band shell in the park at Rembrandt.

On Saturday nights we again came to Rembrandt with cream and eggs to pay for groceries and clothing and to visit with friends, neighbors, and the business people. The cream came from a small portion of whole milk that we got from our dairy cows—separated by hand or machine separator, which we did both in the morning and at night. The eggs were picked late in the afternoon from nests in our chicken house.

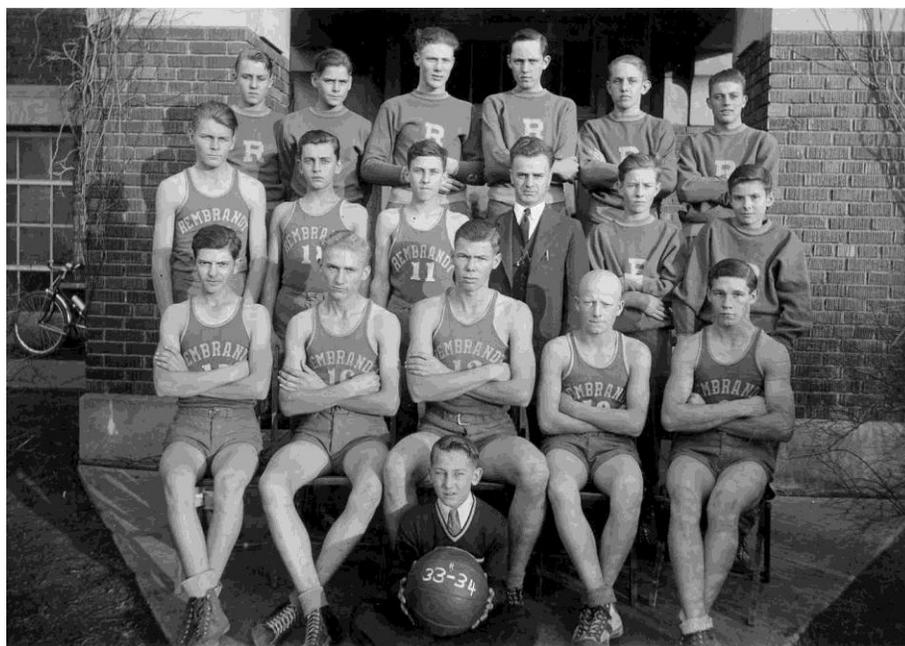
I am grateful for my growing-up years amongst the people of Rembrandt and the surrounding community and for the connections since then. Thank you.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where I received my teacher's certificate (which was a two-year program). Olga Lerud, whose father was the Lutheran pastor, and I were in the same class and both went to Augustana. I taught at Highview School for three years and attended summer school at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls (now called UNI). In 1939 I married Donald Halverson, which meant that I was no longer permitted to teach school. Later on I was allowed to substitute teach in the Linn Grove and Peterson schools. We farmed, mainly near Linn Grove. We have five children, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



Fun in a Bobsled, 1932

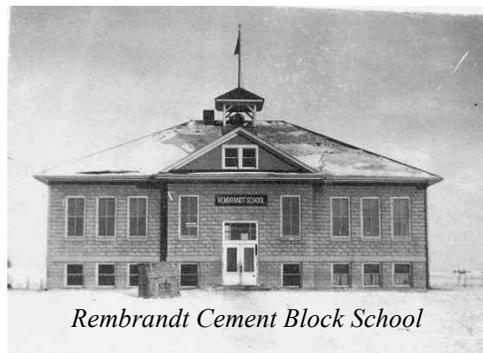


Rembrandt Men's Basketball Team, 1934

Evelyn Junkermeier Benna - Class of 1935

I am of German descent and was born in 1916. All my grandparents, the Junkermeiers and Kramersmeiers are direct descendants from Germany. My Grandmother Kramersmeier had once said after having pioneered in this country as a single girl, she would have walked back to Germany if possible, because she was so homesick. They spoke no English. And when I visited my grandparents, she spoke very little English.

I am the second daughter of John H.W. and Lena S.W. Junkermeier. We were seven children: Luella, Evelyn, John, Venetta, Louis, Alfred, and Dorothy. In later years Mom told me the first years she and Dad were married they lived in the Rembrandt area. Dad had worked as a janitor in the old cement block schoolhouse. He had also helped plant the black walnut grove in the northeast corner of the school ground. This was later taken down as the baseball field was in this area. My folks had an opportunity to farm so farmed a while. We children talked High German at home. Dad talked Low German and Mom talked High German, and we children understood them both. Starting school was more difficult. Of course we were teased.



I started school at the age of six, the fall of 1922 at Lincoln Lee Consolidated School. In January of 1923 my dad took my sister Luella and me out of school because there was a diphtheria epidemic—people were being quarantined. Because of the beginnings of the Depression, my folks had to give up and move into the town of Rembrandt the spring of 1923. When our family moved into town, we lived in what was then known as Krout's house. This house is still standing. My mother did laundry for other families, and it was the time long underwear was worn.

Dad was employed with other men when it was very cold and the lake water (Storm Lake) was frozen very hard; they cut the ice into big squares and hauled it to Rembrandt. Putting the ice into the icehouse was a similar process to putting up hay. Slings were fastened to a rope which was hanging down, and horses were used to pull the big ice blocks into the barn. Sawdust was put between chunks. When the weather got hot, the ice man would come around with ice for those people who had iceboxes. This helped to keep milk and cream sweet and keep butter hard. The icehouse stood to the east of Roy Cannoy's barbershop. I remember playing there. There was a long rope hanging from the top, and I would take hold of it, run, and swing back and forth. One time I lost my grip and fell, getting quite a gash in the back of my head.

In the fall of 1923 my sister and I started the first grade at Rembrandt. Our first grade teacher was a Miss Kettleston. I'm not real sure of some of the following teachers: second grade or third, Miss Fry. Miss Mabel Minnie Martz, seventh and eighth grade, was a very good teacher. Another teacher, Miss Ivey, later married Art Rystad. Eddie

Nielson was my freshman algebra teacher, sophomore geometry teacher, junior physics teacher, and senior advanced algebra teacher. He was a very good teacher.

The second semester as a senior I took typing. This was the first time typing was offered, and Miss Florence Cowie taught our class. She later married Ingolf Mosbo. I recall we girls, as well as boys, had to take agriculture, which was studied out of a textbook. Miss Thelma Lillig was my high school English teacher. I also took home economics as a freshman. I made good use of this knowledge later when I married and had a family; I did a lot of sewing for my children and myself. The cooking and canning skills were very helpful. I always enjoyed school. When I graduated we enjoyed the banquet, beautiful dresses, and the ceremony. While in high school we took required subjects. While I was in school, there was no girls' basketball or boys' football.

My dad was hired as Night Watchman in Rembrandt in 1925. He did this for 18 years—until 1943. Some of his responsibilities were to check that the front doors and back doors of the businesses were locked. If not, he had to lock them. It did happen. Also he had to keep peace and order, as there were two taverns in town. Dad was given a big revolver, handcuffs and a billy club to use if he needed. I don't know if he ever did. He never told us children if there was any illegal activity. He had a faithful light brown-colored dog named Sport that was always by his side that helped to alert him. He was responsible to keep the stray dog population down when ordered by the mayor. The young people in town liked my dad—he was able to communicate with them real well.

We children were raised during Depression years. Dad's wages as Rembrandt town night watchman were only \$40 per month to start and later were increased to \$60 per month and more later. Dad and Mom did many things to supplement their income. One time they had contracted to raise some sugar beets on ground east of Rembrandt near the Hildebrand farm where there was peat ground. We older children had to help. The best seed was planted like soybean seed, and when it came up each one of us was given a very sharp hoe to thin the beet plants by chopping out a space of about 12 inches. This was a good successful financial venture. Mom always packed noon dinner and lunches with plenty to drink to take along.

For several years Dad and Mom contracted with the Storm Lake Canning Company for raising and picking green beans. All of us children had to help pick the green beans, and it was always done when it was very hot. Also, they rented about half an acre of ground. Dad had borrowed some farmer's horse and walking plow to prepare the soil for planting potatoes. My folks had cut the potatoes for seed which was put into pails for each of us older kids. With the walking plow Dad made furrows, and we took a pail of seed, dropped one at a time into the furrow and stepped on it and Dad followed to cover the row. We kids also had to help keep weeds out of the potatoes. Then potato bugs had to be dealt with. Dad would pull some long dried grass and tie twine around it to make it like a whisk. Small pails of water were prepared with, I think it was, Paris green powder, and stirred. We walked along, dipped the whisk into the preparation and sprinkled it on the potato plants. It took care of the bugs. When the potato tops had died and were ready to dig, we children helped pick up the potatoes by crawling on our knees with a pail and

scratching the loose ground to find all the potatoes. Dad had again borrowed a horse and walking plow to turn the ground. The potatoes were emptied into an old lumber wagon, covered with tarps, etc., and let stand to dry completely and cure. They were then stored in the potato cellar. There were enough potatoes for the whole winter, enough for seed the next spring, and sometimes enough to sell.

Mom did a lot of canning. We lived on the north end of town, and Mr. Bertness told my folks when the field corn was ready to eat (it was open pollinated at that time and tasted like the sweet corn does now), they should help themselves, which they did. They were so grateful. My mom also always had a big garden. One time when it was meal time, she told us children to come and eat. Brother Louis had not shown up, so some of us went outside and called and called. We finally heard a little voice—Mom called again and asked, "Where are you?" He finally answered, "Here." He was in the garden lying on the ground between the carrot rows. She asked, "What are you doing?" He answered, "Watching the carrots grow."

When Louis was quite small, he liked little kitties, and many times when he and brother Alfred came home he had found a little kitten he was carrying and he would talk to it and say, "I shock you tittily"—because he did love it so much. It did happen the kitties died.

For many years Dad did a lot of trapping of muskrats and mink. He occasionally accidentally caught skunks. They got special treatment, but he did save them, skin and stretch and dry them. The trapping was done in the Raccoon and other small rivers around Rembrandt. As night watchman, he was allowed to go home at dawn. He then loaded necessary traps and items to take along to check his traps and take out animals he had caught and reset traps in the river. He walked a long way in very cold weather, and traps had to be checked every day. It took special skills to be a successful trapper. I remember one year especially that he caught 295 muskrats and 5 mink. He skinned all his own furs, made his own thin stretch boards out of shingles to stretch the furs on (the fur had to be turned inside out), then strung them on a wire line to dry in a room upstairs until they were cured and dried enough to sell. The furs were sold to scalpers like the Shine Bros. who lived in Sioux Rapids or maybe Spencer.

For many years my dad always had a cow or two. He had a bridle to put on them with a rope to lead them and stake them along the railroad track where there was grass for them to eat. This was going north out of town. I was curious and anxious to try to milk, so Dad let me try. Well, I ended up getting the evening milking job. Dad always milked and restaked the cow or cows to a fresh spot in the morning. I carried some grain to the cows in the evening when I milked.

There was a small barn on our property. Dad would learn about a farmer who would have several little pigs he didn't want (the "runts"), so Dad would buy them, put them in the barn, and baby them with special feed. When the pigs were big enough, some were sold or one was butchered, and Mom canned meat.

When I was 12 years old in 1928, my folks arranged with the family of L.H. (Levi Hallet) and Mayme Green who were farmers east of Rembrandt that I live and work there

during the summer. They had a family of four boys, Clifford, Nolan, Merle, and Loren. I learned how to fill, clean, and wash five kerosene lamps. Monday was washday, Tuesday was ironing with a gas iron and mending, Wednesday was for church ladies' meetings, Thursday baking was done, Friday upstairs bedrooms were cleaned, and Saturday downstairs cleaning was done.

Besides farming the Greens operated the dairy. They made deliveries into Rembrandt in the morning and the evening. Glass milk bottles were used, and I learned how to sterilize them. I also learned how to take the milk separator apart, wash and sterilize all the disks and other parts, and when it was time I had to put it together again. I also helped fill the bottles from the bowl spigot, cap them, and then put them in the steel wire carrying crates. Mr. Green was very particular. There was a payment schedule for deliveries. They also were members of a dairy association. I was paid \$3.00 a week, which my dad later used to buy a radio, so all of us children could enjoy listening to funny programs.

In about 1924 Mother enrolled Luella, John, Venetta, and me into the Norwegian Lutheran Church. To become members of the church, we were required as children to attend parochial school. In fifth grade, I was excused from public school on Tuesday forenoon about one hour, walked to church which was on the north end of town, and I and other students were instructed in Bible History and Bible, then memory work in *The Explanation* and *Catechism*. Then we walked back to school. I attended parochial school again as a sixth grader and seventh grader. Then as an eighth grader and ninth grader I attended Confirmation class first on Saturday afternoons for two hours, then as a ninth grader Saturday forenoons two hours studying the same books. We also memorized a hymn. After public school was dismissed in the spring, we attended summer Bible School for two weeks. I was confirmed in 1931 by Rev. Theodore Lerud. He was very strict. The Confirmation services were held in the Little Sioux Valley Lutheran Church in the country, and it was at this time we joined Luther League, the young people's organization.

My mother was a good seamstress. She sewed dresses for other ladies too. She sewed garments for her own girls and boys, including coats. We were given used coats and dresses by the Tennis and Amelia Bertness family. He had a family of four girls that he dressed so nicely. They were Mildred Sewalson, Audrey Larrison Johnson, Geneva who died as a young lady, and Alice Anderson. From the scraps which included a lot of wool, Mom made quilts with a cotton batting and dark flannel back which was tied with wool yarn. I still have and use one of the quilts.

In the winter all the beds had feather ticks which Mom made by saving the feathers that she pulled from the breasts of geese when they were butchered. She saved until she had enough to make feather beds.

For many years Dad and Mom rented from farmer Henry Erichsen a field called blue grass lake that could not be tilled. My folks always had some cows here that would have calves. When the calves were big enough, they were sold.

I remember when Mom would send me or one of the other kids to the meat market with a quarter to buy a quarter's worth of hamburger. This was about two and a half pounds. Sometime in the later twenties, the farmer received approximately ten cents per pound for cattle and hogs.

During our growing up years in Rembrandt, we children had happy years. We played games with the neighborhood children—like "Anni-I-Over," "Hide and Go Seek," etc. There was a pasture behind our place, and when there were no cows or calves in it, we neighborhood children would clean the ground and make bases for a ball field where we played, usually after supper. There always was someone who had roller skates and let us use them to skate on the sidewalks. Occasionally we got invited to a birthday party or to be someone's guest at a mother-daughter or father-son banquet. These were very special occasions. My brothers occasionally went swimming. They had to walk to a gravel pit north of Rembrandt to swim.

On Wednesday evening in the summer time, the portable bandstand was pulled into the town square for concerts. We children were permitted to go uptown to listen to the concerts and also play with friends. Then before going home after the concert, Dad would take us children to Albertson's Drug Store to the soda fountain and treat each one to an ice cream cone. We sure looked forward to this.

When Louis and Alfred were older, they would have Mother help them pop corn, sack it, arrange it in a box, take it uptown, and sell it at special functions.

Occasionally there were public dances in the Community Center. My dad, as night watchman, was required to go in and check to see that all was in order. Then my sister Luella and I went in too, and we danced with each other while Dad was on duty. Sure was fun.

The Center also was used quite a while for roller skating that we children got to do for a fee. I think that originally the Center had been a theatre. The businessmen had gone together to revive the theatre by offering family tickets and continued films or a series. This was successful for a while. People just didn't have money for extras.

I recall when Luella and I were given one doll together to play with at Christmas time.

In 1927 when the Rembrandt businessmen bought the east property in town and had a bandstand built, a children's band was organized. Mr. Elbert E. Morris from Storm Lake was hired to be conductor. The picture shows he had a total of 47 children. They were first taught in groups according to the type of instrument. Later, participation dwindled. I later learned to play the upright nickel-plated alto horn. Morris Mickelson played a beautiful mellophone, like a French horn. He no longer wanted to play it, so he sold it to my dad for me. I sure enjoyed it. My dad first played the big upright bass horn. Later the city bought him the big four-valve bass sousaphone to play which he enjoyed very much. Dad and I did a lot of practicing, especially early evenings. George Brooks was also a band director at one time. He had a son Ellis who was a very good clarinet player. Later the band gradually developed into adult members. Some of these were Leo Pingel on the cornet, Waldo Pingel on the trombone, Art Anderson (from Rossie) on



cornet, Mat Kacmarynski on baritone, Morris Mickelson and I on alto horn, my dad John Junkermeier on sousaphone, Alton Mosbo good on clarinet, and his brother Alvin good on cornet. We wore beautiful uniforms that were bought for us. The ladies wore purple capes with gold-colored lining, and the men wore the same color coats and caps with gold-color trim. Playing in the town band occupied some of my happiest moments in Rembrandt.

During the years I was in high school, I also did housework in the summer time in the home of John and Tina Mosbo. Here too I learned how to operate the gas iron. There always were a lot of white shirts I had to iron that their sons Alton and Alvin wore, as they were students in the Luther College Band in Decorah, and they had many concerts. They had special canvas bags in which to put the clean and ironed laundry so it could be safely mailed back and forth to Decorah.

I believe I was around 13 years old when I started taking violin lessons. My dad had an old violin which he fiddled on—playing *Turkey in the Straw*, etc. He had a natural ear for music. My folks decided since I had long fingers, I had a good asset for playing the violin. Arrangements were made. A violin teacher from Sioux Rapids, Miss Anderson, would pick me up once a week and drive to Lincoln Lee Consolidated School where she taught a class of violin students for a fee of 25 cents per student per lesson. I took lessons for about two years. Miss Anderson did not have good health so had to quit. I later learned she died.

After Rembrandt

No arrangements had been made for me to attend college after I had graduated from high school in 1935. After the first of the year (1936), a representative from the Chillicothe Missouri Business College stopped at our house, and financial arrangements were made with my Aunt Olga Kramersmeier in Chicago. So in February the representative made travel arrangements for me to get to Chillicothe. After I finished the 18-month course, I was fortunate to get a ride with friends to Chicago to my Aunt Olga. I got a job at Martin Auto Parts as a secretary and worked there two and a half years. I

rented a room and lived with a private family and repaid my aunt. I made good use of my typing skills in later years when our children started college. I was employed as a legal secretary in the law firm of Diehl and Diehl in Albert City for 13 years.

In later years after I was married and our children were grown and finished college and I had taken retirement from the law office, I had an opportunity to take violin lessons again. I took from Mrs. Rick Peterson in Storm Lake and Mrs. Merle Robinson in Cherokee. My accomplishments were good as I had the good fortune to get to play in the Little Sioux Symphony in Cherokee for five years. As distance and severe winter weather became intolerable, I felt I no longer could continue. Playing in the symphony was a very happy time for me.

I have three children, seven grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.



Rembrandt High School Classes of 1934-1937

Edith Grodahl Bates - Class of 1936

My Years at Rembrandt Consolidated School

I am Edith Johanna Grodahl, born November 26, 1918, to Minnie Hensel Grodahl and Gunnar Grodahl. I am the oldest of five children. My maternal grandparents immigrated to this country from Germany, and my paternal grandparents immigrated to this country from Norway. My name, Grodahl, means "green valley" in Norwegian. I have the name of Johanna, as the Norwegian custom was that the oldest child of the

oldest child in a family is given the name of the grandparent. My grandmother was Johanna Lokken Grodahl.

Both families settled in the general area around Rembrandt, and that is how they met. We lived about a mile and a half west of Rembrandt on a 120-acre farm. The area of Rembrandt and some of the other towns were populated with many people who came to this country, and I think a large percentage were from the Scandinavian countries. I remember that there were a few children who didn't speak English when they started school because both parents spoke their native language in the home.

Because of the number of people who came from Norway, the Norwegians built a church in the country west of Rembrandt. I remember that, as was the custom in Norway, the women and children sat on the left side of the church, and the men sat on the right side. We were taught to be reverent. The service was in Norwegian one Sunday and the next it was in English—they alternated every other Sunday. That original church in the country, Little Sioux Valley Lutheran Church, is no longer there, but the cemetery is. Later a church was built in the town of Rembrandt, and then many years later it was replaced by another church built by the congregation.

The school bus when I started school had a mule-drawn team. I think there were some motor buses, but I wouldn't be able to recall exactly. I know this because my mother was quite a person to take pictures, and I have a picture of this bus when it stopped by our place.



Mule-drawn School Bus, 1923

While I was in school I belonged to the 4-H Club which I enjoyed very much. Sewing was my joy, and one of my classes in high school, Domestic Science, had to do with sewing and other related arts. I remember that I had one outfit of clothes for school, one for church, and some clothes for every day at home.

My mother kept my report cards for all 12 grades at Rembrandt. Here are the teachers who signed them: 1924-25—first grade, Leola Deen; 1925-26—second grade, Miss Christensen; 1926-27—third grade, Deliah Friberg; 1927-28—fourth grade, Helena A. Backstrom; 1928-29—fifth grade, Mildred Turner; 1929-30—sixth grade, Mary Elaine Ivey; 1930-31—seventh grade, Mabel M. Martz; 1931-32—eighth grade, Marie Nelson; 1932-33—ninth grade, M.S. Nielsen; 1933-34—tenth grade, William J. Collins; 1934-35—eleventh grade, W.J. Jerde, Superintendent; 1935-36—twelfth grade, W.J. Jerde, Superintendent. The superintendent during first and second grades was L.A. Dunham and for third through tenth grades was Floyd A. Conner.

My parents bought me a saxophone when I was in high school (where on earth did they get enough money?!), and I played in the school band and also during the summer

in the town band. The Depression years started in 1929 with the stock market crash, so most of my school years were during the Depression, and I think it did not really end until the start of World War II.

There was one year when I was in school that we got hardly any rain, so there were hardly any crops that year. Another year there was no school during the month of January because of the snowstorms. I don't remember if the kids in town went to school or not, but I assume they didn't. I graduated from high school in 1936. There were twelve boys and six girls in my graduation class.

After Rembrandt

When I graduated, we were still in the Depression. I wanted to go to college, but there was no money. In those days one could take nurses' training, and there was no tuition. But I didn't think I wanted to be a nurse. I waited a year and had enough money to go to the American Institute of Business (the school was then in downtown Des Moines) for only a few months, and even working for my room and board I couldn't go any longer. In those days there was no such thing as student loans, at least that I knew of. I came to Storm Lake and got a job at the office of Dr. Howard Pierce, an optometrist.

My cousin, Edward Haroldson, who died not long ago, was in my same class all during school and was also in my Confirmation class.

Agnes Lerud Peteler - Class of 1937



Agnes Lerud, taken on the steps of the country parsonage

My parents (Reverend) Theodore and Laura Lerud moved to Rembrandt, Iowa, on

November 4, 1923 from Clifton, Texas, with their four children—Reuben - aged eight, Olga - aged seven, Agnes - aged four (born on my dad's 33rd birthday) and Myrtle - aged two. Another child, Esther, was born in Rembrandt in 1927. My parents, Reuben, Olga and Myrtle have all died—so only Esther and I are left.

We lived in the parsonage next to the country Lutheran Church (Little Sioux Valley Lutheran) where my dad preached. He was also the pastor of the

Lutheran Church in town. The 40-acre property that we lived on included the farm land that a neighbor cultivated, the church, a cemetery and a parking lot. The money my parents made from the harvested crops went toward tuition for each of us to go to college.

I remember that there was a blizzard on that first Christmas Eve, a month after our arrival. We had attended a service in the town church and on the way home, we were

stuck in the snow near the Mosbo home. We stayed overnight with them and upon our arrival home the next morning, we found that all of the pipes in the house were frozen and a door had blown open. That was our introduction to "Iowa Winters." I remember one winter when there was no school for a month. During the winter we occasionally went to school in a horse-drawn sled when the roads weren't open. We enjoyed many sleigh rides with the Risvolds, the Haroldsons, the Petersons and many of our other neighbors. One winter, our dad and the kids walked to town (three miles) for groceries—sometimes cutting across fields of hard-packed snow and climbing over fences. We also borrowed coal from the country church next door to heat our house. Everyone was always so friendly and looked out for each other.

Our whole life seemed to center around church and school and town activities—especially band, chorus, drama, sports, etc. I remember one Halloween when the policeman in Rembrandt asked my dad to ride around with him to check on any “pranks.” Only minor pranks were reported. I remember one occasion during Lent when my dad had an evening service at church on a night when there was a "big" basketball game at the Highview School. My brother Reuben was the center for the team from Rembrandt, but he couldn't go because he would have missed church. We were all surprised when my dad cut the service short and we all went to the game—arriving at halftime. Reuben did get to play the second half. Rembrandt won, but we were in a small accident on the way home!! Some might interpret our mishap to be a message from above—that God wasn't too pleased that the church service was cut short that evening.

Spell-Downs (a.k.a. Spelling Bees) were always exciting at school. These involved the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades. One year, the last four contestants were Agnes (fifth grade) and Reuben, Olga and Dorothy Hegna (all in eighth grade). Agnes happened to win, but there was some disagreement at home as to who actually came in in second, third and fourth place. As an eighth grader, I won the county written and oral spelling contest in Storm Lake and was given a choice as to which I wanted to go on to. I chose the oral and went to compete in the state spelling contest in Des Moines.

After Rembrandt

All of my memories of growing up in Rembrandt are so good. After receiving my R.N., I worked in a couple of hospitals—then as a nurse in the Air Corps. I have been back to Rembrandt twice. The first time was in 1987 when Roland and I returned for my 50th High School Reunion. It was a wonderful weekend—seeing Rembrandt again and many of those people who were so important to me. The second time was when Roland and I were there for the big 100th celebration. We couldn't get there until 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. Reuben's widow, Dorley, was with us. We walked all around the town in the rain looking for a familiar face—asking a lot of people where we might find folks we knew, but to no avail. Finally, at about 4:00 p.m., we went to the Lutheran Church and found out that people we knew well had been there to get out of the rain—but by that time, the church was deserted. You'd think a preacher's kid could have figured out that

must be where they were!! However, we did drive around the familiar sites and showed Dorley places she wanted to see that were part of Reuben's childhood experience.

We have three great children—Debora, Brian and Carol. We recently celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary and our kids gave us a trip to Hawaii, and they all came along too—grandkids included!!

Arlene Burwell Cannoy - Class of 1937



Arlene Burwell, the last telephone operator in Rembrandt

My life was drastically changed in 1934 when my father died and I moved from Carroll to Rembrandt to live with my oldest sister, Ruby Johnson. I started my sophomore year in high school that year. The Depression was in full sway at that time, and I took many odd jobs (to keep my head above water) until I was offered the job of relief operator at the local telephone office for the princely wage of 10 cents an hour. I was advanced to full-time operator in 1936. I still had one year of high school left, but I only needed one credit for graduation. I had taken every course offered in Rembrandt so Mr. Jerde, the superintendent, tutored me in a special course of bookkeeping so I could work eight hours a day. Thus I continued working and going to school until I graduated in 1937 in a class of 21 souls. In 1938 I became chief

operator and moved into the office building. A pretty "heady" experience for a young girl!

The telephone office was located on Main Street, a brick building west of the former First National Bank. It consisted of the telephone office plus living quarters—one bedroom, a living room, bathroom, and kitchen. I was responsible for the switchboard 24 hours a day, although I had a second operator (Helen Craig) who worked an eight-hour shift each day, seven days a week. I was also allowed to have a relief operator as needed. The office door was closed and locked at 10 p.m. and the switchboard closed to all except emergency calls. (The latter was largely ignored). I had an alarm on the board which would alert me to anyone calling after hours.

There is much to be said for the old telephone system. Many times I would receive calls from the local housewives who would ask me to check Main Street to see if their husbands were around and to please tell them to bring home pork chops or milk or whatever for dinner. Imagine getting a real voice instead of a menu!

It was my duty to sound the fire alarm and also to blow the noon whistle. The noon whistle would be one long blast and the fire alarm a series of short blasts. When the fire alarm was sounded, all of the volunteer firemen would call me to find out the location of the fire.

Another special service of the telephone operator was "messenger service." Occasionally there would be a resident who didn't have a phone. (Off the top of my head I can only think of one—a blacksmith who had his shop and residence across the street from the telephone office). If he received a call (usually long distance), I would quote a price to the caller for securing someone to go and call him to the phone in my office. The charge would be 10 to 25 cents, depending on the hour. Almost everyone was glad to pick up an extra quarter in those days.

There were no private phones in the homes—all two-party lines. If your number ended with a "J" it would get one ring. If it ended with a "W" it got two rings. Rural phones were a series of combinations—two longs and a short, one short and two longs, three shorts, etc. Many receivers could be heard being lifted off the hook to hear their neighbors' latest news.

If you have ever seen Lily Tomlin do her portrayal of "Ernestine the telephone operator," you have a good idea what the old one-position boards were like!

One more incident stays in my memory—the night "War of the Worlds" (by Orson Wells) was on the radio. The switchboard was really busy that night with all the concerned citizens worried about an alien invasion.

After Rembrandt

Thus life went on in the telephone office until 1940 when it was converted to the dial system and the office closed. I now have the dubious distinction of being "the last telephone operator in Rembrandt." Happily this coincided with my marriage to Marlin Cannoy to whom I was married for 59 years. We had two children, Marcia and Greg. They thoroughly enjoyed our trips back to Rembrandt where they could actually walk uptown unaccompanied. We now have four grandchildren and five greats.

Marlin died in 2000, and I am now living in a retirement complex in Gresham, Oregon.

Catherine Pingel Sokol - Class of 1937

People have always wondered what we 'did' in a small town. We were busy most of the time.

School Glee Club, basketball, volleyball, school plays, spelling contests, plays, etc. I had best friends, the Johnson girls, Phyllis and Lois Ann, and Vernice Vickerman. The Johnson girls lived across from the Lutheran Church, and we spent hours getting ready to go to many activities from their house to school, church, etc. Our assembly consisted of all the high school. The freshmen were so intimidated by the upperclassmen! Also, I remember after school going up to Rystad's grocery and having to walk by those senior boys sitting on the heating register in the middle of the store.

Theatre Besides movies, the theatre also turned into a dance floor and roller-skating rink when the seats were pulled out. Gene Cannoy ran the projector for the movies—a great fellow!

Church Sunday was church day—either Lutheran or Methodist. Mother and I sang in the choir. We would all march in, in black robes, singing *Holy, Holy, Holy*. In the evening services, I remember singing *Now the Day is Over*.

Games The south-end kids played the north-end ones: "Upset the Fruit Basket," "Run Sheep Run," and "Annie-I-Over." Basketball games were fun: going in the buses, being competitive with Highview, Truesdale, etc. There were so many good friends then who now are a blessing.

We had family dinners at my cousins' houses on their farms: the Greens, Petersons, and Pingels. I liked going out to Greens and listening to the party line telephones!

Family My dad, Lou, was the banker; my sister, Enid, and my mother, Jen, made up the rest of our family.

After Rembrandt

Culture shock was learning at college (Grinnell) that some of our ideas and beliefs were quite different from those of others, and I met people from big cities and small towns. My hobby is painting; I had a greeting card business for nine years. It was fun! We moved to Bella Vista 23 years ago after my husband, George, retired early from D-X Oil Co.



Catherine Pingel

Loren Green - Class of 1937

It all started on November 19, 1919. My mother gave birth at her home east of Rembrandt on what is now Highway 71, to a beautiful baby boy named Loren Halet Green. His brother Merle was 12 years older, so I always wondered if I was really wanted.

When I was very young, Dad bought me a pony that had never been ridden. He would always buck Merle off, but would let me sit on his back. He gave me many years of fun and enjoyment.

When I was about seven years old, my brothers took me with them to go swimming in a gravel pit two miles south of the Rembrandt corner. It was called "skinny dipping." There were other neighbor boys there too. All I could do was wade along the edge, and when I got out of the water there were blood suckers between my toes.

My bedroom was upstairs, and it was so cold there would be thick frost on the inside of the windows. My mattress was filled with corn husks, and the pillow was filled with feathers.

Dad had the first dairy in Rembrandt. Our farm at that time was only 80 acres, so we didn't have much pasture. I would herd the cattle down the road and they would feed in the ditches until I got to a grass road, where I would stay with them until time to go home. The milk was tested and Dad delivered it to town in a Model T Ford. The milk sold for ten cents a quart. In later years I got to deliver the milk once in a while. Doyle's Restaurant paid cash and that I got to keep.

With Dad having a dairy, it seemed there was always a heifer that would have trouble calving, so we'd put the heifer into the barn in a stanchion. When the calf started being born, Dad would tie a rope to the calf's two front legs, and Dad, Clifford, and I would pull on the end of the rope and we'd keep pulling steadily until the calf was born. Being raised on the farm and experiencing the reproduction process of the various farm animals, field crops, plants, etc., it makes me firmly believe in creation and wonder how anyone can believe in evolution.



Loren Green and the Milk Truck

At home when there hadn't been enough wind to make the windmill pump water for the stock tank, we could pump the water with our Model T Ford. First, disconnect the windmill, then jack up one back wheel off the ground, attach a pulley to the wooden spokes of the wheel, and install a belt from this pulley to the pump. Our windmill was 60 feet tall, and I would climb clear up to the top and could see Rembrandt over the grove, as the crow flies, about three and a half miles away.

My Aunt Hannah, to keep things cool, would put milk, cream, butter, and so forth, in a pail and hang the pail by a rope down into the well.

I remember our neighbor Edgar Eastman liked to try new things. One year he raised sugar beets; Dad also had a few acres. Edgar got Mexicans from Mexico to do the work. There was a Mexican boy about my age, and we played together in the beet field. At one time I candled eggs with Mr. Eastman down in the basement of Ole Hegna's store.

We used to celebrate Christmas at Uncle John Pingel's farm. We all stayed in the kitchen while Leo and Waldo would act like Santa Claus—put the gifts under the tree, and light the candles (wax candles about four inches long). To keep warm in the car, we put a heavy lined cowhide over our knees.

At one time Dad was the depot agent in Rembrandt. Communication with other depot agents was by telegraph, so he had to know the Morse Code.

My biggest interest in school was sports. I played on the Rembrandt baseball team that won the Clay County championship. We were in the Clay County league because Buena Vista County didn't have a league then.



Evelyn Junkermeier, Clifford and Loren Green

My brother Clifford married my eighth grade teacher, Marie Nelson, and I married a teacher also, Jeanne Lou de St Paer. The teachers who married local men contributed a lot of character and class to the community. We owe them a great deal.

I must mention that Milton and Dorothy Rystad had the idea for teachers' parties. We would all go to dances and get acquainted. I always enjoyed the "Rembrandt Days." George Engebretson would barbecue a beef. Another great fun time was when Carl and Pauline Dorr sponsored a barn dance in their hay mow. Two strong farmers swung Jeanne around so fast that her feet were clear up off of the floor.

One winter I helped Clifford pick corn by hand for four cents a bushel. I could average about 85 bushels a day, from daylight until dark, for about \$3.40 a day. At one time there was a corn-picking contest. They still have the contests at Living History Farms here in Des Moines.

When they had band concerts, I played a trumpet. Today I can play two songs on my harmonica, *How Great Thou Art* and *Rock of Ages*. The people at the care centers that Jeanne and I go to seem to enjoy it. Jeanne plays her keyboard and sings.

I can remember the Depression years. It wasn't too bad on the farm. We had milk, eggs, and butchered pigs. Corn was ten cents a bushel. We would burn the cobs, with corn still on the ears, in the kitchen stove.

Our first radio, an Atwater Kent, worked off of batteries. We listened to *Amos and Andy* and *Fibber McGee and Molly*, and used gas mantle lamps for light. Bruce McKibben had the first TV set in the community.

I would take a load of corn cobs to town to burn in cookstoves and get paid \$1.00 a load. One year I grew potatoes and hauled two big gunny sacks of them on the front fenders of my Model A Ford. G.A. Rystad paid me \$1.00 a sack. He also rang the church bell before every service.

On a Saturday night in town, sometimes I only had a quarter, but would go to a show, play a game of pool, and go home. No stores were ever open on Sunday. It was a day of rest, except for the ball games.

I liked to hunt; one winter I shot 40 pheasants. I also trapped some, and caught a badger, but mostly caught skunks.

Uncle John had a big threshing machine run by a steam engine and would thresh the neighbors' oats. Aunt Bertha would take her home-churned butter into G.A. Rystad's store for him to sell.

During the long winters Dad would sit and read paperback Western stories, while eating a big bowl of home-grown popcorn. In the early days of growing field corn, it was called open-pollinated. Dad would put the biggest ears of corn in a box on the side of the wagon, then would hang the ears on racks upstairs to dry until spring planting. He would shell a couple inches off of each end so the most uniform kernels would be used for planting. The corn yield might make 50-60 bushels an acre.

In 1941 Glenn Pressel, who farmed near Rembrandt, for some reason went across the road to help his neighbor with his bull. The bull attacked him and killed him in the barnyard of the neighbor's farm, a real tragedy. I remember Mr. Pressel so well. He took his sons, Merle and Lloyd, and myself fishing at Pickeral Lake. One time he took us to camp out east of Linn Grove along the river so we could fish. He was a very respected farmer in the Rembrandt community.

After Graduation

A few years after graduation I was sitting by our big dining room window watching the blizzard outside. I began to cry, wanting to get away from home and the farm. Maybe we've all felt like this at one time or other when it comes time to leave the nest.

A bit of my World War II experience. I went to the Island of Oahu in Hawaii for two and a half years, became a tank driver, and drove for the Company Commander. I saw action in the Marshall Islands and on the island of Enewetak, which was four miles long and two miles wide. I was sure glad not to have been a gunner and have to kill; they were all killed, no prisoners. Then back to Hawaii and a furlough, a lot of ocean travel. I would get up in time to see the sun come up out of the ocean, and also watched the sunset. I have never seen anything more beautiful. When the war was over, our tank company went to Japan and landed very close to where the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. We could walk to the site, which was completely devastated.

One near tragedy in Japan—we were next to the ocean and many of the soldiers would go swimming. I sat on the shore and watched. After they had all come out of the water, we could just barely hear a call for help way out from shore. The tide was going out. The strongest swimmer started out to save him and brought him about halfway back where another strong swimmer brought him the rest of the way in. A feeling of great relief—he could so easily have drowned.

During my entire experience in the war years, I was never homesick, but it was sure good to come back. I was blessed with aunts, uncles, cousins, and many friends. I feel greatly blessed to have lived during that period of Rembrandt history.

You might say that I never succeeded. I guess I started at the bottom and liked it there. Some are much happier near the bottom than those who try to get to the top. Can one define success? Is it money, which can cause a lot of troubles? I would rather think that my success is my relationship with God. I truly feel and believe that's what will count.

Our parents and grandparents were builders—churches, homes, colleges, roads, towns, commerce, etc. At one class reunion, a young man got up and said, "My generation is a generation of change." Think on that statement—divorce, drugs, AIDS, abortion, big government, taxes, contaminated water and air, inflated prices, and we could go on and on. My brother Merle once owned a gas station; gas was six gallons for one dollar. That's why my best thoughts are of the past and of Rembrandt.

I have just one last thing to share with you—you may have heard the song, *One Day at a Time*. If we would only realize just how true that is. I may not be here next year. If I'm not, it will be because I've gone to a far better place, and there are not many places better than Rembrandt. Where I'm going, everything has been paid for, and the whole trip and accommodations are absolutely free. It was all purchased for me some 2,000 years ago on the cross at Calvary. I'll quote just one Bible scripture, I John 5:13—"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you might know that you have eternal life." Martin Luther taught that we are saved by grace through faith.

Enough preaching. Now for the big surprise. I'm still here and may see some of you again this year—I've only missed one class reunion. But don't count on it—I may have taken my final trip. I love you all.

Phyllis Johnson Gring - Class of 1937

There was so much freedom in a small community like Rembrandt. We knew and trusted everyone in town. There was a man, Roe Cain, who used to drive a dray wagon from the depot with freight for the various businesses. Mr. Cain allowed us kids to ride all over town on the back of this horse-drawn wagon. This was a special treat on a summer day.

There were several shops in Rembrandt. There was a meat market, hotel, two cafés, hardware store, blacksmith shop, variety store, barbershop, two general stores, lumberyard, jail and firehouse and even a drug store with a typical soda fountain atmosphere.

In 1933 many of the banks closed. One in Rembrandt was Farmers State Bank. I remember my dad coming home with the terrible news. Everyone was talking about it, and many suffered great losses.

We used to walk to school, rain or shine and even in snowstorms. We were free to walk the railroad tracks south of town to pick wildflowers. Once in awhile we'd see a hobo walking the tracks.

Every year the gypsies came to town. I remember one had a wooden leg and drove a covered wagon. I was a clerk in Hegna's store at one time and remember being told to keep an eye on the gypsies as they would walk out with whatever they could get their hands on.

When I was around six years old, I went down to Hegna's store where my uncle, Omer Mickelson, worked. I knew where they kept my favorite three-colored coconut candies, so I walked right to the back room and helped myself, as no one was in sight. This little episode bothered me for a long time, as I knew stealing was wrong. If that happened today I would be in Juvenile Hall! Ha. It did teach me a very valuable lifetime lesson—honesty is always the best policy.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Rembrandt High in 1937 and went to Capital City Commercial College in Des Moines. While there I worked for my board at Bishops Cafeteria. I had to walk 17 blocks after work at night to get from downtown Des Moines to where I lived. That was pretty scary after growing up in Rembrandt and never being farther away from home than Sioux City.

My husband, Vernon Gring, passed away last May after 58 years of marriage. I have a son and a daughter, one granddaughter and three great-grandsons. Right now I am living near my daughter in Mukilteo, Washington, but we are moving to Palm Springs, California.

Ken Hadenfeldt - Class of 1938

We were the children of Lettie and Henry Hadenfeldt. We lived on a farm about six miles southeast of Rembrandt where there was always livestock to care for. This meant that other than attending school, our duty was to be home to help with the farm work. This was during the Depression years of the 1930s—a time when few families had any money. As kids growing up we did not have much to spend, but we got by and created our own entertainment. The fact that there was little money to spend put us all on an equal basis—not all bad.

If we were given any spending money, it was either a nickel or a dime. One could buy an ice cream cone, any flavor desired as long as it was vanilla, for a nickel. We could even go to a Wednesday or Saturday night show for a nickel. The first time I ever saw a movie show was when our hired man took me to Rembrandt in his Model T Ford car. The floorboards were kind of broken, and we could see the exhaust pipe glowing red in the dark of night. The show may have featured Marie Dressler or Buster Keaton. At any rate it was a brand new experience even though they were silent movies with the script spelled out across the screen.

My older sister Ardys started country school two years before I did, yet we both graduated with the Class of 1938. She encountered some illness and was held back one year. I was in the fifth grade with two other boys and they were struggling to make passing grades, so County Superintendent A. E. Harrison approved my moving up to the second semester of the sixth grade. I thought that was pretty neat—I'm not sure my sister felt the same. It didn't make learning any easier in future years as I found out in high school. It might be of interest to modern-day students and teachers to know that our

recess and noon entertainment consisted of playing kitten ball or, in summer, using that same bat as a weapon when we would drown out striped gophers. We had one swing which was suspended by ropes from the branch of a big cottonwood tree.

The teacher would rent a room on a nearby farm and would walk to the schoolhouse, getting there earlier in the winter time in order to start the coal fire in the pot-bellied room heater. This too would get to the point of glowing red, yet the room was cold everywhere else but around that old stove. We had long, double sash windows with storm windows on the outside but with a high ceiling and no insulation in the building. It was not a cozy place in winter. The plumbing consisted of a water pail on the entry shelf and two twin-hole buildings in the back yard. They were little houses outside behind the schoolhouse, so I guess that's why they were known as outhouses.

My next younger brother Bill started to school three years after I did. His philosophy was not to waste a single day in school without tormenting the teachers or finding some way to cause trouble. He had that sense of mischief bubbling inside him, and it just couldn't wait to come out. He wasn't mean—he just couldn't wait to disturb someone's otherwise normal day. Therefore, a book could be written about him, but not now. There was a little clique of him and three friends who quite often visited Superintendent Jerde's office on a regular requested basis. One day Mr. Jerde told them, "You four people can cause more malicious mischief than any four people that I know of." "Malicious" was a word he never forgot and just played it to the hilt—laughing every time he thought of it as though it was an honor to have that big word laid on him.

My brother Bob, the last of our brood, was seven years younger than I and graduated in 1947. Since his high school days were going on after I was out of school, there is not much to report about his school days. He did buy an old 1927 Star car which provided transportation and lots of fun in his high school years. He removed the muffler and installed a pipe that was exhaust-pipe size on one end and about four inches in diameter on the exhaust end. That car could be heard a mile away when the wind was in the right direction.

There were some days when we were testing the teachers rather than them testing us. One such day we were in the lunch room at noon when I noticed two high school boys down on their hands and knees crawling across the room under the lunch tables. Suddenly, a teacher looked into the room from the hall doorway. "What's going on in here?" she shouted. "Looks like a circus is taking place." Without hesitation one of the boys on the floor yelled back, "Yeah, and the monkey is standing in the door."

Memories of our Days at Rembrandt High School

When I first entered RHS in the fall of 1934, we came from a one-room country school where the most students we ever had in the eight grades was about 13. One room—one teacher—eight grades. As a new, green freshman, my early years were at Lincoln #4, some six miles to the southeast of town. We walked to our country school, about three fourths of a mile from the farm home. Getting a ride to school in those Depression days was as rare as getting to sit on the teacher's lap. But when we were to

start high school, ours was still an independent country school district, and we would go to RHS as tuitioned students. This meant that the school bus could come no farther than the driveway in front of the old country school. So, we walked the three quarter mile stretch to get on the bus all four years in high school. Remember what they say about "walking is good for your health." Didn't realize what a great favor our parents were doing for us at the time.

The school bus we rode in was of wood frame construction with long, leather-covered seats the length of the bus body, to the right and left of the center aisle. In other words, the kids faced each other as we sat along the sides. No safety glass in the many windows, no steel frame to protect us in the event of an accident—just what one could call "a cracker box." For winter heat the exhaust pipe from the truck engine would pass into the bus body—down the center aisle and out as it reached the rear of the bus. Needless to say, we were cold around our higher extremities and near scorching at our feet. During the summer months the bus body was removed and a grain or livestock box was mounted, since our bus was owned by Bill Wellmerling, a farmer in the area. I remember rounding a corner as we were going home on the afternoon ride and just as the driver slowed and turned, the front wheel fell off onto the road. We all sighed in relief that the Great One must have been with us that day.

When I got to RHS and saw the size of that school building, it appeared that I might get lost and not find my way out again. Gee, the assembly room held over 60 high school students—not to mention the rooms with all the lower grades. The assembly room had a big stage up front which seemed large enough for an opera. As we got into our education at RHS and were asked to stand and recite something, as during government class, it was embarrassing for this country kid. I envisioned having a trap door beneath me that might be opened at will so I could suddenly disappear to get out of my misery. There I was, just 12 years old and the kid of the class. I was thinking of the earlier times in life when I would go to Rystad's store with my mother and if some stranger approached me, at least I could hide by pulling her skirt around me—kind of like an ostrich—sure that no one could see me. And it was "pleasant torture" during those early years in high school when a nice young girl would smile at me—couldn't talk, couldn't breathe, couldn't think.

The senior boys were big and strong, and many of them went around with that tough look—protruding chin and glaring eyes. I didn't look directly at them—just a quick glance to see if they were bearing down on me. Then there was the superintendent's office, which we had to walk past each time we came in or left the assembly room. Most of the time we walked a little faster and looked straight ahead as we went past the door. Sometimes we would run up the stairs taking two steps at a time. It was then that a deep voice would be heard coming from the office, "All right boys, we don't fly upstairs that way. Let's come down and try that over, one step at a time." Our superintendent's name was Mr. Jerde. He had the unique ability to save on words. It just took one sharp glare in our direction to set us straight. We were to learn in time that this was known as the unspoken word.

We were fortunate to have a janitor who took immaculate care of our school building and grounds without the assistance of other help. He was Art Johnson, a very kind but disciplined man. In the dead of winter he would be up at 4:30 a.m. to get the furnace fire going and shovel the snow off the sidewalks before the buses and town kids got to school. One time I was supposed to be getting on the bus for the return trip home and stayed inside just a moment too long and was within the sight of Art. I felt a swift kick on the posterior and got the standard reminder from Art that it was time to get a move on. All this was done with a stern look—then a smile, and we knew he was our friend, just doing his job.

Sometimes there were petty fights on the bus, but most of the time it was companionship and lots of loud talking when we would, on occasion, feel the bus slowing down quickly to hear the driver say, "All right now, who wants to get off this bus so we can hear ourselves think for a while?" But there were advantages to the ride 'cause sometimes we got to sit beside someone we admired—preferably a girl rather than just another boy.

In our school days at RHS we were told to be home after school so we could help with the farm chores. It was also required that we help with chores before school each morning. This meant getting up by 5:30 a.m.—a terrible time of day. We may have done some of our duties without knowing it—it's called "being half asleep." Sometimes when we finally got on the way to the bus, it was sitting there waiting for us—three fourths of a mile up the road.

After Graduation

Since I was the youngest one in our senior class, it seems that I spent more time around the freshman girls. They were young and, well, very nice. In fact, I later married one of them, Doris Hoskins. We became the parents of Dixie, Mike, and Peggy. They too were to become graduates of Rembrandt High. Doris and I farmed on the same place where I grew up. That is where we lived until we moved to Spencer, and that is where our brood of three lived while attending RHS.

While our three children were in school, I became a member of the school board and served on it until they graduated. We have no regrets for all the great memories. We were a small school that provided its students with a big start from which they were ready to go out into the world and live and work with the best of them.

Lloyd Pressel - Class of 1938

I'm 80 years old, happily. I don't know if the emphasis is on the 80 or happily. It is nice the two go together however. I thought 80 was old when I was a 13-year-old, tall, gangling freshman at Rembrandt High School. My 12 classmates are all 80 too, and let's hope happily.

Something from my upbringing in the vibrant 1930s Rembrandt school system releases within me daily to vitalize me. I still run my 40-year-old, professional, human

resource management consulting firm. It serves several of America's large and small business corporations. I work in it eight to ten hours a day. I continue my 45-year daily habit of one hour of calisthenics. (Rembrandt 1930s karma, are you taking note.) I also benefit from four years of World War II experience. I was in the South Pacific with the 81st Army Infantry Division as a member of their 32-piece Army band. (Rembrandt Town Band, take a bow.) When combat came, instruments went in their cases; rifles came into our hands in exchange. I somehow worked my way through Master's and Ph.D. degrees in Industrial Psychology. I still have fun working with a variety of paying clients across the U.S. and being nice to my only wife Marky, three kids and five grandchildren here in Bisbee, Arizona.

So it is proof Rembrandt had its human nourishing qualities in abundance. Rembrandt's upbringing sent me to Buena Vista College on a basketball and baseball scholarship. There I learned I was prepared more for life, getting on with others, and thinking well of myself than for using good grammar and being skillful with math and Aristotle. Being put on probation as I entered my first college English class jolted my psyche sufficiently for me to knock down a B and get myself off academic probation. That's the way it was for my early college years—draw on my good Rembrandt-imposed character and self confidence and somehow tackle head-on the big challenges.

Let me give you but one example of what I mean about Rembrandt character. Every person in Rembrandt accepted their responsibilities and played their part in bringing a small farming community through the worst depression of the century—from 1931 to 1940. No person went unrecognized or unappreciated. Even the town drunk had concern and love from the community. Being a farming community, the three to four farmers per section of land grew their crops, sold their eggs, cream, corn and oats to Rembrandt merchants, albeit at low prices, and everybody pulling together made enough for all to eat well and to participate in the almost free community, school and church events. City folks suffered the Depression. Rembrandt lived in a one-class society of enough to get by on. So the Class of 1938 acquired no neurosis or stigma from the Great American Depression. In that time, Rembrandt was the place to be.

Also, because jobs were hard to get, a teaching job at Rembrandt Public School in the 1930s was a plum of a job. A teacher's salary was \$125 per month, when farm hands worked for \$1 a day (and room and board). Thus Rembrandt got the pick of the teaching talent. Before we boast too much, keep in mind Rembrandt taught only the minimum courses. The few teachers they could afford were required many times to teach subjects out of their area of specialty. The coach for instance might teach math. And we were only offered the math courses of algebra and geometry. My sophomore year, 1936, the Federal Government subsidized typing, school lunches and shop. So offerings did expand.

Why did I, with a normal brain, get put on probation when I entered Buena Vista College? In part, it was because the Rembrandt community recognized the performing arts of sports and music over academic A's. In part, it was because the athletic coach and the music instructor were more demanding, dynamic, and fun to be with. In part, it was

because Rembrandt's academic curriculum was narrow. In part, it was because I was a smart-alecky, lazy student. That frankly was the dark side of our 1930's school culture.

But before you get on the wrong side of the equation, let me get back on the positive side. A big thing as I look back is the central role our janitor played in the daily operation of the school. Art Johnson, that wonderful man, janitored the full 12 years of my schooling. During our time, the small gym was the only gym. It also was the place, in the many winter months, where we kids hung out. Art, for some reason, took on, in addition to his janitoring duties, the role of the force who kept order. Why a teacher didn't show up to do this I don't know. But unruly or out-of-line kids quickly had to dodge Art's swift kick toward their rear-end. He did it with such naturalness that his boot kept civility the order of every day.

Art Johnson should be enshrined in the Rembrandt Public School's "Hall of Fame." He was and is my example of "good guy" Rembrandt citizen. He did voluntarily, as other Rembrandt citizens did, those things that were necessary for the makings of a good community. Moreover, the Rembrandt teachers, at my time in school, created a feeling among the student body that we were something special as well as worthy of their time and skills. The shortcomings our school had from being small were offset easily by the caring, attentive nature of our teachers. Their attitudes rubbed off on me, and the resultant qualities still stick to me.

In short, Rembrandt Public School—and Rembrandt as a nurturing, caring community—implanted qualities in me that allowed me to make my way through a good life. Isn't that what is expected of a good school? Undoubtedly we all absorbed somewhat different qualities from our Rembrandt School experience. But from what I learn from the grapevine, Rembrandt School graduates sing similar praises to mine. My goal is to die a healthy man. Live On Rembrandt.

Harry Edwall - Class of 1939

I have a lot of memories of things that happened in Rembrandt, as I was raised during the Depression years. My parents, Helmer and Svea Edwall, didn't have much money. I don't think anyone had very much money during those years. I'll tell some of the experiences during the years I was growing up. The house I was born in was in the north end of town. It was the second house from the end on the right side of the road as you came from downtown. That house, I understand, was the parsonage for the Lutheran Church that was out in the country. It was moved into Rembrandt about 1918, so it is probably one of the oldest houses in Rembrandt and it's still there.

First of all, I would mention the winter of 1936 in which the whole town was snowed in for six weeks. The trains couldn't come through, and the school had to close down because the buses couldn't make the rounds. We kids, of course, thought that was pretty great. There was plenty of food because most people did canning in those days. Most people had their own gardens or would buy from other people who had excess.

When my parents died (my father died in 1950) and I was home and went down in the cellar, the walls were covered with shelves of all kinds of canned goods.

But there was a problem for the whole town because of the fuel shortage—coal was in short supply. We had to close off all of the house but the kitchen and the dining room (which adjoined the kitchen), in order to ration the fuel that we had. In the dining room was a floor furnace with a grate that was over the furnace. Mother had a little



Pooch in our backyard, 1973

Boston terrier called Pooch. Pooch used to lie on top of that almost red-hot grate, and when it came time for bed we would open the curtain that closed off the upstairs where the bedrooms were, so that the heat could get up there.

My brother Gene and I shared the bed in one of the bedrooms and when we went upstairs to go to bed, the dog would race upstairs first and jump on the bed (he always slept under the covers). So we would raise the covers quickly because the dog liked to sleep at the foot of the bed under the covers. We would race to get into bed so we could put our feet on the red-hot dog. But there was a problem. Pooch snored, and he not only snored on one end but on both, so we would really have to air out the covers before we could go to sleep.

As I mentioned, our house was on the north end of town, so it was only a short way from O.J. Hegna's pigpen. In the summer when the wind blew from the north, we would have to close the doors and windows because it smelled so bad.

In the winter we kids would have to walk to school because there was no bus for town kids. The school was about a quarter of a mile from where we lived, so we would really hurry in the winter when it was very cold, sometimes down to ten degrees below zero.

In the middle of town was the business district, and one of the businesses was the Rystad General Store which contained clothing and general merchandise. In the middle of the store was a raised furnace grate like a box, so we kids would rush into the front door of the store and pile on top of the furnace box so, like Pooch, we stored up heat. Then we would rush through the grocery department and go out the back door, so that way we would have some heat stored up to get us down to the school.

As small kids, we weren't allowed to wear long trousers but had to wear knickers with long underwear that bunched up down by our shoes, and we hated that. It wasn't until my brothers and I got into our teens that we could wear long pants.

One of the most embarrassing things, though, was that Mother used to wash our hair in the kitchen sink (we didn't have any bathroom inside). She not only washed our hair, but she cut our hair. And in order to get all the soap out, in the rinse she used vinegar. We couldn't really get the smell of that vinegar out of our hair, so when we went to school and it either rained or snowed and our hair got damp, we could smell the vinegar in the classroom.

I majored in music at Drake University and studied piano with the head of the department, so Mother thought I must really be good; she would promise the ladies of her Ladies Aid that I would play the piano when I was home from school on vacation. But the problem with that was that the piano was an old upright in the basement of the church which in the summertime became somewhat damp, so the keys on the piano would swell and stick together. Also the pedal on the piano didn't work, so it was hard to play anything really decent. But when I complained to Mother about it, she said, "Don't worry—they won't know the difference."

My dad was a very quiet man. He owned the hardware store in partnership with August Rystad. Because it was the Depression years, he did everything that he could to make extra money, so he not only sold things in the hardware store, but he kept the financial books for both the school and the town. He also did electrical wiring and as I remember, I think August and Dad had a gasoline pump by the side of the store. Because of the Depression, he had a pretty hard life. The building the hardware store was in is still there.

After Rembrandt

Following graduation I spent a year working in the school office (for the princely sum of \$10 per month!) before entering Drake University in Des Moines. After three years of college, I was inducted into the Army in 1943 and was discharged in January of 1946. During that time I served at Pearl Harbor and in the Gilbert Islands at Tarawa, which was one of the initial islands in the campaign to recover captured territory from the Japanese. Then I spent 13 months on the island of Leyte, Philippines, where I landed 20 days after the initial invasion and stayed until the war was over.

I returned home to go back to college and went from Drake to teach at Southwestern College in Memphis, Tennessee, for four and a half years and then left to pursue doctoral studies in musicology at the University of California at Berkeley. From there I became a member of the music faculty at UCLA where I taught for 11 years and then felt called to become an Episcopal priest. I went to General Seminary in New York City and was ordained in 1965. Since that time I have been a parish priest as rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in San Pedro, California, retiring in 1987 and am now Rector Emeritus.

Lois Ann Johnson Mathison - Class of 1939

As I look back on my childhood, I especially remember the feeling of security (even though I lived through the Depression). We never had to lock our doors, neighbors looked out for each other's children, and we were free to run all over town playing "Run Sheep Run" after dark. I had the same classmates from first through twelfth grade, so it was like having many brothers and sisters. Almost everyone in town had a front porch. It served a real purpose as it was an open invitation for neighbors to stop by for a visit.

Rembrandt to me was “Family.” We knew everyone in town. All my relatives lived close by. I never knew what racial prejudice was. We were all equal no matter what our race or social status was.

I especially remember my school days: ball games, cheerleading, music contests. They were so special. My dad, Art Johnson, was the school custodian. One of his many duties was to ring the tardy bell at 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. I was one of those students who seemed to arrive at the last minute, but one day I misjudged the time and was at the far end of the school campus when I noticed my dad beckoning me from the superintendent's office to hurry. I raced as fast as I could across the lawn, up two flights of stairs, and just as I stepped into the assembly the tardy bell rang. What a great Dad!



Custodian Art Johnson

It's been many years since I grew up in Rembrandt. Back in the early 1930s it was a cozy, clean little town. Beautiful elm trees interlaced across the streets; all the homes were kept neat and trim. We had two grocery stores, a meat market, hotel, drug store, hardware store, café, movie theatre, etc.

For winter fun we hooked toboggans behind cars and even ice skated. All the kids shoveled the snow from the baseball diamond, packed it around the perimeter, then the firemen turned the hose on it, flooding it for great skating and “crack the whip.” We always made our own good clean fun.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Rembrandt High in 1939 and from Buena Vista College in 1941. I taught school at Lincoln Lee, Marathon, and substituted two years in Salinas, California, before directing a preschool for 25 years.

I was married to Glen Mathisen from Royal in 1944. We had a son and a daughter. We moved to Salinas, California, in 1949 and lived there until 2001. I moved to Bakersfield, California, last year. My husband died in 1993 so I felt I needed to be closer to my family.

Marv Erichsen - Class of 1939

I was born in 1921, three miles east of Rembrandt on a very large farm. My earliest memories are about the years I started school. Our transportation was horse-drawn. I must say we had the best teachers in the world, as I can't recall any teacher in my 12 years I did not enjoy. But what a treat in school to have running water, electric lights, books, rest rooms, and all the many things we take for granted today.

I lived in a large farmhouse with my father, mother, brother, and sister (two more brothers came later). We had no electricity, no running water, no refrigerator, no fans to cool, no bathroom, and no radio for years. When electricity came in, you could see how our life changed; that wasn't until 1935.

My mother had a huge old iron cookstove. On one side was the fire box and across was the hot water boiler. Whenever there was fire, we always had hot water. Beneath the fire was a large oven and above the stove top a warming oven. This stove was started each day with cobs and fired with wood.

Dad used horses in my early life for all field work. For lights we had kerosene lanterns, which we carried about from building to building. In the house we had kerosene lamps with wicks and chimneys. Our farmyard chores were the horses, a few hogs, milk cows, feeder cattle, and chickens. As a boy I had a pony. We always had a very large garden and raised almost all our needs. As I recall, all we had to buy at Hegna's store was sugar (100 pounds at a time), flour (100 pounds at a time), sewing material, and coffee. Milk, butter, eggs, pork, beef, all our garden produce we grew. Every fall Dad and neighbors would get together and butcher pork and beef. Next my mother and aunt would cut up and cook and jar the meat. To keep the meat, they poured hot lard over it and sealed the jar. Hams and bacon were smoked in a smoke house. Beneath the house we had a cellar, which was only a hole dug in the ground with dirt sides and floors, where we kept the potatoes and all our canned goods. No windows.

Laundry was in a tub, until later when Mom had a machine that had a large handle that we boys would take turns at just before we left for school. The milk was separated from the cream, the cream made butter and buttermilk, and from the milk we made cottage cheese. Any cream left over went to the grocery store to trade for sugar, flour, etc. The chickens provided us with eggs and chicken for the table. Any surplus eggs went into a special kitty.

We had no carpets as such. Floors were all wood except the kitchen, which had linoleum. When the pattern wore thin, they would paint it. We had an area rug in our living room, and each spring my brother and I would take the rug outside and drag it upside down back and forth across our lawn, then put it on the line and beat it. Floors were swept and windows all had screens, but there were still plenty of flies. We all had feather bed mattresses from ducks we butchered.

Dad raised oats and corn and later some flax and one year even raised sugar beets. Hay was a necessity. Corn was picked by hand and stored, oats were cut and put in bundles and then into shocks, and hay was raked and pitched by hand into a hayrack and then put into the barn. Everything that we did was labor intensive. Later the oats went through a threshing machine.



Threshing

When the Depression hit, Dad lost the farm but continued to farm it as a tenant. We fared rather well because we raised almost everything we needed.

This could go on and on—I hope I have given you some idea of life on our farm. It really was a great life, although it didn't seem so at the time.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I stayed home and farmed with my folks for three years. In 1942 I enlisted in the pilot training program of the Army Air Forces. I trained in many sites in Texas and Oklahoma and received my pilot's wings in June 1944. In July 1944, Lorraine and I were married while I was on short leave. I flew B-24s for about four months, then transferred to B-29s and was assigned a crew. March 1945 saw me stationed on Tinian, a small island in the Mariana Chain in the Pacific, where the *Enola Gay* was based. I flew B-29s on 24 missions over Japan until the end of the war and received my discharge in March 1946.

Lorraine and I started farming in 1946 at Everly, then on to Truesdale, and finally Hartley. We have three sons and eight grandchildren. We retired to town in Hartley in 1987 after 41 years of farming. We have truly been blessed in many ways—one of those has been excellent health.

Ruth Hill Shankel - Class of 1939

A Career Start

When I was 16, a sophomore, Mother gave me a birthday party. I invited my entire class and the entire high school faculty. As I had helped in the kitchen since I was old enough to stir batter, I planned the menu. One of my classmates remarked about how delicious everything was and said, "Ruth, you should be a dietitian." To me that sounded like a great idea, so that became my goal from which I couldn't be dissuaded.

At my first college the faculty wanted me to switch to English, but I couldn't be swayed. I transferred to another college, and they had me take some aptitude tests. They said, "Since you live on a farm, why don't you go home and raise strawberries." My aptitude test showed that I was most qualified for social work or clerical work. I spent a year at home to help, since my brother and sister had enlisted in the service (Navy and Marines, respectively), but my parents wanted me to graduate from college, so I went to southeast Iowa and finished college there, graduating in 1946. I taught Home Economics and other subjects for six years.

I went to San Francisco, where I succeeded in entering the business world—with a clerical job. I went to a downtown Methodist Church where I met my husband, a man 13 years my senior. I would always come



*Ruth Hill and Maxine Hess, 4-H
Demonstration Team, 1937*

up for the Sunday evening service late, a fact which piqued his interest, and his curiosity got the better of him. He asked a fellow worshiper, "Who's that girl who can never get here on time?" "Oh, that's Ruth Hill." Thus began a romance. He won me after two years, and we went home to Rembrandt to be married. Dad wanted one of his girls to have a home wedding. We were married September 2, 1958, in a crowded church in Rembrandt. As we began our years of travel (I accused my husband of being "part gypsy"), our older son, James Anthony, was born in San Francisco in 1960; our younger son, David Michael, was born in Salt Lake City. Then followed years of roaming, not my idea of a home life - traveling and living out of suitcases with two small boys. We settled in Oklahoma City in 1964 and then made a final move to San Antonio, Texas. My husband died in 1982.

While living in Oklahoma City one of the girls in my Sunday School class, where I gave devotions, suggested that I write a book. One of my biggest thrills was when I received the copyright on my book, *A Time To Pause*, a compilation of devotionals and meditations, which was published in 1986. I sold 360 copies and autographed every one.

I'm very active in church at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church—am church librarian, choir librarian, church and UMW historian, and Wesley Sunday School class reporter; I serve on the Education Commission, Administrative Board, Boy Scouts, and am Reporter and keep up our Book of Remembrance. I am currently working on a commemorative scrapbook for our 50th Anniversary for next year. I often wonder about people who complain of boredom. I'm so busy now I wonder how I had time to raise a family. I have four grandchildren. My sons live in Schertz, Texas, and Redlands, California, respectively.

Wes Wallace - Class of 1939

Driving into town with my parents in 1937 (my dad was the new Methodist minister), I remember thinking how small it looked. Then, that first night when the street lights came on, I was struck by their appearance—they looked like full moons. Quite beautiful.

Then meeting the kids at school as well as neighbors and townspeople, I was impressed with how friendly everyone was. This spilled over to the friendships made between those of us who lived in town and the boys and girls from the surrounding farms. There were a lot of competitive sports, but basketball was always king.

I recall several individuals: Mayor Schluntz; Postmistress Spiegelberg; Frank "Shorty" McGrew who ran the movie theatre; fun and good hamburgers at the café. But most of all, the wonderful staff at school headed by Superintendent Jerde. Walter Jerde was a remarkable man and a fine educator. I can't vouch for it, but I was told at the time he was the highest paid man in town next to the banker. No wonder we had a great school. Really, how did the taxpayers in those Depression years tax themselves to give us such a solid education?

Going on: Art Johnson our custodian, was a friend to every student as well as the father of my classmate, Lois Ann. Coach Ed Garlock was a great guy. Classmate Opal Conrad taught me a lot about overcoming adversity; Harry Edwall gave me friendship (and his mother taught me bridge). Ruth Hill demonstrated to all of us how to overcome disability with grace. I could name each of my classmates, but this is supposed to be about Rembrandt.

How could a class of 15 produce two B-29 airplane commanders during World War II? This was the most sought after heavy bomber assignment in the entire Air Force. As a minimum, it required 1,000 hours of pilot flying time, a college degree or equivalent, leadership skills, etc. Marv Erichsen and I were the two pilots. How did that happen? Apparently the foundation had been laid in a small school in Rembrandt, Iowa.

Maybe that is where to stop: people, persons, individuals all. That's what made Rembrandt, and I hope it will long be that way. Our class motto sums it up, "The stars my camp, the Deity my light." I wonder if that would pass the critics in 2002!

After Rembrandt

After graduating in 1939 I went to Buffalo, New York, to visit my married sister and just sort of stayed. Jobs were available, especially after the European war began and the United States became the "Arsenal of Democracy." This led to our country's involvement in World War II after Pearl Harbor and my enlistment in the Army Air Corps (now USAF) and pilot training. I was recalled for the Korean War and thus served a bit over five years.

Returning from the Far East to Buffalo, I joined Scott Aviation Corporation in 1953 for a position in Houston, Texas. My work was primarily in the industrial safety equipment market, and in 1955 I became part of a small company selling to high-risk industries. In 1956 I married a beautiful registered nurse named Hazel, and we had three great kids (and now two grandsons). I retired in 1977, did some consulting, and my wife and I have literally traveled the world. We leave in November for the Canary Islands, and in April 2003 we fly/cruise to Tahiti.

God and country have been good to us.



Clement Kevane - Class of 1940

Dedication to Sports

There is one particular day in my life as a Rembrandt High School student that I will never forget. It did involve basketball but only indirectly. It was more about farm life in the late 1930s and early 1940s as well as about youthful energy and vigor and the dedication to sports by our high school students and by their parents.

It was late winter and well into the basketball tournament season of 1940. Our team had won the county championship and had advanced to the semifinals of the sectional tournament on that day which I will never forget.

In order to tell about that day, I must first describe a few things about the Kevane farm which was approximately five miles southwest of Rembrandt. The house and farm buildings were set back a quarter mile from the county road with a long lane connecting them. Because of the configuration of the land, the lane had a tendency to get drifted shut during blizzards.

Well, on the morning of that particular day, on which we were supposed to play a semifinal game and (if we won) also the championship game, the farm lane had drifted shut during a late winter blizzard. So, with the indomitable spirit of the farm, we set about to clear the lane so I could get to the game. In those days there were no front loaders or snow blowers—just hand shovels (we called them scoop shovels).

We started early and spent the whole morning shoveling snow, and it was very hard snow—the kind that horses could walk on. Each block of snow had to be chopped out of the drifts before it could be shoveled aside. The shovelers were my older brother, Philip (Class of 1936) and my father, Mike Kevane (age: middle fifties), and I.

We finished about noon and drove to Rembrandt to catch the bus to the tournament. We played an afternoon game and one in the evening, winning them both for the sectional championship. The team bus took us back to Rembrandt and, happy but tired, we drove safely back to the farm in snow which had started to drift again.

When we got up the next day, the lane had drifted completely shut again!

A Rembrandt High School Memory

Another memory I'm sharing is weakly related to Rembrandt High School basketball but is more about youthful exuberance and poor judgment as well as the law of unintended consequences.

It was the spring of 1940, and we had just completed a successful (for us) basketball season. We had won the county and sectional basketball tournaments and had reached the finals of the district tournament but were defeated in that game, so we could not play in the state tournament in Iowa City. To show their appreciation for our season, the town merchants generously contributed money so the team could go to Iowa City to watch the state tournament even though we could not play.

We went to Iowa City in two or three cars and had a wonderful time, staying overnight and then driving back home. On the way back, we stopped to eat at a roadside

restaurant and then continued our trip back to Rembrandt. A couple weeks later we were told that Mr. Jerde, the superintendent, wanted to meet with the basketball team in one of the classrooms. So we gathered and waited for Mr. Jerde. When he came in, he looked grim. He was waving a piece of paper and ripped into us. He said that the manager of the restaurant had written him with a customer complaint about the behavior of the Rembrandt High School basketball team. The complaint said that we were rude, loud, generally obnoxious and inconsiderate of the other patrons of the restaurant.

Mr. Jerde was very upset. He got red in the face, pounded his chest, and tore the front of his shirt open. He said that we had disgraced the school, the town, him, and the team. This tirade continued for some time, but eventually he began to slow down (maybe due to fatigue). Following some whispered consultations, Clarence McKibben and I went up to the front of the room where Mr. Jerde was speaking (shouting?). We told him that the restaurant had customer comment forms on the tables and that some of our boys had filled one out with all those bad comments on it and left it on a table.

Naturally, Mr. Jerde was surprised, but he was also relieved and somewhat embarrassed. The members of the basketball team were also embarrassed and sorry to have caused so much trouble.

Many years later, Mr. and Mrs. Jerde were traveling in Arizona and stopped here in Tempe where my wife Kathryn and I had a chance to share a meal with them. There was much laughter as we recalled that incident.

On the Way to Rembrandt High School

This "memory" could have been written about riding the school bus, school bus microsociology, pranks and high jinks on the bus, etc. Or about the (few, fortunately) times I missed the bus and had to walk the five miles between our farm and the school.

Instead, it is about the grade schooling of an Iowa farm family of six children. The oldest started in 1918 and the youngest finished in 1942. In particular, it is about my grade school experiences between 1928 and 1936. Therefore, it is about my "educational" way to Rembrandt High School.

It has been said that towns in Iowa were established and located so that no farmer would have to spend an unacceptably long time to reach a town when traveling by horse transport. Some scheme like that must have been used to establish and locate schools.

The family farm was located in Scott Township (Buena Vista County, of course) and about a mile and a half from Scott Center School which offered schooling for grades one through eight. The school was located on one acre of land at the intersection of two county dirt or gravel roads (depending on which years are being considered). There were three structures on the acre lot: a school building and two outhouses, one for the girls and one for the boys. The acre school ground was surrounded on two sides by a woven wire fence and on the other two sides by the two roads. There was no playground equipment on the grounds, not even a basketball basket. The children played various hiding and tag games as well as a kind of touch football. Baseball was played in a neighbor's pasture

adjoining the school grounds. All play equipment was brought from home by the children.

The schoolhouse itself consisted of a concrete basement and a ground floor of wood construction with white painted siding. In the basement was located a furnace, a coal bin and an open play area which was used at recess time when the weather was really bad. On the ground floor were a single classroom, two cloakrooms, and a small apartment where the teacher lived if she wanted. My first teacher lived there in the schoolhouse. The school had no electricity and no running water.

Lack of electric lights was, on occasion, almost a plus. We sometimes gathered at night with our parents for special "programs" (Halloween, etc.) where there was singing, recitations and playlets as well as lots of food. Light was supplied by kerosene lamps and lanterns, candles, and jack-o-lanterns. The result was a most wonderful aroma, which I can still remember, throughout the room.

There were eight rows of desks in the classroom, each extending from the front of the room (east) to the rear, and each row was for one of the eight grades. Light was provided from the north wall which was almost entirely windows. In the floor at the front of the room was a large open grille (we called it a "register") through which warm air from the furnace below rose to heat the classroom in winter. In winter, on occasion, the children were permitted to sit with their feet on that register to dry out and warm up after playing in the snow at recess time.

A typical day started with the mile-and-a-half walk to school. The start of the school day was signaled by the teacher ringing her large hand-held bell. This was followed by morning "chores," one of which was for two children to take the water bucket across the road to a farmhouse, pumping it full of water and carrying it back to school where the water was used for drinking that day.

During the school day, the teacher directed her attention, in turn, to each of the grades (rows), teaching, listening to reading and spelling, asking questions, etc. While she was dealing with one grade, the rest of the children spent their time studying, working on assignments, reading, etc. Reading was taught by a strictly phonics method, and most developed good reading skills as well as an enthusiasm for reading. At the end of the day, the teacher wound up the Victrola, put on a record, and the children would march up and down the aisles between the rows of desks. The record was of some classical work (I still remember *Minuet in G*). When the record was over, we would all leave to walk home.

And so it went. Each year I would move one desk row to the north, toward the windows. When I had finished one year in the northern-most row (eighth grade), I was finished with Scott Center School. And then I was on my way to Rembrandt High School.



Scott Center School

When I look at the picture, it evokes a vision of one of the beautiful grandmothers we see around us: with her white hair, careful grooming and neat dress, an air of calm and peace, and the evidence of pride in a long life well lived.

Look at the School House! She stands there, gazing out over the farms and farm places which sent her her many children. She is proud of the care and shelter she provided for them and of the intellectual growth they achieved while in her care. But that part of her life is over now; the children are all gone, the rooms and playground are silent. She has her memories and works at keeping up her appearance (she still looks wonderful at an age of one hundred years). She still serves her community in less demanding ways.

She is still a great lady: I salute her and feel genuine affection for her.

Some Final Thoughts

No doubt, Scott Center School operated below some educational poverty level. But we did not know that and just did what was expected of us: to work hard and learn. Actually, we were eager to learn. Like a blade of grass pushing up through a crack in concrete, we learned in spite of limited educational facilities provided by the school. Overall, Scott Center prepared us for Rembrandt High School at least adequately, I think.

It is noteworthy that at least three children who attended Scott Center in that time period (and then went on to Rembrandt High) later earned doctorates in higher education. That the three I know of were from the same family reinforces my belief that family influence is of paramount importance for success in school.

At any rate, shortly after those years at Scott Center, it was consolidated out of existence. And later Rembrandt High was consolidated out of existence. It is easy to see that consolidation afforded economies of scale and increased efficiency, but there was a price to be paid. That price included a loss of closeness to school, teachers, and fellow students. It also included for the students a sense of anonymity in the mega school and a loss of opportunity to participate in important school activities.

It is also true, no doubt, that history cannot be undone.

After Rembrandt

After finishing high school, I attended Loras College in Dubuque where I played small-college basketball. After two years there, I was in the Navy for about four years. Following the end of the war, I came back and attended Iowa State in Ames where I earned B.S. and Ph.D. degrees.

About that same time I was fortunate enough to marry Kathryn Temm of St. Louis; we have been happily married ever since (49 years) and have a goodly number of children and grandchildren. In 1953, following graduate school, I worked for Motorola in Phoenix for three years and then joined the faculty of Arizona State University in Tempe where I taught physics for 31 years. I retired in 1987, and we still live in the same house where we have lived for 45 years, and we have the same telephone number. The email address is new, of course.

Delores Lady Risvold - Class of 1941

I was born in 1923 on a small farm in Buena Vista County and attended Fairview Consolidated School in the country until I was in fourth grade, when my family moved to Rembrandt. At Fairview there were two grades in each room and the high school was upstairs. Our teacher's name was Miss North, and it was sad when she got married and we had a new teacher, as they did not keep married teachers at that time. I found this rule still employed 20 years later when I wanted to marry before my boyfriend left for the Korean War, and I had quite a time persuading the Board of Education to allow me to marry. Incidentally, I think that school, Storm Lake, was the last public school in the state to give up that rule, and I was one of the last teachers to face that problem.

Back to my school life. What did we do? At recess we played kids' games such as tag and "pom-pom-pullaway," skipped rope, and played "jacks" and hopscotch, which kids also played at home. We played some softball and volleyball, but girls were not allowed to play basketball, even in high school. There were programs and plays. PTA was a family affair, and those meetings were fun since all the kids came too and played around, as they often met in homes. I remember hiding in closets for "Hide and Seek" and jumping on beds.

We often stayed overnight with a "best friend," talked on the phone a lot, wrote letters, and passed a lot of notes in school. Telephones out in the country usually had several neighbors on the same line, and once in awhile if there was nothing else to do, you could pick up the receiver and listen to other conversations and hear the goings on in their homes.

At home my brother (two years younger than I am) always wanted me to play "farm" with his toy machinery and tractors, and in turn he would play "house" with me. We would tie some twine around four trees for a room in the grove, and we would pile old boards or broken furniture for our household stuff and make mud pies to serve on old broken dishes and invite imaginary people to visit us. This did not appeal to my brother

for very long, and he would disappear to his "fields," and soon Mom would call and tell us it was time to feed the chickens or gather the eggs. I hated picking the eggs. We probably had 50 hens, and when they felt like nesting and were sitting on an egg, they would take a peck at your hand. I would hold their heads with a stick and try to reach under them.

We also had to get the cows in for milking (which was done by hand) and carry the milk to the basement of the house to separate it and get skim milk and rich cream. Washing the separator was a chore I despised. Another chore that I had was picking up cobs from the barnyard to be burned in the kitchen stove and carrying buckets of water.

In my early years we did not have running water or electricity. This meant almost always taking a sponge bath, washing our hair once a week, and heating the water on the kitchen stove for cooking and bathing. Our cooking stove had a large reservoir on one end, and that did have warm water in it, except at night when the stove went out and the kitchen grew quite cold. This also meant an outdoor toilet. Is it any wonder that I liked to go to my grandmother's big, pretty modern home in Storm Lake to stay a few days. We heated our house with a wood burner or a coal burner. We always had a dog—a beautiful collie and some cats. We made pets of the baby ducks and chicks that were hatched from eggs or a small incubator we kept in the house. We butchered our own hogs and chickens for our meat. We did not always have an icebox, so canned a lot of meat and later rented a locker in town.

As a child I liked to play with dolls and had a lovely girl doll named Nina Rose and later a baby doll named Betty, a little baby carriage, and some pretty doll quilts made by an aunt who did a lot of sewing for me, even coats, until I finished high school. My mother and aunt excelled at handwork and taught me to sew, crochet, and embroider.

Another thing that I did as a child, and even until I got fairly old, was to cut paper dolls out of the Sunday paper. The doll was from a comic strip called "Jane Arden." She was clad in a bathing suit, and there would be several costumes—suits, formals, furs, etc. Each frock had little tabs at the top which could be folded down to hang on the shoulders. I drew and colored hundreds of clothes for these dolls' wardrobes, and those young girls were very modern and fashionable. I fancied a life for them with interesting jobs and boy friends. I never did appreciate paper doll books from the store as much as my own creations.

My maternal grandfather and grandmother had retired and moved from their farm home to a large house near the college and the park in Storm Lake about the time I was born. I loved that house and later was married there in 1950. My grandfather died of cancer when he was in his early fifties. That was my first experience with a funeral. Instead of a funeral home, at that time the casket stood open in the parlor of their house with the drapes pulled behind it where the family could walk in and view him at any time. I stood in awe of that but was not intimidated at all. We grandchildren just stood and looked.

Mom played the piano, and I took piano lessons from a traveling music teacher who came to our house each Saturday. My brother got to be a very good saxophone

player, my dad played the "bones" and the ukulele, and at family get-togethers on either side of the family, we would gather around for some kind of music.

We listened to a battery-run radio. We liked *Ma Perkins*, a soap opera, *Amos 'n Andy*, a comedy, Jack Benny, Arthur Godfrey, and Major Bowes, and my mother listened faithfully to *Aunt Lena* and her recipes and household hints (she was the Martha Stewart of that day).



I had three bachelor uncles who would come and stay for several weeks to help with harvest in the fall, and they were a lot of fun also. One of my uncles fell in love with the farm girl across the road. He met her when he was helping Dad as the farmers shared their threshing of oats in the fall. The big machine came around to each farm and the neighbors teamed up, some with racks for bundles and some with grain wagons to haul the oat grains to the bins. He stayed at our home a lot after that, and eventually he married her.

I entered activities at Rembrandt that were offered and especially liked music, spelling bees, and watching ball games. Ice skating was a big thing at that time, and girls went to wearing snow suits instead of long underwear and long stockings. I was a member of Girls 4-H along with some of my neighbors and school friends, which meant attending the County Fair. That was fun, and we learned a lot.

High school was fun—the plays, music contests, etc. I was a cheerleader with my best girl friend. We definitely did not have the activities that kids do today, but we did have roller skating, some dances (to records), and shows in the old theatre in Rembrandt; the kids "hung out" in the café next door. My dad taught me to drive the car, and when I was 16 I got a license, but no girls drove cars to school or other events. Boys were lucky to get to drive, and of course, the girls liked to get an offer from some particular one. "Could I take you home?"

I always thought, and still do, that Rembrandt was a "special" town. The people always had a lot of pride and spirit. It showed at ball games and town events. (Witness the extra-special centennial this past summer).

After Rembrandt

I went to Buena Vista and taught from 1943-1950 and again from 1958-1976. I married Gordon Risvold from Linn Grove, and we have three boys and two grandchildren and currently live in Sioux Rapids.

Doris Hill Best - Class of 1941

It has been said that the scenes of childhood are for future memories. So it is with my memories of Rembrandt and especially Rembrandt Consolidated School. My parents farmed a 160-acre farm two and a half miles south of town, and our family lived there



*Spelling Champion
Doris Hill*

from 1928 to 1954. Consequently, I attended all 12 grades of school at Rembrandt Consolidated School, and many of those who graduated in May 1941 went to school all 12 years together. We not only knew all the students in the class, but we knew everybody in the entire school (all 12 grades). At the time I attended school in Rembrandt, the average size class in high school was 15, making a total of about 60 in the high school.

There are two experiences that I particularly remember. The first one occurred in 1937 when I was in the eighth grade. I won the county spelling contest and was entitled

to participate in the state spelling bee held in Des Moines, Iowa, 180 miles distant. I remember my teacher, Miss Esther Thorson (later Esther Mosbo), drilled me on spelling words every day during part of

her lunch hour. At home my parents and brother and sister also helped me study for this important occasion. Although I did not win the state contest, I will never forget the dedication of my teacher during those six weeks of study.

The second incident was the tremendous school spirit our school and community exhibited during the basketball season of 1940. Our high school basketball team advanced to the finals of the district contest (the tournament before the state finals). It was a real disappointment that we did not win, but I shall never forget the team spirit displayed at that game!

We might not have had a great choice of subjects to study, but with the class size so small, many participated in class plays, Glee Clubs, Junior-Senior Banquets, band, sports, etc. I recall each year Superintendent Jerde admonished the high school boys not to play too many pranks on Halloween night on members of the community because, after all, they were the ones who supported our school financially as well as the various school functions. Obviously, this was in the days before “trick or treat.”

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Rembrandt High School in 1941 and moved to Des Moines, Iowa, in the fall of that year to attend business college. I think the biggest culture shock in moving from a small town to a large city was for me to learn that the family I lived with did not even know the names of their next-door neighbors!

I served two years in the United States Marine Corps Women’s Reserve during World War II, being stationed in the nation’s capital, Washington, D.C. from 1944 to 1946. In 1952 I moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, to work for the Veterans Hospital. I was married in 1956 to George Best, who was a mail carrier. We had six children, four girls and two boys. Presently three daughters live in Salt Lake City, one daughter lives in Wyoming, and two sons reside in Phoenix, Arizona. We have twenty grandchildren and one great-grandson.

When I tried to explain to our children how I rode the bus to school two and a half miles one way and about 15 miles home the other way, they almost could not

comprehend it. Also they could not imagine a school so small that a person would know everyone in the school. After all, each of them graduated from a high school where each was only one out of several hundred!

I think one of the neatest things about attending a small school is that I still enjoy keeping in touch with several former classmates via e-mail, telephone, and mail.

Dorothy Olson Cerny - Class of 1941

When I think of Rembrandt, I am thankful for three areas that helped to influence my life.

My HOME - My parents, Albert and Lula Olson, and my family taught by example that life was good and that work was an important part of life—it was to be enjoyed. I learned to work to help others and not expect to be paid in return.

My CHURCH - Pastor Lerud was a good shepherd who helped reinforce values I had been taught at home. He taught Confirmation class on Saturday mornings. I carried a bag filled with books for two and a half miles to class. I walked regardless of the weather—if someone offered me a ride I never said no, and I never ran into a problem.

My SCHOOL - I can still recall my teachers' names. Superintendent Jerde was outstanding. In my senior year he taught "current events" without a textbook, and he made the history and the present so alive. He attended my church and was a great soloist. A building on the campus at Northern State Teachers College (Northern State University) in Aberdeen, South Dakota, is named in his honor—Jerde Hall.

Just today I read an article about the danger of mercury. My mind flashed back to going to the empty science room during study hall. Nothing was locked, so we took mercury from a bottle just to play with it. I can still see how it rolled around on my desk, but when it hit the floor it splashed all over. We didn't know its danger, but science was fun!

In fourth grade a group of us started collecting broken pieces of pencil lead. We would stay in from recess to dig out pieces that were between the boards on the floor. We invented our own games, but I can't remember who found the most or what we did with our collection. We had no money to buy games so we created our own.

After Rembrandt

After spending 12 years in our school and graduating in 1941, I spent one year of college at Augustana in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and one year of college at Luther, in Decorah, Iowa. I taught six years in Iowa, then came to Sioux Falls and taught kindergarten until I retired in 1984—a total of 39 years of teaching. I graduated from Augie with a B.S. in 1961. In 1957 I married the Art Supervisor of the Sioux Falls Public

Schools, a widower. When I said "I do," I got a husband and four children who were three, eight, twelve, and fourteen years old. His mother came with the package; by 1975 our house was empty but is now filled with wonderful memories. We are retired and are thankful for our many blessings.

Orin Peterson - Class of 1941

Early records show all our ancestors came from Norway after 1820. The family trees, with some dates, begin in Civil War days. The Petersons farmed two miles west of Rembrandt. My dad and I were born in the same house. He sold the farm before being called to World War I, then bought it back. A few years later in the 1920s he sold it to Uncle Conrad (C.J.) Peterson. We moved to town, and Dad started a store on the north side of the street west of the square. He also worked for Cargill. His next step was buying the Robbins Store.

Mother's family, the Olsons, homesteaded in South Dakota, but after a few years of drought and grass fires, they moved to the farm four miles northwest of the Petersons. She walked two and a half miles to school in Linn Grove. Her folks bought that farm, and she taught in a one-room schoolhouse a mile west of their farm. She built the fire in the morning to warm the students and then taught their young minds the Three R's. She especially enjoyed spelling bees and ice skating on a creek and pond near the school.

My folks, Elmer and Leota, were married in 1920. She worked sometimes at the Rystad Bros. grocery store. They were also relatives. The store work was mostly Wednesday and Saturday evenings when the farmers came to town to trade. (The expression "trade" meant that a lot of them brought eggs and cream to trade for groceries.) It seems they both were anxious to be in the grocery business and realize their dream.

It is interesting to note that the town doctor and most of the teachers ate their meals at our house. Some teachers stayed in our house. All teachers were single. Many of them liked Rembrandt gentlemen and married them, which enhanced the intellectual quality of a town named after a Dutch painter.

Peterson Store

My folks first bought the Robbins Store which was west of the square, mid block, south side. Later they bought the larger store on the southeast corner of the square.

All orders were written down item by item and gathered (put up) by the clerks. Credit was common, and charges were filed in a unique system, but still work intense.

This scene was not uncommon. A youngster came in the store and handed Dad a list, he put it in a large bag and the boy left. I asked Dad if he thought he would get paid. He said, "No, but they need the food." When asked about his low prices, Dad replied, "Oh, Mom and I don't need much."

In the early 1960s the store burned and closed. They rebuilt their dream store. Many of the townspeople helped them clean up, rebuild, and stock the new store. They were thankful for all the help and were proud of the new store.

They had more than groceries and meat. There was film developing, dry cleaning, special orders for various meetings, and a gift department, plus many other services such as bridal showers, etc.—sometimes deliveries.

They spent many hours in the store, but Dad usually went for coffee at Webers. A long list of people met there, such as Roy Cannoy, Bill Lyons, and about everyone else.

Dad retired at age 76 and sold the store to Don Gibbons. I never found a list of people who owed them money for what they charged at the store. I'm sure they did not collect it all. They probably lost the list—that again would have been typical of Elmer and Leota.

This seems to be a part of the story that built good citizens in a small Iowa town. We are grateful for our heritage.



Leota and Elmer Peterson

A Few Notes on Elmer and Leota

A lady told me that when she was a little girl, Elmer came along as she was sitting in his strawberry patch having a feast of strawberries. She thought he would be angry, but instead he asked if he could get some sugar for her. That seems to illustrate the mild-mannered couple my parents were.

Dad was an amateur photographer and kind of specialized in wedding pictures. He liked to fish, but mostly he liked to sit by the water.

Mother loved all the seasons, and during each one she would say that it was her favorite time of year. She did a lot of handwork; she made afghans, tablecloths, quilts, etc. She was a very good cook. There was a note on one of her recipes, "Everyone

liked it."

Church and family were the top priorities in their lives. Their philosophy was—we can't turn back the clock, but we can learn to live the present. Today is wonderful, and we really wouldn't have it any different.

Memories

There were many super teachers, such as Dorothy Lean (Rystad) who took us to Sioux City to see Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. Marie Lindeen (Mosbo) taught us "The Ancient Mariner" and other classics.

Esther Thorson (Mosbo) taught us *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* in Chinese. Mr. Shaw taught us the political system when Roosevelt ran against Landon. There were many more teachers who shaped our young minds.

There was delivering the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* every day for six years and being projectionist at the theatre for several years. That is the same theatre with the roll-down curtain that had the old ads of merchants and a triangular peek-hole at eye level to view the audience.

There was farm and store work, but better were ball games, hunting, fishing, ice skating, roller skating, dancing, etc., and of course, band.

There were many good friends, and I remember them all with nostalgia. Isn't it wonderful to have roots in this great town?

After Rembrandt

There was the year at Buena Vista College, then three years in the Army during World War II, most of the time in the South Pacific. War is hell, and the glory fades fast when the ravages surface as men lose arms, legs, sight, and life. I was a soldier in training with a pass on New Year's Eve, 1943, when I met Muriel at the U.S.O. dance in Seattle. Music was Frank Sinatra and Glenn Miller, and the Jitter Bug was the dance. She was a student at the University of Washington, and we wrote letters as I toured New Guinea, the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan—18 months at sea from calm tropics to deadly hurricanes.

At war's end I enrolled at Iowa State College in Ames. It was after forestry summer camp in the Kaniksu National Forest in Northern Idaho that we were married at the University Lutheran Church on the campus of the University of Washington, Seattle. Then back to Ames where I received a B.S. in Forestry. My career was in the lumber business in Longview, Washington, Kansas City, Missouri, Tipton, Iowa, and Sterling, Illinois, where we settled into wholesale lumber and the insurance business. Muriel pursued a teaching career—eighth grade English and drama.

Family has been priority number one. I'm so proud of all of them—two sons and their families—all geniuses, beautiful and handsome! Brian married Lynn, and they live in West Des Moines, Iowa, with two daughters, Kaitlyn and Suzanne. Tim lives in Huntington Beach, California. His daughter, Lindsey, and her son Colten, live near us, and we see them often.

Gerald Holm - Class of 1942

I am writing about the basketball teams of 1940 and 1941. I think we only lost one game each of those years and that was in the district tournament. The names of the 1940 team were Gerald and Lewis Holm (guards), Clement Kevane and Clarence McKibben (forwards), and Arnie Fetters (center). In 1940 we played Hinton at Orange City in the district tournament. Back in those days we didn't have sub-state, so the district champion went to the state tournament. Hinton won the game and went to the

state tournament at Iowa City. We went to Iowa City to watch; Superintendent Jerde and Jim Cuddy (the coach) each drove their cars, and ten of us players went with them. We stayed at family homes in Iowa City during the tournament.

The names of the 1941 team were Gerald Holm and Curtis Haroldson (guards), Loren Cain and Vernon Olson (forwards), and Art Waldstein (center). During the season in the fall we played Everly on their own floor and we beat them. Then we played Everly once in Storm Lake in the district tournament.

When President Roosevelt declared war on Japan, we were playing a team which I can't remember, but we stopped playing in the middle of the game and all the players and spectators listened to the speech on the radio right there in the gym. After his speech we continued playing and finished the game.

Two players from Rembrandt's 1941 team were killed in World War II. They were Loren Cain and Vernon Olson. Loren Cain was in the Army and was killed in the Battle of the Bulge, and Vernon Olson was on a destroyer in the Navy and got caught in the middle of the hurricane of 1944. Two players and the coach from the Everly team that we had played were also killed in the War, so when Rembrandt played Everly, four players and a coach from those games were later killed in the War. That was one example of the high price that was paid by people willing to fight for our freedom.



1940 Rembrandt High School Basketball Team

Top Row from left to right: Superintendent Walter Jerde, Clement Kevane, Gerald Holm, Arnold Fetters, Lewis Holm, Clarence McKibben, Coach Jim Cuddy

Bottom Row left to right: Curtis Haroldson, Kenneth Christianson, Gordon Gulbranson, Loren Cain, Lynn Domino, Paul Haroldson, Vernon Olson

The best basketball player that I ever played with was Art Waldstein. The best baseball player I played with was Loren Cain. He probably would have played in the major leagues if he had lived.

After Rembrandt

I served in the Navy in the Pacific during the War and was discharged on March 12, 1946. Then I worked for Johnny Mosbo and Ed Mosbo for a few years. I married Dolores Ryan from Pocahontas in 1952 and started working in Coops and managed Coops for 35 years. I am retired and currently live in Red Oak. I have three girls; two of them live in Des Moines and one lives in Prairie City.

Jamae Johnson Lyman - Class of 1942

Some of my fondest childhood memories of Rembrandt are of the freedom we had to make our own fun . . . nothing organized or scheduled. In the winter the seven-foot snow drifts along the railroad tracks kept us entertained for hours since the trains couldn't come down the tracks. All the kids in the neighborhood would trudge up the drifts for one brief flying moment down the hill.

As the seasons changed, there were even more things to keep us busy. In the summer we played hockey in the gravel streets with tin cans and used tree limbs for hockey sticks. Bruised, battered and sweaty we would often finish a good game with a five-cent ice cream cone from the hotel. Physical activity wasn't our only source of entertainment. Evening band concerts in the park played the emotions of adults and kids alike. Rembrandt, Iowa, gave me wonderful childhood experiences that I carry with me and have passed down to my three children and three grandchildren, especially now that I find myself in another small town. Life really has come full circle.

Shirley Siefken Beneke - Class of 1942

I applaud the Rembrandt School for my basic elementary education. My teachers were devoted to their students. I absolutely cannot remember that I had a single classmate who was unable to read. If only that could be said of present-day schools! Spending two years with the same teacher and absorbing the “facts” from the older class was invaluable. I was able to attend college with students from large schools and not panic—because of my Rembrandt School experience.

During my high school years (1938-1942), I worked in the office of Superintendent W. J. Jerde. I now realize how fortunate Rembrandt was to have a man of his caliber as its school administrator. Daily I saw the Phi Beta Kappa key on his watch chain. He explained to me its significance. At that time I did not appreciate the message.

A job was a job in those late Depression years, but how he must have wished for a position elsewhere. Because of his insistence, and actual prodding, I went to Iowa State Teachers College (UNI). I am truly grateful for his leadership and friendship.

After Rembrandt

I taught in the Laurens schools and met my husband there. We have lived in Vinton for 46 years and raised our family of three (two daughters and a son) here. We are living in Vinton at the present time, but are planning a move to a retirement home in Des Moines, where our youngest daughter lives.

Maudie Mae Burch Sennert - Class of 1943



*Allene and Maudie Mae
Burch, 1937*

I was in seventh grade when we moved to Rembrandt. I had gone to country school before that, so we listened to all the other grades. Some people say you can't study and listen at the same time, but many of us grew up doing it. When Dorothy Lean Rystad was teaching the eighth grade students at Rembrandt, I knew that I had listened to this before. When we were in country school, we had one teacher and 28 kids. When we got a little older, we helped our teacher with the younger children, like helping them with their spelling words, reading, and math.

We moved to Rembrandt on March 1, 1938. My dad was looking for a farm, so we made a trip to Iowa from Hebron, Nebraska, the summer before. His friend, Vic Bartels, had come to Iowa and worked for John Lullman, who lived in the German settlement in rural Storm Lake, so we stayed a week with them. My dad rented the farm three miles east of Highway 71 (east of Ken Christianson's station). He sold his lease to the Madsens in 1945, and we moved into Storm Lake.

At Rembrandt we could be in everything—band, Glee Club, school plays, and softball. When my two older kids went to school in Storm Lake, they could only be in two things. To me that was unthinkable. Our teachers were dedicated to see that we learned everything that they could teach us. We learned to manage our time and to become useful, responsible citizens.

Sometimes families would get together for an evening, and I'd baby-sit for all their kids at one of their houses. I'd get paid about ten cents an hour (25 cents by my senior year). We played games a lot with them—there was no TV back then. My mother had me make a bag out of a feed sack. I'd buy a coloring book for a nickel or a dime and Crayolas to put in my bag, and I'd take along a book to read to them. My dad liked

wrapped peppermints and would have me take one for each child. We'd play games like "I Spy," "Button, Button, Who's Got the Button," and "Peas Porridge Hot, Peas Porridge Cold."

During recess at school we played "Fox and Goose" in the snow—we'd stomp out a big circle and usually divide it into eight sections. The one who was "it" was in the center and would try to catch us as we'd run around—they'd always catch somebody, and then that person was "it." We'd always have a lot of fun and would get a lot of exercise. We played "Andy-I-Over" over a garage or outhouses at my country school.

We also played "Hide and Seek" a lot. Whoever was "it" would stand by the side of a building, close their eyes and count to 50 while everybody else would hide. Then the person who was "it" would start looking. You could run in and touch the base and be "free," and you wouldn't have to be "it." But if the one who was "it" saw where you were hiding, then they'd run back to the base and would call your name, and you'd have to be "it." It was usually a fast game, unless somebody hid really well. We have six grandchildren, and I've had fun teaching them these games.

We were fortunate because we had a cistern—rain water ran into the cistern from the eve troughs. We used that soft water for washing our faces, baths, washing dishes, and washing clothes. We had our washing machine on our porch. When we washed, usually on Mondays, we heated the hot water on our cookstove. There were two rinse tubs. You ran the clothes through the wringer, cranking it by hand. You had to fold your wet clothes just right before you ran them through, because if you didn't, the wringer would just pop the buttons off.

Rationing was a big thing during the War. We got our ration books in 1941, but they were talking about it even before that. This went on until the War was over in 1945. We all did it for the War effort. All your baby-sitting money went into stamps that you could buy at school once a week. When you got enough (\$18.75 worth of stamps), you'd buy a bond and in ten years that bond was worth \$25. Sugar was also rationed. We got stamps for sugar, and I think we got about five pounds per person per month. In those days women canned fresh fruit from their orchards and gardens so we used a lot of sugar. We also made our own jelly. We cooked on our old cookstove that we heated with cobs and wood. Jell-O and bananas were also hard to get, so you went to the grocery store, put your name in, and they would call you if they had enough to go around. You would get little tokens for meat and butter.

You got a ration book for gasoline, and a farmer could get three gallons a week for his personal car. This was about enough to go to Storm Lake and back once and to Rembrandt a couple times. You would have a colored sticker on your windshield to show how much you could buy. Farm boys could get gas, so they were very popular! To save gas, a lot of us would go together in one car (like to a movie). To get a new tire you had to go to the County Draft Board office, and they would give you permission to buy a tire if your job warranted it. Once we had two flat tires in one night. You had to patch your own tires right there on the road, and then you pumped the tire up with a manual tire pump.

Nylons were hard to get because they used nylon fabric for parachutes. When I was working, we wanted to wear nylons (of course they had to have the seam up the back), so we went to every store that sold nylons in Storm Lake and put our name down. When they got a shipment in, you might get a pair.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to Buena Vista College. There were very few boys going there then because so many had been drafted. Loren Cain was in my grade and was killed during the War.

Between 1943 and 1945 June Mertz and I lived in a one-bedroom apartment while I was attending BV. We walked to school, to work, and to baby-sitting jobs in Storm Lake. When my folks moved into Storm Lake, they bought a house across the street from Fred Gaes, who used to live in Rembrandt. My dad worked at Adams Feed, and I worked for Northwestern Bell. I got married in 1946, and in 1947 my husband and I both attended Iowa State in Ames and lived in Pammel Court. I worked part-time in the Registrar's Office at Iowa State, and a person also working there told me that the Rembrandt graduates who enrolled at Iowa State made very good grades, worked hard, and the school was well satisfied with them as students. In 1948 we moved to Portland, Oregon, and my husband was working at the depot when the Vanport Flood occurred (the Columbia River flooded and wiped out part of the town).

Carl and I got married in 1967, and we moved to Carl's farm west of Rembrandt. The next year we adopted three more children. I taught Sunday School and Bible School at the Methodist Church in Rembrandt for years and was secretary of the church board. Our family all lives within 25 miles of Rembrandt.

It's so nice to see everybody who gets back for the Rembrandt Alumni Reunion every July.



Homemade Easter Hats

Orris Haraldson - Class of 1943

It was a pleasant experience going to school at Rembrandt. We had a small class of eight until a few moved in and graduated with us. After we graduated, we lost Loren Cain who was killed in the war.

Superintendent Jerde taught a physics class which made me very enthusiastic about physics until I got to nuclear physics in my senior year at Iowa State; then I discovered that nuclear physics is something entirely different.

I broke my ankle when I was a senior, and the band director, Mr. Hokeness, was very helpful and even brought my homework out to our house several times.

I remember one winter Rembrandt was buried under snow. To avoid big snowdrifts and piles of snow, people just parked wherever they could, and cars were parked all over and headed every which way. Alfred Junkermeier said it looked like people jumped out of their cars a half mile from town and just let them roll into town.

I hunted and fished around Rembrandt for practically all of my life. Pheasants were pretty much all over. We fished in the Little Sioux River for catfish, and we'd also go up to Spirit Lake and West Okobojo to fish.

After Rembrandt

I went to Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for two years. I remember being rather deficient in English, spelling and writing, until I got to Augustana, where I received extra help. I married Esther Elsie Klement from Minnesota, whom I met at Augustana, and then graduated from Iowa State in physics, math, and education. I received my Master's Degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Minnesota, went into counseling, and was guidance counselor in public schools at Princeton and Aurora, Minnesota. In 1965 I became a pastor in the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) after attending Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

I retired in 1989 for the first time and retired three more times after that. We have four children, eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren and currently live in Spooner, Wisconsin.

Delores Cain Jensen - Class of 1944

I remember having a lot of fun with my friends from Rembrandt. Somebody would have an idea and if it sounded good, we'd usually do it. We would take turns riding a friend's bicycle, and we would roller skate to school. I remember admiring the big house just east of town. We would take our sleds, start at the top of the "Hesla Hill" and go all the way to the bottom. There was always a noon whistle in town. When you heard that, it was time to go home for lunch. It was such a nice group of kids. I don't remember that we had any trouble.

There was always a big Christmas tree right in the middle of the intersection in town at Christmas time. It was kind of like an old scene out of a book.

My dad didn't drive and never had a car, so if we wanted to go out of town our aunt and uncle would usually take us. But even this was very seldom; just going to Storm Lake was a big thrill. We knew what we had, so we didn't ask for more. For example, we shared one tricycle and one sled.

I lost my mother when I was eight, my sister Lee was four, and my brother, Loren Cain, was ten. Since my dad was not really able to take care of all of us, we moved around, and I attended Fairview School but came back to Rembrandt to graduate.

I was a cheerleader at both Rembrandt and Fairview. Our cheers back then were a lot less complicated than cheerleaders do today. My brother, Loren, loved sports and people called him "Dunk" because he was so good. He was killed in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.

After Rembrandt

After graduating from Rembrandt I went to Buena Vista and received a two-year Normal Certificate. They were very short of teachers because of the war. After we graduated, some taught in one-room country schools. My first year of teaching was at Lincoln Lee; the next year it closed. I taught first and second grades in the same room. I think all the grades were combined—third and fourth, and so on. When I left there, I went back to Buena Vista for summer classes and then taught at Sulfur Springs for two years.

We did a lot of things ourselves, like teaching music and physical education, and putting on little one-act plays. You had to play the piano yourself for one-act plays. They had a stage in the assembly, so for whatever programs we put on, the parents would sit in the student desks to watch. It was fun—I wouldn't have traded it for anything. The teachers were kind of like a happy family. Each teacher pretty much handled her own room, but everyone was willing to pitch in and help if needed. There was not a basketball court at Lincoln Lee, so the high school boys' team had to go to the Rembrandt gym to practice (what was later called the "old gym"). They didn't have a girls' basketball team.

I married Bob Jensen from Newell. We were on the farm for a few years, and then we moved to Blair, Nebraska, where he was in construction. I retired three years ago from 24 years of teaching in the reading program. I help my daughter one day a week in her first-grade classroom. We have five children, four girls and a boy, and have 12 grandchildren.

Esther Lerud Gilbertson - Class of 1944

I have only the fondest memories of "my hometown," Rembrandt. I look forward to and anticipate any opportunity I have to return to my "roots." I drive by the church, the schoolhouse, Main Street, and the countryside and realize how this community prepared me spiritually, educationally, and socially for the years ahead. So many, many people have had positive effects on my life. I've enjoyed a very full and happy and successful life, and for this I owe a debt of gratitude to Rembrandt—my hometown.

We're retired and live in Fargo, North Dakota. My husband was a pastor for 33 years, and I taught high school Speech/Theatre for 32 years. I was inducted into the Iowa High School HALL OF FAME (Speech/Theatre) in 1986. I still do Dinner Theatre in our church during the first week in February (the last 15 years).

We have four children. Joanne Whiting is a lawyer in Madison, Wisconsin; Carol Grimm is a doctor in Fargo, North Dakota; Mark Gilbertson is in business in Fargo, North Dakota, and Greg Gilbertson is in business in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We have nine grandchildren, and they're all beautiful!!

Francis Peterson - Class of 1944

Perhaps growing up in Rembrandt was not so well appreciated at the time, but in retrospect, I treasure the memories. Even though I left the community upon graduation in 1944, Rembrandt is still my "hometown." My class was one of the largest ever (16) to graduate from Rembrandt. I feel that for the times (World War II), the dedicated teachers did their best to provide appropriate educational opportunities.

At least three items really impress me about the community:

(1) The number of RHS graduates who have achieved success in a wide variety of occupations and professions.

(2) The esprit-de-corps of the community for many events, such as the 75th and 100th year anniversary celebrations—including the research and publication of both school and community histories.

(3) The annual all-school gatherings honoring certain anniversary classes held each summer—a great event promoted by a few—that is virtually unique for any community.

Orv Mosbo - Class of 1945

When I began school in the first grade we had 18 students and were taught by Miss Arlene Doty with whom we continued to have classes through the third grade, although in the third grade we were in another room with Miss Landsberg. From then on as we moved up in grades, we had different teachers but often stayed two years in the same room.

The first day of the first grade in school while waiting for the bus I got in a fight with one of the boys. The buses came before a decision was reached, so it ended in a draw. But the last day of school that year I got into a fight with the same boy, and he beat me. However, my revenge came when I was in the Army in Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. I interviewed him for the Army records, and he kept calling me "Sir."

Certain events and/or situations stand out in my mind—some personal, some involving the entire class or school. I remember in the third grade, which was in the

southwest room, during a thunderstorm lightning struck the flagpole outside. We saw a ball of electrical energy strike the ground and then roll toward the school building. Also, in the same grade a mother of one of the students came in and berated the teacher without cause. She left the school that day, excused by Superintendent Jerde, and we had a substitute teacher.

In the fourth grade a new student joined our class. She sang for us some Scottish songs, such as *The Campbells Are Coming*, and we were all impressed. She had a desk in front of mine, and I conducted an experiment. I had somewhere read of capillary action, liquid moving up a rope. Her hair that day was in braids so I dipped one of them into my inkwell to see if it would happen. It did. I let it go up only a short distance so I was never caught.

One time during recess I was with some boys on our merry-go-round, swinging it as we circled. I fell off into the footpath around it, which was filled with water. I was soaked, so the administration called my mother to bring dry clothes. While waiting, I had to sit in the furnace room which was the warmest place in the school at that time.

A band had been organized while I was in the fifth or sixth grade. Our director introduced us to a march entitled *Biga* which we worked on continuously until a certain basketball game when we were to play it. Unfortunately, when I tried to play my part, I couldn't even make a sound. I had put one of the valves of my cornet in backwards. So the first ensemble attempt was a bust. My face did turn quite red during the attempts to play, as one of the people at the game noted.

We began to develop a great band when I entered the seventh grade. Myron Hokeness had joined the faculty. He developed a program of private musical instruction, which built up the band to about 70 "musicians." Each year we went to band contests and always did very well, winning most of them. Band practice was always the first period, and then we went to our classes.

There were some deficiencies in our academic program such as lack of foreign language and the sciences, except for math which was very good and one course in biology. But we had some outstanding classes in literature and the social sciences.

One event each year until I was a junior was the annual carnival held in the gymnasium to raise money for the sports activities. The community would also come out for the class plays, one of which was put on in the fall and one in the spring, to raise money for the senior skip day and the Junior-Senior Banquet held shortly before graduation. Most of the time these were comedies. The basketball games were well attended as well. Several years the basketball teams would go to the district tournaments. Being wartime it was sometimes difficult to hire coaches, so Superintendent Jerde would become the coach.

By the time graduation came around in 1945 only two of us, Roger Mickelson and I, who had started the first grade in Rembrandt, finished together. The other 16 had disappeared—mostly by moving away (some were children of tenant farmers; some were children of hired men working for local farmers). But we did gain four more so our class in 1945 numbered six—one of the smallest classes to graduate from Rembrandt High.

Those were good days. Many of our friendships still remain, although some of us have moved far away. The good academic standards, the caring teachers, and the community support all contributed to our growth in knowledge and in awareness of the world events. By the time we graduated, World War II was almost over, but the military still called a number of us into service.

As I look back, the days spent in school were important days for everyone. The small school with good community support has left a lasting legacy for us all.

Characters

For a small town Rembrandt had its characters. Many of us, I am sure, remember some of them. One who stands out in my mind is Fred Lessmeier. He was for a period of time the town constable and a good one. He loved to dance, and whenever an oompah band would come to the area he would be sure to be there to polka and schottische.

He could run faster than most of us boys. But one special trick he was notorious for was the eating of a raw egg. He would take a raw egg, make sure it was clean, pop the whole egg in his mouth, and then chew it. It was said that one could hear the crunching of the shell while he chewed it small enough to swallow.

Another character who regarded Rembrandt as his town, even though he had a Sioux Rapids address, was Theodore Jensen (nicknamed T'eter). He lived on a farm three miles north of Rembrandt but did no farming himself when I knew him. His big love was the raising of gladiolus flowers. He often exhibited them in flower shows. Because of his rapid-fire talking (something like a machine gun), he was at first dismissed by his competitors, but when he began walking away with the majority of blue ribbons, cups, etc., they took notice of him. One room in his home was filled with his prizes. During dry seasons he would hand pump water from his well and carry it to the gladiolas and water them. He would furnish flowers regularly to the church, and he often would share them with people who were sick and with others in the community.

The story of him is told that many years before I knew him, he was putting up hay with his uncle. When the full hayrack turned a corner, it tipped over. He went to a neighbor for help, and since it was about noon they invited him to have dinner. When they were about finished with the meal, they asked about his uncle, and he said that he was under the hay in the road. When they pulled him out, he was OK. I was told this story by one of my cousins, who was a neighbor.

Each Tuesday we children who were members of the Lutheran Church in town would be dismissed for an hour from school to walk up to the church for special instruction by the pastor. This was not Confirmation instruction, but was a sort of preparation for it. The actual Confirmation instruction took place on Saturday—senior class in the morning, junior class in the afternoon. If we got to the church early before the pastor would come, we would set the clock in the basement where we met four or five minutes ahead. Rarely did he notice that small time. But if we tried to move it ten minutes ahead, he would spot it and change it back.

Roy Cannoy's barbershop was a favorite place for the men to gather on Saturday evenings. While waiting for their haircuts they would discuss the weather, crops, and the war (1941-1945). Roy also had the only shower available in town for the bachelors who lived above the restaurant and in other quarters. Many of us boys had our first haircuts there sitting on a board laid over the arms of the barber chair.

Freshmen initiations were a part of fall activities. I can remember wheeling one of the girls in my class in a wheelbarrow uptown and back. And that evening we had the special "party" in the gymnasium with upperclassmen doing the honors. Sandwiches were made with gobs of mustard and onions and who knows what else. One thing I suffered was to try to swallow a chunk of raw liver tied to a string which would then be pulled up. I couldn't do that, but I did chew the raw liver and almost made some of the observers sick I was told. Another stunt was to lie under a small table blindfolded while someone above would take a raw egg and try to break it so that the contents would fall into our own mouths. Rarely was the target hit, but our faces were. The best part was at the end when we were first in line for the cake and ice cream which followed.

Because the war was on, gas rationing kept us from doing much traveling. The other rations such as food, etc., didn't affect us much except for sugar. Most of our mothers had gardens, and meat was usually available through farmer contacts, so no one went hungry as far as I know.

When World War II ended, celebrations of all sorts took place. One of the noisiest was the taking of the fire trucks out with the sirens going full-blast going from one town to another. It was good that there were no fires that night.

A more recent event happened to me. Last summer I was invited to preach at the Rembrandt Centennial Celebration. Just when I began the sermon, everyone who was present got up and walked out. (If I stop there and tell this story in a church where I am not so well known, it raises eyebrows. I have shared this story with some of my pastor colleagues, and they too wonder.) What happened was that a thunderstorm was developing and the pastor *loci* suggested that we all go to the Lutheran Church nearby. So I was actually able to finish it inside.

Some of my favorite memories are the threshing times (meals were outstanding) when I was a blower boy, putting up hay, ball games, family reunions, July 4th celebrations, watching the snow fall, the smell of newly turned earth in spring plowing, the gulls following the plow at that time, friendships which have continued long since many of us moved away, church services, the oyster stew dinner put on annually by the men of the church, good teachers, and other things too numerous to mention.

Activities

As I grew up on a small farm just outside Rembrandt it was easy to be involved in many activities taking place there. Looking back, many things shaped our lives even though at the time they seemed very ordinary.

In the winter we often had to walk to town because the roads were filled with snow. We still speak of the winter of 1936 when school was closed for a month;

Highway 71 was so filled with drifts (that year it was just outside our farm) that cars were stalled in many places and the drivers sought shelter in nearby farmhouses. The road did not open for about five days; electricity was cut off for about the same period, and the snow drifts in some places were so hard that farm animals, such as pigs, were walking over the fences.

Each December before Christmas the town merchants put on a free movie and afterwards "Santa Claus" gave out candy and peanuts to all the children who came. One year the movie was *The Wizard of Oz*, the first Technicolor movie shown in Rembrandt. All of us who were there were enthralled.

Speaking of movies, in the local theatre they were mostly shown on Saturday evenings when the stores were open and the farmers and their wives came to town to shop, bringing eggs and cream to sell. The men usually went to one of the local pubs. We boys, if we did not attend one of the shows, would get together to talk or occasionally jack up a car's rear wheel so it could not drive away.

The library was established by Mrs. Omar Siefken in a corner of the city hall which had in another corner the jail, consisting of a cage holding a cot. The books of the library were mostly donated, and some of them were very interesting. Each December before Christmas a drawing would be held in the city hall when the merchants would give out some free gifts, such as a few turkeys, other meat, some canned goods, etc.

In the center of the town where the two main streets meet, a Christmas tree with large colored lights on it would be put up. The two churches would also have large Christmas trees inside, decorated by the young people (at least in the Lutheran Church), and underneath when the Sunday School Christmas programs were held, there would be piles of presents. Each child would also receive a sack of peanuts and candy in order to make sure that everyone received something.

Snowmen were found everywhere in the yards, and a large area near the school was cleared and then covered with water so that ice skating could take place. And, of course, there was much shoveling of sidewalks.

The summer program for the town was varied. Wednesday evenings the weekly band concert was held in the park. The cars were parked with their fronts pointing to the platform where the band played. After each number they would honk their horns to let the band members know their appreciation. Sometimes, when I was quite small, we kids would play around the park during the concerts and would often have to be quieted since we were making too much noise.

A big event each summer was the Rembrandt BBQ. Two large unused stock tanks were placed in the park on raised ceramic blocks and filled with water. Underneath each tank, a fire was lighted and slabs of beef were placed in the tanks. These cooked all night and then the next morning were cut up into pieces and placed on plates together with potatoes and the other foods. I remember being impressed by the tiny loaves of bread (Wonder Bread or something like that) wrapped in the commercial wrapping and given to each of us.

There were also carnival rides such as a ferris wheel and others. There was always a Bingo stand and some other ways to spend money. One year airplane rides were given using a field by the school for the plane to be based. That was very popular. Some people had their first and only plane ride at that time. That same year there was a big water fight using the fire hydrant at the school. Each team had about six fellows, and the purpose seemed to be to get as many wet as possible.

During the summer months we fellows would get together on Sunday afternoons for a baseball game. Sometimes it was a pick-up game; other times there was a town team which played teams from other towns.

It was a simple life in many ways, but satisfying. Travel during World War II with gas rationing was severely curtailed, so we made Rembrandt the center of our activities. A trip to Storm Lake or to Spencer was special for many of us.

Three general grocery stores, two filling stations, two garages for auto repair, a lumber yard, a pharmacy, a bank, two pubs, a hardware store, a small newspaper; and easy access to medical care provided for our needs. We provided much of our own entertainment and did a lot of visiting of relatives and neighbors.

Growing up there has not only left good memories, but also an awareness of neighborly support. When there was a crisis, such as a death or a fire or a major loss of some sort, the community rallied around the need. It was a supportive town.

After Rembrandt

I enrolled at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in the fall of 1945, but before the end of the first semester I was drafted into the Army. (I missed final exams but did get credit for the courses I was taking.) After spending time in the occupation forces in Vienna, Austria, and playing in an army band, I was discharged and returned to college, graduating in 1950.

From there I went to Luther Theological Seminary where I graduated in 1954. In 1953 I was married to Joyce Berry. In 1954 I began serving a small parish on an island in the Columbia River in Washington. From there I went to Madras, Oregon, then to Lakewood, California, and my last parish was in Marysville in Northern California. From there in 1976 I joined the faculty of the Lutheran Bible Institute in California located first in Los Angeles and then in Anaheim.

In 1991 I retired and moved to Bend, Oregon, where my wife and I live. We have three daughters, Karen, Ann and Lynnea who have blessed us with nine grandchildren. I was awarded a Doctor of Ministry in 1989. Since retirement I have had the privilege of teaching at the Latvian Christian Academy in Latvia, the Romanian Bible Institute in Bucharest, Romania, and am currently teaching at the High Desert Christian College in Bend, Oregon.

My wife and I have traveled extensively, and we are now enjoying retirement, although we both keep quite busy. The Lord has been very good to us.

Roger Mickelson - Class of 1945

I started first grade at Rembrandt Consolidated School in the fall of 1933 at the age of five. I was surprised that I passed that grade because I missed so many days with illness. I must have had every possible communicable disease that winter. Miss Doty was our teacher, and she was great on phonics with the flash cards.

I recall the winter of 1936 when I was in fourth grade. We must have missed at least six weeks of school due to the terrible winter snow, drifting, and extreme cold. Back then the snow removal equipment was not as sophisticated as it is today. Roads were blocked for days. Highway 71 to Rembrandt was finally opened. After hand scooping our long lane, we got access to 71. The hired man and I drove a team of horses with a triple-box wooden-wheeled wagon to Rembrandt. At the store we bought flour and sugar. The store shelves were sparse since they had not been able to restock. Before heading back to the farm, we stopped for some coal for the furnace. Guess what. That night the winds came up and blew all the roads shut again.



When I became old enough, I was expected to do chores morning and night. Many mornings I would be eating my breakfast when the school bus pulled up at the end of the quarter mile lane. I would grab my books and run down the lane as fast as I could. My bus driver, Vernon Peterson, would edge the bus ahead acting like he was going to leave me. This encouraged me to run even faster. Needless to say, I was in good physical condition to play sports.

Our Rembrandt Lutheran Church had parochial school every Tuesday with Pastor Lerud as the teacher. I believe it was for grades three through six. The public school would allow each class an hour to attend church school. Confirmation classes were held on Saturdays. I remember having a lot of memory work and the public examination in front of the congregation. When the weather was nice, I would ride my bike five miles to class. Later I bought a used motor scooter which made it much easier. After class kids would pay me a nickel to drive my scooter around the block. Later in the summer my scooter riding days came to a close. One night I was stopped by the Highway Patrol. He told me that I could not operate on the highway until I fulfilled three things. The first thing was that I needed a driver's license, which I wasn't old enough for. He said I needed a license plate, which made no sense to buy if I had no license to drive. The third thing was to install proper lights. He didn't think my two-cell flashlight was adequate. Later on, the same patrolman stopped my cousin, Bob Hadenfeldt, who was riding a motor scooter similar to mine. The patrolman thought it was me and chewed Bob out about

being stopped a second time. Bob had to do a lot of explaining that this was his first offense. Bob was two miles from his home, and the patrolman told him to push the scooter home. Do you really think he did? As soon as the patrolman was out of sight, Bob hopped on and drove his scooter home.

In high school I enjoyed various extracurricular activities. I was a snare drummer in band since fifth grade, I sang in the mixed chorus, and I participated in class plays. My favorite activity was sports. I went out for baseball and basketball. We had some good basketball records even though we had a different coach every year I was in high school. Don Henderson was my freshman coach. Superintendent Walter Jerde was my sophomore coach. My junior year our coach was Dick Lashier, and my senior year coach was Leonard Dahl.

After Graduation

I graduated from Rembrandt in 1945 in a class of six. Luckily, Russ Hughes and Don Herrig transferred into our class in our junior year, or we would have had only four graduates. Orville Mosbo and I were the only two who started first grade together and graduated from high school at Rembrandt. That meant that a lot of kids came and went in the 12 years of school.

After attending Buena Vista College and Iowa State, I came home to farm the home place in 1949. Howard Knutson, who was superintendent of RHS, was also the band instructor. Mr. Knutson decided to further his education by going to summer school in Colorado. Since I had directed the band in a school concert in his emergency absence, he asked me to direct the summer band. The band played every Wednesday night at the Rembrandt band shell. Band practice was held on Monday evenings. As an incentive (for those two summers), players who came to both practice and the concert received 25 cents. For the concert only, they received 15 cents. The town council provided the money. People would park their cars around the park with the windows down. The honking of the horns after each of our selections encouraged us to play better. I was pleased to be asked to conduct the summer band the following year. Marches were always my favorite as a drummer, so we played a lot of those.

In 1951 Uncle Sam called me into the Army to serve in Korea, so that was the end of my farming and band directing days for two years. After returning from service, I married Ruth Ann Olson in June of 1953. We raised corn, beans, and five kids. I was born on the farm and have resided here for 73 years. I have a lot of good memories of the past in the Rembrandt community and its people—past and present.

Ralph Haroldson - Class of 1946

My first thought when asked to write about what growing up in Rembrandt meant to me was that I was probably the last one who should respond, since I left town as soon as I got out of high school and only came back once or twice a year to visit family. But

actually, those 18 years pretty much shaped my whole being and determined how I was to live the rest of my life. There were a few zigs and zags the first few years after I left, but one activity taught me to focus; that was pilot training in the Air Force during the Korean War. I flew T6s the first six months, B25s the next six months and got married to my first (and only) wife Barbara and flew B29s the next six months. Before I knew it I was flying first pilot in a B29 across the Pacific to Japan. Boy, that's a lot of water when you have a brand new navigator. But I digress.

I rank the influences of Rembrandt in the following order:

No 1 FAMILY My parents and six older siblings were by far the most important influence in my life. Mom was there every day, not off fulfilling some dream career like the NOW gals demand. Discipline was swift and sure and never had to be repeated for the same offense. There never was any worry about "damaging my psyche" because they knew that behaving would do more for my self-esteem than their trying to be my "friend." There was no Ritalin to take the place of love and discipline. Of course, having plenty of farm work to do after my three brothers went off to World War II taught me the "joy of work" and tended to keep me out of trouble.

No 2 CLASSMATES Since most of my classmates grew up in families similar to mine, they tended to be "well adjusted" and of good character. I don't remember any of the bullying and fighting we hear about today. If there was any I'm sure Miss Doty or Mr. Jerde or Mr. Hokeness took care of it very quickly.

No 3 TEACHERS My memories of my teachers are some of the best from growing up in Rembrandt. Of course, in my mind they're still young and pretty and dedicated to our education. A couple of them, Miss Cook and Miss Hudek, even joined a bunch of us at a party in our haymow one night. We had a bag swing that would carry us from the peak at one end of the barn to the peak at the other end (and it was a real Iowa barn, not one of these sheds like we have in Texas). Not everyone had the courage (or stupidity) to slide off that high perch onto a gunny sack full of hay. The rope broke one time, but luckily there was still enough hay left on the floor to break the fall.

I think the reason we had such good teachers is that in a small school close to home the bad ones were quickly weeded out and sent down the road. Eventually they went into a line of work more suited to their capabilities. Now we have mammoth consolidated school districts with powerful teachers' unions, and the needs of our students are secondary. It's difficult for parents to be involved in their children's education.

We always had a number of fresh young teachers coming in because it wasn't long before they were discovered by the young farmers in the neighborhood, and they left their teaching careers to pursue what they really wanted to do—raise a family. Again, that was before the NOW gals came along.

No 4 NEIGHBORS The other day I ran into my neighbor two doors down and decided it was time to get acquainted. I introduced myself, and during the conversation I asked him how long he had lived there. After a little thought he said, "17 years." Isn't that pathetic? My next door neighbor had his mower stolen out of his back yard while he was edging in front. I caught a guy carrying my skill saw out of our garage. We've had three cars stolen from our driveway. Good friends were held up at gunpoint at a neighborhood restaurant. An acquaintance was shot in the leg while being robbed. The names and addresses of child molesters are listed in the paper to help us protect our children. Can you imagine any of this happening in Rembrandt "Where everybody knows your name" (and business). Nuff said.

Why did I come back for the Centennial?

In 1996 my wife and I attended my high school reunion for the first time. It was our 50th. It was so much fun we came back for the 51st and then for the Centennial. For me it was almost like going back in time and being 18 again. The school building was the same (except for the gym), the town was very much the same, the girls were still pretty and the guys, well, they looked prosperous. "And all the children are still above average."

We were especially impressed by the Centennial Celebration. I couldn't believe my little hometown could put together so many activities. That tractor square dance ranks right up there with Air Force Thunderbirds (for precision and comedy if not for noise)—and in the rain yet.

After Rembrandt

I've been a Texan ever since I came down to the University of Houston in 1949, where I received my B.S. in mechanical engineering and also a Bachelor of Business Administration. Except for four years in the Air Force and two years in Tulsa, I've been here ever since. I've worked as a Sales Engineer and Sales Manager in the Oil Industry most of the time since I finished college in 1960. We've lived in this neighborhood in Dallas for 35 years. Our four kids and four grandkids all live in the Metroplex. I'm retired, but Barbara still works two days a week as a registered nurse. Barb likes to garden, and I'm restoring a couple of cars and a Lancair airplane.

Edith Breckenfelder Brake - Class of 1947

When I started school, we lived across the tracks on the west side of town, straight down Main Street and up the little hill, where Kenny Obman lives now. I walked to school from there. It was quite a walk. I don't think that you would let a five-year-old walk that far by herself in a larger town. I remember starting first grade and having Miss Doty as my teacher. There was no kindergarten. You knew everyone in the grades. There were a lot who started and finished in the Rembrandt school, going to all 12 grades there.

I also remember the terrible snow in 1936. We were looking out the window when the train made it into town; everyone was out watching. The snowdrifts were very high, and there was a snowplow attached to the front of the train. Mom always said no groceries could get to town during that time so everyone came up to our place to get milk. We always milked cows.

We then moved out in the country. Then I rode on the old wooden school bus. They had the exhaust pipe that ran down the center of the bus for heat. The seats would face inward. In the winter we would put our rubber boots on the pipe to keep our feet warm. Someone would yell, "Your boots are burning." It wasn't too long before we got the new buses. They were lots warmer.

School was fun. We had the old swings and the merry-go-round to play on. We also played lots of softball games at recess. We didn't need any adult supervision—we just went out and played and had a good time. I don't remember any fights.

It was exciting to come to school the day after Halloween to see what the big kids had hauled into town and to see all the soaped windows.

At Christmas it was always Santa in town, the church programs where everyone had a part to learn, and the big bag of candy that was passed out in town and church.

As we got older, we got to talk on the phone. It was a party line, so there was always somebody wanting the line. If someone needed the line, they would just come on and say, "We need the line," and everyone else would hang up. Sometimes there would be two or three kids from one line talking to two or three kids from another line.

It was great in the school—everyone had a chance if they wanted to be in band, sing in the chorus, play sports, and act in plays.

A lot of us girls belonged to 4-H. I can remember selling popcorn at the theatre to raise money for 4-H. They told us to put holes in the bottom of the sacks (we used a paper punch) so no one could pop them and disturb everyone. I also remember the film would break and everyone would hoot and holler until it started again.

For band concerts, the town would be full, and all would park their cars around the park. When we finished a piece, all would honk their car horns.

I remember all the fun times going to ball games. No one drove—all rode the bus, either the team bus or the spectator bus.

It was great growing up in Rembrandt. You knew everyone from first grade through high school. And now here we are back in the Rembrandt community. How some things have changed, but we still have our good memories of the fun in Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

I married Perry Brake who graduated from Rembrandt in 1942. His sister and I were great friends, and we just lived a couple miles apart. We lived on his home place for about five years, moved to Aurelia and lived there for about 20 years, and moved back to the home place near Rembrandt. We have three children, Linda, Ervin, and Loren, and eight grandchildren. They all live in the Alta area, so we enjoy them a lot.

Ronald Haraldson - Class of 1947

The "Willows" south of town along the railroad tracks where the lagoons are now located was an area where the town people would often walk the tracks in the spring and pick wild flowers.

When I was a boy, the railroad area near the stockyards was sort of a playground for us. There were a couple of old abandoned steam engine type tiling machines we used to play on, and sometimes there were empty boxcars along the railroad tracks near the stockyards that we would climb on. Also, there was a sand pile along the tracks which probably was used for bedding in the cars so the livestock wouldn't slip and fall. We would play on the cars and then jump into the sand. It seemed quite daring and fun at the time.

Anyhow, hobos and tramps, as they were called then, would come through every spring and sometimes would camp along the tracks by the stockyards or farther south by the "Willows" before making the rounds and asking for handouts at the various houses in town. We were afraid to go too close to their campsites. They always stopped at our house, and my mother would give them sandwiches or whatever she had for food. Many would offer to work for their meal, and I suppose many of them didn't have jobs because of the Depression.

In the winter of 1936 the railroad tracks would drift shut and a special locomotive with a snowplow had to clear the way. A crowd always gathered when there was a big drift to break through.

One other thing I remember is a daredevil balloonist who came to town and inflated his balloon near the spot where the water tower now stands. I don't remember the details, but there was a big fire that supplied the hot air for lift, and after the balloon ascended, the balloonist had to parachute to safety.

The "chivaree" was common in the 1920s and 1930s. My grandfather, who was widowed early in his life, remarried when he was in his sixties, and that was the first "chivaree" for me. They were surprised by a large group of friends and escorted to town where the "treats" were on him.

Some notes about Rembrandt written by my mother, Mildred Doyle Haraldson

Most of the buildings on Main Street had an upstairs and they were all occupied by people living there—I suppose because there were no more houses available.

All people in the country were on party lines. When I was 17 years old, the telephone company moved to a room over Hegna's store, and they asked me if I wanted the job as telephone operator. Lenis helped out as night operator. I worked there three years and then quit and helped Dad in the café business.

Doris and I started taking lessons on an old pump organ that Grandma and Grandpa Doyle gave us. Years later my mother took the organ apart and made a library table of the wood, which turned out good.

The garage was built at the west end of Main Street in 1911, and that was the beginning of the first movies in Rembrandt—ten cents. Everyone thought that was wonderful, but I must say a lot of kids had a hard time saving up the ten cents. Then the big dances followed—many of them; lutefisk suppers every Christmas; and people in town put on home talent plays, which seemed pretty good at the time. The high school girls played basketball there many times—usually against the teachers, and there were always big crowds. They had Box Socials back then. The ladies brought fancy boxes of food that were auctioned off to the men. Then the men ate with the lady whose box they had bought. I can't remember where the money went—for some cause, I suppose. When the new theatre was built, that changed things. Movies, dances, and roller skating were the main things, but all the school plays were given at school. The hotel and theatre were built at the same time by two brothers—O.B. and Isaac Caskey, who lived on a farm near Rembrandt with their folks and several other brothers and sisters.

When spring planting came along, a lot of men came here from different states to help on the farms. Then they would go back home and come back in the fall to husk corn. I remember quite a few of them—a few of them married and stayed, including Roe Cain.

Traveling men came on the train and stayed at the hotel, which made better business for restaurants and such. That all changed as everyone bought cars.

History of the First National Bank

It appears the "Bank of Rembrandt," which may have been a private bank and possibly located in J.K. Haraldson's General Merchandise Store, was probably the first "bank" to offer banking services to the town of Rembrandt and the surrounding area. We believe it was controlled and operated by C.B. Mills (from Minneapolis) and his associates.

C.B. Mills was a major shareholder and the first president of the Rembrandt Savings Bank founded in 1906, five years after Rembrandt was incorporated. The



Articles of Incorporation were signed by these original shareholders: C.B. Mills, John Spindler, H.C. Berger, Olaf Mosbo, W. O. McGrew, W. H. Zinser, H.F. Wellmerling, J.F. Pingel, A. Peterson, and A.T. Douglas. The first seven were named directors, and the first three were appointed to be officers, President, Vice President, and Cashier, respectively. Business was

conducted in a new bank building on the southwest corner of the "town square." The inscription in the entryway floor tile was "1906."

The First National Bank of Rembrandt, organized by a group associated with the Rembrandt Savings Bank, remained in the same building and was granted a national charter in 1915. The original stockholders and directors of the new bank were E.M. Duroe, Mills, Berger, McGrew, and A.C. Schluntz, with the first three elected as officers. In the years to follow, the bank served its customers through good and bad times. But the Great Depression was soon coming, when many banks would close their doors and the depositors of the failed institutions, which were not insured at this time, would suffer unrecoverable losses in many cases.

In 1934 the First National Bank, which had remained open through the crisis, completed a reorganization. The directors were McGrew, L.F. Pingel, H.L. Haraldson, O.M. Lee, W. Ray Fairchild, and George F. Brown, with the first three elected as officers. From this point on the bank experienced slow but steady growth. W.O. McGrew remained president until his death in 1947. At the following meeting H. Lloyd Haraldson was elected president.

After Graduation

I attended Luther College for two and a half years, came home in 1950 and was employed by the bank. I married Janet Dunning, who worked for her parents in their café here in town. I enlisted in the Air Force in 1951 during the Korean Conflict and, after serving for four years, came back and have been at the bank ever since.

In 1976 the bank moved to a new, more spacious facility that was constructed on the same location where Hegna's store had been located. In 1978 Lloyd passed away after 57 years of service to the bank, and I was appointed president. Our sons, Vaughan and Jim, both certified public accountants, returned to Rembrandt to help operate and manage the bank, and in 1995 Jim was elected president. Our daughter, Valerie Mosbo, previously employed with Stille and Schaller Insurance in Storm Lake, had already been employed with the bank since 1973, and Janet also joined the bank in 1973 in many and various capacities. David, our youngest, worked in livestock for several years after graduation and now helps at the Main Street Diner. The bank continued to grow, and in 1998 a new addition consisting of three new offices, a conference room, and a fire-resistant record vault was completed. Thanks to the loyal support of its patrons, the bank helped celebrate Rembrandt's 2001 Centennial and continues to provide banking services to its customers and friends.

Dick Johnson - Class of 1948

I used to deliver the *Des Moines Register* in Rembrandt. The truck that brought the papers originated out of Storm Lake, stopped at Truesdale and Rembrandt and then went to Sioux Rapids. I think they called it the Star Route. It was due in Rembrandt

around seven or eight in the morning, depending on the weather, of course. It came to the Post Office, so I usually waited inside because sometimes it was late. I delivered to around 40 homes throughout the whole town. If I got to school late, I was never counted tardy—I was automatically excused. I just went straight to whatever class was going on.

I also delivered the *Rembrandt Booster*, which came out on Wednesdays. That went to every business place and every home in the town. Bill and Opal Lyons had their own printing press and hand set the type. I'd watch them set the type every now and then—it was a slow process.

I lived in three different houses in Rembrandt before Mother and Dad (Ruby and Reen Johnson) built their new one across from the Lutheran Church. I went through all 12 grades at Rembrandt. With such a small school you got to know everybody by their first names. When it was real cold, we'd stop at Rystad's Grocery Store on the way to school and warm up by their floor furnace. A group would congregate there, and then we'd walk the rest of the way to school together.

They had movies in the theatre, and I ran the projector for a while. The mail truck brought the film, usually about four reels for one movie. There were stairs that went up above to a little room that had two arc projectors. The carbon arcs made a big bright light that would shine through the film. The film wouldn't break too often, but once in a while it did. When that happened, I'd have to rethread it, which wouldn't usually take very long. Then when that reel was done, I'd splice it.

I remember the telephone office building just west of the old bank. It was a red brick building with a flat roof. My aunt, Arlene Burwell, was the telephone operator and also lived there. She was on call 24 hours a day. To make a phone call from a home, you would just pick up the phone and turn the crank. She would answer, you'd tell her who you wanted to talk to, and she would ring the person.

There was a lot going on in Rembrandt back then. If you wanted a job, you didn't have to go out of town. You could always work someplace in town—for instance, there were three grocery stores and two gas stations. Bud Cannoy, Harold Olson (Oslo), and I candled eggs in the basement of Hegna's store. My dad had a truck line, and I helped him quite a bit during high school. By the time I graduated from high school, he had sold his truck line and was working at Cargill. I also worked there until I went into the service. That's how I got to know all the farmers—delivering feed. I was in Korea for over 17 months. I've been retired from John Deere for about ten years. I married Fran in 1955, and we have two girls and four grandchildren.

Mitchell "Bud" Cannoy - Class of 1948

I spent my early years growing up in Rembrandt during the Depression; I was born in December 1930. If times were tough, I sure didn't realize it. Rembrandt had everything a small boy could ask for—lots of friends, plenty of places to play, and my dog Pal, who was my best buddy.

High points of the 1930s that I remember were

- starting school—there was no preschool or kindergarten, so I started the first grade when I was five.
- pavement coming into town from Highway 71, past our house and all the way west to the end of Main Street. The gravel road right west of town was the old main road.
- my first airplane ride—it was during the annual fall celebration that the town had. It was a night flight in an old metal Ford tri-motor and cost fifty cents a ride. The plane landed and took off from the field just east of the schoolhouse.

World War II came to America on December 7, 1941, the day after my eleventh birthday. I remember the shock and disbelief that everyone had over the attack on Pearl Harbor. The next four years brought rationing of all sorts and many shortages, since so much was diverted to the war effort. We kids at school bought war stamps every week, which could be converted into war bonds when you got enough of them, or you could just redeem the books for whatever value had been accumulated. We collected scrap metal and aluminum (old pots and pans or any metal), and even picked milkweed pods in the late summer for use in filling life vests.

There was no television in the 1940s, so news of the war came by newspaper and radio. I think that WHO Des Moines was the primary local station; stations like KAYL and KICD didn't exist until later.

Because of gas rationing, tire shortages, and cars getting older, travel was really limited. The 35 MPH national speed limit didn't help either. As a result, people stayed close to home!

On Saturdays Rembrandt was a very busy town. Main Street would be full of cars. I know on many Saturday nights, my dad's barbershop would be open until after midnight.

When the war ended in 1945, it was as if a switch had been thrown. All restrictions were lifted almost overnight, and servicemen started coming home. It was a euphoric time!!!

During the late 1940s I don't remember having many worries or concerns, except for one—polio!!! Prevention of the disease was a long way off, and no one was safe. I remember one summer when every noon on the news they would tell of the number of new cases reported that day. About all you could try to do was avoid congested places like theatres and swimming pools.

Dad's Barbershop

My first recollection of my dad's shop (Roy Cannoy) is a rack of shaving mugs he had on the counter. These were fancy mugs with pictures and the owner's name on them. This was in the early 1930s when many customers came in for a shave and some had their own mug and brush.

On busy days like Saturday the barbershop sometimes looked like a social club gathering. The place would be full of mostly farmers, and they all knew each other. Dad

even had a shower stall in the back where hired men or anyone who wanted a shower could get cleaned up and put on clean clothes.

My dad loved to hunt and fish and as a result, so do I. During pheasant season I would often put my gun and hunting gear in dad's car, and he would drive to the shop. After school I would hurry to the shop so he could drive me a mile or so out of town and I would walk a fence row, road ditch, or the railroad tracks back to town. A lot of times a customer would patiently wait in the shop while this took place.



You just can't beat a small town like Rembrandt.

There's another thing that many men will remember Dad doing. When little boys started getting haircuts, Dad would always give them a nickel when they were finished. He did this until they started school. It was a pretty good incentive for the kids to sit still and not cry, because years ago a nickel could buy a candy bar, an ice cream cone or a bottle of pop. He did this throughout his barbering career.

The Old Swimming Hole

When I was a boy growing up, swimming facilities were few and far between. Spencer had a pool, Marathon had a park, and Storm Lake had the lake. When all you have is your legs and maybe a bike, these places were pretty much out of reach.

However, we did have the old gravel pit north of Rembrandt, and we could get there. The pit also had blue gills and bullheads in it, so we could combine fishing and swimming! It was always a standing challenge to see who would be the first to go swimming in the spring. I never won that honor—it was just too cold! More than one of us learned how to float and swim at the pit. Fortunately, no one ever got in serious trouble, because it could have been a dangerous place— and of course, skinny-dipping was always allowed!!!

After Rembrandt

In 1948 I graduated from RHS, and there were only two of us from that original first grade class who graduated. I went to Buena Vista for two years; then my college education was interrupted by the Korean War. After four years in the Air Force, I went back to finish my college education at Iowa State, getting my Electrical Engineer's degree in 1957. That same year I married a Sioux Rapids girl, Betty Blackert, and then started work with Collins Radio in Cedar Rapids. I retired from the company in 1993 after 35 years. We have three children and four grandchildren.

Jerry Madsen - Class of 1949

I am going to talk about a few things during the period from 1941 to 1946. There were very few tractors, so most of the work was done with horses, for instance, at oat harvest, at threshing time and for picking corn. That was before we had electricity. We didn't get electricity until 1946 when the REC (Rural Electric Cooperative) was formed. We worked in the field from sunup to sundown and then used kerosene lanterns to do chores.

During this time for the few tractors that were around, Gay Fosmark had a tank wagon. At that time there were no pumps with meters. He had a five-gallon gas can that he would measure with, and on the back of his truck he had a round circle with numbers from 1-20. Every time he dumped a can, he would move the lever to the next number. At that time most people had a 55-gallon barrel that lay on its side up on a little wooden rack, and he had a funnel that he would use to pour the gas into your barrel.

Also during that time Harold Phillips (who also drove a school bus for years) had a truck and a regular route to deliver ice to farms for people's iceboxes. Before we had a refrigerator, we'd get a 50-pound block of ice. We kept our icebox on our back porch, but some people kept theirs in the kitchen.

Another thing during that time was that Rembrandt merchants would give out a ticket, and with that ticket and two cents you could go to the movie on Wednesday night.

All of this changed in 1946 when electricity came. We got running water in the house and an indoor bathroom and an electric refrigerator. Prior to that time one of the last things you'd do before you went to the house was to get a fresh bucket of water for drinking purposes. During the winter it would splash on your leg, and your pant leg would freeze by the time you got to the house. One thing you always remembered was to fill the reservoir on the end of the cob and wood cookstove in the kitchen. Filling this with two or three gallons of water at night gave us warm water to use in the morning to wash our faces.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I stayed home and helped on the farm until I was drafted into the Army. I spent my time during the Korean War in Alaska (it was still a territory then—not yet a state). I was in the truck company that traveled all over Alaska. You could look across the open sea and see the Russian troops. The Aleutian Islands were a key part of the defense of the northern sector. When I returned, I started farming with my brothers east of Rembrandt. I married Marjorie Lenz from Early in January 1956. We farmed there until 1963 and then moved to Aurelia and farmed there until 1985 when we retired. We now live in Cherokee and have seven children and twelve grandchildren, who all live within four hours of us.



Roger Pewsey - Class of 1950

I was born in Rembrandt on May 1, 1931, and left on January 24, 1952, when I enlisted in the Air Force. My parents moved to Imperial Beach (San Diego area) in late 1952.

Why not come back! The United States is my country. Iowa is my state. And Rembrandt will always be my first home. Even though I haven't lived there for over 50 years, it still holds a very dear place in my heart. I loved, and miss, the small town atmosphere, closeness to my neighbors and the friends I grew up with. I go back to get in touch with these feelings and to reaffirm that there are good and decent places and people in this world.

One cannot have a better place than a small town in which to grow up. A small town teaches one to be independent and resourceful and that integrity and honesty are the greatest attributes one can develop.

Rembrandt barely had enough boys to field a baseball team with a couple left over. Thank God a basketball team was only five. That gave us at least a chance for rest during a game. My favorite memory was, aside from my first kiss, pitching two perfect games for our team, even if they were against two of the worst teams at that time.

The entire upper four grades were seated in the assembly area on the third floor, the seniors being next to the windows. I tell everyone that I graduated in the top ten of our class. Of course, that's all there were in the class.

Probably the most interesting person I remember was Ole Hegna. He owned one of the two grocery stores in town. Several of us got jobs manually candling eggs in his basement. It was cool down there and not a bad job at all. He also had a pig farm at the other end of the street from the high school. I went with him a few times when he went to "slop" the hogs. Man, what a mess that was!

Every Memorial Day the town would have a program in the park, and the school band would play the marches in the bandstand. People would come from all over the county. I really miss that.

After Rembrandt

My wife Luci and I are retired. I was an Information Systems Assistant Vice President for a commercial insurance company in San Diego. Luci was an office manager for a court reporting firm in San Diego. We moved here from Chula Vista (San Diego area) in May of 1993.

Luci is into quilting and is quite good at it. I play around with model trains. We both enjoy riding our own full-dress Harley on day rides, weekend overnights, and extended trips. We've been to Florida, Virginia, Iowa and over most of the southwest United States on it.

We have one son born in August 1964 and a daughter born in August 1965. My father and uncle were identical twins, Rush and Russell. Rush was my dad, and our son is named after my uncle Russell. Our daughter is named Lori. Russ and his family live at

the other end of the block from us here in Kingman, Arizona. (He just became a grandfather, which I guess makes me a great-grandfather.) He currently test drives newly designed Harley-Davidson motorcycles that will be in production in two or three years. Lori lives in Phoenix. She is an Oracle Database Administrator for Bank of America. She just became engaged and will be married in November of 2002.



Russell Pewsey with the 1953 International Fire Truck on Rembrandt's Main Street

Ruth Ann Olson Mickelson - Class of 1950

I guess I can say I've lived around Rembrandt most of my life, except for the three years I was at Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Medical Technology College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I worked one year at the hospital in Marshall, Minnesota, as a lab and X-ray technician.

Since I was five I have lived with my family outside Rembrandt northwest of town. When I was small and we couldn't go to the band concerts on Wednesday nights, we could hear the music while sitting on our front porch on a summer evening. I felt fortunate to grow up in such a tranquil atmosphere.

School days at Rembrandt were fun years in high school. I loved music— both vocal and playing my saxophone in the band. We had very good instructors. My first was Myron Hokeness for band and vocal my freshman year. It was Mr. Hokeness who started our trio, consisting of Janet Hegna, Arvilla Cleveland, and me. Through our high school days we did lots of singing—at Ladies Aid at both churches, Farm Bureau meetings, showers, and PTA meetings. The summer of 1949 the Rembrandt Women's Club entered our trio, along with Jack McGrew on his steel guitar, in a contest. It was held at the Vista Theater in Storm Lake and was broadcast over the radio station, KAYL. They had a call-in vote with the contestants with the most votes the winners. We won, thanks to all who listened and called.

My sophomore year Howard Knutson directed the band, and we had another teacher for vocal. Mr. Hokeness was superintendent before Mr. Knutson, and they both also taught math. At contest we always received "I"s for band and vocal large groups.

My first love was basketball. I was fortunate to be around when the groundwork to organize girls' six-player basketball started. We had a Phys. Ed. teacher, June Hudek, from Pocahontas, who encouraged us to get organized. Some of the upperclassmen went to the superintendent and then took the idea to the school board. It was allowed, if we would practice after school and the boys could practice during school hours. For me it meant walking home after practice in the cold (a little over a mile). I had never seen a game, so it was a learning experience for me, but I soon caught on. The first year we were able to schedule practice games with surrounding schools. There were several schools that didn't have girls' basketball yet. We progressed very well with Coach Claire Ericksen and later Wilbur Waggoner and had many winning seasons. Just check the trophy case!

Roger and I both grew up around Rembrandt and raised our family here, so we can say we are still creating memories, especially after our Centennial Celebration in 2001! We have one daughter, four sons, and eighteen grandchildren.

Phyllis Obman Thayer - Class of 1951

My family moved to Rembrandt when I was in the eighth grade. Simple things were a lot of fun for us. We went to the Peterson park for picnics at night and went swimming in the gravel pit in the Marathon park.

We rented, and in those times often the landlord didn't put in plumbing for the tenants until later. We did not have inside plumbing until I was in about ninth grade. We had to carry our water in from outside; we had a pump right outside the house. That meant that after you did the dishes, you had to carry the water out. We did the dishes in a one-section sink that would hold two pans—one for washing the dishes and the other for rinsing them. My dad put in a bathroom upstairs on his own, and later my parents actually bought the farm.

We always had a big garden and canned everything. We spent a lot of time working in the garden, planting, weeding, picking, and digging the potatoes when they were ready in the fall. To can food, green beans for instance, we'd pick them, bring them in, snap or cut off the ends, wash them, and then wash and sterilize the glass jars. With our big family, we used mostly quart jars. We'd put the beans in the jars with water and canning salt, put a lid on, seal them, and set them in the canner or the pressure cooker. Cold pack takes a lot longer. Food from our garden that we canned would last through all winter and we'd probably have some left. That would be fine; as long as they sealed well, they kept for a long time.

We always cleaned on Saturdays. We would mop and wax the floors, which were mostly linoleum. My mom always said that you couldn't get into the corners unless you were on your hands and knees. For spring and fall cleaning we used to take things out and

clean a whole room at a time. We'd take the rugs outside, hang them on the line, and beat them with a carpet beater.

In those days we didn't have permanent press clothes—we ironed everything. (My grandma ironed her sheets and even her rags). I started ironing when I was very young, probably about when I was eight, because my mom wasn't well then. When I first started ironing, the iron would sit on the cookstove to heat. There was a little handle that you could clip on the hot iron. One was heating while you were using the other one. Our ironing board was made out of wood. My mom made starch (stiffening) to iron Dad's good white shirts for church; she mixed a powder with water. Later we dampened shirts before ironing them. She put holes in the lid of a bottle so that we could sprinkle water on the clothes easily.

When we moved to Rembrandt, my brothers were old enough to do the outside chores, so I mostly worked in the house, although I did gather eggs every day. We had setting hens to hatch our own chickens. Years ago when you had chickens, they would go in and set someplace to hatch eggs. They would try to hide them. Mom would also have ducks and geese, and the setting hens would nest them. They would be in our shed or somewhere.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I married Don Thayer from rural Storm Lake. He was a farmer, and we still live on a farm. After we got married, we lived a few months in a little house on his dad's place, and then we moved to just north of Storm Lake, and we've lived here since 1957. We have five children—Steven, Robert, David, Diane, and Judy—and eight grandchildren.

Bill McGrew - Class of 1952

I consider attending Rembrandt School and growing up on the farm near Rembrandt one of the greatest experiences of my life. The education we received in school and the close relationships gained in a small town have benefited me my entire life. Rembrandt school provided an education second to none. Our high school scholastic standing was always among the highest in the state and in the country at the time and, looking back, was much better than that of most schools today. My decision to enter engineering in college was prompted by the extensive testing programs provided every year in high school. We always dreaded those lengthy test days each year to establish our aptitudes and our scholastic standing, but they were helpful in directing our futures.

These are some of the events that stick out in my memory of "The good old days."

- Being able to attend all 12 grades with six out of the ten of our graduating class. Not many people are that lucky any more.

- Everyone taking part in all of the sporting activities. (We actually had to or there wouldn't have been enough players for a team.)
- The fantastic girls' basketball team and the "athletically challenged" boys' basketball team. (The girls won nearly all of their games, and the boys won only seven games in four years.)
- Getting beaten by Fairview 87-12.
- Getting beaten by Aurelia 90-17 after the girls' team destroyed their team. They were trying to get 100 points against us; we actually stalled the whole fourth quarter to keep that from happening. (I guess you could say we actually won a moral victory.) How can anyone forget four years like that? We must have given Coach Waggoner gray hair.
- Howard Knutson taking the time out of his busy schedule to provide a private class to teach me advanced algebra because he knew I would need it. I know he felt it was just his job, but he went beyond what was expected and provided me a great advantage when I attended college. Thank you Mr. Knutson. (Mr. Knutson conducted a few other private classes for me at times which I don't care to talk about.)
- When I was quite young, going to town early on Saturday night with Jack and Larry so we could stop at the school and sneak a smoke before we went to the movies. The first time (and last time) that I inhaled, I was sitting on top of the swings and started coughing so hard I fell off and almost killed myself. (I quit smoking at the age of seven when I got caught.)
- The hot humid days that always made it doubly hard to start school in the fall. We couldn't wait for the long days to end.
- The violent thunder and lightning storms that would literally shake the house at night. The Iowa storms are still something that I miss and look forward to each year at the reunion.
- Community square dances in John Mavis's hay mow. What a great time we had.
- The Rembrandt marching band. We considered ourselves second to none and competed well against the best. I still love to listen to a good John Philip Sousa march. On one such trip, I bet Floyd Binder that I could drink six mugs full of root beer after we had just eaten a dozen spudnuts. I collected the dollar bet but paid for it dearly on the long bumpy bus ride home. Talk about your eyes being bigger than your stomach.
- Working with Loren Green on the baler every summer. It was hard work but very good pay for that time and a great experience. I got the chance to meet people all over the countryside and sit at their tables in the evenings after a hard day's work and enjoy their meals and their habits and customs that were usually different from those I was used to. I think this has helped me when I travel throughout the world meeting and dealing with people from other cultures.
- Loren paid me 1 cent per bale if I loaded bales all day. On a good day we baled about 1000 bales which was backbreaking work but paid \$10.00 which was great in those days. When Loren bought a second baler, he promoted me to running the baler and sitting on my behind all day driving the tractor while some other poor guy loaded the

bales. Loren paid me 2 cents per bale for this. It taught me a valuable lesson. "It's better to drive and let someone else do the hard work. It's a lot easier and pays a lot better." I've never forgotten that lesson. Thanks Loren.

- There are a million more fond memories of our family, the lifelong friends gained, the many pleasant days and summer visits to Iowa, and all the great people, but not enough space to put them to paper. I could continue forever; Rembrandt will always be home. Growing up in Rembrandt prepared me well for the future years. Thanks Rembrandt. I look forward to many more summer reunions; it's a privilege that few people own.

After Rembrandt

After graduating from Rembrandt High in 1952, I attended Iowa State College in Ames where I received my Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering in 1956. I then moved to California and went to work for a radar company.

In 1963 a partner and I started our own company, Modular Devices, designing and manufacturing power systems for the electronic industry. We eventually grew the company by gaining many of the large computer companies as customers.

We sold the company in 1994 to a company in England who sold their group to a French company in 1998. I am, at present, the CEO of Martek Power U.S. which consists of four companies in the U.S. and one in Mexico. I have not yet retired because I enjoy what I'm doing (still driving and letting someone else do the work) and the travel that the job entails. I just keep saying I will retire in a couple of years.

In 1979 Ellie and I were married in Anaheim, California and between us have five children: my three, Deborah, Barbara and Bill Jr., and Ellie's two, Sherrilyn and Greg Arnold. We also have nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Ellie and I have lived in Rolling Hills Estates, California, for the past 16 years and enjoy traveling very much.

Darlene (Suze) Johnson McGrew - Class of 1952

My parents, Reen and Ruby Johnson, and brother, Dick, moved to Rembrandt the year I was born. I attended Rembrandt Consolidated School grades 1-12, graduating in 1952. Though our curriculum was very limited by today's standards, we all learned the basics and we learned them well! Being in such a small school, I was able to be involved in sports, music, drama, journalism, leadership and many other special events.

Basketball became my focus, starting to play in junior high. Girls' basketball was as popular as boys' basketball, and we played half court. My kids can't even understand how half court basketball worked, let alone see any fun in it. But to us, it was the greatest! Highlights were the annual trips to Des Moines for the girls' state tournaments and staying in a hotel. WOW—that was big!!

Saturday nights in Rembrandt were most memorable—everyone came to town on Saturday night. The streets were filled with cars, and the stores and café were filled with people. The main event was the ten-cent movies and five-cent popcorn at the theatre,

where I would meet my one and only. We mainly saw Gene Autry and Roy Rogers movies. As a teenager I had various jobs—Rystad's General Store, Peterson's groceries, waitress at the café, and oh yes—detasseling corn!

Summers were band concerts in the park, hanging out with friends, detasseling corn, and swimming. Winters were ice skating on icy streets and flooded ponds, sledding, and basketball games. Spring and fall were gardens and flowers, and then raking leaves, having bonfires, and roasting wieners.

An example of real town involvement was after my wedding (on a Saturday night) when I was placed in a wheelbarrow in my wedding dress and Larry having to push me down Main Street and back, with everyone in town cheering him on.

After Rembrandt

We moved to California in 1958 where we raised three daughters and now have seven grandchildren. I'm now alone, as Larry died 11 years ago. I am semi-retired and living the good life in the Palm Springs, California area, but I still think of Rembrandt as home.

Why do I still return to Rembrandt? That is where I learned all life's important lessons—honesty, respect, principles, morals, and about my God and my faith, and I'm most thankful for all of this.

Larry McGrew - Class of 1951

Since Larry isn't here to contribute his story, I will try to add a few words on his behalf. Larry grew up on the McGrew farm, two miles west of Rembrandt School, being the second of Eva and Johnnie McGrew's five boys. He attended Rembrandt School for all 12 grades, where he excelled in music. Under the teaching of Howard Knutson, Larry enjoyed and won many honors at state band meets playing his cornet.

I'm sure some of Larry's memories of Rembrandt would include growing up on the farm with his brothers, the family owning and operating the White Star Dairy, walking to and from town, breaking the speed limits in Rembrandt, and hanging out at the café and George's Place (and, oh yes, spending time with me).

Larry graduated from Rembrandt in 1951. At Buena Vista College and Drake University, he majored in music. After we married in 1954, Larry spent three years playing in the Army Band in El Paso, Texas. Sales was Larry's career—here his strong rural Iowa work ethic contributed to his success. Larry was diagnosed with cancer, and after four and a half years, he lost the battle in 1991.

Don Whitaker - Class of 1952

Small town living. What was it like to grow up in the small town/rural environment? Having been asked that question, I've been giving some thought as to what

is the true meaning of "small town." Are we comparing Rembrandt to Storm Lake or possibly Des Moines with New York City? It all depends on one's point of view, I guess.

Having lived here from age six through my 67 years, I can say that I can see where one who has grown up in the hustle and bustle of the city would wonder how anyone would live in the quiet, neighborly environment of the small town.

Imagine all of the kids in town getting together to play softball in the summer. (We needed nearly all of them to make up two teams). Of course, it might seem unusual to our children of 2002 when I tell them that we had boys and girls of all ages participating in these pick-up games.

Most activities today are all so organized for those kids, that there isn't much time for them just to be kids and use their own imagination to create their own fun. Who of you has made box kites from scratch, carved an arrow out of a wooden shingle to be sent up into the air using a piece of twine attached to a short lath, or possibly created an object to play with using scraps of material at hand. Most today would be lost without their TVs and other electronic toys, as well as all of the organized activities they just have to have in order to stay busy.

The small school here has put out a lot of talented people over the years. There are graduates who have made their mark by tilling the land, creating all kinds of buildings, cultivating fine minds as teachers and administrators, going into the medical field as doctors and nurses, taken up engineering, and gone into manufacturing; the list goes on and on. In that light, I can say that our small town schooling isn't so bad after all. Granted, most who have moved to other areas have had to do that in order to follow those professions, but they will all say that they had a pretty good start by having enjoyed the attention given to them by their instructors who treated them all as individuals instead of numbers.

Our high school programs in sports were used by almost everyone in high school for the simple reason that we were all needed to fill out the teams. Today only those with the most talent get a chance to represent their school. We were able to give everyone a chance to play.

George Engebretson started the Little League here in town for the boys of the area. The age limit at that time was 14 or 15. Those of us who were barely young enough to be on the team had a huge advantage over some of the other teams we played. Some of those scores were almost like basketball games instead of baseball—21 to 3, 18 to 5—fun at the time, but the main thing was learning to play the game, win or lose, have fun winning, and be congenial losers.

I remember going to the ten-cent movies in the old theatre, getting my hair cut at Roy Cannoy's barber shop (with the nickel he gave all of the boys when the cut was completed), town nights, playing in the band in the old band shell and riding the bike out to the gravel pit or the creek to go fishing for bluegills or chubs. These are a few of the memories I have.

After Graduation

My dad, Curtis Whitaker, was a carpenter here in town, and I started helping him while I was in school. We worked together quite a number of years. After a couple of years in the Army, I came back here to Rembrandt, and he and I were in partnership until I took over in 1974. He then worked with me until he retired. We have built or remodeled quite a number of buildings around the area. After over 50 years of this work, I am now doing a lot of projects for my family. I do enjoy making cabinets and furniture for them as well as helping them make their home improvements.

Ardis and I were married in 1958. Oh, by the way, we do get to enjoy the hustle and bustle of the big city every once in a while, as my oldest son Dean and his wife live in West Des Moines. My youngest son Scott and his wife have a home in Sioux Rapids, and both work in Spencer. As you can see, with the advantage of our good roads and cars, we are only a little over two hours from family and all of the activity of the city. I guess the small town isn't all that bad.

Clarence Madsen - Class of 1953

In the fall of 1945, a small skinny boy entered fourth grade at Rembrandt Consolidated School, transferring from Lincoln Lee Consolidated School in rural Lincoln township. Each classroom had two grades—first-second, third-fourth, fifth-sixth, and seventh-eighth at the elementary level. In time, friendships developed, many lasting until now, and hopefully much longer. Even though the teachers taught both grades, everything worked out. The smaller class sizes were to our advantage, as everyone was involved in all classes, and we had a lot of individual help.

As we grew older and entered seventh and eighth grade, the school allowed us to have some class parties, some at school, attending a movie at Sioux Rapids, or maybe a roller skating party at Spencer. I will never forget my first experience at roller skating. Growing up on the farm, we didn't have cement sidewalks to learn on, so I had never been on skates before. Well anyway, off to Spencer we went one night to roller skate, but if it hadn't been for the helping hands of Marlene Foval and Shirley Whitaker, I would not have made it around the rink. No broken bones, some floor burns, but it was fun.

Entering high school, the girls were becoming more noticeable, which led to puppy love and talking to a special girl in the hallway between classes.

Our class sizes didn't change much. Shop class was always my favorite. Bob Hauser and I decided to build two self-feeders for pigs, and if I remember correctly, we got a good grade. Of course, sports were always enjoyable; whether it was watching the girls win their basketball games and the boys losing, it still taught us character.

I remember playing a baseball game at Linn Grove High School. Floyd Binder was up to bat. He got an infield hit and took off for first base. He collided with the first baseman's knee, hitting his head and suffering a concussion—end of game.

Our class of ten finally entered the twelfth grade, and thought we were big wheels—skip day, graduation, and time to think of the future.

After Rembrandt

The Korean War was on, and when we reached our 18th birthday we had to register for the draft. I volunteered for the Army in the fall of 1956 and spent 18 months in France, returning home in 1958, and started farming. I am semi-retired, living part-time in Minnesota and California. Life has been great, and I never felt my education at Rembrandt wasn't sufficient as we all learn every day. I thank my parents, Ed and Marie Madsen, and the teachers at Rembrandt for giving me the knowledge and ambition to succeed.

I moved with my family to Minnesota, where I met and married Marie in 1958. We have six children and two grandsons.

Dick Frederick - Class of 1953

These are some of my memories of growing up in Rembrandt, during the 1940s and 1950s, which was a good time in the century. I lived just north of the gas station and spent lots of time there riding my bike through the office and out on the service bay, which I am now able to see was not a good idea.

I remember waiting at the café for the *Des Moines Register* to come to be delivered. I had the north part of town and carried the paper for about five years. I was late for school at times when the weather was bad and papers were late.

We used to try to get Art Johnson, the custodian, to let us into the gym to practice basketball on Saturdays. He used to let us in some of the times, but I remember how particular he was about no street shoes on the floor. How times have changed. The gym was 50x25 with walls all around except for the north side, which was where the stage was.

We used to ride the bus to basketball games, and I remember how cold it used to be waiting for the bus to warm up. We had good times in Little League baseball as we had pretty good teams. I remember playing under the lights at Cherokee, which was rare in those days.

I worked at Hegna's Store candling eggs and feeding Ole's hogs. A semi truck used to come in from New York and pick up cases of eggs once a week. I was always interested in talking to the drivers.

I also used to help set type at the *Rembrandt Booster* with Bill and Opal Lyons. The paper came out every Wednesday.

The Christmas programs were always a good time. I remember going out to the church in the country and having practice, and we would have programs there at times. It was so cold until the furnace would get the church warmed up. The Lutheran Church in town was about five houses north of my place and on the east side of the street.

We used to ride our bikes out to the Raccoon River and go fishing by my uncle's farm, which was about three miles one way. We would go out to the gas station on the highway and watch TV, which was on about three hours per evening from Sioux City.

We used to go to Bruce McKibben's to watch the World Series during the early 1950s from WOI-TV in Ames. He was one of the first to have a TV. Sometimes the picture would be so snowy that we could hardly see it, and other times it would be clear as a bell.

There were band concerts in the park in the band house on Wednesday nights. There were movies on Wednesday, Saturday, and sometimes Sunday nights. I'd go to the movies and help run the projector. Jean Hegna used to bring popcorn from the meat locker to the movie house. Wednesday and Saturday nights were open nights for stores. We used to roller skate in the movie house also; the seats were on boards and could be moved to the sides.

In the late 1940s when the wind blew the corn down, we got out of school to help pick corn off the ground and throw it into wagons. I also remember picking pods off milkweeds to use in parachute packing.

I don't remember the year, but I think it was the 1941 Veterans Day Blizzard when snow was as high as telephone poles and sheep were in piles, frozen to death two miles west of town.

We had dial phones in Rembrandt as long as I can remember, which I didn't think much of, but when I went to work in Mason City, Iowa, in 1954, they still had operators.

The Fire Department used to flood the banked area near the water tower, and we would ice skate and have good times. We used to put barrels on the ice and jump them.

We used to go out by the Raccoon River and pick milkweed pods during World War II and then put them in large bags and turn them in, and people would make parachute material out of the filament inside the pod.

During wartime rationing, we used to have small plastic tokens about the size of a dime—red was for meat and blue for sugar. These were in addition to money that we paid for products. We also had paper coupons for the purchase of gasoline. We were allowed so many coupons or tokens according to need.

Candling Eggs at Hegna's Store in Rembrandt in 1950

The farmers brought eggs to the store in different size cases, and then we took them to the basement and put them on a shelf. We had cases sitting on each side of us, and we put the case that we were to candle in front of us. We stood at this location and would take two eggs in each hand and rotate them up to a light device that would show us how small or large the air pocket was—the smaller, the fresher the egg. Some would be very dark, and these were spoiled and went to Ole Hegna's hogs. The others which were good were sorted by size—large, medium and small—and farmers were paid accordingly. We also coated eggs with oil before they were shipped to New York by semi which used dry ice to keep the eggs cool. Cleanliness of eggs was important because clean eggs brought a better price for farmers, so if they were dirty we had to clean them with a sandpaper device. We worked in quite a dark area so we could look at the eggs through the lighted device and see the inside better. This is a synopsis of candling eggs.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to telegraph school in Omaha for six months and then got a job as telegrapher on Chicago Great Western (CGW) railway at Oelwein, Iowa. I worked several stations as agent and then got a job at Mason City, Iowa. I was a Train Dispatcher most of my career on the railroad with CGW; they were bought by Chicago Northwestern, who in turn was bought by Union Pacific. I married in 1958, was in the Army at Ft. Gordon, Georgia, for 18 months, divorced in 1961, and never remarried. My daughter is a chiropractor in Kensett, Iowa. I retired in 1994 after 40 years on CGW-CNW-UP RR, and live in Boone, Iowa. I work part-time at Boone County Landfill as the scale attendant, and I'm also the Boone County weather reporter (storm spotter) for WHO-TV.

Jean Hegna Obman - Class of 1953

When I was in high school, my dad (Herman Hegna) bought a big popcorn popper. He put it in the meat market that he owned. We had movies in the movie theatre on Wednesday and Saturday nights. I would pop the corn at the meat market, sack it up and take it to the theatre and sell it. The corn was probably sold for about ten cents a sack. I would make several trips to get more corn as it really sold fast. I don't think I got to see very much of the movies. I did it for two or three years; then my brother Jerry took over.

My mother and dad both were involved in school. My mother, Beulah Hegna, cooked hot lunches at the school, and my dad drove a school bus every day and also the bus that took the basketball teams to the different schools we played. My mother cooked at RHS for 13 years and then cooked at Buena Vista College in Storm Lake for 17 years.

I remember after home ball games we would go to George's Place (the bar). He had hamburgers and all the things that went with a hamburger. They were the best hamburgers you ever ate. I don't think our parents liked us going in there, but there wasn't any place else to get something to eat. Of course, we were all starved after playing ball.

Also, we would go ice skating by the water tower. Some winters they would make an ice skating rink. We also had a tennis court down by George Engebretson's house.



*Bertha Cannoy, Roselle Johnson,
and Beulah Hegna*

After Rembrandt

I married Dale Obman, who graduated from Rembrandt in 1952. We moved to Hereford, Texas, in 1977 and lived there for about five years. I was manager of a 7-11 convenience store. We then moved to Amarillo, Texas, where we still live. Dale worked

in road construction until he had triple by-pass surgery and was forced to retire before he was ready to. I worked in a meat market and a large grocery store, and then worked in the Diet Office and Food Service of one of our large hospitals here in Amarillo for eight years and retired from there two years ago. We have three children, who all live here in Amarillo, and three grandchildren.

Marlys Pingel Gregg - Class of 1953

Life has been good. I grew up on an 80-acre farm on the east side of US Highway 71, near Rembrandt, USA. My dad raised hogs and milked Brown Swiss cows. Mother had a flock of laying hens and enjoyed gardening.

Since I was an only child, I enjoyed playing with my pets. I went everywhere with my dog, Brownie. Whenever Mother wanted me, all she had to do was call for Brownie, and I would come too. I remember taking coffee to my dad in July when he was shocking oats. Brownie and I would stay cool under a shock of oats until chore time.

My first trip home from school was a memorable one. Mother had instructed me to get off the school bus so I wouldn't have to ride all the way around the route. I was to get off the bus at the corner one fourth mile north of home and walk close to the fence. I followed directions explicitly and had a hard time staying close to the fence without slipping into the ditch. I must have been a funny sight clinging to the fence all the way home. The next day I was allowed to walk in the middle of the ditch, still a safe distance from the road.

My parents promised me a horse when I completed fourth grade. When it came time, they took me to see a litter of Manchester Toy Terrier puppies. I fell in love with one but had to make my choice between a horse or the puppy. Buttons, my new puppy, became my dearest friend. She would play "hide and seek" with me in the house. I enjoyed all the farm cats too and dressed some of them in doll clothes and put them to sleep on their backs in the doll buggy.

I became interested in music in the fifth grade and took piano lessons from a teacher who gave lessons at the school. I also wanted to join the band so I learned to play the clarinet. My mother didn't appreciate my squeaky notes, so I was sent to the brooder house where the baby chicks enjoyed my music. I remember that Mr. Knudson wanted us to practice more than 30 minutes a day so we would make progress.

Athletics were never my strong point. I went out for basketball so that I would be allowed to attend the ball games. I was on the third team and spent most of my time warming the bench. I got to suit up only every third game. During my junior year, the coach, Mr. Schirmer, had a dream that I should be a starter in the first game of the Buena Vista County Tournament being held at Truesdale, Iowa. I surprised everyone, including myself, by making three long shots within the first few minutes. That was my most successful sports event.

Television was becoming available about this time. The nearest TV set was located at the gas station on the corner north of our home. My dad would walk there to watch professional wrestling. At home we listened to the radio for our entertainment.

Miss Elizabeth Davies was my Home Economics teacher and taught me to sew and cook. She was also influential in securing a scholarship of \$200 to pay tuition for two years at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls. That changed the course of my life.

After Rembrandt

I became a third grade teacher in the Cherokee Community School district in 1956. I met my future husband, Vernon Gregg, on a blind date and married him almost two years later. He is a farmer and at the time had part ownership in a small airplane. I was on cloud nine flying with him.

After our children were in school, I accepted a teaching position at the Willow Community School in Quimby, Iowa, and spent the next 22 years teaching remedial reading and remedial math. I still love teaching young children at our church's neighborhood Bible Club.

God has been good to us. We are active in a local church, and it is a blessing to have a fine Christian husband. Vernon and I are members of The Gideons, and last year when RAGBRAI rode past our farm, we were able to distribute tracts sharing Jesus with the bike riders.

Our three children are all married and serving the Lord in their churches. We have 11 grandchildren. The oldest is 18 years old and the youngest is three. We enjoy spending time with them.

My hobbies now include gardening, canning, flower growing and arranging, and candle making. Vernon and I also enjoy traveling together. I'm still living on a farm near Cherokee, Iowa, and am glad for the influence of my rural roots near Rembrandt.

Shirley Mavis Butts - 1953

I have many fond memories of my years in Rembrandt. We moved there as I was beginning fifth grade—Miss Bender was my teacher in fifth and sixth. I became friends with Dolores Green, Jean Hegna, Janet Fosmark, Sue Johnson, Larry and Bill McGrew, Floyd Binder, and Carolyn Breckenfelder.

I always liked school, studied hard, enjoyed being in plays, choir, band, cheerleading in junior high and attempting basketball in high school. I sat on the bench most of the time, but it was fun being part of the team.

I remember always liking Home Ec., as I planned to be a Home Ec. teacher. Miss Davies was our teacher; I still have the cookbook we put together. Miss Spahn was a favorite English teacher. Typing was my hardest class.

I appreciated our small classes—11 in our graduating class—but missed the opportunity to take a foreign language and enough science to prepare me for college. It

was very rough coming from such a sheltered background, but I made it with lots of study and hard work. I see so many benefits of growing up in a small town where you know everyone and receive lots of encouragement.

I lived on a farm, so often felt left out because we couldn't always get to town, but I have fond memories of the Saturday night movies and attending youth meetings at both the Methodist and Lutheran churches.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Iowa State College, Ames, in 1957 with a B.S. in Home Economics Education. Since my family had moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, I taught there for nine years. During that time I met and married Carl Butts. We lived in Ohio and Minneapolis, and after our daughter Deanna was born, I became a stay-at-home mom and loved every minute of it. I became involved in church, PEO, and community activities, always singing in the church choir. Our second daughter, Carla, was born, and in 1975 we moved back to Middletown, Ohio, where we still live. As a "new Christian" I became involved with Christian Women's Club and Friendship Bible Coffees and still lead Bible Studies and continue my involvement with this ministry.

When Carla went to Ohio State, I began teaching again and taught six years at an Alternative High School for at-risk teens, retiring in 1997. I enjoy traveling and have taken numerous trips to California where our two daughters and twin seven-year-old granddaughters live, a trip to Israel, and many trips to Sun City, Arizona, where my parents lived for over 30 years.

Clifford Green also lives there, so over the years we have seen Dolores (my classmate), Ken, Rosalyn, and Steve. We have also seen Carlos Bryan (superintendent when I was in school as well as math teacher), as he and Helen were in Sun City and attended the same Methodist Church my parents did. My father passed away five years ago, and my mom died in 2001 at age 98. She was a remarkable woman—a leader. In fact, she ran for school board in the early 1950s—before the time when a woman could be elected.

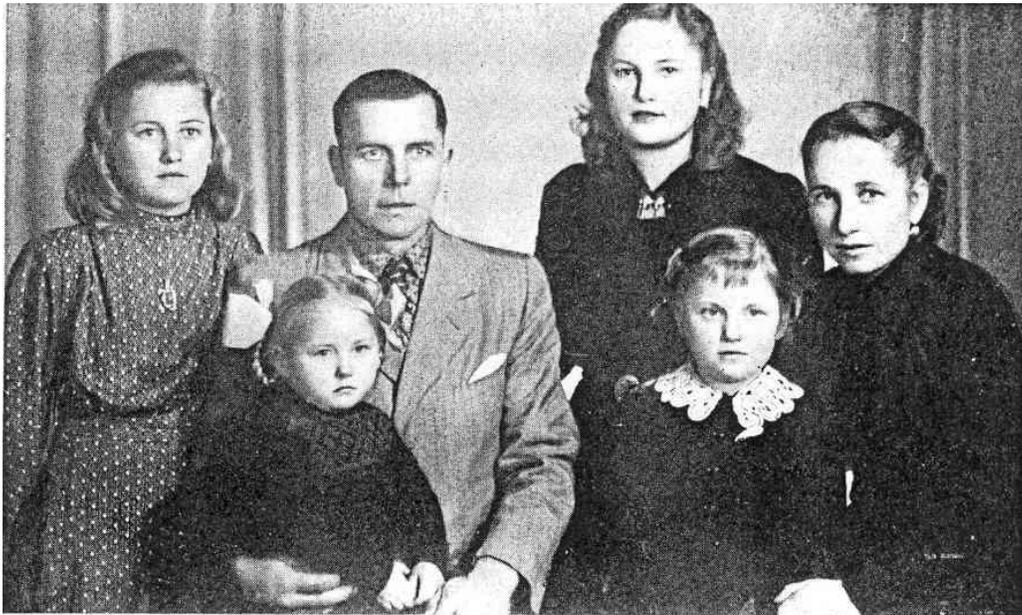
Hobbies include gardening, aerobics and walking, reading, singing in choir, visiting shut-ins and helping young children read. I volunteer in an elementary school and find the children delightful! Yes, life has been an exciting adventure; the Lord has blessed us in many ways.

Velta Beimanis - Class of 1953

I AM AN AMERICAN. And it is only because of the kindness, generosity, warmth and acceptance of some refugees by the people of Rembrandt. This happened a long time ago, but my family and I will never forget it.

We arrived in Rembrandt in March of 1949. After World War II, we and thousands of other people were put into DP Camps (DP stands for displaced persons) in Germany. We were lucky enough to end up in the American Zone where we were treated

with kindness and organization that was a huge relief after the chaos of war. We had left our country of Latvia in October of 1944 and after long and arduous travel across Germany were put into a warehouse with quite a few other families. This warehouse was burned down during a bombing raid a week before Christmas, and we were moved out into the countryside where we remained until the war ended. Being in the DP camp was temporary because we did not know where to go. Russia occupied our country, and they had treated us abominably; we were not going to return until Latvia was free.



*Left to right: Velta, Vita, Voldemars, Lija, Inara, Irma
Taken in 1948 in Germany*

Through the Lutheran Church we were offered a chance to come to America. Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Green had opened their hearts and arms to a family of six. We came and stayed on their farm until 1953.

As far as I am concerned, Rembrandt should be the CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE. People from the world over could learn the compassion and sweetness of the community who took us in and provided for us in many ways. I remember little girls bringing us May baskets; on Halloween our outhouse was tipped over; there were baby-sitting jobs to be had and movies to be seen for a dime (can you believe that?); there were concerts in the park during summertime and basketball games galore. I remember our class bought a popcorn machine so that we could contribute to the building of the new gym.

Rembrandt was a family of caring and concerned people.

My thanks go to the Lutheran Church, Rembrandt Consolidated School, all the wonderful people who cared for us and treated us with kindness and respect, but most of all, to Clifford and Marie Green and their immediate and extended family who brought us over to America. God bless them and God bless Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

In 2000 I organized and hosted a reunion of Latvian friends from that DP camp in Germany. They came here to Albuquerque from all over the United States, and one even came from Germany. The last time most of us had seen each other was in 1949, just before we left the DP barracks we'd been living in. I was able to find them using the internet. For the reunion I put together a book that included two pictures of each person—back then in the DP camp as we knew each other and now.

My father passed away in 1962. My mother is 92 years old and still going strong. She lives with my oldest sister, Lija, outside Seattle. Inara lives in Ft. Lauderdale and has a few years to go before her retirement, and my youngest sister, Vita, lives in California.

My son graduated from James Madison University with a B.A. in music and still lives in Virginia. My daughter (who is from Korea) lives in Wisconsin.

Bob Hauser - Class of 1954

I graduated in 1954 in a class of nine. We were the only class I know of that could all get in Ben Terrill's 1950 Mercury. In fact, in our senior year we did just that. Our class decided to go fishing over at Linn Grove. All was fine until Mr. Bryan, the superintendent, wondered why the entire senior class was missing that day. Mrs. Whitaker knew where we were and drove over to tell us we had better get back. Mr. Bryan wasn't too upset, although for our discipline, after class Ben and I had to level a load of sand that had been dumped in the front yard of the school.

We farmed two miles south of Rembrandt on Highway 71. Life on the farm was hard work but very educational and rewarding. My two children will never know the experience of raising their own chicken, pork, and beef, or planting a large garden and canning all of the delicious homegrown fruits and vegetables.

Riding an M Farmall tractor ten to fifteen hours a day working in the fields was work that had to be done to plant, cultivate, and harvest the crops. After a day's work in the hot humid days of summer, we looked forward to going swimming and cooling down over at the gravel pit near Marathon.

My fondest memory working in the fields was when Mom would bring coffee, a sandwich, and a piece of homemade rhubarb pie for a mid-morning and afternoon break. Ahh, that rhubarb pie—I can still taste how good it was.

Another good memory was after the home basketball games, everybody would take their dates to the Steak House in Sioux Rapids for a burger and malt and listen to all of those now golden oldies on the jukebox.

After Rembrandt

In January 1960, my family and I moved to Phoenix, Arizona. That year I went to work for a bank. During that time I met and married my wife, Barbara. We worked there for 35 years and raised a son and daughter. I made mention there were nine of us in our

class, which was great because we all knew each other and could all be in our senior class play. Our son and daughter graduated from a high school in Phoenix. Their class size was 600 plus. I always said that would make three of my hometown. In the 1950s, I don't think Rembrandt had a population of 200.

The kids still live in Phoenix. We have six grandsons, ages three years to nine years, and Grandpa and Grandma really enjoy them.

For enjoyment during the working years, we bought a seaside cabin in Cholla Bay, Mexico, and spent all of our free time there. We also enjoy our quads and have taken them to the Yuma, Arizona, sand dunes during Thanksgiving week the past 29 consecutive years.

My wife and I retired in 1996 and moved to Show Low, Arizona, which is 185 miles northeast of Phoenix, in the White Mountain area where the trout fishing is great. Our hair turned gray and we wear bifocals, but all in all we are in good health.

Marjorie Walter-Litman - Class of 1954

I have traveled far and wide since leaving my tiny home town at the age of 18 and have gained many friends, experienced wonderful times, gone through some tough times, but all along the way, I have always been proud to say that I am an Iowa farm girl.

Jim and I have lived in Eagan, Minnesota, since 1986. We have seven children and seven grandchildren from our merged marriage. I retired two years ago from health care, and Jim is retiring at the end of the month from being a salesperson in the fine wine division. I went back to work part-time at a country club, as I needed to keep busy.

We plan to spend our winters in California; we bought a home at Thousand Palms two years ago, and now we can enjoy it. We both love to golf, so now we can do it almost year round.

I only had to look at a book on my coffee table to come up with something to enclose. I wrote the following in August of 1983, when Mom was dying of cancer. I put it in the book, along with some Helen Steiner Rice verses, as I knew Mom always liked her writings. After both Mom and Dad passed away, I found the book among their many possessions and now have it back again.

Memories

*Amassing memories all in my mind, flowing freely back through the years.
Where do I begin to expound, all the thoughts and feelings I hold inside?
Excitement abounds from my reminiscence of childhood, adolescent to adult years.
I have some very fond and sentimental recollections of all.*

*My mind is racing back to stimulate bygone occurrences.
I can see only slight features of beings and happenings.*

*Two little girls playing together;
Why did you cut her curls?
Two little girls going to school together;
Why can't I stay for lunch?
Two little girls playing house together;
Who wants to be the mom?*

*Roller skates, kittenball with mom, guinea hens chasing after
me!!
Saturday cleaning, going to town, learning to drive a tractor
for dad.
Wading in the creek, mowing the grass—being out in the
field—to help you, dad.
Chickens to feed—cows to get in—
I loved to dream and wander; climb over old machinery or
hide away up in some old building, not to be found.*

*A new baby boy came into my life; such a change for all was
he.*

*Just as one might expect, he was a younger brother teased.
At a Sunday dinner one day, these words were heard said—
“Rev. Grote, why don't you marry my sister?”*



*Lois, Denny, and Marjorie
Walter*

*Friends staying over, starting to date—driving the car and staying up late.
School activities, busy at home—going on trips and learning new things.
Out in the world I journeyed one day—traveling off for a newfound life.
What a big world away from the farm!
It's scary out here I thought to myself.
But I must grow up and plunge right ahead—doing all kinds of new things.*

*It seems I hardly remember spending much time with my dear little brother.
God called him away when he was so young, but I know he was a joy to you, mom and
dad.*

*A friend of mine, the father of my children, brought sadness to my life—but now
my heart is full again—I'm peaceful and I'm free. I have someone who I care for
as dearly as he does me.*

*I know the love you have for each other may not have been so openly expressed;
but I thank the Lord he gave me two parents who helped me grow up in a wonderful
home.*

*I've learned your warmth,
I've learned your strengths,
I've learned your wisdom,
I've learned your faith.*

May we all go on learning something new each day that gives pleasure to all in a special way.

May your memories back through the years be as special to you as these are to me!!

I hope we can get home to a class reunion one of these years. If anyone should be visiting the nursing home in Albert City, please pop in the door of my stepmom, Sophie Walter, and tell her hello from me.

Marlene Foval Eddie - Class of 1954

I was very small, but I remember going to Crumrine's Drug Store for ice cream, probably only an ice cream cone, with my nickel.

Russell and Rush Pewsey ran the maintainers in town and country but never missed piling up snow at the end of Main Street so we could go play "king of the mountain" and also go sledding.

I remember picking something while carrying a large bag; at first, I thought maybe it was green beans for the canning factory; the patch was in the large lot south of Engebretson's. Some of my friends reminded me that we picked milkweed pods for parachutes during World War II. It was hard work as I was just starting school so I was very young. It felt like I was picking cotton in the South.

My first recollection of death in Rembrandt was my good friend and neighbor Sandy Engebretson; she had gone to school through eighth grade and got sick and died before school started in August. Up to that time I thought only OLD PEOPLE died. But my dad also died when I was a sophomore in high school. I didn't really think life was fair at all.

My mom, being a nurse, was the one who helped everyone in town who needed shots for an illness or morphine for cancer patients. I remember her going at all times of the day or night to help someone. The whole town mourned when someone was sick; we were all one big family in those days.

A lot of students interested in band were not necessarily able to play the type of instrument they wanted but instead played whatever the conductor needed. I ended up playing the clarinet.

My class was very close as there were only 11 in it so actually we would go places together. There were only two boys in the class so they drove, and off we went to shows in Sioux Rapids or just went cruising. I remember one good spring day, when we were either juniors or seniors; we decided it was a good day to go fishing at Linn Grove. So off we went. After a while Clara Whitaker, Shirley's mother, came and told us, "You'd



Concert Band, Mr. Peterson, Conductor, 1953

better get back to school—Mr. Bryan said if you do, you won't be in trouble." All in all, it was a short fishing “skip day” . . . I don't recall anything drastic being done about it, but we didn't try it again . . .

I remember how all the unmarried teachers rented rooms in town and then probably went home on weekends. There was no rental property at that time. Some of the widows in town rented just sleeping rooms, like my Grandma Lorence, also Grandma Green and Grandma Eastman. All three lived next to each other across from the school. The teachers took their evening meals at the local café, and they were good ones . . . Cozy Café, Dunnings' Café, Mrs. Wallen's. I wish I could remember all the names!

We had the local grocery stores—Peterson's and Hegna's. I worked at Hegna's candling eggs; I think everyone should have tried that (Ha), and then I moved up to working in the store. The farmers sold their eggs and bought their groceries, and we packed the groceries back in their egg cases.

After Rembrandt

After I graduated from high school, I became employed by H. Lloyd Haraldson at the First National Bank. Little did I know that that job would start my occupation. After I was married, I followed my husband in the Army and was employed at the National Bank of Commerce of Seattle, the Kirkland Branch, for a year and a half. After his discharge we returned to Storm Lake where he went back to the family farm near Storm Lake, and I went to work for a bank there until we started our family. I was a stay-at-home mom for three sons for 27 years, and then I got back into the working world. I am now coming to my 17th year at Citizen's First National Bank in Storm Lake, which I thoroughly enjoy. I owe a lot to Mr. Haraldson and his hiring me back in 1954.

After my husband's semi-retirement, we moved off the farm and into Storm Lake, where we are able to enjoy the activities of three of our five grandsons whose fathers have stayed on the family farm. My other son and his wife and two sons live in Des Moines. I feel I really have had an advantage living in or near Rembrandt for most of my life; I still go to church there and am able to attend all of the yearly reunions. Every year someone is back whom I haven't seen for years. Such fun!!!

Barbara Hoover Range - Class of 1955

As a farm girl (and the oldest child), I was expected to help with milking chores, feeding chickens, etc. As I became dating age my biggest worry was that my hair would smell like cows. Back then you didn't just go in and take a shower, wash your hair and use a blow dryer. We would wash our hair in the morning and set it in curlers or pin curls and let it dry all day.

On hot summer evenings we went for drives in the car with the windows all down so we could cool off. The breeze really felt good.

Miss Davies was our Home Economics teacher. This was the time when all the new small electrical appliances were coming out, and she would make all of us use wire whips when attempting to make angel food cakes. It took the whole class period just to whip the eggs. She always said they tasted so much better than with the new electric hand mixers.

Dating—these are just some thoughts I've had after talking with my grandchildren: necking, parking, bushwhacking, petting. My husband and I try to explain to the grandchildren the meaning of these terms, and they are, of course, surprised we even tried them.

For entertainment we went to the movies in Sioux Rapids or Storm Lake and went roller skating at the Trianon in Spencer, even broke into Adult Night even though we were not old enough! Of course a lot of us played all the sports we could, mainly basketball, as softball wasn't available until after I graduated.

Rembrandt was a great place to grow up; we had no fear when going to our cars after ball practice. Everyone in town knew everyone else and looked out for you, even if you didn't want them to. Mr. Petersen at the grocery store would let you charge and after so much would remind you what you owed.

After Rembrandt

I married Kirby Range in November of the year I graduated and believe it or not I am still married to him (46 years). We had five children, losing our oldest in 1982 to brain cancer. Our remaining two sons and two daughters are living in the Midwest with our ten grandchildren, so we get to see them all quite often. I just recently retired from a position I really enjoyed with a local manufacturing company. I was the business/office manager there and in the 15 years performed a variety of duties.

Betty Mavis Cole - Class of 1955

I always enjoyed animals, so it was great being raised on a farm where we had a dairy, feeder steers, pigs, horses and chickens. (Didn't care much for gathering the eggs).

My older sister, Shirley, enjoyed being inside the house, cleaning, sewing, and baking, which was just fine with my younger sister, Alice, and me as we would rather be outside.

When I was in first grade, I started helping my father milk the cows by hand, before going to school and at night. Later we got electric milking machines, which were wonderful until the electricity went off and we had to milk all the cows by hand. Part of the milk we put through a separator to separate the cream from the milk. Mother would make butter and cottage cheese, and the cream was wonderful on cereal and for making a freezer of homemade ice cream. When in high school, I had classmates over for ice cream parties. The boys usually turned the crank, but we all took turns.

It was always my job to check on the cows if they were calving and to bring the dairy cows into the barn to be milked. The baby calves were taken away from their mothers after 24 hours. I enjoyed bottle feeding the baby calves.

Red, our horse, and I were great friends. Besides gathering the cattle, going on long rides, and getting the mail, I would ride over to our closest neighbors, the McGrews, to visit.

Norma Enderson, classmate, and Sandy Engebretson, dear friend, and I used to ride our horses together and had so much fun. Norma and I rode our horses in several parades at horse shows. Norma was the first person around Rembrandt to have a Palomino horse. Because Rembrandt was a small town, we knew almost everyone and could ride anywhere without feeling we were in any danger.

Sandy had a Shetland pony that sometimes would be ornery and just lie down and want to roll to get you off his back. One day shortly after Norma and I graduated from the eighth grade (Sandy was one year behind us in school), we three were riding on the school yard near Sandy's house when her pony decided to lie down. Sandy got off then and didn't want to ride any more, so we put the pony in his pen behind their garage, and Norma and I each rode home.



Sandy Engebretson's pony, Thunderhead, 1951

The next week when I was in town I went to see Sandy. Her mother told me she was very sick and that I could not stay long as Sandy needed to rest. The following week Sandy died, and the whole town mourned. Sandy was the first person who was close to me to die, and it was very sad for everyone. I think about everyone in town went to her funeral. The next week I asked George if I

could keep her pony at our farm for three or four weeks. I thought it would be easier for them if they didn't have to care for Sandy's pony for awhile.

4-H Clubs, basketball and band were a big part of my life and activities. Marie Green and Marian Mavis (my mother) were our Girls 4-H leaders. At that time there were Girls 4-H Clubs which taught sewing, baking, canning and personal grooming.



Betty Mavis's first 4-H calf, 1949

Boys 4-H Clubs, which they let girls join, consisted of raising beef calves, dairy calves, pigs, or chickens. Usually I would pick a Hereford calf from the yearling calves my father bought. However, for two years I bought my 4-H calf from Bruce McKibben. He was so kind to let me pick any calf of his that I wanted.

In August we would enter our baked goods, clothes that we had made, garden vegetables grown and our calves in the Buena Vista County Fair in Alta. It was always an exciting time, and one year my sister, Shirley, and I took first prize on our pen of five feeder steers. The day of the cattle sales and the day when cattle buyers would come to get the calves were sad days. We would become very attached to our calves, having fed them, given them baths and clipped them. We spent lots of time leading them around.

Mother and Daddy always had a large garden, so we girls spent a lot of time weeding in the garden and later helping can and freeze the vegetables. We also weeded the soybeans and detasseled corn.

I learned to drive the tractor at an early age so that I could help in the field harrowing, haying, etc.

Loren Green did custom hay baling so when it was haying time either Loren Green or Bill McGrew, who worked for Loren, would bale the hay. Bringing the bales of hay in from the field and stacking them in the barn was hot work.

When we cut corn and put up silage, Clifford Green, Kenny Green, and Glen Graeber would come and help us. The farmers all helped each other during harvest or when there was a real need in a family. Everyone worked together for the good of the community and to help their neighbors.

Basketball was a very important part of my high school life. Clifford Christensen was the basketball coach. Others on the team were Shirley Bjorklund, Barbara Hoover, Jo Ann Fosmark, Jean Hegna, Norma Enderson, Dolores Green, Rosalyn Green, Delores Hoover, Shirley Whitaker, Kay Hoover and Sharon Peterson.

I fondly remember some of the school staff who were always so helpful. Herman Hegna was our bus driver, and many times he also drove the bus to the basketball games away from home. Art Johnson was the janitor as far back as I can remember. Mrs. Art Johnson, Mrs. Herman Hegna, and Eva McGrew were the cooks in the school cafeteria, and we had great hot lunches. Gordon Peterson was our band director, and Jeanne Green was our chorus leader.

It was wonderful growing up in a small community where you knew everyone in high school and your neighbors.

Carlos Bryan was the school superintendent when I graduated. The classes in school were small; there were 13 in my graduating class, and we were all good friends. It was exciting when we graduated but also sad as we all went our separate ways.

Rembrandt brings back happy memories, and I always enjoy returning to the Alumni Reunions when I can and renewing friendships and reliving old times.

After Rembrandt

After graduating from Rembrandt I attended New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico. In 1958 Jerry Cole and I were married in Albuquerque. Jerry was a commercial beekeeper for about 40 years. We packed and sold all our honey to restaurants, bakeries and stores. We have five children, fourteen grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. In 1998 we sold our business, retired and moved to Sun City, Arizona. Jerry still has three hives of bees for pollination of our citrus trees and is a master gardener. I do volunteer work at the hospital two days a week, and we are active in church, Bible study groups, and several clubs. We have a motor home and travel during the summers visiting family and friends and seeing the beauty of this wonderful U.S.A.

Bob Peterson - Class of 1955

We had a lot of fun playing summer baseball for George Engebretson. He hauled us all over northwest Iowa in his red Oldsmobile—a pretty flashy car. Our Jr. Legion team even played in the Sioux City Soos' ballpark, home of the (then) New York Giants' farm team. Playing under the lights there in that ballpark was a big deal to us kids because we didn't have lights in Rembrandt. It was quite a thrill. I remember that he took us all out to eat after we played.

We played high school baseball in the spring and fall and played for George in the summer. There were a lot more country schools then who had teams, such as Highview, Fairview, and Brooke.

Dick Frederick and I lived on the north end of town, and Alan Engebretson and John Cleveland lived on the other end. Once we built a ball field in the Y where the train turned around to go back to Storm Lake. People at the elevator helped us make bags to use for the bases. That way we could play ball on our end of town and wouldn't have to go clear to the school to play; that was a lot of fun.

We rode our bikes everywhere. I remember riding all over the nearby county to sell magazines for some kind of fund-raiser.

My dad worked at the gas station under Roy Foval and then Marice McKeever. He also delivered the rural route mail sometimes—the route was close to a hundred miles long. I rode with him a couple times—that was interesting as a kid. Morris Mickelson

was the regular mail carrier, and Dad would fill in as his substitute. My dad also drove a school bus for many years.

After Rembrandt

I worked for 33 years for Rheem, a company which manufactured water heaters and also heating and air conditioning equipment. I worked for the company in Chicago for about 25 years and then went to Montgomery, Alabama, with them. I also worked for the airlines for several years in both Chicago and Minneapolis; I met interesting people every day doing that. I am now retired, lived in Estes Park for several years, and currently live in Longmont, Colorado.

Ken Green - Class of 1956

I was born in Sioux Rapids, Iowa, in 1938, and graduated from Rembrandt High School in 1956. During those years, it was not uncommon for people to attend the same school, K-12. The following comments reflect some of my Rembrandt experiences.

Growing up on a farm three miles from town:

Initially, we had no electric power or running water; visiting my grandparents in Rembrandt and marveling at the modern conveniences that we lacked in the rural community; struggling to stay warm in the winter and welcoming the magic of spring; sweltering in the heat and humidity of summer and working hard harvesting crops before winter reduced our activity to tactics of survival.

Becoming involved in the Rembrandt community:

Recalling an early visit to my grandparents (preschool years) and getting into a stare-down with the "town kids" that escalated into a rock-throwing fight; attending church on Sunday; taking in the Saturday night movie for ten cents and stopping in at George's Place for an ice cream cone; making new friends riding the cold school bus both to school and to sports activities.

Two memorable sports events:

Basketball . . . A new gym at Rembrandt just had been completed, 1952, and one of the first events held there was the Buena Vista County Junior High School Basketball Tournament. We beat Sulphur Springs, 89 - 8, in the first game and went on to win the tournament.

Baseball . . . On Monday, April 23, 1956, a very unusual baseball game was played against our biggest rival, Truesdale. It was so unusual that I received newspaper clippings from eight newspapers, five of them from out-of-state. I pitched nine innings and struck out the first 18 batters, 22 in all, and didn't win the game because the score was 0 - 0. State high school baseball rules allowed a pitcher to pitch only nine innings. Teammate Derwyn Anderson took over the pitching duties, and Rembrandt finally won the game in 15 innings, 2 - 0.

In summary, I have pleasant memories of growing up in Rembrandt. The people were hard working, honest, and dedicated to improving the quality of life in a small town. The times demanded these efforts in order to manage life in the 1940s and 1950s. Through my wonderful parents, Clifford and Marie Green, and the good people of Rembrandt, I am a product of the many who included me in community activities, taught me in school, and coached me in sports.

Apparently, living in a small community had an impact because my wife and I have chosen just such a place, slightly larger than Rembrandt, to make our retirement home.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Graceland College, 1958, A.A.; Iowa State University, 1960, B.S.; University of Northern Iowa, 1965, M.A.; and University of Arkansas, 1971, Ed.D.

I played college baseball at Iowa State and one year of professional baseball for the Philadelphia Phillies (minor league) in Des Moines. I was an infantry officer in the USMC for three years.

I taught/coached at Starmont High School, Strawberry Point, Iowa, for two years and taught/coached at the University of Northern Iowa for 33 years. My responsibilities there were Campus Recreation Coordinator, assistant basketball and baseball coach, two years; and head men's golf coach, 24 years. I taught undergraduate and graduate-level classes and retired in 2000.

I have two sons, Matthew and Michael. My wife, Onalee, and I moved to McCormick, South Carolina, in 2000, where we built a home. We love the southern climate, and I enjoy playing golf, fishing, and community activities.

Wilma Stange Hale - Class of 1956

My family moved to Rembrandt in January of 1953. We first lived in an apartment above Hegna's store, then later moved to the house south of the bank (now the Town and Country Store). Not long after moving to Rembrandt I wanted a job so inquired at the Peterson Grocery Store and was hired. Elmer and Leota Peterson were wonderful people. They became like second parents. I spent after school and Saturday hours doing just about everything there was to do. A lot more was involved as a grocery clerk than there is now. We had to itemize every item on a grocery pad, and cash registers were the hand crank type. Saturdays were long days as most farm families came to town to do the weekly shopping. The wives came to the grocery store while the guys went next door to George's "to chat." Many nights it was near midnight before we closed. We didn't have any special closing time—only after the last customer left. I worked there for three years until I graduated and then got married. I still wanted a job, but after I graduated, my sister Bonnie took my place at the store, so I inquired at the

Locker and started working for Herman Hegna. He taught me to cut meat, wrap meat, and sell meat. He also was a great "boss."

My sister Bonnie and I spent a lot of time with Janet and Janice Weber, so we spent a lot of time at the Cozy Café owned by the Weber gals' mom, Janet.

After Rembrandt

I moved away from Rembrandt a year after I married, as my husband returned to the military. We were gone for the next 14 years until he retired, but guess where we settled—"Rembrandt, Iowa." There was never any question. Now we've been back almost 32 years. We bought the August Rystad home and have no desire to live any place else. In fact, five of our six children also live close by (one lives in Cedar Rapids).

There's no place like a small town!

Bob Kirkpatrick - Class of 1957

I was fortunate enough to live in the Rembrandt area and attend Rembrandt High School for grades 10 and 11, from October 1954 to May 1956. I moved to Rembrandt from Piedmont, Missouri. I really thought I would get to return to Rembrandt and live with my aunt and uncle for my senior year, but my parents would not allow it. I graduated from Piedmont High School in May 1957.

I have only good memories of my time in Iowa. I think all the people I met were the friendliest people anywhere. If someone didn't like me, I never knew it.

I think my best memories were mostly in or about athletics. I played baseball and basketball with a great group of guys. We had very good community support, with many people who were there for all our games. In the spring of 1956 we beat Truesdale 2-0 in fifteen innings. Ken Green struck out 22 batters in nine innings and gave up only one hit. Derwyn Anderson pitched the rest of the game and shut out the opposition.

I would be neglectful if I didn't mention that I thought George Engebretson was the strongest supporter of our teams.

We had really good baseball and basketball teams the years that I was there. There were a lot of good players, but I think the best high school athlete I ever saw was Ken Green (Class of 1956). His sister Rosalyn was probably the best female athlete (Class of 1958).

After Rembrandt

Three weeks after graduation I went to work at McDonnell Aircraft Co., which later became McDonnell Aircraft Corp., then McDonnell-Douglas, and in 1998 became a part of the Boeing Aircraft Co. I worked as a sheet metal assembler and riveter for about six years, then as an Assembly Inspector for about ten years, then as a Material Review Inspector until my retirement in June of 1999, accumulating 40 years with the company (I was laid off three times).

I married Linda Moss from Piedmont in 1960, and we are still married. We have two sons and one daughter and a total of nine grandchildren. We have lived near Hillsboro, Missouri, since 1965.

Derwyn Anderson - Class of 1957

When I was either in third or fourth grade, a traveling fair came to town. A number of booths and rides were set up on Rembrandt's Main Street. I particularly remember the ferris wheel because my dad and I were at the top when it suddenly stopped. The chairs rocked back and forth, and my dad seemed a little concerned. I know I was quite frightened. It seemed like a half hour went by as we sat in the open air seats. Then, the ferris wheel started up with a jerk, let the next chair unload, and then rocked us again and again until we were allowed to get off. I wonder if any of you were on that ferris wheel that night?

I grew up on the farm, and so I don't have many memories of being in Rembrandt after school hours. An exception was I occasionally was able to listen to the band play in the bandstand in Rembrandt's central park on some hot Saturday nights in the summer. Did any of you play in that band? I wonder who the band leader was? Other than that, I remember mostly getting to play high school and Legion baseball spring, summer, and fall, and basketball in the winter for the RHS Raiders.

George Engebretson really went the extra mile (actually many extra miles) to coach summer baseball. I have many good memories that include George. He gave me



the first opportunity to pitch a baseball game when I was about 13 years old. I pitched five innings before he brought in a reliever. The next day my muscles were sore from my right shoulder to my right hip. After that I made sure I was in better condition when I was pitching. I remember riding with him to many out-of-town games. One time we almost didn't get to a tournament game in Onawa because a deer hit the right fender and George and a couple of others had to pull the fender out so the front tire didn't rub.

I could reminisce with you about quite a few games that we played between 1953 and 1957. Our teams had a good record of wins in both baseball (under George and in high school) and in basketball. What RHS did for me is allow me to have a history of winning and that has stayed with me. I wonder how it would have been if I had been in a large high school where I wouldn't have had as many opportunities to compete and win and to be recognized as an individual.

After Rembrandt

Upon graduating from RHS, I attended Mankato Commercial College and earned a diploma in Accounting and Business Administration. Over the next two years, I worked at Citizen's First National Bank in Storm Lake and Iowa Hardware Mutual

Insurance Co. in Mason City. I was beginning to see my future would be limited if I didn't go for more higher education. I decided to work on a B.A. in Psychology at North Park College in Chicago and completed this degree with honors. I also met my wife, Jackie, during my freshman year and that summer (1962) we were married. Our first child was born during my senior year (1965). At North Park, the need for graduate education for psychology majors was impressed upon me, and I chose to apply to several graduate programs. I chose to attend the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and successfully completed a Ph.D. in Counseling and Psychology. Upon graduation, I accepted a position at St. Cloud State University in the Psychology Department in September 1968. Our daughter was born in 1969. In May 2000, I decided to retire after teaching 32 years at SCSU.

Presently, Jackie and I are living a more relaxed lifestyle here in St. Joseph, Minnesota, though there is plenty to keep us active and stimulated. We would enjoy hearing from all of you.

LaVonne Williamson Taylor - Class of 1957

I went to live with Esther and Russell Pewsey when I was six years old. Esther was my mother's sister. After my father died, I was going to spend the summer with them, and I ended up living with Esther and Russell until I graduated from high school.

What I remember most about Esther was that she was always busy, especially with sewing. Esther loved dressing "dollies." She would make each doll a good set of clothes and an everyday set of clothes. The girls had a fancy dress with a lot of lace, ribbons, and bows and also slips and panties. Esther was great on bows. The everyday clothes would be a pair of jeans recycled from the pant legs of my jeans, a little button-up blouse, probably a vest, a jacket, some kind of hat or bandana to match the blouse, and always a couple pairs of shoes and socks. For the boy doll she would make a pair of good church pants, recycled from somebody's old suit pants, a white shirt or a shirt made from the lining of that same suit jacket, probably a good coat or jacket to wear with this, and some kind of a hat or cap from the same material. The everyday clothes would be a pair of overalls recycled from a pair of Russell's old overalls, a chambray shirt or a very small checkered shirt, a bandana hanging out of the pocket, and a straw hat.

That was pretty much standard until we came to baby dolls. For baby dolls Esther made flannel nightgowns that tied with ribbons in the front. She always made bonnets and usually a very fancy long dress for the baby doll. She made their diapers out of flannel—usually little tiny flowers or little polka dots for the girls (Esther loved polka dots) and a tiny checkered or plaid for the boys. Peterson's store and Hegna's store sold Concord grapes in little oval wooden baskets. Esther converted them (recycled them before recycling was popular) into doll bassinets. She padded them with old flannel sheets and blankets both inside and out, and then put the decorative fabric on. If it was for a girl doll, she usually decorated it with ruffles, lace, and bows. If it was for a boy doll, she put rickrack around the edge. She also made a matching pillow and little

"mattress" to fit inside the basket. She did this for anyone who asked her to. Many little girls in and around Rembrandt woke up on Christmas morning to find a baby doll under the tree—in a basket made by Esther and dressed lovingly by her.

She started getting into Barbie dolls after I had graduated. She did much of this sewing by hand because the outfits were so tiny and so elaborate. An outfit could be a dress, skirt and blouse, or pants suit, and of course, she would make undies, hats, purses, and whatever else she thought was needed to fully accessorize the outfit. She also made beautiful formal dresses and hair pieces using lots of ribbon and lace. Her bride dolls were elaborate. She used lots of seed pearls, tiny snaps, tiny hooks and eyes, and lots of lace. One year Helene asked Esther if she could enter her bride doll in the Iowa State Fair; Esther said yes, and was thrilled with the ribbon she won. She made tuxedos and all kinds of clothes for Ken. She sewed for GI Joes, making all kinds of uniforms, including Green Beret, Australian Army outfits, camouflage outfits, and other clothing. She also made marble bags for little boys and gave many of these as birthday gifts.



Esther Pewsey's handwork, including replica of Valerie Haraldson's wedding gown

Esther always seemed to find a way to "make to order" whatever people asked her about—and she made her own patterns. Here are just a couple of examples. Valerie Haraldson Mosbo brought scraps of fabric and trim from her wedding gown, and Esther made a wedding gown exactly like Valerie's for her Barbie doll. And she made a Marine dress uniform for a GI Joe doll for a lady from Storm Lake whose son was in the Marines. The woman brought a photograph of her son wearing his dress uniform and told Esther what the colors were and Esther just took off. The finished product was just amazing. She even made little white gloves.

Esther's dolls are literally all over the United States and even overseas, but she was always very humble—she had a servant's heart and loved to make little girls and boys happy.

Many of the ladies in the community donated things to Esther for her to use: grape baskets, pieces of material, old jewelry, and old clothes. Sometimes people would bring their childhood doll into Esther for her TLC, so Esther also got into repairing dolls. If people would find pieces from an old doll (arms or legs) they would give them to her to use in repairing others' dolls.

Esther also made other things—probably many ladies in and around Rembrandt are still using a pin cushion that Esther made. I got to the point where I didn't even like to look at tomatoes because Esther made so many "tomato" pin cushions. She made the outside from felt or jersey (she preferred jersey for the tomatoes and felt for the carrots). She filled them with real lambs' wool because the lanolin in the wool would prevent rust on pins and needles. The needles would always work into the inside of the pin cushion

and we would have to squeeze them out. We'd bend and squeeze the pin cushion and the needles would pop out— sometimes into your fingers. Then she would tease me and say, "Don't bleed on the carrot, Vonnie." For her strawberry pin cushions, she'd use felt on the outside, and attached to the top was a tiny strawberry filled with emery, so you could keep your needles sharp. She sewed on little tiny yellow seed beads for the strawberry seeds.

She also made white dishtowels, usually in a set of seven—one for each day of the week. She hand-appliqued houses of every color and pattern (again, using lots of polka dots) and trees, and embroidered the windows, door, and smoke coming out of the chimney. She gave these as shower gifts, gave some to whoever would come in (including many nieces and great nieces), and sold some.

Esther wouldn't let even the tiniest scrap of material go to waste. She sewed tiny pieces together like quilt squares and made those into potholders.

I will never forget the dresses that Esther made me. I remember one in particular that she made when I first went to live with them. It was a yellow background with little pink flowers, white lace, and little black satin ribbon trim. There were always ties that came around to the back (from the side seams) and they tied into a great big bow. Then she would always make a matching hair bow.

Esther was also known far and wide for her delicious cinnamon rolls. She would often just show up at people's houses with a big batch of her wonderful cinnamon rolls if she knew they were having special company or kids coming home from college.

Russell was always busy also. Russell and his twin brother Rush made many of the gravel roads in Iowa—they worked all over the state. Esther would go along and cook for the men in a cook-shack. After the roads were built, Russell ran the road grader and did a lot of grading work for farmers. His shop was in the basement, so it seemed I was always sweeping little pieces of colored threads off the floor and sawdust off the basement steps. Russell made many walnut lamps. He turned them on the lathe so they would have two or three rings; the rings were part of the lamp, so you couldn't get them off. He also made bookends that many people probably still have, and he refinished a lot of furniture for various people. He made the pulpit, the altar, a communion railing, and the chandeliers (six, I believe), for the Methodist Church in Rembrandt. He created his own patterns. When they replaced the front doors of the Methodist Church, Russell used that wood to make Bible holders for many members of the congregation. He also served on the volunteer fire department for 50 years.

I took piano lessons from Mrs. Vernon Peterson. I would sit down and play my lesson and later on would play from sheet music. Esther, who never read a note of music, would sit down and play the same thing almost verbatim. She played by ear and would miss very few notes. She had a fantastic ear and a fantastic voice—they sang all over the Alta area when they were kids. Russell restored and refinished the old pump organ that had been in his family. Esther loved playing hymns on that pump organ and her legs would really get a workout. Every night she would start playing, and she and Russell would sing to their heart's content.

Esther and Russell never had any children of their own, but to me they were Mom and Dad, and I was their daughter. Esther was one of eight girls and three boys, so they had lots of nieces and nephews. Many times nieces and nephews who needed some cash, some clothes, a cup of coffee, or just a hug would come to their house. We all got what we needed—in abundance.

After Rembrandt

I was married in 1961 to David Taylor from Cornell. We moved to near Seattle, Washington, then to Alaska, and then came back to Iowa. We have a son, a daughter, two grandsons, and a great-granddaughter.

Mike McGrew - Class of 1957

Growing up in a small rural community like Rembrandt was a unique experience, although we didn't think so at the time. I grew up on a farm two miles from town with four brothers and no sisters. The older brothers, Jack, Larry, and Bill helped Dad with most of the farming, while my twin brother, Pat, and I got to wash a lot of dishes! My parents, Johnnie and Eva, also owned the White Star Dairy, which they originally operated on the farm. Later they moved the bottling operation to a small garage in Sioux Rapids and started pasteurizing the milk. I remember the Fosmark girls complaining that the new pasteurized milk tasted funny. Dad gave them two bottles of milk, one with a "pasteurized milk" cap and one without, to see if they could tell the difference. They later said they could, even though both bottles were pasteurized!

Going to town was always a treat when you lived out in the country. It was a real occasion when we got to go to "the city," Storm Lake or Spencer. Some of my best memories are the trips we made to other towns around northwest Iowa to play baseball for George. I don't think any of us appreciated the effort he made to make our summers more fun and teach us the game. Years later when I would return to Rembrandt, George would always remind me of the time in Linn Grove when he couldn't find me to substitute. I had climbed a tree to watch the game. Many times Pat and I would walk or run the two miles to town to play baseball.

Twelve years of school in one small building! When I tell people that today, they think it very unusual, but it was very normal to us. I can remember how big those high school kids seemed when I was in grade school.

Growing up on a farm could get boring at times. But having a twin brother always gave us someone ready for a one-on-one basketball game or a baseball game with tennis balls using the corn crib as a backstop. Those things could sure sting when we got hit with one, and some angry words were exchanged.

For nearly four years Pat and I were the Rembrandt paper boys. That made for some early mornings and long days during high school. We had to get up early to milk the cows (by hand) and do the chores, get to town to deliver papers before school, go to basketball or baseball practice after school, and do more milking and chores at night.

Somewhere in there we found time to study. Sometimes in the winter the newspapers did not get to Rembrandt before school started. That meant delivering them during our lunch period, on the dead run so we could get back to school in time for afternoon classes.

During the summer Pat and I would also help other farmers around Rembrandt bale hay. One summer I figured I threw over 10,000 bales, either in the barn or behind the baler.

I'll always remember the Rembrandt friends and the special times we spent together. Even the teachers were often as much friend as teacher. Although we didn't have the technical courses like chemistry and calculus at Rembrandt, their teaching and dedication enabled us to survive and excel in the outside world. When we moved to Southern California in 1957, it was a very scary change, but we soon found out that we could compete very well, both academically and in sports. We played a lot of baseball and basketball in Southern California during college and later years and thank the Rembrandt teachers for preparing us for that part of our lives.

Mom and Dad and Mrs. Blackwell always made sure that we made it to Sunday School and church at Rembrandt Methodist. Mrs. Blackwell was our Sunday School teacher for many years. She and Edgar lived on a farm by Fairview/Alta. Every Sunday she would pick up Pat and me for Sunday School. Summer church camp at Okoboji was the best week of the year.

Growing up in Rembrandt was special. As I look back I can see how family, friends, school teachers, Sunday School teachers, and the whole community seemed to work together to make life enjoyable and prepare us for the future. Rembrandt is not just a small town. It is a group of family and friends that I will never forget. Thank you Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

After leaving Rembrandt and moving to Southern California, I worked part-time while attending college and graduated from California Baptist University in 1963 with a major in math. In 1964 I started working for an electronics company, first as an engineer and later in management. In 1978 I was transferred to Logan, Utah, to start a new plant and be the plant manager. After 25 years with Bourns Inc., my wife and I purchased a Subway sandwich franchise and operated that until August 2001. We still own the Subway in Utah but have retired back to Southern California and taken on a partner to run the business. We have one son in Atlanta, Georgia, and a daughter in Laguna Beach, California.

Rosalyn Green Coward - Class of 1958

Rembrandt—Ah, the memories. I can't think of a better place on Earth to get a good start than on the Iowa farm, though I was never called on to drive many of the machines because I usually broke something (while helping lift the bales into the haymow, I jumped off the John Deere tractor to pull the pin out of the clevis and caught

the hem of my shorts on the hand clutch which promptly fell off with me). Dad walked over to see if I was okay, saw the clutch on the ground and asked if I wouldn't be happier helping in the house, making lemonade and getting the workers' snacks ready. Bummer!

The feeding of the animals, cutting of their horns, carrying bales and buckets, milking six to eight cows, cleaning stalls, or grooming our 4-H feeder calves—all of the family was involved and shared the jobs. As we four kids became involved in Rembrandt sports, the days became a lot longer. A day would begin with getting up in time to finish our chores with the cows, pigs, calves or chickens, hauling some wood or stoking the furnace and kitchen stove, cutting the grapefruit or filling the glasses with orange juice with cod liver oil, gathering homework, packing the Hi Top Converse Sneakers and making a dash to the bus on the driver's last honk. I've had dreams about making that bus on time because the only alternative was to ride our huge rubber-tired bikes the three miles to school on loose gravel. Not fun.

Probably many of the area families loved sports, but I'd guess the Greens were pretty high on that list. Our parents, Marie and Clifford, got us to and from any sports activity, which sometimes took them in two directions if kids played in different towns. We, to this day, remember and thank them for their loving support. Marie had been a softball and tennis star, and Cliff (also known as Hi Pockets Green, then Hi Green because he grew so tall so early) was great at baseball and basketball. His grandson, Jeff Coward, started a fantasy baseball league penned "Hi Pockets Baseball" to honor his grandpa.

On any given day, Dolores, Ken, Rosie, or Steve could have had an after school practice. So by the time practice was over and we had popped in to visit our Grandma, Mayme Green, who lived across the street from the baseball field and George Engebretson's home, we'd head to our home to do the evening chores, homework, practice piano or horn. When that cacophony of sounds began, Mom and Dad would try to finish any work that they had to do, outside!

Dolores was my sports mentor. I had to become as good a ball player as she was and work as hard as all three. The basketball practice was year 'round—in the haymow in the winter and the front yard on the end of the baseball diamond in the summer. Dolores was just enough older than I that we never played on the basketball court together. Coach Christensen would yell to the bench, "Green" meaning Dee of course, but never one to give up hope, I would respond as well. I was always proud to be brought in at the last two or three minutes to follow in her footsteps. To this day we still joke about that.

Living on a farm meant many visits to our neighbors and friends—sometimes to picnic together, sometimes to trade a piece of equipment or to get it repaired. Cliff and Nolan Green (brothers) farmed a 640-acre section together (that's a square mile if you have forgotten). So Sally at Nolan's farm and we from Dad's farm saw each other often. Sally and I were often the "gofers" to help keep the planting etc. going. We'd often see a member of the Graeber, Enderson, Hill, Wise, or Mavis farms. We always wanted to be invited by Alice or Janie Mavis to come and ride their beautiful horse.

Paul Mosbo will remember the breaks between classes we spent discussing baseball. We both liked the Dodgers, so it was not competitive. Just fun.

After Rembrandt

When my #13 basketball uniform and those old used hi tops were hung up in 1958, I went off to four years of nursing school. During that time I met and married Walt Coward, and we've been partners and buddies for 39 years. Our children are scattered over the U.S. Jeff is a varsity girls' volleyball and basketball coach and teacher in the Dripping Springs High School near Austin, Texas. His wife, Thia, is an exercise trainer, and they have the two most beautiful children; Jaxon is five and Bree is two.

Dana Marie has been finance manager with the Hilton Hotel chain but recently has had to go on permanent disability (she has MS). She lives with her husband, Ed, also in finance, in Marietta, Georgia. Walt and I have made a permanent move to Marietta to try to make life a bit easier and happier for both of them. She has a wonderful spirit and keeps us laughing and out of trouble.

Douglas, twin of Dana, is the family politician. With his Master's from FSU in city and regional planning and a minor in geography, he has a good background for his four years as one of the County Commissioners in St. Lucie County, Florida. His wife, Tara, has just completed her two-year certificate in taking sonograms and is employed at the Port St. Lucie Hospital. So we travel the routes between Marietta, Texas, and Florida to see young families and to Sun City, Arizona, to see Dad.

Walt has just retired in September from 40 years of research, teaching and philanthropy in the field of Rural Sociology, first at Cornell University, then at the Ford Foundation in NYC. He continues to write and entertain offers to consult or to join the boards of various non-profit organizations in areas of his interests. And he loves traveling to see the family.

I am continuing my interests in nursing—have spent years in pediatrics and still do many hours on the phones at a large peds office, teaching parents child care and how to recognize the illnesses their children are currently having. I love the contact with parents and hope to continue. It's the memory that is my concern—sometimes can't pull up the word.

To bring this all up to date, I am currently visiting Dad at his condo in Sun City. He and Mom moved here in 1973 to enjoy the sunshine and lack of snow. Mom died in 1997, and Cliff is living alone and doing a great job of it at age 96. He is bowling today, the third time this week, and carries averages of around 145. In between his lines of bowling, we are sharing a root beer float. Life is good, thanks to strong roots. Thanks to all my family and for all the years of growing up in Rembrandt that allowed me to live and learn in a small town atmosphere. I treasure that.

Rosemary Jones Kirkpatrick - Class of 1958

I remember going to town on Saturday night. We would leave eggs at Hegna's along with our grocery list. Then if we could not get everything we needed in Rembrandt, we would go to Sioux Rapids and pick up those things and stop back in Rembrandt on our way home to get the groceries that they would have ready for us. It seemed that everyone was in town on Saturday nights, and it was a fun time, at least for a kid.

I barely remember the rationing during World War II. The one thing that I do remember is that I had appendicitis, and my folks took me to Dr. Farnsworth in Storm Lake, and as I recall, the hospital was full and I had to go to Spencer for the surgery. My dad was very concerned as the tires on the car were getting very bald, and he was afraid they would not make the trip to Spencer. Dad had checked around, and there did not seem to be any tires available. We made it to Spencer, and my mom got a room so she could stay in Spencer while I was in the hospital. I had the surgery and Dad went home. He spent the time trying to find some tires and was finally successful before it was time for me to come home.

I remember when I started to school, I was not very happy to be going and would cry when I got there. One day the teacher sent me home because I was crying. She must have forgotten that I lived in the country. I started walking home. When I got to Christianson's Gas Station on Highway 71, they asked me where I was going. I told them that the teacher had sent me home. They called my folks and told them what had happened so they could come and get me. Dad said that when he got there to get me, they had me sitting on a stool drinking a bottle of pop.

Dressing Chickens

When I was in high school Mom and I dressed chickens and sold them to people in town. That was my way of getting spending money. I would feed them, put the ad in the paper, and then depending on how many orders we would have at one time either Mom and I would dress the chickens or if we had many orders, Dad helped too. Some summers we would do 200 or more. My Grandma Jones said that I always wanted to help dress chickens even when I was quite little. They would have to get me a wood box to stand on because I was not tall enough to reach the table to help.

To dress chickens the first thing was catching them, which sometimes was quite a chore in and of itself. Then we took an axe and chopped off their heads. If my dad was helping, he would wring their necks. He preferred to do it that way and thought the chicken was better if you would wring its neck.

We always had boiling water ready and scalded the chickens so the feathers would come off more easily. Then we had to pull all the feathers off the chicken. Next we had to singe the chicken and remove any pinfeathers. Singeing was burning off the hair that was left on the chicken after you had pulled the feathers off. There were several ways of doing this. Sometimes it meant using a rolled up newspaper and setting it on fire or putting rubbing alcohol on a cob and setting it on fire or in later years using a small torch.

Removing pinfeathers meant pulling out the feathers that were just starting to grow. Sometimes they were pretty stubborn to pull out.

After the chickens were singed, it was time to cut them up. This meant taking out the insides of the chicken. After the chicken was cleaned out, it was time to cut it in pieces if it was to be used as a fryer; if it was a bigger chicken, we would leave it whole for roasting. Then the pieces had to be washed. After the chickens were washed, we would put them in ice water to get out the heat. After we took them out of the ice water, we let them drain for a little while so that there would not be so much water in them. Then if the people we were selling them to wanted them in plastic bags, we would put them in plastic bags so that the chickens were ready for the freezer. Most of the time we delivered them to town. There were a few people who would come and pick them up. We would do as many as 25 to 30 a day, depending on how many orders we would have. Sometimes we might only do ten a day. It depended on our schedule and the number of orders we would get.

I don't remember spending much time in town when I was growing up because there always seemed to be so much to do on the farm.

I was a member of the 4-H club and remember getting projects ready for the county fair. My mom was also a 4-H leader for a while. I was also on some demonstration teams—one year we went to Waterloo Dairy Cattle Congress, and one year we went to the Spencer Fair. I also went to the State 4-H Convention in Ames, and one summer I went to the 4-H camp. Those were fun times, and I got to meet a lot of people.

I remember one summer the band went to Mason City to march in a contest there and to march in the parade. If I remember correctly Meredith Willson was there. It was a very hot day, and some kids were passing out. The uniforms were made of wool so they were really hot on hot days. On the way home that night the bus broke down, and we had to wait for another bus to come get us and take us home. It was the wee hours of the morning when I got home, and I had to be up very early to catch a bus in Storm Lake to go to the 4-H convention in Ames. If I remember correctly Rosalyn Green and I were both going to the convention, so we slept on the way to Ames.

After Rembrandt

As for my family, my mom and dad have both passed away. I married Theron Kirkpatrick, and we lived in Missouri Valley where he was an elementary teacher and principal. I continued working for Arthur Andersen & Co. in Omaha for a couple more years. Our first daughter, Rose Ellen, was born there. In 1967 we moved to Arthur, Iowa, and have lived here ever since.

My husband was the elementary school principal in the Odebolt-Arthur Community Schools, and our second daughter, Kezzie, was born here. After the girls were in school, I started working at the Ida County State Bank, which has become the United Bank of Iowa, and I am still working there. My husband went on disability in 1992, became very ill in 1994 and was in care centers in Lincoln and Omaha until 2000

when he passed away. Rose Ellen teaches composition and literature at York College in York, Pennsylvania, and at Villa Julie and the University of Maryland—Baltimore County in Baltimore. Kezzie lives in Council Bluffs and is managing I-29 Storage there. She hopes to go back to college soon and complete her degree.

Sharon Breckenfelder Stanberry - Class of 1958

Thoughts of growing up in Rembrandt—not necessarily in order of importance.

4-H—The meetings were held at a member's house. I don't remember much about the meetings per se, but I do remember Mom being concerned about refreshments for attendees. Some of the fair projects were presented at the Buena Vista County Fair in Alta. A picture of me standing proudly in my 4-H uniform beside a really ugly nightstand that I'd "finished" in varnish recently came to light again. I can't remember what sort of ribbon was awarded, but even in those days everyone went away feeling proud, and I was encouraged to expand on woodworking skills, even to building and beyond varnish.

Another 4-H project for the year was highlighted with baking. We made all sorts of baked goods. For some reason, another member and I decided we'd do biscuits and maybe make it to the fair. Dad was brave and ate a lot of biscuits that summer, and we were finally able to make some at a consistent quality to go to the fair to present the whole process of how to make these delectable morsels to a group of older women who certainly had much more experience in the kitchen. Now my dear husband, who is from the South, dearly loves biscuits with every meal. I'd always sworn I didn't know how to make these delicacies. Then one day I let it slip about going to the fair and making biscuits from scratch and even getting a blue ribbon for the presentation and product. I've not heard the end of that yet. However, I am good friends with the "Doughboy" and do great slam biscuits that probably taste better than the ones we made.

My birthday party was a HUGE surprise. I'd made a comment to Mom after everyone celebrated my grandmother's birthday that it would be nice if I had a party sometime. Little did I know what that comment set in motion. We had basketball practice after school and had just gotten the parts assigned for the spring play. I was sitting in the car looking at the part I'd been given and waiting impatiently for Dad to come out of George's to go home. I waited quite a long time and finally he came out and slowly drove home. I was slightly steaming at this time as teens do, but when we walked toward the house, I smelled something that wasn't quite right for that time of the year—turkey and everything to go with it. When I walked in and everyone I'd been with not more than an hour before greeted me with a surprise "Happy Birthday," I really was surprised—I had no clue what was going on to get this all arranged.

Everyone focused on basketball in the winter. I can still feel cramps in my legs from running up and down the bleachers and the coach saying, "This is good for you." And it probably was, but I didn't think so at the time. I suppose getting hit by the medicine ball falls in the same category and as a life lesson to pay attention to what's

going on around you. We always went as a whole team—boys and girls—in a school bus to play teams in other parts of the county. Some years (most) the girls were better than the boys, but we were all cheered on by each other and parents and other townspeople who came to both home and away games. The girls always played first, and after the boys played and had showers, their hair would be frozen by the time they got to the bus.

Square dances were frequently held after basketball games. My dad called a lot of these dances before they became "passé." What a sight to see a number of squares twirling around and everyone laughing and having a good time.

And then we go on to the dances for the "teens." Some Saturday nights there would be dances in the old gym/cafeteria. Everyone brought refreshments and records (45s at that time) for the music and danced, if we weren't hanging on the concrete wall. How patient and giving the teachers were to organize and sit through these first social events for us.

Prom—How much the kids nowadays miss by not being involved in getting ready for this event. We made many roses from crepe paper, twined a lot of blue streamers and countless shiny stars from aluminum and then got on ladders to hang everything to complete a magical transformation of the gym. We girls shopped for the perfect formal, complete with high heels and other accessories. We danced in the gym after the dinner which the juniors prepared, served and cleaned up. Hopefully, the class following did them as well.

Home Ec. class—Miss Davies was a teacher all students should experience. She was kind and no nonsense. I've never wrapped a present that I don't think of her. She made a comment about a gift I'd wrapped for Mom, saying she would have a hard time getting to it with all the tape I'd used. I've been very frugal with tape since. And again, spilling vanilla on the counter—"It should go in the batter, not the counter." And another wisdom—as with a blouse I'd had to rip up several times—"Pay attention and do it right the first time." She also led our class to plan and prepare our first dinner party. It was for the school board and took place in the old gym/cafeteria. The menu was quite ambitious with stuffed pork chops and with Baked Alaska as the dessert. Have I ever done one since??? No, but I can say I have prepared one.

Of course, a teacher also counseled me to give up typing class because I was so stressed (who knew in those days). I'm glad I didn't take that advice, as that's been my base for employment.

Snow—Everyone gets so hyper about snow where I live now; of course, I go along with it so I can get some time off from work. Anyway, back when I was growing up, we had some real blizzards. Dad had to shovel a path to the barn because it was too deep for the tractor to plow—it was over my head. I could ride the sled over drifts for a long distance. Sometimes the snow got hard crusts, and igloos and tunnels could be constructed. When I got to my teens, we drove to a hill behind Fairview School to sled, since these were the closest hills to Rembrandt. Someone would build a bonfire at the bottom of the hill to warm hands; then we'd pull the sleds to the top to slide again. Living

in the East with lots of mountains and hills, people can't imagine traveling miles to sled down a hill.

Chores—I'm not sure we ever thought about not doing what our parents told us to do. To this day I can say cleaning under the chicken roost in the middle of July was the worst job I've ever done. We had a large chicken house with the drop down roosts, and it was decided that since I was short I could get under the roosts and shovel the manure to the manure spreader. Ugh. Ammonia overload. Talk about fumes (where was the EPA??).

It was usually my job to feed and water the chickens and get eggs in the afternoon when I got home from school, take them to the basement, and wash and put them in crates to take to town for barter or payment. Mom had purchased a washing device of a wire basket fitting inside a bucket that sat upon a gently rotating table to wash the eggs. Detergent and water were added to the bucket to wash the eggs. I was distracted at one time in the washing process to the point of washing the shells off the eggs—only the membranes were left. We had a lot of cakes and other egg dishes that week.

Dad always had milk cows, and fortunately he had a hired man who lived on the farm to help. However, I was designated to help out with the evening milking. After the cows were milked, I would carry the five-gallon buckets to the separator room. I would dump the buckets into the separator and then carry the skimmed milk to the hogs and the cream to the house, which would be sold or exchanged for butter or ice cream when the truck came to pick up the cream. The separator had to be dismantled after each use—taken apart and cleaned and new filters put in. The company that bought the cream would send a sample of the dirt in each week's sale, which was one of the determining factors of what the payment would be.

It was a matter of pride to have clean soybeans, so during the summer we walked beans to clear the rows and rows of volunteer corn and thistles and milkweed and whatever else grew taller than the beans. Everyone took as many rows as they could manage to clean to get the job gone. I still have a large scar on my foot from the hoe missing the milkweed I was trying to take out. No stitches or trip to the doctor in those days.

Detasseling in the summer was employment for an abominable amount of money. I packed a lunch, a drink, and Mom drove me to Rembrandt to meet the truck to take us to the fields to pull tassels for seed corn companies. The drive in the truck was cold, but you were with friends, and misery loves company. The mornings in the field were wet with dew and pollen, and the afternoons were hot and dry with pollen falling on us. The foreman person would walk behind us to see how many tassels we'd missed and make the offender go back and clean up what had been missed—porta-potties weren't furnished in those days, so it was off to a picked row for privacy. Upside—we got buffed arms and great tans and bonded with friends.

For several years my sister and I raised chicks to be ready as fryers by the Fourth of July. Advertising by word of mouth and in the *Rembrandt Booster*, we got a very good response from town folks who called to place their orders. Getting them ready for pickup was a real line production job with me catching them, Mom manning the ax, my

sister and dad dipping them in the hot water, and then everyone picking feathers, cleaning the insides out and packaging for delivery. Dad said he could never figure out why we got to keep the money since he bought the chicks and feed and helped get them ready for market.

Saturday night was always anticipated. Each week featured a new movie. The admission was only 25 cents and popcorn was available for ten cents. This was also a time for the parents to visit with friends in the grocery stores (Mom traded at Peterson's) and Dad went to George's. The café was also a great gathering place—you could get a ten-cent double-decked ice cream cone and then sit on the front entrance to talk to friends.

Band and chorus were always enjoyed. Since the school was so small, everyone got to participate. The marching band was probably the greatest challenge—to read music, stay in step, and not tromp on your neighbor turning corners. We went to several contests and did quite well for ourselves—quality not quantity. The concert band, chorus and individual groups also performed very well. Mr. Teague did a superb job getting every group ready for the contests and then making sure everyone knew where they were to set up to perform.

I was also fortunate enough to play with a dance band he formed. We played at some of our school's dances and also at several area high schools and even received payment for the performances, which was used to purchase more music.

Some time in high school it was determined that we needed new band uniforms, so some fund-raising activities were scheduled. One that stands out is the time a hard wind, followed by an ice storm, took a lot of corn down. Band members walked behind a wagon picking up corn and throwing it into the wagon. I'm not sure if we got paid by the load or hour, but it was a bone-freezing experience.

When my grandparents celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, the whole town came to their house to honor them. The church ladies helped the family serve refreshments, and the band went to their house which was across from the school's ball fields to play several special songs for them.

Playing for Mr. Teague at the Centennial Celebration was indeed special. My first thought was, "No, I can't do it." Then I rented a saxophone and even took a couple refresher lessons at a local music shop before going to Iowa. I'm so glad I didn't miss the fun of seeing former band members and friends and playing the saxophone again with Mr. Teague directing. We all share the special bond of a small Iowa town of Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

Our class reluctantly left high school and went our separate ways. I headed to Minneapolis to a business school and was recruited by the Department of the Navy in Washington, D.C. as a clerk-typist, where I stayed for approximately two years and then moved across the street to the Department of the Interior with the Fish and Wildlife Service. What an interesting position. Our division was responsible for sending biologists to Canada to survey waterfowl nesting sites to determine the fall hunting limits, and we

also conducted undercover operations to apprehend persons illegally selling waterfowl and other federally-protected wildlife. I left Interior after 13 years to move to the suburbs and become a stay-at-home mom to my two daughters. I volunteered at their school and was hired as a library assistant and eventually moved into office work. I worked in two elementary schools as a finance and principal's secretary and retired recently after 30 years.

After a brief respite I am now working part-time (?) at a garden/gift shop four miles from my home (my former commute was 90 miles round trip in the infamous Washington-area traffic). In my spare time I try to keep up with my gardens and enjoy sewing, ceramics, porcelain, tole painting, and making yard-art. I also have lots of cats and three Arabian mares that gave me four colts to raise and eventually sell. The village (Orlean, Virginia) that we're close to is much smaller than Rembrandt and is about 50 miles west of Washington.

My husband taught industrial arts at an intermediate school also in Fairfax County and is retired, and of course, the girls got old and have their own families—I have four grandchildren. They live close enough to see now and again.

Bernie Cremers - Class of 1959

String of Pearls, Tuxedo Junction, Moonlight Serenade, Little Brown Jug —all those Glenn Miller tunes—Benny Goodman (Cordy Peterson on clarinet) —good memories of our dance band! Calvin Arthur was so instrumental in starting and keeping our dance band going, along with strong support from our band director, Myron Teague. Calvin was influenced by his father's (Lonnie Arthur) interest in big band sounds. I have good memories of our dance band days, as well as all of our music experiences in school—band practice in the mornings, marching band, band and marching band contests out of town at other schools, pep band, summer band concerts at the band shell downtown on Wednesday nights, etc. Today I continue to enjoy music, particularly jazz and big band sounds.



The Band Shell in the Rembrandt Park

Rembrandt School and the community gave me a good start before I left for college. In school we were able to participate in about any extracurricular activity that we wanted to—athletics, music, school plays, newspaper staff, yearbook staff, speech contests—and besides the experience that gave us, it also gave us confidence to take on the challenges of college and to go to a large university where there were many students who had attended much larger high schools.

Many of our teachers also gave me a strong background for my future. I had excellent teachers in all of grade school—they were very dedicated and helped me to develop my sense of responsibility. In high school I was especially influenced by Dorothy Parker and Margaret George who set high standards and accepted nothing less in our work. Every now and then I hear someone use the word *snuck* and remember Mrs. George correcting me in a speech, admonishing me that the correct word is *sneaked* and there is no word *snuck*—I was so red faced! And Mr. Teague was also a great influence and certainly a friend and strong support to all of us. What amazes me now as I think back on our Rembrandt days is that we had such fine teachers in a small school—didn't they have greater opportunities in larger schools? We were so fortunate!

Certainly I can't recall days in Rembrandt without thinking of the great influence many of my friends had on me, especially on my ambitions to go on to college. Maybe we influenced each other in that we never considered any future other than to go on to college. Like our teachers and participating in all our extracurricular activities, my friends made me feel I could achieve anything I set out to do.

Most of my growing-up days involved school and all of our activities. But I also recall the free Saturday night movies during the summer as well as the Wednesday night band concerts at the band shell. Another incidental memory is of Mike Mickelson having a jukebox business in an old service station north of Hegna's Store. He had a large selection of used "45" records that he allowed us to rummage through and buy for something like five for a dollar—we surely appreciated the bargain.

These are just a few of my memories of the "good old days" in Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

After high school I obtained my degree in pharmacy from the University of Iowa. While in college I worked many hours a week in a downtown pharmacy. When I graduated, I was offered a position at this pharmacy, recognized it as a good opportunity, and accepted the position. Shortly after, I met Cherie, who was an Iowa City native. Cherie has worked as a pharmacist at Mercy Hospital almost all of her career. I managed a large chain drug store for many years and then went into a partnership with a pharmacist friend, and we operate two clinical pharmacies. For 27 years I coordinated the Community Pharmacy Experience course as well as lectured each week for the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy.

We have really enjoyed living in Iowa City, and it has been an especially wonderful community in which to raise our family. All three of our children graduated from the University of Iowa, as did our son-in-law and two daughters-in-law. Our daughter received her degree in education, a son in accounting, and the other son in mechanical engineering. The older two live near us in Iowa City. They each have two children—we are so fortunate to have them nearby so we can enjoy seeing them frequently. Our youngest son and his wife live in Chicago.

When I reflect on growing up in Rembrandt, I think of the good influence it had on my family. Neither of my parents was able to attend high school, having grown up in

Nebraska during the Depression. However, all eight of their children recognized the value of education, all have college degrees, seven of them having attended the University of Iowa.

Cherie and I enjoy downhill skiing, and we and our children have skied in Colorado for many winters. We also enjoy bicycle riding. We have ridden RAGBRAI and have taken bicycling trips to Ireland and Prince Edward Island near Nova Scotia. This summer we will do a week-long bicycle ride in Wisconsin. As we look forward to working less, we are anticipating bicycling much more. We also enjoy ballroom dancing. We have a number of dance floors in the area and have a number of dance bands available to play. With all the activities available through the University, we certainly never lack for things to do!

I am looking forward to reading everyone else's memoirs.

Cordy Peterson - Class of 1959

I've put this off long enough—having mentally written no fewer than twenty or more Raider Tales in the past few months. The memories, thus stories, are difficult to put in print, however, for each seems to lack credibility without some verification from other close friends who are the very center of the tremendously fond and cherished experiences. I find those experiences extremely gratifying in today's life, in a world so changed from those peaceful and innocent and youthful years in which we all were privileged to learn and grow in Rembrandt.

I must tell that I remember only good things of truly good classmates, teachers and administrators, and family relationships, of very close and personal friendships which were enlarged so greatly by the athletic events and vocal and especially instrumental music groups of which almost everyone was a part. Good lives were enhanced by a rural farming culture which embraced religious activities.

In a small town with a small school enrollment, we didn't realize that something really good was happening to us. And weren't we lucky. The never-to-be-duplicated setting of which we all were a part is priceless.

To all those who guided our experiences and directed our activities, may we forever be grateful.

Bright Youngsters from Rembrandt Watch Big Speed Press Roll at Newspaper Office



Fifth and Sixth Graders With Their Teachers, Miss Ruhs and Miss Barlowe, 1953

Janice Youngberg Peterson - Class of 1959

At Rembrandt I especially remember Mrs. George and her enthusiasm to help us love literature, the school newspaper that I was editor of for one year, learning to drive with a stick shift, and landing unhurt in the ditch with Sally Green behind the wheel.

Yes, I also remember completing my last semester while on bed rest recuperating from spinal surgery, going to the senior play via ambulance, and walking again after five months of bed rest just in time for graduation. Indeed I have been blessed.

After high school I went to North Park College in Chicago, a liberal arts Christian college; I changed my plans from going into teaching to becoming a nurse. My first job was night charge nurse in an ICU; that was the year the hospital installed cardiac monitors (technology has come a long way). During that time I met and fell in love with a fellow who studied for the ministry. We have just celebrated 36 years of marriage. This union has led to many exciting ministries: a short-term mission stay of one year in Zaire (now Congo), work in an inner-city church in Chicago, ministry in Albuquerque, New Mexico, fifteen years in two places in Alaska, and now with a retirement community here in San Diego. My career has included teaching in a school of nursing in Chicago, numerous staff positions, supervisory positions, Director of Nursing in the rural area of Nome where the only transportation is airplane (I also learned medevac nursing), hospice nursing, and now Director of Quality Management and Education for a non-profit organization. We are blessed with two children; our daughter is married to a pastor and resides in Michigan. Our son is a mechanical engineer and just got engaged last night.

Jeanette Brazel Steffens - Class of 1959

What do I remember about Rembrandt? The cold winters and hot summers come to mind. My parents had a very long lane that in winter would have snowdrifts hip deep. Unless my dad felt the need to go somewhere, we stayed "snowed in." And that made getting to the school bus a very large challenge. I also remember that no one ever locked their doors—because there was no need.

There were a few of us Catholic kids sprinkled among our Protestant friends at school. How we dreaded Ash Wednesday! On that morning we would have a spot of ashes thumb-printed on our foreheads at church, as a reminder of "Dust Thou Art," etc. Then our folks would drop us off at school with the stern warning of, "Those ashes had better be on your forehead when you get home from school!" Ash Wednesdays always seemed like a very long day. To our Protestant friends, who never made "fun" of us Catholic kids—thanks.

How many of you remember dear Miss Elizabeth Davies? She was the school's version of "Our Miss Brooks." She was also the advisor for the cheerleaders. And she wasn't going to have her girls showing anything inappropriate. So our uniform consisted of a long-sleeved blouse, over which we wore a heavy wool sweater. And of course, wool slacks completed the outfit. By the end of the games, we cheerleaders were "glowing" more than the players on the floor. But Miss Davies had preserved our modesty! Go Raiders!

After Rembrandt

Artie and I have been married 40 years and have lived in Tacoma, Washington, for 36 years. Artie is the Juvenile Court Liaison Officer for the Tacoma School District. We have a daughter, son, and three grandsons (am going to rent a granddaughter). To all the old friends of Rembrandt High School, I bid you a fond hello and a hope that life is being kind to you.



Betty Foval Hoskins - Class of 1960

A Response to Helene, July 2001, "What growing up in Rembrandt means to me"

After living in Kentucky and Virginia for the last 30 years, in medium to large cities, I have come to appreciate the values that Rembrandt represents to me: not locking our doors, playing in the streets with whoever happened to be around without fear of anything or anyone, respecting others, being a part of a small community, feeling a sense of belonging, and having the same friends all through school.

My friends in Virginia are amazed that Rembrandt had community showers for prospective brides at which families could be a part of gift giving by signing up for some gift at Hegna's store—it might be a gift of one dollar, for example. But when it was combined with the dollars of other people, a lovely present was the result. I remember I got a large red linen table cloth and napkins from about fifteen people. What a great idea. Compare that to the registration of expensive gift suggestions today.

Because the school was so small, everyone was needed—whether to play in the band, play basketball, cheerlead, be in choral ensembles, be in a play, put together the annual, etc. I suppose some people were left out, but I don't think there were many. I felt important because so many people told me I was. That can only happen in a small school; it cannot happen in a large one such as the one from which my boys graduated. It was a wonderful facility with fine teachers and the latest technology, and they both did well and found a niche, but neither one liked high school, felt any school spirit, or plan to return—ever. I think that is sad.

My teachers were first rate, not so much because they could explain DNA but because they instilled in me, at least, a sense of discovery, a love of learning, and good study habits. They simply didn't tolerate second-rate work if you could do first-rate work. I learned to read and to write—and I became a college English teacher. My teachers were tough, smart, and loved their subjects. Today they would probably be lawyers. We were lucky; I hope they think they were.

I realize there were drawbacks to living in such an isolated, provincial little town, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything. It provided me with the confidence I would need to go on to other challenges, such as teaching a member of the Black Panthers in a freshman class at the University of Kentucky in 1965. That was a completely new experience, but I knew who I was, what I stood for, and survived because of growing up in a small town, in Rembrandt.

Other Memories

In addition to the general ideas that I expressed above and wrote a couple of days after the Centennial Celebration, I would like to point to some other thoughts that have stayed in my memory in fairly vivid detail.

In the 1950s those of us in small communities were not immune to the threat of polio and cancer. Because my mother (Mel Foval) was a registered nurse and worked at the Buena Vista County Hospital in Storm Lake, she was asked to give morphine shots to

several people in the community who had been diagnosed with cancer, including Mrs. Siefken, our next door neighbor, Mr. Dunning, owner of the Cozy Café, and others, including my father. It was not a happy duty.

I remember the day that Sandy Engebretson, another next door neighbor, came over and asked my mother what might be wrong with her. When she left, my mother had tears in her eyes; Sandy died of acute leukemia within the next two weeks. Sandy was older than I and younger than my sister, Marlene, but we all were friends. That death plus the death of Cindy McKibben at which the Melloettes sang *Jesus Loves Me* are etched in my memory. The whole community knew of similar tragedies and mourned together.

One of the happy times with Sandy was riding her pony, Thunderhead. One day, he started off with me on his back without a saddle and walked for about half the distance around the field; then he began to pick up speed and galloped the rest of the way with me holding on for dear life. Suddenly, he stopped, but I didn't. Flying over his head and landing in the gravel gave me a scratch or two, but I was mostly scared. That was my last ride on any horse until my teenage boys convinced me to take the trail ride in the Garden of the Gods in Colorado. What gentle horses those were.

Until his death in 1951, my father (Roy Foval) was involved in business in Rembrandt. First he owned the DX gas station (later Hondo's), then sold it to Marice McKeever and bought into the Farmers' Cooperative Oil Company based in Marathon. He ran two oil trucks, one of which was usually parked by the side of our house. Sometimes my cousin, Larry Esslinger, and I would use it in our games of "Annie-I-Over." That, of course, would put one of us in the street, but there wasn't much traffic.



Mel and Betty by Roy Foval's Oil Tank Truck

My mother tended her plantings of roses, lilies and other flowers, and our lilac tree was always a ready source of fragrant purple flowers for the stage at graduation time. She



Betty Foval in her front yard

also had a big garden and was very careful to plant her seeds and seedlings in a straight line so that no one would think she "was tipsy" when she was creating her garden. Only when I left Rembrandt did I realize that Iowa has some of the best soil in the world. I always want to bring some of it back to Virginia; instead I buy "top soil" at a premium price.

I loved the winters in Iowa with the wonderfully bright white snow and

the intensely blue sky. I didn't mind the cold; in fact, ice skating on the pond by the water tower and sledding down the street in front of my house before anyone got there to plow it were fun, safe activities. Gary Hanson, a neighbor across the street, my cousin Larry Esslinger, and I also built ice caves back by our old garage. We were then treated by someone's mother to hot chocolate and a warm kitchen. Until my cousin moved to California, I tended to be drawn into his activities which included climbing to the top of the freight train cars. When Larry left, I found there were also girls in the neighborhood.

I remember going with Linda Stratton, who lived on Main Street, to watch the *Rembrandt Booster* being assembled by hand. I was amazed at the speed of Mr. Lyons' fingers as he created each story. I also became good friends with Baiba Blats who had been relocated with her family from Latvia after World War II. Her mother introduced me to "black bread" which I thought very strange at the time. We were good friends for a time before her family moved, and she tried to teach me her language (I didn't do too well). While most of our activities were harmless, she and I got in trouble when my mother discovered that we were sitting in George's Place, reading comic books and eating peanuts. I think only boys were allowed to do that.

Singing, playing drums in the band, attending church, and doing well in school occupied much of my time. But my favorite high school activity was playing basketball. I was a guard on a six-member team in those days when girls were thought too frail to run the whole court. Actually our teams did very well under Coaches Hulsebus and Skogerboe, and although we never made it to the state tournament, we came close. Many of us did attend the tournament as spectators.

Another high school memory is of listening to the Yankees play the Dodgers in the World Series year after year. The game was broadcast during study hall; although I tried not to listen, I later realized its value as I can recognize the names of old baseball players when I do crossword puzzles.

Probably my most influential teachers were Mrs. Parker, who taught me the value of accuracy in math and typing, Mr. Teague, who made me a drummer and introduced me to music; Mrs. George, who made me learn grammar; and Mr. Hansman, who introduced me to Chaucer and Eliot. As a university writing center teacher, I still enjoy literature, but I regret to say that we grammarians are probably fighting a losing battle.

I remember

- during winter storms, closing off all of the rooms except the kitchen, turning on the gas stove and listening to ball games while learning to crochet—then running like mad to get into bed before freezing
- sitting on the back porch in the summer sun, reading and smelling the fragrance of the lilacs and roses while avoiding the bees attracted by the hollyhocks
- enjoying Christmas-time Norwegian dinners at the Brandvold-Halvorson farm, complete with lutefisk (ugh) and wonderful Christmas pastries
- getting a handful of peanuts for a penny from the peanut dispenser at the gas station
- never being afraid in Rembrandt—only of news of the Korean War

- wearing a satin gown to play a fairy princess in the Christmas play
- getting hit in the head with a horseshoe when one of my sister's friends was starting to throw it and I was standing too close
- watching my sister lead cheers at basketball games
- jumping rope during recess to establish the school record of continuous jumps (and almost passing out)
- singing *Birds in the Wilderness* while waiting in line to eat at Bible Camp
- plucking and singeing chickens after they had been killed and scalded at my aunt's farm (not my favorite activity)
- helping my mother can fruits and vegetables from our large garden; remembering when my mother stopped canning peaches because sugar had gotten so expensive
- stopping to buy a snack at Hegna's store on the way to or from religious instruction at the Lutheran Church; receiving my ten-year perfect attendance Sunday School pin
- taking piano lessons from Leola Peterson in Rembrandt, then from Mrs. Siddle in Storm Lake
- watching Keith Stroup score 60 points in one basketball game
- assuring a probation officer in another town that one of our temporary classmates would return to Iowa after our senior class trip to Minnesota; we were naive but right
- Eloise Mosbo taking shortcuts in math class which left me mystified and certain I would never major in math; working for three hours on one problem
- discovering that lefse was Norwegian, not Swedish as I thought, when my great aunt in Sweden referred to it as "bad bread that had not risen"
- experiencing culture shock when I left the familiarity of the Scandinavian community in Rembrandt and at Augustana

After Rembrandt

I completed my B.A. in English and German at Augustana College in 1964 and my M.A. in English at the University of Kentucky where I met and married Robert Hoskins who was also a graduate teaching assistant there. Upon the completion of our degrees, we moved to Harrisonburg, Virginia, where he is a professor of English, teaching film and modern British literature at James Madison University. We have two sons—Lane, 27, who is married and a paramedic in Boston and David, 25, a lawyer in Washington, D.C.

I established the Writing Lab at JMU in 1974 and plan to retire from there in a few years. In the meantime, my husband and I have been fortunate to accompany Semester in London students three different semesters and one summer. We have enjoyed traveling both in the U.S. and abroad, starting almost from the time we were married 35 years ago.

Beverly Hegna Ruff - Class of 1960

Christmas at Hegna's Store

I can still see the two-story, red-brick building with its faded green awning standing on the corner of Main Street in my small hometown, Rembrandt, Iowa. This building that I so often think about was a general merchandise store, built in the early 1900s. It later became our family business. Naturally, as I grew up there in the 1940s and 1950s, I became a part of this hub of activity because in a family business, the family works. My brothers and sisters, Barb, Richard, Sandy, and Bob also at an early age worked at chores while our father, Art Hegna, poured over invoices or customer accounts in his office nearby. We soon learned that there was always something to do—make egg cases, grade eggs, unpack boxes, mark merchandise, dust and straighten shelves, bag potatoes, sweep the floor, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, and although the working memories are also sprinkled with friends and customers who drifted in and out of Hegna's doors, one of the warmest memories for us is always of the store at Christmas time.

Preparations for Christmas were special there. Each year right after Thanksgiving, the long, brown cardboard boxes firmly tied with strands of rope, were lugged out of storage and scattered on the floor back in the dry goods department. As we opened each box, we once again shared excited whispers of “oohs” and “I forgot about this one,” with each other. In a matter of a few hours the store was transformed into a Hallmark moment, ready for the unfolding drama that would follow. Silver-coated papier-mache bells and garlands of silver rope were draped from the aging light fixtures. Sprigs of evergreen and colorful glass balls of red, green and silver adorned the glass display counters, and a small white artificial Christmas tree with twinkling white lights blinked warmly at shoppers as they stopped to look. As the rough, wooden floors were swept and oiled for the holiday season, the distinct pungent smell of sweeping compound mixed with scents of evergreen drifted through the air.

Close by, heavy oak shelves displayed newly-purchased Christmas gift items: fire trucks, Slinkies, dominoes, Evening in Paris perfume, and dainty lace handkerchiefs. Practical gifts such as winter boots, denim jackets, jeans, and shoes lined another wall. At the front of the store, large boxes of freshly-opened Christmas candy—peanut brittle, coconut brittle, and assorted favorites of hard candy—crowded the limited space on the oak counters and tempted chubby fingers to sample. Baskets of salted peanuts in the shell, almonds and walnuts, also stood ready for those who wished to buy several pounds. Often Dad would fill children's pockets with peanuts so they might munch while their parents purchased items on their lists.



Close to the heavy, white scale at the center of the counter was a seasonal treat, smoked whitefish. For anyone who wanted to sample it, an arrangement of crackers surrounded this salmon-colored filet. Although the whitefish was popular, one of the community's seasonal favorites was lutefisk, stored in a fifty-gallon barrel in the cellar of the store. The strong, uninviting, fishy smell of this Scandinavian favorite, if kept anywhere else in the building, would have repelled all potential customers. Yet, long before Christmas Eve, the barrel was empty.

In the large front store windows, strings of Christmas lights, blankets of artificial snow, and arrangements of toys, storybooks, cowboy boots and other gift items, invited the window shopper to come inside. Sometimes during the pre-holiday preparation, carolers from the local churches would trudge by and, after stopping to sing *Silent Night* or *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, would move on to the next business down the street. But if any passer-by paused long enough to look closely at the plaque hanging in the front window by the lighted star, he would be reminded of an age-old message: "Peace on earth and good will toward men." Now, 40 some years later, as all of us who worked in that family business shop at the Super Targets, the Walmarts and the chain department stores, we wonder if that message has been forgotten, and we miss the breathless moment of experiencing the awakening of the Christmas spirit in Rembrandt, especially at Hegna's Inc.

Beverly (Hegna) Ruff with input from Barb (Hegna) Jackson, Sandra (Hegna) Taylor, and Bob Hegna.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Augustana College with a B.A. in English and speech and drama in 1964 and married Jack Ruff (also an Augustana graduate) that same year. My Master's is in education with an English emphasis. I have been a secondary teacher for 17 years, teaching English, Forensics, and Honors Writing and Speaking at Papillion-LaVista High School in Papillion, Nebraska. The high school is tenth-twelfth grades with a student population of over 1800. Jack and I have four children: Tami Harrison (who has two daughters); Christian Ruff (who has one daughter); Kathleen Hughes; and Jonathan Ruff.

Dee Gustafson Ryan - Class of 1960

THANKFULNESS! That is the word that comes to mind when I reflect on my "growing-up" years in Rembrandt, Iowa!!

- **Thankfulness** foremost to my wonderful parents, Marvin and Lorene Gustafson, who raised me in a Christian home that was filled with love and happiness, support and encouragement.
- **Thankfulness** for a brother, Roger Gustafson, who was and is today a person I admire and love very much, not only as a brother but as a person of integrity and a person committed to the Lord.

- **Thankfulness** for positive friendships, both young and old, who helped enrich each day with smiles, kindnesses, conversation, and fun.
- **Thankfulness** for a community that was concerned about and helped one another in good times and in bad times—a community that believed in the worth of its people.
- **Thankfulness** for teachers who believed in “excellence” for their students and who recognized that each young person was “special” and thus possessed unique qualities that could be developed and strengthened. They were teachers who “pushed us” to do our best!



*Dee and Roger Gustafson with their father
Marvin's oil truck in the background.*

Thankfulness also includes very special memories of my years in Rembrandt, that today I deeply cherish! I will reflect here on a select few of these memories from a variety of time periods, seasons of the year, and occasions.

Autumn always meant lots of leaves to rake! Entire families would be outside raking the leaves into huge piles heaped all up and down both sides of our street. And what beautiful sights, sounds, and smells, as those leaf collections were lighted and burned as soon as dusk arrived. To stand there and see 20-30 neighborhood leaf piles ablaze—the orange and yellow flames rising upward, the smoke swirling into the night sky, the crackling of the crisp leaves, and the smell of autumn in the air—I can close my eyes today and still remember!

May Basket Day! What fun! In our elementary school classroom and then also at home, we children would create darling little “baskets” out of construction paper, doilies, ribbons, etc. Each basket would be filled with popcorn and candy ready to be given to friends—either by delivering the treats ourselves door to door or by answering a knock at our own house where a voice said, “Happy May Basket Day.”

I have fond memories about my parents in their respective careers in and around our town of Rembrandt—of their dedication, hard work, and enjoyment of what they were doing. My father, Marvin Gustafson, operated the Rembrandt Petroleum Bulk Tank Business for 17 years, and then he was the area's (Rembrandt and then Storm Lake) Rural Mail Carrier for 25 years. My mother, Lorene (Schmidt)



*Marvin Gustafson
Rural Mail Carrier*

Gustafson, was an elementary school teacher for a total of 22 years—teaching in Rembrandt, Sioux Rapids, and Storm Lake.

Baseball games were always a highlight, especially since our house was located directly across the street from the school's athletic field. Sitting with friends on the front steps of our house watching the game, and even occasionally seeing a home run ball roll into our yard, was exciting!

Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies always did and still do mean a lot to me, especially because my dad served in the U.S. Navy in World War II. I was only three years old at that time, but I remember flags flying everywhere in Rembrandt—in house windows, on cars, on flagpoles. I remember our town always having Memorial Day parades and programs honoring those who had defended our freedom in service to our nation!

As a little girl, walking from our house up to Peterson's grocery store was not only an errand I was doing for my parents, but it was also 'fun' because Elmer and Leota would usually have a treat (a lollipop, etc.) for me! And the glazed donuts they sometimes had for sale were the highlights!

A bag of popcorn for five cents (popped at the meat market) and a movie ticket for ten cents at the theatre on a Saturday night were so fun to enjoy with friends! In later years, the theatre was closed and the building was used as a roller skating rink which also drew lots of people, young and old.

In fourth grade our class had the privilege of going for a ride in the caboose of the local train, from Rembrandt to Storm Lake! I still have a newspaper clipping from that historic event!

Detasseling corn! A group of ten to twelve high school kids (manned with gloves and straw hats) would meet at the café by 6 a.m., climb into the back of a truck, and head off to a field of corn just waiting for us to walk up and down its rows (no, we didn't stand on machines as they did a few years later) pulling tassels from the “much taller than we were” stalks. At \$1.50 an hour, we were mighty proud of that hard-earned money!

Watching Mr. and Mrs. Lyons put together a *Rembrandt Booster* newspaper was fun! They were always so gracious in letting us (as little kids) stop by their office and watch them “set the type” (all by hand, piece by piece) in preparation for the printing press process.

The school bus rides to events of all kinds—how could anyone forget! We rode the bus to roller skating parties, to Raider and Raiderette basketball games, to class parties in nearby towns (movies), and even to the Senior Prom dinner (in Cherokee).

State of Iowa Music Contests were highlights each year for which, as participants, excitement mounted as hours and hours of practice culminated in the actual musical presentation given in front of no fewer than three judges. These statewide contests always included many of Rembrandt High School's group ensembles (both vocal and instrumental) as well as individual performances (piano, instrumental, and voice). “Butterflies fluttered in tummies” as everyone waited for the “ratings” to be posted, and RHS always proudly came home with a significant number of Division I ratings.

Yes, “growing up in Rembrandt” was a privilege! It was a small rural town and community, but a place of large value in my life! Today I live in a suburb of a huge city (Minneapolis)—but I am so very THANKFUL for my “roots” that began in Rembrandt, Iowa! Above all, I am so thankful to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for all the blessings He has given to me in my lifetime—which all began in Rembrandt!

After Rembrandt

After high school, I graduated in 1964 from Iowa State University, Ames Iowa, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

I taught school a total of 37 years, of which 33 years were in the Edina, Minnesota Public Schools plus four years overseas in the Stuttgart, Germany U.S. Military Dependents School. I retired from teaching in June 2001, and am now working part-time as a Resource Consultant and Development Editor for a Christian publishing company in Minneapolis.

My husband, George, and I (married in 1965) live in Bloomington, Minnesota. Our family consists of our daughter Kim, her husband Bryan Hughes, and their daughter Sarah and our son Mike and his fiancée, Julie Elshaug.



Left to Right: Lorene Gustafson, Eloise Mosbo, Betty Foval, Pat Mosbo, Dee Ann Gustafson, and Beverly Hegna

Who Were They?

In about 1947, what was the popular singing group of little five-year-old girls in Rembrandt? Who were they? What were their names? What made them such a ‘hit’?

Here is a compilation of memories!

The group's name was the “Melloettes,” and the group began with six members: Betty Foval, Eloise Mosbo, Dee Gustafson, Bev Hegna, Pat Mosbo, and Kristin Knutson. Kristin's family moved to another part of Iowa, but the five remaining Melloettes continued singing together into the 1950s.

Lorene Gustafson (Dee's mother) was the organizer and leader of the Melloettes, and she devoted much time, talent, and effort with us. Mrs. Gustafson selected appropriate songs for us to sing, she was the pianist for our many practices in her home and for our performances, she wrote the harmony parts for each song, she instilled in us the love for music and helped develop our ability to sight-read music. Bev and Dee sang soprano, Pat and Betty were second sopranos, and Eloise sang alto. A highlight after each practice? Mrs. Gustafson always had snacks for us to enjoy!

We performed at a variety of community events—bridal showers, church events, mother-daughter banquets, junior-senior plays at school, and county-wide talent shows. When we first began singing together at age five, we remember singing at a bridal shower for Anna Mosbo who was to marry Ole Hegna. We sang *An Apple for the Teacher* and *School Days* with the final line being: “And I wrote on my slate, I love you Ole, when we were a couple of kids.”

Other examples of popular songs we were often requested to sing at various events were *I Love You Truly*, *Mr. Sandman*, *Jesus Loves Me*, *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, and *Our Best to You*.

When we first started performing, we each just wore nice dresses, but then we decided to ‘dress alike.’ Our mothers bought yardages of quarter-inch permanent pleated cotton skirt fabric—both in aqua and in navy blue for two different outfits—which they sewed for us to wear with white blouses and little red bows at the collar.

Our solid musical foundation began in our “Melloette” experience! When choral group opportunities presented themselves at school, we five already knew what we were doing and could take it to a higher level.

We certainly appreciated all of the support and encouragement from Mrs. Gustafson and all our parents! We loved singing together as the “Melloettes”!



Marvin Gustafson and Roy Foval at the DX station

Eldona Pingel Hahm - Class of 1960

Roots/Rembrandt - They are the Same

I sat in the gym on that warm, humid evening in July of 2001 watching the history of Rembrandt unfold on stage before me. The same gymnasium where I'd been part of the junior and senior class plays (*Our Town* and *I Remember Mama*), played in numerous band concerts, practiced and played basketball, received awards and, in 1960, graduated from high school. Some of the people there had experienced these events with me, others were of my father's generation, and still more who had experienced Rembrandt Consolidated School well after my generation had moved on to all parts of the U.S. The warmth of seeing so many old friends and acquaintances was somewhat unexpected. It was a precious evening, not soon forgotten.

Later, as I reflected on that evening, it occurred to me that there had to be a way to convey to my children and grandchildren what growing up in the Rembrandt community had been like. What was it that made the connection to Rembrandt so special? And, how can I explain this to my children, who graduated from a high school of nearly 1200 students?

Rembrandt is special because that's where my family's roots are. Those roots run deep in this community, even though none of our family lives there any longer. My great-grandfather purchased land and settled on a farm a mile and a half west of town in the mid-1880s, one of the few German immigrants in the largely Norwegian area. The Pingel family name appears often in the early history of the area. I have pictures from the early 1900s of life on the Pingel farm showing my father as a child and the home my grandfather, my father and I grew up in, in the background. My great-aunt and uncle, Mayme and Hal Green, lived across from the school's athletic field. My dad graduated from Rembrandt High School (Class of 1926). He looked down upon me from his graduation picture each time I quenched my thirst at the water fountain just outside of the study hall entrance.

Rembrandt was, indeed, a special place to grow up in in the 1950s. Mr. Peterson at Peterson's Store let us "charge" the cost of candy bars to our parents' account—no plastic, only promise. George in George's Place let us use the phone to call for a ride home, if needed. An ice cream cone from George's Place was a treat, if a bit smoky tasting—well before "Smoking or Non?" became a standard question. The Cozy Café was handy as well for an occasional ice cream cone. The movie theatre was a routine Saturday afternoon or evening event. I can easily recall the music of Don and Phil Everly singing *Wake up, Little Susie* on the car radio as we waited for the time to go into the theatre for the evening's movie. The park just east of the theatre meant Wednesday evening band concerts with mosquitoes for company and car horns for applause.

The west end of Main Street included the meat market, owned by classmate Jerry Hegna's family. The smell of the frozen meat in the freezer is unmistakable. Mike's Tavern was across the street from the meat market—unlike George Engebretson's

establishment, kids weren't welcome. Rystad Hardware was a special place too. It was a "Dad" place to go. There I was "Daddy's little girl" as I tagged along as a youngster on fix-it trips to town. Hegna's store was an amazing place, unlike any shopping mall stores. An off-spring of the old General Store, Hegna's offered customers just about anything for the home. And, unique to small-towns, when community wedding showers, to which all the women in the community were invited, were held, women simply called Hegna's store to add their name to a group present for the honoree. After more than 30 years, I still have a couple of such gifts from my own wedding shower.

Other than the concern that the Russians might, for some reason, feel Rembrandt was a Cold War threat and bomb the town out of existence, Rembrandt was a pretty safe place to be in the late 1950s. Halloween might be a bit spooky—who would do what to the school?—but the Halloweens I remember were pretty tame, with townspeople allowing kids to include them as scavenger hunt sources and parties held at the Legion Hall. Rembrandt did have a town constable and, if memory serves, he was also my bus driver.

Rembrandt in the 1950s was a calm, perhaps a bit boring, experience, but we didn't know anything else. It was a time and place that nourished the young people of my generation and gave them the courage and motivation to make the most of their talents and abilities. Education was important to the community; "cool" was maintaining good grades and participating in a myriad of school, community and church activities. Success was defined as going to college and making your family proud of your accomplishments.

All of this begs the question: if growing up in Rembrandt was so memorable, why have so many scattered to cities and suburbs? It was a place and a time that no longer exists anywhere. It prepared me to be successful and to relish my education at the large university I attended. My education and school activities in Rembrandt taught me to appreciate challenging educational and work experiences, music, and many things that living close to a large city provides. Thus, perhaps Rembrandt and other small towns of the 1950s in America were a victim of their own success—producing successful adults who enjoy the stimulation of cities and suburbs to enrich their lives.

After Rembrandt

After I graduated from Iowa State University in 1964 with a degree in mathematics, I worked as a mathematician at the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Lab in Madison, Wisconsin, and married Gordon Hahm in 1965. After teaching high school math at Milwaukee Lutheran High School, I became a stay-at-home mom. I then worked half-time as a mathematics instructor at Milwaukee Area Technical College, was a computer education consultant to Manpower International, designing and writing computer-based training, a programmer/analyst at ProAdvantage Computer Consultants, programming computer- and Web-based training software, and finally worked as a programmer at Manpower International, with the Product Program Development Department, programming computer- and web-based training software. Son Eric is a chemical engineer at Eli Lilly in Lafayette, Indiana; Mark is an associate producer at

Starz cable network in Denver, Colorado; and Julie is an environmental educator and naturalist at multiple camps in Wisconsin. My grandchildren are Katie (8) and Aimee (6), Eric's children.

Eloise Mosbo Obman - Class of 1960

Growing up in Rembrandt provided a solid foundation for nearly everything I have done in my life. We were large enough as a school and community to have many opportunities, but small enough to need everyone's whole-hearted participation.

Academic challenge topped the list. My class of 22 was packed with talented, motivated learners who were reaching for the best they could be. You knew you had accomplished something if you could finish an algebra test in one class period, pull an A in Mrs. George's English class, or type 80 words a minute in Mrs. Parker's typing class. Co-curriculars saw no less demand for excellence. The *Party Line* had to have right-justified columns (the pre-computer way!) and could tolerate no mistakes in information, spelling, or punctuation. Even the art work had to be perfectly placed and executed. The band performed challenging pieces capably. *Til Eulenspiegel* with its opening French horn romp was a highlight for me. Vocal and instrumental music ensembles provided another avenue for taking our music abilities to a higher level.

Basketball and baseball teams flirted with state tournament action several times in my high school years. The girls' basketball team in 1957-1958 was one of only two undefeated teams in the state going into district tournaments, and we beat that team handily in the consolation match.



*Front: Eloise Mosbo, Beverly Hegna, Helene Ducas, Carol Galvin, Betty Foval, Sharon Hoover.
Back: Coach Skogerboe, Lynette Anderson, Marlys Watts, Connie Jensen, Linda Anderson,
Joyce Stroup, Lenora Odor, Manager Lucille Cleveland*

Drama was yet another area of excellence. As seniors we presented *I Remember Mama*, an apt choice for a community settled first by Scandinavians. Our junior year performance of *Our Town* had such an impact on the local audience that some adults thought it was too serious and deep for teenagers to have experienced. Personally, I was thrilled to have viewed life from a more mature perspective when, as Emily, I was among the dead people in the cemetery scene. We were aware of the comings and goings of the living who mourned our deaths, but we remained tempered and emotionless in the presence of their grieving. I have yet to see an *Our Town* theatre production whose narrator surpasses the performance of Steve Green on the Rembrandt stage!

Nearly 30 years of my adult working life have been spent in education in Northwest Iowa. The love for excellence and challenge instilled in me as a student in Rembrandt in the 1950s inspired me as a teacher in the Sioux Rapids-Rembrandt system in the late 1970s. Three colleagues and I began a talented and gifted program before the state had mandated or funded such endeavors.

Since 1988, I have been K-12 coordinator of the Talented and Gifted program at Odebolt-Arthur, a school system about 40 miles south of Rembrandt. My broad base of learning experiences and activities helps me to identify with a wide variety of students and pursuits:

WORD PEOPLE? Write your stories, your books, and your plays. You're on MY turf now! I had Mrs. George, you know! Poetry? That, too, including limerick-writing sessions at slumber parties.

MATH LEARNERS? Hey, Mr. Gran, Mrs. Parker, and Mr. Bryan challenged us in math to the point that I pursued a math major in college (until German and English won me over).

MUSIC-STRONG STUDENTS? Mr. Teague—need I say more?

BODY-SMART PEOPLE? Maybe Mr. Hulsebus couldn't pronounce "Hippocrates" in history class, but #1, we learned how to use the glossary to learn the REAL pronunciation, and #2, we learned to care about physical conditioning for maximum performance on the court. You want to involve your body in learning? I'm with you! And, by the way, this 59-year old woman will take you on in a game of horse if you're brave enough!

NATURE LEARNERS? I grew up on a farm walking beans for a summer job, picking up rocks, helping sort and load pigs, gathering eggs, baling hay, picking fruit, and mowing grass with a motorless pusher. Do I appreciate what nature has to offer? You'd better believe it!

PEOPLE SMARTIES? Rembrandt was one big team, one family pulling together to achieve excellence. I was privileged to be a contributing member of that team and a recipient of the high expectations of the adults in that family.

SELF-SMART LEARNERS? My intelligent, hard-working father taught me to tap my inner self for strength and discipline. I understand introspection!

ART SMARTIES? Guess what—in all of the eight multiple intelligences in current educational vogue, this one would seem to be a void for me in my Rembrandt background. Art instruction was placed in the hands of each elementary teacher and was non-existent in junior high and high school. Yet my innate spatial ability helps me appreciate these learning needs and talents. You create it—I'll encourage and appreciate it!

Rembrandt's foundation taught me to expect excellence, to seek fulfillment in achievement, and to have fun with challenge. As a teacher, my chief goal is to pass these priceless perceptions on to my students. As I write, one of my Odebolt-Arthur TAG seniors is being honored on ESPN as one of 12 national finalists in the Wendy's Heisman Trophy recognition for scholarship, athletics, and citizenship. This part of Iowa continues to produce all-around excellence! We can give our youth no better heritage than to preserve the valuable learning climate of small, rural America.

Growing up in Rembrandt was...

- knowing the people who lived in every house for a two-mile radius
- camping out at a friend's home after basketball practice until Mom could pick me up
- playing piano duets with a friend just for the fun of it
- singing with the Melloettes as a young girl
- playing “Candyland” when Melloette practice was over
- being needed as a freshman to play the church's new pipe organ
- calling a non-relative couple my aunt and uncle because our families did lots of things together
- seining minnows in the creek
- seeing *Gone With The Wind* in the Rembrandt theatre
- going to four proms in the same dress with the same guy and eventually marrying him
- running laps to stay in condition for basketball, even when the coach didn't require it
- mentally ostracizing (for life!) anyone who cheated in the classroom
- writing a poem for an English teacher's birthday
- going to teachers' homes just to visit with them after we had graduated and gone off to college
- cleaning a stove as a semester final in Home Economics
- using the cloakroom to crank out the finishing touches on the *Party Line*
- being excused from study hall to organize and file music in the band room
- practicing the intricate snare drum rhythms for a contest ensemble piece, using the benches in the girls' locker room as our drums

- using improper drum roll techniques but receiving the highest rating from the judge anyway—with the comment, “I’ve never seen such a good job of faking the proper technique.”
- knowing that almost everyone you knew, or knew of, attended a worship service every week
- learning (too late!) that the boys routinely peeked through the door cracks into the girls' locker room at showering time
- calling all congregational members to see if they would mind having Lenten services earlier in the evening than usual so basketball players could attend church AND play in their tournament game on Ash Wednesday
- deciding on a test that the infinitive *to lay* could be conjugated in the passive voice after having pondered if, indeed, one “could be laid”
- having a community member take me to her attic to find her wedding dress and letting me wear it in *Our Town*
- walking beans with a crew of friends each summer
- being expected to be a working, productive member of my family
- going to cultural events in Storm Lake—such as *Nutcracker Suite* and The Vienna Boys' Choir
- attending Buena Vista College football and basketball games
- knowing you would get a nickel when you went trick-or-treating at the home of a friend's grandma
- perfecting the square turn in marching band, practicing up and down the streets of Rembrandt, and performing in weekend parades
- playing summer concerts each week in the park band shell
- having “applause” for summer band shell performances in the form of car horns honking
- being in the basement of Hegna's store to watch friends candling eggs
- strolling the aisles of Hegna's store to see all the neat merchandise they had
- buying ice cream cones or thick malts from Ma Weber at the Cozy Café
- going with friends to take swimming lessons at the Marathon park/gravel pit
- listening to Cubs' games on the radio while cleaning out the chicken house
- stacking bales in the haymow
- finally using enough bales to get down to the floor of the haymow and turn it into a basketball court for winter games
- going with my dad and aunt to decorate family graves each Memorial Day
- attending the Memorial Day services in the cemetery when the guns were fired and Taps was played and echoed

After Rembrandt

I attended Luther College through the equivalent of my junior year and graduated from Buena Vista in 1963. I married Richard Obman, who graduated from Rembrandt in 1958 and from Buena Vista in 1962. We have been farming south of Rembrandt since

1977. I have taught for 28 years in various capacities K-12 in the former Sioux Rapids-Rembrandt system (1977-1983), with the remaining years in the Odebolt-Arthur School District; the past 14 years have been as K-12 Talented and Gifted Facilitator. Earlier positions involved language arts, social studies, and math from grades 5-9 and TAG in the SR district. I am retiring from teaching in May 2002.

Our daughter Kristine was born in 1965 and is a design architect and registered nurse. She and her husband Peter Ernzen have two children, Joshua and Rachel. Our son Joel was born in 1967 and is a career Air Force navigational aids equipment specialist. He and his wife Kim have two children, Britt and Cassie.

Jerry Hegna - Class of 1960

In the early 1950s, TV and home freezers were just coming on the market. Anyway, at age ten, that was my take on it. My dad, Herman Hegna, was a butcher and ran the meat market in Rembrandt. He also rented out boxes in a large freezer area when a farmer would bring in a hog or cow to butcher. Dad would cut, wrap, and store the meat for the farmers.

It was during this time that Rembrandt really jumped on Saturday nights. The farmers would bring their family to town to grocery shop, pick up enough meat from their box at the meat market for the week, and socialize.

While the adults were busy, we kids would all hit the movie. The cost for the movie was ten cents and a bag of popcorn was ten cents. My sister, Jean, had to work on Saturday night selling that popcorn at the back of the theatre. It wasn't too bad—she got into the movie free, and Dad gave her three cents a bag commission. I don't know why she quit selling the popcorn, but much to my chagrin, Dad hired me. I wasn't even looking for a job! So now, instead of getting into an occasional bean shooter or water gun battle while watching the movie, it was I who was selling the popcorn at the back of the theatre!

After the movie was over, it was time for the Saturday night fights (apple fights). We all knew where every apple tree in town was located. It wasn't long before there were several bands of well-armed “Raiders” lurking in the shadows. One became very cautious during this time of night, and if you were smart you had two or three of your trusted buddies with you for more fire power and defense.

The bandstand area was a popular place for an ambush. “I hear a noise!” It came from the direction of the bandstand. I fire off a salvo of three green and very sour apples—two Harvest and one Whitney that came from my grandma's house on the south side of town. A hit!

I could tell it was a good hit from the long and loud cursing coming from the bandstand. How was I supposed to know the road construction crew who were working in the area had taken up residence in the bandstand for the night!

The war games came to an abrupt halt as we all scattered in several different directions.

Bean fields

Ask any young person who could handle a machete what a bean field meant to them and they would probably say “corn.” Why? Because corn does not belong in a bean field, as any respectable farmer will tell you. A young person with a machete was the perfect solution. We would walk down the bean rows and usually be responsible for four rows each, cutting the corn at its base with a minimum loss of beans.

We were at the John Obman farm this day: Richard Obman, Eloise Mosbo (Richard's future wife), myself, and two other girls I should remember but don't. Anyway, it was a hot day and we were talking about how nice the cool waters at the Marathon gravel pits would feel. We jumped in the car and took off for the Marathon gravel pit and its cool waters.

I wonder if the girls got the bean field done.

After Rembrandt

After I graduated I went into the Army and spent 18 months in Germany. After that I worked on the farm for Saathoffs for several months. I went to California in August 1963 and was hired by PSA Airlines, later bought out by US Airways. I spent a total of 29 years 9 months with the airlines. I took advantage of the travel opportunities with the airlines and went to Germany three times, Italy, and Switzerland. I retired in 1993 and live in Mobile, Alabama. I have a son, Cary Kazuo (which means “first son” in Japanese).



Keith Stroup - Class of 1960

It has been a long time since those five short years of my life in Rembrandt. However, memories make it seem like just a short passing of time. It's hard to believe that back in those years I could be doing what I am doing now. However, I am sure that growing up in Rembrandt provided me with experiences that contributed to what I am doing now.

In the first couple of years in Rembrandt we lived downtown above the printing shop next to George's Place. Thanks to George I got to go in the back of his tavern and play pool on the small 8-ball table. Hardly anything that happened downtown passed our attention. One year at Halloween we even had a 3-seater deposited in the middle of the Main Street intersection. Memory fails me as to how it got there?

Rembrandt was the right place for me to spend my high school years. We did not miss out on anything that might have been provided by living in a larger town with a larger school district. In fact, in many ways we were provided a greater opportunity to be involved in more activities during those important years. I couldn't act, but had to be in the plays. I thought I could sing—even a famous music solo—*Goodbye Forever?**%^&* I look back on that and wonder how Betty Foval endured practicing with me without complaint, because I could not sing solos. Mr. Teague should have encouraged me to get a clue, but he was too encouraging and positive to do that. What a blessing to have a man with his talent and ability to be a teacher in Rembrandt.

In my opinion the Class of 1960 was the best class ever to graduate from Rembrandt—11 boys and 11 girls teeming with talent. (I may be a little prejudiced).

Our sports programs were excellent and gave us all the opportunity to keep busy. That was most of what my world revolved around—baseball and basketball—from which we learned many life lessons. Mr. Hulsebus and Coach Skogerboe were good coaches. One particular lesson I learned through Coach Skogerboe in our senior year of basketball. He was a first-year coach, and we seniors had trouble coming under his authority. One night in practice we were challenging something he said and our attitudes were not the best, so we began running laps. The more we grumbled the more we ran, and I think we ran over 70 laps before we shut up. I went home and complained to my mom about how bad coach was and how it wasn't fair that we had to run so many laps. She must have been in cahoots with the coach because she simply said, “Maybe you should just quit if you don't like the coach and don't want to do what he asks!” Well, that was it—I didn't quit, and we ended up having a very good season.

George Engebretson had a profound influence on my life. I remember, as if he had told me yesterday, how he would talk about a time when he was in battle in the war, when he made a promise to the Lord that if he lived through the war he was going to give his life to doing something for kids. That was the motivation for the tireless hours of making sure the kids of Rembrandt had baseball programs. He always made you feel like you were the best and usually had a good word of encouragement for you. Greatness is in serving, and George was a servant.

After high school I was able to start college because of an unsecured loan that Haraldsons gave me. I remember going in and asking for the loan and Mr. Haraldson asking what it was for and simply saying yes. I was surprised because he never asked me how I was going to pay it back or when! I look back on that and know that to him it was not about the banking business but about helping a young boy get started in college and willing to take the risk. Amazing!

Rembrandt was an extended family more than just a town of citizens. I guess in many ways smaller communities are like that, but ours was one of the best. I am thankful for “Our Town” (Grover's Corner, let me see!) and the great environment in which I was raised.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to Buena Vista on a basketball scholarship and then transferred to Los Angeles Pacific College (now Azusa Pacific University) where I lettered in basketball, baseball, track, and football my senior year, and was player-coach of the college baseball team my last two years. Even though Rembrandt didn't have track, I participated in the National AAU Decathlon meet in 1962.



Sectional Champions, 1959

*Front: Terry Ingram, Albert Parris, Keith Stroup, Steve Green, Cordy Peterson, Larry Galvin.
Back: Manager Don McKibben, Arlo Lorenzen, Bob Madsen, Bill McKibben, Graham Teague,
Lanny Peterson, Jerry Hegna, Coach Ken Hulsebus*

[Editor's Note: Keith was all-state honorable mention in basketball at Rembrandt, was Little All-American and in 1963 led the nation in scoring in college. He was inducted into the Azusa Pacific University Sports Hall of Fame in 1992.]

I received my B.A. in 1964 and have taught P.E. and history and coached basketball, football, and track at Christian and public high schools. In 1975 I became the founding principal of Lebanon Christian School (K-12) and had a great time coaching the varsity boys' basketball team to a State ACE Championship and a National ACE Tourney runner-up.

I am currently Senior Pastor of Lebanon Chapel Christian Fellowship and President of Lebanon Christian School. I met Barb in college, and we married in 1964. Our three sons are Trevor, 36, who has three sons and a daughter—Flight School, Phoenix; Warren, 35, who has a son and a daughter—Worship Leader, Lebanon Chapel Christian Fellowship; and James, 30, who has two sons—Insurance Adjuster, Sacramento.

Larry Hauser - Class of 1960

I lived on a farm two miles south of Rembrandt on Highway 71. In my younger days I got to play on George Engebretson's Little League team for several years. Then I got old enough to ride the tractor in the fields and started to cultivate corn, and that ended my baseball career.

When the corn was all cultivated, I went to work for our neighbor who did custom hay baling. I would take the tractor, baler and two wagons to some of his custom baling jobs. Sometimes driving the tractor, baler and wagons wasn't very much fun going down Highway 71 at ten miles per hour. When I wasn't working for the neighbor, I was detasseling corn.

In the evenings we had to make sure the 800 head of hogs we raised had enough corn to eat. Then after supper we would try to find time to go to the Marathon swimming hole. When we got through swimming, we would go to Sioux Rapids for burgers and fries.

In the winter once a month I remember the school would take a bunch of kids to Spencer to the roller skating rink. That was a good time for all of us.

After Rembrandt

In 1960 my family moved to Phoenix, Arizona. I attended a trade school and became a machinist. The company I worked for made aircraft engines for the government and commercial airlines. I married in 1963 and had two children, and we now have one grandchild. I retired in August 2000. My wife and I moved from Phoenix to a small town in Northern Arizona with a population of 8,000. We are now doing some RVing.

Pat Mosbo Meckstroth - Class of 1960

I don't know why, but the first things that come into my mind about Rembrandt are those that I remember from when I was really young, a scene here and there at different times that I recall vaguely, and picture vividly . . .

Our class (first or second grade?) is walking on the sidewalk from school up to the store with our teacher in the lead. We are crowded together and very serious. There was a fire last night that burned the home of two little boys (one in our class?) who wore overalls to school. We are on our way to buy a new pair of overalls for each of them.

Our Lutheran Sunday School is practicing for the Christmas Eve program at the old Lutheran Church in the country. It is cool, but cozy, with lots of dark wood—wood pews, wood altar. There is snow outside. We are singing and singing. The door to the church opens and my cousins Joan and John who have just arrived from Davenport come in to watch.

It is summer. Our town band is playing in the bandstand in the park. Some of us are kids and some are adults. The lights on the band are bright. There are lots of people mingling around in the park eating ice cream cones. The band sounds loud and good. Sometimes my father (Alton Mosbo) leads the band.

Almost all the seats in the darkened Rembrandt movie theatre are filled. We are riveted to the pictures on the screen—the battles, the plantation, Scarlett and Rhett against the sunset. When the soldier's leg is amputated, there is a collective gasp.

Our class is standing in the field north of our house on the farm. My dad is explaining about soil conservation. He pulls a plant out of the ground and we all look at the roots and dirt as he talks.

Five of us little girls are singing in the uptown Lutheran Church basement. Many women from the community are there sitting on folded chairs. On tables around the room are jars of fruit and vegetables and blankets and kitchen things. There are women and children who can't speak English, but they smile at us. They have come all the way from Latvia to live in our community, and we are there to help welcome them.

My mother (Phyllis Mosbo) takes me uptown to the library on Saturday evening. We look through many old books on the shelves in the small room. I choose the books I haven't read yet—*The Bobbsey Twins* and *The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew*.

We are five (six?) little girls standing in a line in a living room we have never been in before. Across the room is a small coffin. I can see the brown wavy hair of the little girl who was killed in the car accident. The girl's father comes down the stairs into the living room. He is sobbing. We girls sing as well as we can and try not to cry.

We lift up the wood tops of our desks to put our books inside. The teacher writes on the blackboard. When she reads to us from a book, we beg and beg her to read another chapter. At recess we go down the long slide and swing on the swings with long metal chains. When we are a little older, we girls play jacks on the sidewalk lined with bushes or jump rope, jumping and counting.

The Lutheran Church in town is nearly full. I sit with my mother and father and brother in the same place every Sunday. I'm wearing the dress my mother sewed for me and the pink shoes she bought me. The pastor talks and talks. Then my father gets up and walks to the front and side to lead the choir. The voices in the choir are strong and beautiful. My father moves his arms and they sing softer and then louder.

It is summer and the town is filled with green leafy trees. My mother is driving the car and taking me and my little brother uptown with her to the meeting of the Stitch and Chatter Club. The women go inside the house and several of us girls play on the swing hung from a tree with stiff rope. We are wearing dresses and our hair is tied back with ribbons. Later we drink red Kool-Aid.

My mother reads all the news in the *Rembrandt Booster* with me. One day she has news to tell the editor so she brings me into town to the newspaper office. The press is running and is so thunderously loud that we can't hear each other talk. I can smell the ink and see the backwards letters in their little boxes waiting to be arranged into words.

I have my hands over my ears, but I can't shut out the sound. The big vinyl record goes around and around on the record player in our living room. My father is saying, "You will listen to this before you go to the movie. This is the *1812 Overture* and it is great music!" It is Saturday night, and I just want him to drive me uptown where I will meet my girlfriends at the Rembrandt movie theatre and we will giggle and watch the cartoons. I am thinking, "I hate classical music! I hate Tchaikovsky! When I am grown up, I will never have to listen to this!"

From my second-story bedroom in our house on the farm I can see the town of Rembrandt. In the summer I look out my bedroom window across the corn fields, and in the winter I look across the snow drifts to the town a mile away. I can see the water tower, some buildings and some trees. The big orange school bus takes me to town to go to school. My father and mother drive me to town in our car to go to church. Rembrandt is where I go to do things with other people, to see my friends. It is far away, but close.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Luther College with a B.A. in English and then received my M.A. in English from the University of Chicago where I met my husband, Steve. I taught English at the college level for a time and returned to the U of C for my M.A. in Library Science. My husband and I have been on the library faculty at Illinois State University for over 25 years. I was also involved in developing our new General Education Program at the University, have taught one of the courses, and was an administrator for the program for awhile. Steve and I enjoy reading, working on art and photography projects, and traveling. We have two sons. Christopher, who graduated from Harvard and then spent a year organizing hotel workers in New York City, is now applying to graduate and law schools. Noah, who is autistic and lives in a group home near us, attends a special class at the high school. One of my great joys is that for the last ten years I have had season tickets to the Chicago Symphony. Although I love Bach, Wagner, and Mahler best, sometimes the orchestra plays pieces by one of my other favorite composers, Tchaikovsky.



Children of the Stitch and Chatter Club, 1953

Jeanette Anderson Anderson - Class of 1961

Memories from growing up in Rembrandt:

- growing up on a farm where I occasionally “picked” the eggs
- playing alone with my imagination in the grove behind the house
- picking mulberries in the grove, playing in the grape thicket, and wandering through the rows of corn
- walking barefoot to deliver lunch to the men in the field at threshing time
- sunbathing on the roof of the hog shed
- taking cases of eggs to Hegna's store and having a credit there for groceries
- my dad taking a case of eggs to town in a farm wagon—ruined eggs!
- taking a dollar to Hegna's Meat Market and buying meat for supper
- going into the Locker Plant to get frozen meat out of our rented space
- our dog Blackie hearing the John Deere tractor coming from the grain elevator and running down our lane to meet my dad
- my mom's “Stitch and Chatter Club”—formed for social reasons only
- having pancake breakfasts on days of a blizzard
- sliding down huge piles of snow with friend Scott Waldstein
- being able to walk to town, go anywhere, anytime without worry
- buying Lick'em-ade at Peterson's store
- taking jelly sandwiches on a summer day for a trip into the neighboring countryside with Linda Stratton
- at recess: playing “War”; racing to the swings to team up with a boy who would “pump” while you sat; playing “Rhythm” (clap hands)
- visiting Arnold's Park on the last day of school
- getting “green” boards and yellow chalk to replace the blackboards and white chalk—easier on the eyes

- being sent outside by the teacher to clean erasers
- adding two states to the U.S. and adding “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance while I was in grade school
- community plays with local actors—school plays, our class having one every year of high school
- the Rembrandt theatre, at first going to movies, then later making it a youth center with our class being involved in the renovation
- waiting for my dad in George's Place and being able to read comic books to my heart's delight
- sock hops following home basketball games
- being a cheerleader and getting to go to all the basketball games
- knowing everyone in town on a first name basis
- eating a piece of homemade pie after school at the Rembrandt Café
- being able to buy hand packed ice cream at the café
- going to both Luther League and MYF with friends—and especially the MYF parties
- having bus parties with other grades, going to either a movie or roller skating
- singing duets with Linda Stratton in the basement of the Methodist Church
- being able to be in band from sixth grade until my senior year
- during the cold war, I remember the map on the bulletin board of our church showing how Rembrandt would be in the fallout area if the SAC Air Base in Omaha were attacked
- and mostly being raised by wonderful parents with high values, morals, religious beliefs and feeling safe and loved

Log House

My family moved to Rembrandt in 1952 to live in my grandparents' former home. Right in the center of the farmyard was a log house! Over time the house had been used for various purposes and had been neglected. In the next few years I explored it and played in it. A lean-to on the north side allowed us to slide down the roof in the winter onto a snow bank. Never did I consider what a history the log house had.

It had been at its site for over 80 years when we moved there. It was built by Ole Dahl a few years prior to 1871 on land obtained by homesteading from the United States government. These Norwegians had come from Norway to Section 36 in Barnes Township when Buena Vista County made free land available to anyone willing to stake a claim. To record their land, they would have had to walk to Sioux City. The land was all prairie, and each farmer cultivated only enough land each year to support his family. The 16' x 24' house was at one time home to a family of 12. The Dahls owned the land until 1882.

There were other landowners following the Dahls. My great-grandfather Timan Bertness and his wife Sarah eventually owned part of the land, and their son Tennis owned another part. When Tennis (my maternal grandfather) married Amelia Gulbranson in 1902, they built a new home. It stood very near to the log home, which by then was

being used as a cob house. When my grandparents were both gone, my parents Oscar and Alice Anderson became the landowners when they bought the inherited shares owned by my mother's sisters. In 1962 my parents donated the log house to the Buena Vista County Historical Society, and the home was moved to Storm Lake in one piece by the Benberg Moving Co. Later it was moved by Heartland Building & Moving to its present location to be part of the Prairie Heritage Exhibit.

The log house was built entirely of hand-hewn logs with the ends being dove-tailed. In the top of one log and in the bottom of the next log, there was a hole drilled so that a two-inch peg could be inserted to keep them from shifting. The cracks between the logs had to be filled with clay caulking to make them tight. The roof was built in three steps. The rafters came first and were not uniform in dimension - 2x4s, 1 1/2x4s, or 3x5s, etc. Next, the sheeting was actually scrap lumber from the outer edge of the log when each log was trimmed to size. These varied in width from six inches on the ends to twelve inches in the middle, so they had to piece them together to cover all the gaps. Placed on top of the sheeting were the shingles.

The house has two floors. The living and dining areas are downstairs, and the sleeping quarters are upstairs. As you enter the front door you are in the living room. Two pegs in the wall were probably for hanging clothes. Separating the living area from the kitchen/dining area is another wall of logs. To this day the house contains an original chest which was in the house when it was occupied by the Dahls. Upstairs the sleeping quarters contained a rope bed on which rested a cornhusk or straw mattress.

If I had known more of the history of the house when I was a little girl, I think I would have had a greater appreciation of the home at even a young age. I'm sure I would have pictured other little children living in a house that was surely not as warm as the one I lived in, having to work harder to help maintain their pioneer life, and yet children just like me, with toys and imaginations and a future that held promise.

Credits go to my references: Ossie Anderson—my dad; *A Portrait of Rembrandt—The Early Years* by Rolf Mosbo; and *A Tour Through the Prairie Log Cabin* published by the Buena Vista County Historical Society.

After Rembrandt

Following graduation I moved to Minneapolis to begin my training as a medical laboratory technician. I worked for a private clinic in St. Paul for a short time. In 1963 I married Mark Anderson from Montevideo, Minnesota. The first year of our marriage we lived in Minnesota, but then we spent five years in Nebraska. It was there that our two daughters were born. We returned to Minnesota in 1969 and have lived in Sauk Centre, Minnesota, ever since. When I returned to work, I began working for an advertising shopper called the *Dairyland Peach*. In 1980 we purchased the shopper. Our business did well, and in 1994 we were fortunate to sell it on the upswing to a large family-oriented corporation who treat all our former employees well. I should know, I'm one of them. I have been with the company since 1975.

Our children are Kathy Beckermann and Laurie Jennissen. Kathy and her husband Dan have one daughter Tara, who is 16. Laurie and her husband Rick have three daughters: Greta—seven, Jamie—five and Maria—two. I still enjoy going to work every day. Our leisure time is spent at a lake home we recently purchased in nearby Alexandria and finding time to travel occasionally.

Linda Stratton Renshaw - Class of 1961

Saturday

Summer Saturday nights when I was a kid, Rembrandt came alive. By late afternoon the population began to swell, albeit temporarily, as farmers sought out Roy Cannoy's services at the barber shop. Soon the sidewalks swarmed with sunburned men and boys with white around their hairlines while wives and mothers congregated in the two establishments favored by women: Peterson's Grocery and Rystad's Dry Goods.

There were others, of course—the hardware store, also carrying the name Rystad's, but belonging to another brother and mostly the domain of menfolk; the lumber yard, which closed by sundown; Herman Hegna's meat market, staying open only long enough to pop the popcorn Herman's kids would peddle for ten cents a bag at the movie theatre; Ginkens' Garage, also closing by nightfall; post office and bank would stay open only until normal closing hours, so would be closed by the time the farm families arrived.

Men did their banking with Lloyd Haraldson during the week, taking their turn to go and sit in the straight chair beside his desk at the back of the building, hats in hands, borrowing the money for seed corn to get them through to another harvest or for the down payment on a tractor. While they waited to see him, they'd lean their elbows on the chest-high wooden writing ledge at the right side of the "lobby," passing the time of day with any and all who came in. We kids were welcome there too, whether we had pennies to add to our savings accounts or not, pennies that would be faithfully recorded by Agnes Rystad or Catherine Anderson, or later, Haraldson the younger, Ronnie, who would take over the banking business. Marble counters at the two windows, half-walls of glass—to protect the tellers from bank robbers?—and the smell of money that had passed through thousands of hands made the place unique.

The stores available to respectable women held groceries and some of the household goods they needed; for major purchases, Storm Lake and Spencer weren't that far, but Rembrandt merchants met the need for the weekly staples necessary to keep farm families running. Fabrics and some clothing items could be purchased at G.A. Rystad's mercantile, but grocery shoppers were generally loyal to one or the other of the two stores. Our family patronized Elmer and Leota Peterson's market, perhaps because they were first located in what would become the produce next door to our little brick house, or perhaps they were more willing to offer us the option of running a "bill," to be paid at the end of the week. On Saturday, of course.

Saturday night meant one thing to both town and country kids: going to "the show." Rembrandt's opera house had stood for many years, anchoring Main Street. A

roll-down curtain we discovered during my high school years carried advertisements for businesses far out of memory, so who knows how long it had been there. Movies were free when I was a kid and only costing a dime by the time the old theatre had nearly outlived its usefulness. Good films played there—I saw Walt Disney’s *Bambi* and *Gone With the Wind*—and every feature was preceded by a “comedy,” usually a short cartoon of Woody Woodpecker or Daffy Duck, but occasionally the Three Stooges.

Once we saw *War of the Worlds*. That night, on my walk home, as I passed the empty lot next to our house, I saw lights shooting into the southern sky and got scared spitless. Turns out, some car dealer in Storm Lake had rented one of those big oscillating beacons, but it sure made a believer out of me.

Dick Johnson ran the movie projector, up in a tiny room reached by a narrow flight of steep steps, kind of an inner sanctum that I was only allowed to visit once or twice. Sometimes the film would break, and a groan would go up and the audience would wait in patient darkness for Dick to splice and patch and rethread. We’d pick up where we’d left off, usually with only a small bit of plot missing.

The long center back row of the theatre was, predictably, occupied by couples, high school kids who were “going together.” When I was little, my place was with my friends on the front row on the right side, beside the exit door where you could jump out (no steps in the fire code) into the park. As I got older, our group edged back until we sat in the last row on that side, never with boys that I can remember. Long before I reached dating age, the theatre had moved on to other uses.

When I was pretty young, early elementary-school age, a Des Moines radio station carried a program called *Town and Country Quiz*. The format involved an on-location broadcast of something resembling a Trivia match, between two teams composed of, predictably, town folk and country folk. The year the *Quiz* came to Rembrandt was a Big Deal. The theatre was packed for the occasion, and a whole revue framed the event. I frequently got roped into entertainment, mostly for bridal showers and mother-daughter banquets, and I performed that night before my largest crowd. I recited the “Red Jelly Beans” reading, and Mother put real lipstick on me for the show. That night our seats were on the left side of the room, near the door that opened out into the horseshoe pit. Clearly it was an extraordinary affair.

Maybe it was economics, maybe it was lack of interest, but something brought an end to movies in the old theatre. It was turned into a roller skating rink when I was in maybe sixth or seventh grade. A lot of us had our own shoe skates, white with wooden wheels and great pompoms and jingle bells laced onto the toes. Someone refinished the beautiful hardwood floor, scraping off all the globs of gum left from the theatre days and removing popcorn-grease stains. It made a grand roller rink, except for the one screw left when they took out the seats. For some reason it stayed, and you had to watch for it as you circled the floor.

When I was in high school, we had a couple of go-getter coaches who tried to channel our energies out of our parked cars and into something constructive. We tackled renovation of the old theatre and converted it to a teen center. The experiment was not

wholly successful, but it kept us occupied for weeks, which I guess was the purpose. The building had been sitting empty since its skating rink days so had to undergo major cleaning; this was when we discovered the stage's elegant roll-down.

For years, school dances had taken place in the school's old gym, which doubled as the lunch room and band rehearsal hall after the new gym was built for basketball. A record player set up with 45s provided the music, but we wanted a real teen hop, complete with live band. And we knew the one we wanted: Myron Lee and the Caddies.

A Rembrandt alumnus, Calvin Arthur, played sax with Myron, so we had an inside man at work for us. But it was up to us kids to make the place worthy of the Caddies. Thus the heavy-duty cleaning job—we scrubbed and wiped and rummaged and threw away, until the day Cal brought Myron to inspect. A man of few words—probably because musicians of the day were notoriously inarticulate—Myron came, saw and nodded. Lois Wright, my best friend all through school and Calvin's hometown girlfriend, said in reverently hushed tones, "He likes us."

Oddly enough, I don't recall the actual event of the dance, although I'm sure a good time was had by all. I really don't remember if we held any other events there either, but I sure remember the tension of the inspection tour.

One other Saturday circumstance remains in my memory. When I was in about the third or fourth grade, so in the early 1950s, three families of "DPs" arrived in Rembrandt. These Displaced Persons, homeless after the war, were relocated to the Corn Belt under the sponsorship of several members of the rural community through the Lutheran Church. Hired men were hard to come by, and in exchange for the strong arms and backs of the fathers and eldest sons of these Latvian families, they were given places to live and the benefits of schooling for their children. They entered a kind of indentured servitude and after several years in Rembrandt packed up and moved to Milwaukee to join others of their kind.

How they spelled their names I can only guess, but they were the Blats, Beimanis and Miesnieks families, and there were sundry kids among them. Unable to speak English on their arrival, they represented a challenge to us benevolent Iowans. One family was housed in the apartment above Bill and Opal Lyons' *Booster* office, and the two Blats daughters became my chosen project. Baiba was my age, with Mara about three years younger, and I devoted hours to introducing them to our lifestyle. Dolls, coloring and comic books, and American food were brand-new to them, and they absorbed the Midwestern culture like sponges. All the DP girls had fair, delicate skin and long, curling hair—if I'd been older, I probably would have resented this imported competition for our young men—and I thought them exotic. Why, I'm not sure. About all our Scandinavian community had was blue-eyed blondes, but these children were different.

One little boy had the misfortune to resemble the posters of the displaced youngsters—scrawny, with a large, nearly shaved head, he was blessed with abundant tears, which made him the butt of constant teasing. My final Saturday remembrance is of him, one spindly arm wrapped tightly around the light post in front of Rystad's store,

bawling “Mamo . . . Mamo. . .” A little lost boy in a strange land, bewildered and separated from all he knew.

Decoration Day

While Americans now observe Memorial Day on the last Monday in May, in the Rembrandt of my childhood “Decoration Day” was May 30, and whatever Saturday preceded it was “Poppy Day.” Patriotic ties and fresh memories of World War II and the Korean Conflict led to an active American Legion post and Legion auxiliary in the community, and these two organizations sponsored the annual ceremonies honoring the fallen military dead. Somber undertones kept the occasion from being called a celebration, but for us daughters of Legionnaires (all of us too young to really remember absent fathers and uncles, or sometimes aunts), the event meant selling flowers.

On Poppy Day, we were mustered early to the Legion Hall to receive our sales kits: white deli-type cardboard canisters with a slot cut in each lid and a fistful of crepe poppies with wrapped-wire stems and a glued-on paper label. Each sold for a dime in my earliest recollection, and I’m sure the expected donation rose in subsequent years; a prize was awarded to the girl who sold the most, or at least collected the most money. “Do ya wanna buy a poppy?” we demanded of every pedestrian, and even motorists found themselves besieged by junior auxiliaries leaning in their windows and forcing slow passage down Main Street. Door-to-door sales were coordinated by the Poppy Chairman, with the town divided into quadrants. Since one residential section yielded more revenue than the others, some politicking was involved in the assignments, but generally speaking the competition was congenial, and we all felt very self-righteous in our contribution to the cause. All proceeds went to benefit veterans, we understood, and that was the point. By noon, our market was saturated and we could go back to our play, having done our part.

Decoration Day itself may have involved some sort of ceremony in town, but what I recall took place at the Lutheran cemetery. Generally a half-dozen young girls, principally the same cast as the poppy-sellers, attired in our best dresses (first worn at Easter, doing double duty), lined up close to the gate near wash tubs brimming with bunches of fresh-cut flowers from Rembrandt yards: lilacs and tulips and irises and, mostly, spirea—what many called bridal wreath, draping boughs of clustered blossoms showering minuscule white petals when touched all bound with ribbon. Marshalls ushered us in pairs to have our extended arms loaded with the fragrant sprays. (I can still smell the spirea, much of it pruned from the ancient bushes beside the Methodist Church.) We then trudged dutifully behind the leading matron through dewy grass to the selected grave sites, marked by tiny flags, where we reverently placed our offerings and returned to repeat our role until all the resting places had been decorated.

Then came the thrilling part. A few words from the clergyman whose turn it was to speak, a hushed silence, split by the sharp report of guns saluting the dead. And *Taps*, played first by a member of the high school band standing nearby, but next, from the

distance, eerily, an echoing version from an unseen horn. It was enough to make the hair rise on the back of your neck, and the sound brought tears to eyes young and old.

Later years carry much more cheerful memories, but I must have been less impressionable as they're not as vivid. By the time I was a teen, the social significance of the American Legion was waning, unseated by the school and its activities, probably as much because it was peace time and the Legionnaires were aging as because the school administration recognized the necessity of community involvement for survival. Since the school building was the place to be, that was where Memorial Day celebrations took place, for patriotic celebrations they had become. (Were poppies still sold on the street corners, and were there still group ceremonies at the cemetery? I don't recall being part of them; I do remember the annual trip to put flowers on family graves in Marathon.)

The greatest contribution to the observance came undoubtedly from the Rembrandt High School band, under the capable, incomparable direction of Myron Teague. Here was our rare chance to march, and the streets of Rembrandt provided our parade route. Sometimes the end of May was hot, and those purple wool uniforms proved scratchy and uncomfortable, but we seized the opportunity to show off and pranced and drummed and blew for the townspeople all the way from downtown to the school.

Once inside the gym, the marching band became the concert band, seamlessly moving from John Philip Sousa marching tunes to the anthems of freedom our audience expected. Ignoring any mandate to separate church and state, the program included prayers and remarks from local pastors along with stirring reminders from the city fathers of our national heritage. I recall delivering the lines to "In Flanders Fields" while standing at the podium before all those folks in folding chairs, my throat thickening with the emotion of the moment.

Now, 40 years later, it's reassuring to witness a resurgence of similar patriotism. It's okay again to fly the flag, and pledge your allegiance to it, and place your hand over your heart while you say the words. Those of us who grew up in Rembrandt learned how to do all that at an early age, and it's just one more of those things we've never forgotten.

School Daze

Rembrandt Consolidated School stood at the far south end of town, with cornfields across the road and to its east. A small grove of hardwoods stood beside it, with its baseball fields behind the building. The playground hugged the strip of ground along the road at the south.

My first experience there was a visit I made to the first grade with my friend Dee Ann Gustafson. Perched on a tiny chair pulled up to the corner of the little, four-person table, I knew I was where I wanted to be. When I got there the next year—we didn't have kindergarten then—I was so ready, I didn't know what to do with myself. I loved school. Still do, for that matter.

I cried when I was sick and couldn't go, and I and most of the other town kids spent our off-school hours . . . at the school. We swung on the swings, rode the merry-go-round, sat on the window ledges and traded secrets, drew with chalk on the sidewalks,

and played rhyming games lounging on the cement benches by the back door. We went there on Saturdays, and we went there in the summertime, just to be close to this cool, fragrant (to us) structure. It represented something that we didn't really recognize, but it was our ticket away from the only thing we knew.

It was also the heart of the community. Everything revolved around the school, whose session started in mid-August (excusing the older boys who had to work in the fields during corn-picking and threshing) and let out in mid-May. Baseball was big, but basketball was bigger. Every student participated in one way or another: as player, cheerleader, manager, band member, or fan. No one missed a home game, and frequently we went to the away games if there was room on the spectator bus. Socially, it was the center of the world.

Junior and senior class plays, and even home-talent plays, presented on the school-gym stage, provided the drama for the community, and concerts by the band rounded out the cultural experience. When something took place at the school, the whole town turned out. Graduation exercises—Baccalaureate, Class Night and Commencement—also rated a full-house audience, whether you had someone graduating or not. Everyone would be there.

The “new” gym was built when I was in about third grade, as near as I can figure. Before that, basketball games were played in a tiny cracker box of a gym, with seating consisting of two or three tiers of concrete banked above the floor and a scaffold of bleachers set up on the stage. Out-of-bounds was the wall. Literally. There was only room beyond the line for a player to stand to take out the ball. I can't remember where the benches were, as there was no room. The furnace room opened off one end of the crowd's seating, where men slipped away to smoke. Maidrites, coffee and large squares of thick-frosted cake were served by the band boosters in the lunchroom, and if you went for a bite to eat, you lost your seat and ended up standing. We kids wanted to stand anyway, or run around, so it didn't matter.

Other small schools speckled the countryside, consolidated like ours. Their student bodies drew from farm families for surrounding miles, and all had basketball teams—Highview, Fairview, Brooke—and other tiny towns like ours also fielded squads—Webb, Linn Grove, Truesdale, Marathon, Everly. All had boys' teams, of course, but for the most part, girls' basketball reigned. Six-woman teams played half-court ball. Anything else would have been too strenuous. (What a joke—some of those girls could run rings around the guys, and were stronger and tougher as well, but delicate they were believed to be and refined the rules they played by. But, dirty? The word may have been invented for Iowa girls' basketball.) One team we played, Fairview perhaps, or Brooke, was coached by the school superintendent, and his daughter was the star of their team. They never ran onto the court because he considered it unladylike; instead, they walked sedately in from the sidelines, the queen with the ball tucked onto her hip. They were the dirtiest players in northwest Iowa. Vicious.

Fifteen of us graduated in 1961, ten girls and five boys. I attended all 12 grades in the same two-and-a-half story building. Our class size varied over time, and for many

years our grade was merged with the little group a year behind us—only about six in their class—so that even with the combination we had fewer than the target 25 per class of today. One teacher taught both classes, in the same room. Likewise, the junior high shared one homeroom. Discipline problems? Not with the threat of our parents finding out about misbehavior.

Much has been written and said about these small rural schools. Far from cost-efficient and gradually closed over the years through ever-more consolidation, nevertheless, they were the heart and soul of the farming communities. When the schools closed, so did the towns. RHS may not have been able to offer the number of courses we think we need today—I probably wouldn't have been able to pass chemistry even if we'd had it available. But what the school did offer was a full, well-rounded experience of learning, with dedicated teachers and kids who truly wanted to be there. Excellence was expected, and we excelled. Call it Protestant work ethic, or whatever—we were instilled with a desire to go and do and be. So we went and did and were.

After Rembrandt

The other day a co-worker told me with a big grin, “Renshaw, you've become a real Southerner!” This acceptance has finally come about after 25 years of living in South Carolina, in response to a remark I'd made about “fixin' to” do something or other. After I graduated from RHS in 1961, I entered my first career—wife and mom—and lived in Iowa, Texas, Iowa again, and Minnesota before settling in Columbia, South Carolina, with my husband, who was a hospital planner, and two children. I enrolled in the University of South Carolina (the *other* USC), graduating in 1983 with a B.A. in English. I am now a widow, still the mother of my two children and grandmother of their four, and am nearly 20 years into my second career, this one in the communications field, as editor of *South Carolina Wildlife* magazine, a bimonthly publication with a nationwide paid subscriber base of 60,000. I hope to retire within ten years and, who knows, may embark on a third career!

Lois Wright Yocum - Class of 1961

Our Teachers Inspired Us

The single most important aspect of a student's learning is the teacher. An accomplished teacher promotes much deeper and more extensive learning. Three Rembrandt English teachers inspired me to become a secondary English teacher. One was Mrs. Margaret George, who taught us how the English language worked in seventh grade. She was meticulous with correctness of expression, and she taught us why to use each mark of punctuation. We diagrammed sentences and were expected to understand how and why nominative and objective pronouns were used, the differences between gerunds and participles, etc. We were also expected to write using a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Mr. Rex Hansman was another junior high English teacher whose classes we enjoyed. He continued to challenge us with reading and literary analysis. He also invited all 16 of us to a party on the shores of Storm Lake, where he lived with his wife and baby. We roasted hot dogs, sang songs, and played on an old ice-fishing boat.

Mrs. Cleone Schneck was another great English teacher in Rembrandt. I remember how she threw out the old textbooks in our junior year, and we all brought money so that we could subscribe to *The Atlantic Monthly*. We read contemporary authors and discussed popular themes in literature daily.

Mrs. Schneck also directed the class plays. Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* with Eloise Mosbo as Emily was unforgettable. It was a junior class play so we sophomores could earn only bit parts, and I remember singing *Abide with Me* in the choir in the play. One of the memorable lines referred to the small town of Grover's Corners as a part of New Hampshire, the United States, North America, etc. I remember thinking how Rembrandt was a lot like Grover's Corners.

We always had marvelous adventures with Mrs. Schneck, such as our 1961 senior class weekend trip to Chicago, where we stayed at the Palmer House and toured Field Museum, the Museum of Science and Industry, the Art Institute, Shedd Aquarium, etc. We traveled on the passenger train from Storm Lake to Chicago, stayed up all of Friday night playing cards, spent two days in the city (the girls had to wear white gloves to the ecumenical church service on Sunday morning), stayed up all of Sunday night, and hit the floor running to attend school on Monday morning!

One spring I met Mrs. Schneck at the TAG teachers' conference in Ames. She explained that few of us knew while we were growing up in Rembrandt that we were talented and gifted. We just thought everybody was expected to achieve at high levels.

When I think back on why so many students were successful in many fields, I think it had to do with that high expectations philosophy and the fact that we were blessed with accomplished teachers. To those to whom much is given, much is expected. We did the best we could with whatever diverse intelligences we possessed. Some of my classmates stayed near Rembrandt and farmed, some went off to become mathematicians and marine biologists, and others became teachers, nurses, and secretaries, those vocations that were traditional for women in the early 1960s.

A belated thanks to Rembrandt teachers—to . . .

- Mrs. Anderson in first grade for organizing the cubicles, insisting we each have a Kleenex or handkerchief every day, and helping us make the miniature town of Rembrandt in the child-sized, white sand table.
- Miss Lauridson for teaching me cursive writing on a day when there was so much snow that there was school only for those who could get there and to my dad for putting the chains on the old 1939 Chevy coupe and driving Gail and me to school.
- Miss Morehead for helping me through grief in fourth grade after my dad died in the tractor accident.

- Mrs. Redenbaugh for teaching us how to meet deadlines in sixth grade.
- Mr. Teague for inspiring me to play the clarinet well enough to enjoy playing in wind ensemble at Augustana College. He inspired confidence through the challenge system in band and by helping us be successful at music contests.
- Miss Davies for teaching me how to sew a perfectly straight seam and how to cook for a crowd. Does anyone else remember fixing the stuffed pork chop dinner for the school board in home economics class?
- Mrs. Parker for teaching me typing, a skill that I have used more than almost any other I learned in high school.
- Mr. Brower for teaching me how to parallel park. I'm sure he wondered if I would ever get it right!

I remember

- growing up on the Siefken homestead two miles north of town in the house without running water and electricity and how the Rural Electric Association finally brought us electricity in 1951. Soon afterward we had television.
- saying prayers at night in the upstairs bedroom (heated only with a stovepipe that ran upward from the pot-bellied stove that warmed the parlor of the farmhouse).
- smelling coffee perking every morning when I awoke and savoring the bacon and eggs breakfasts that my mother used to cook on the wood-fueled range.
- traveling in the blue 1949 Ford to the Clay County Fair and taking a picnic with fried chicken, potato salad, baked beans, etc. It always seemed like a holiday.
- hearing my dad sing *You Are My Sunshine* and *The Red River Valley* as he accompanied himself on the guitar on Sunday afternoons on the farm.
- pretending to be sick so I could stay home to help my mother make Fattigmand, but she was a nurse and knew I wasn't sick so I had to go to school anyway.
- doing chores before and after school and having "school, church, everyday, and chore clothes" and having to change into "everydays" as soon as we got home.
- washing eggs to trade at Hegna's store on Saturday nights when we all went to town because Daddy ran the picture show.
- watching Grade B western movies and Linda Stratton and I pretending to be the characters in the movies.
- going to Linda's little brick house on Main Street and playing Ping-Pong in the basement.
- playing in the jail in the old public library and my Aunt Lillian Siefken letting Linda and me read in the stacks in the new library as if it were our "home away from home."
- taking care of Uncle Omer's and Aunt Lillian's geese when they went on vacation and how they were so territorial that they would flap and bruise our legs when we tried to feed them.
- going to Uncle Omer's house for Christmas Eve oyster stew and how Aunt Lillian would always use her sterling silver and best linen tablecloth and napkins.

- looking forward to Uncle Omer visiting us on the farm because he always gave us each a stick of Wrigley's spearmint gum.
- singing in the children's choir at Our Savior's Lutheran Church; memorizing Bible verses in Bertha Cannoy's Sunday School class; attending Confirmation classes and Luther League meetings; typing the bulletin when I was in high school, and wondering when I would feel "called" to a career.
- watching Linda feed our goldfish while my mother braided my hair before school.
- sitting on the porch of the Cozy Café with Linda on hot summer afternoons.
- walking uptown to get the mail and sometimes going to Hegna's meat locker to buy a pound of hamburger for fifty cents.
- practicing marching band in the wet grass and on the street, preparing for the Northern Iowa Marching Band Festival in Mason City, and going on the band tour with Mr. Teague.
- practicing my clarinet for 30 minutes every day and playing in solo and ensemble contests.
- being junior class president and working at the concessions stand to raise money for the banquet and prom.
- learning how to sew on Mother's treadle sewing machine, then on the home economics class electric machines, and then differentiating between the home ec. and the 4-H methods.
- traveling to the Iowa State Fair with Gail, my sister, and Joyce Green, our 4-H leader, who took us to the Stitch and Chatter Club to give our cloverleaf roll demonstration. After the demonstration, Mrs. Green said, "Just put the dough on the back seat. We'll have a glass of lemonade and go right home." When we came out of the house, the bread dough had risen all over the upholstery of her new car!
- being Buena Vista County 4-H Club President and wishing I could be as poised as Rosalyn Green when she held the same office.
- writing my senior year term paper about the history of the English language.
- receiving the John Philip Sousa Band Award from Mr. Teague at the senior awards ceremony.
- going to Augustana College in Sioux Falls and feeling like a little fish in a big ocean of 2,000 students.

Career and Family

While attending Augustana College, I met Gary Yocum at a party after Eloise Mosbo and Richard Obman's wedding in 1962. We were married in August 1963. Gary taught instrumental music at Havelock-Plover while I finished my B.A. in English at Buena Vista College. Cindy, our older daughter, was born in Storm Lake. Then we lived in Iowa Falls where he was the junior high band director, and I taught American literature, etc. at the high school.

In 1974 Gary went into school administration, and after our younger daughter, Mary, was born in 1975, I did substitute teaching until we moved from Cedar Rapids to

Marshalltown in 1978. Gary worked in administration at the AEA here, and I have taught middle school language arts/publications at Anson Middle School since 1979.

I taught (adjunct) freshmen college composition classes at Marshalltown Community College before deciding to work toward a M.S. degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Iowa State University. In 1992 I earned a research excellence award for my master's thesis and went on in qualitative research to finish my Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction in 1999. I earned National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification in 1995.

One of the turning points of my teaching career is related to my participation in three of the levels of the Iowa Writers' Project. I teach in a technology-rich classroom financed through my own grant writing. For the past three years we have been awarded Showcase on Educational Technology Awards at the University of Northern Iowa. Every teaching year is a new beginning as new technologies are integrated across the curriculum.

Ed Nielsen - Class of 1962

Baseball Dynasty

Rembrandt High School had a policy of allowing students to participate in intermural sports only if they had passing grades. I loved to play basketball, but especially baseball, so this was all the incentive I needed to keep my academic nose just above water. (The school was just too small to field a football team and didn't have the real estate necessary for track.)

Rembrandt's main claim to fame in those days was that they always had good baseball teams. People around the state who had no idea where Rembrandt was still knew the town because of its baseball teams. I remember going to Bible Camp when I was ten or eleven, and one of the things they did was choose up teams and play softball. Whenever the other kids found out I was from Rembrandt, the excited response was always the same: "Will you be on our team?" I always said, "Well gee, I don't know. You'd better speak to my agent. I've already got several other offers I'm considering."

It always amazed me that when they found out I was from Rembrandt, everyone would automatically assume I was a great baseball player. "How come Rembrandt always has such great baseball teams?" they would ask. Sometimes I would tell them, "It's the water," but other times I would say, "They won't let you move to Rembrandt unless you're a good baseball player, but if you were born there and you're no good, they make you move away."

As I grew from childhood into adulthood and met older people around the state, whenever Rembrandt, and therefore baseball, came into the conversation, I began to hear more and more comments to the effect that, "George Engebretson sure is a good coach, isn't he?" Finally, I realized that maybe it wasn't the water.

I began to watch what other teams did in certain situations and compared that with what George had taught us to do. As an example, whenever a defender picks up a dead

ball, which hand does he pick it up with, bare hand or glove hand? George taught us very early to pick up a dead ball with our bare hand because we'd handle it more surely. And besides, if we picked it up with our glove hand, we'd just have to transfer it to our bare hand to throw it anyway, so why waste time?

Another thing that George taught us the first day of Little League is that when running the bases, always touch the bag with our inside (left) foot, never the right. If we hit the bag with our inside foot we could pivot, turn the corner sharper, and take a more direct route saving several steps on our way to the next base. The next time you're watching the game of the week, watch closely and I'll bet you see pros who don't follow this principle. If you tag the base with your outside foot, it causes you to turn wide and you may find yourself running through the dugout to get from third to home. Runners who tag the bag with their left foot usually reach the next base safely, while folks who don't are often out.

So, the bottom line is that even when the other team had the superior athletes, Rembrandt still usually won because George had his players so well trained in the fundamentals.

Other things that George stressed were team spirit and sportsmanship. Many times, I heard George say, "Come on Eddie, let's hear some chatter out there." He insisted that you always root for your team whether you were playing or riding the pines, but you were NEVER allowed to root against the other team. Too bad some pro athletes don't follow this principle.

George did a lot of leading by example; you'd never see him kick dirt on an umpire the way Billy Martin did or turn his hat around and get in an umpire's face like Earl Weaver. He would let an official know if he thought he had blown a call, but he never raised his voice or resorted to verbal abuse. He was so well respected around the state by players, managers, and officials alike that George never had a problem being heard. He was the E. F. Hutton of Iowa baseball: when George talked, people listened.

Following a game, I would have defied anyone to tell whether his team had won or lost by the look on George's face or by how he talked. Nobody wanted to win any more than he did, but he always kept it in proper perspective: Do the best you can when you're on the field, but when it's over, just forget about it; it's only a game.

Looking at all of the athletes who played for George, I believe they carried that attitude with them into their adult lives: Give it your best shot; then go forward to the next challenge with no regrets.

George did a marvelous job in helping us develop good sound habits in other ways, too. For example, the fastest way to get sent home from a practice or game was to let George hear you swear. In fact, he didn't even allow grown-ups to swear in the tavern he operated when he wasn't on the ball field.

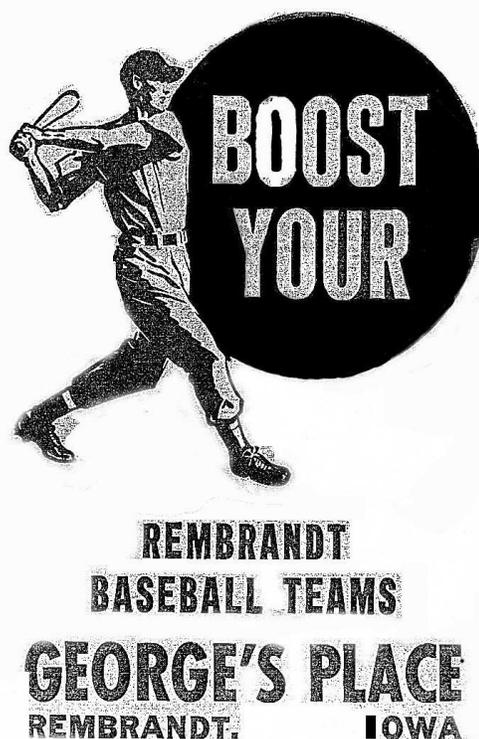
George's Tavern brings up a lot of fond memories for all of us ex-ballplayers because that's where we hung out when baseball activities were through for the day. I know that sounds terrible to some of you—little kids hanging out in a bar! But maybe you just had to be there. You see, George had a corner of his tavern that was unofficially reserved for kids. In this corner, he had a large newsstand and about half the magazines in it were comic books. So after baseball you'd find most of the team up there reading comic books and having a pop or an ice cream cone until Mama or Papa came to pick them up.

Of the thousands of comic books I must have read in those years, I don't recall ever buying a single one, nor do I know of anyone else who did. I suspect George kept the stand well stocked for the sole purpose of keeping us in one place, off the streets, and out of mischief. It worked, too.

An anecdote about George's youngest son, Doyle, might give a better appreciation for the class that abounds in the Engebretson family. Doyle had been working at an industrial operation when a drop in sales forced some temporary personnel layoffs. Doyle had plenty of seniority and wasn't affected, yet he went to his supervisor with the following proposal: "Could you please lay me off instead of my friend Joe? He's got a wife and kids and no other way to support them. I'm single and have my own carpentry business, so I can get by. If you could do that, I'd be happy to come back to work for you when business picks up." His supervisor gladly fulfilled Doyle's request. George raised his children to be thoughtful and kind. I firmly believe that some of those values rubbed off on George's baseball players too. We all loved playing ball for him and, looking back, realize we were blessed to be under the influence of such a great man.

I got a phone call in the summer of 1988 from the good folks at the bank in town. They told me on that very day there was going to be a big celebration in Rembrandt, the occasion being the dedication of the new Little League Field to George Engebretson.

I was touched that the folks at the bank were so thoughtful to call and tell me the news. They said they knew I couldn't attend (I lived in Atlanta at the time), but they thought I would want to know anyhow, and maybe even give George a call. That's exactly what I did, too. In the course of my conversation with George, I asked him what he thought about his big deal. He said, "It's just wonderful; I really feel honored. But the best thing about it is that they named something after me while I'm still alive to enjoy it!"



I don't know who came up with the idea of naming the ball field after George, but I think it was a stroke of pure genius. In fact, that person should have something named after him (or her). It should be something really nice. That may present a problem, though, since I'll bet the nomination was by unanimous acclamation if I know the good people of Rembrandt. Whoever's responsible, you “done real good.”

You Meet the Nicest People

In 1999, Hollywood released a movie called *The Straight Story*. Not everyone in Rembrandt saw the film, but they certainly knew all about it. It was a true story about a man from Laurens, another small Iowa town about 20 miles east of Rembrandt. The movie has no violence, no bad language, and no sex, but I liked it anyway.

The main character's name was Straight (hence the name of the film), and he learned that an estranged brother who lived in Wisconsin was gravely ill. Our hero decided he'd go to his brother, provide aid and comfort, and hopefully mend some fences. Unfortunately, Mr. Straight was elderly and a bit infirm himself—he'd had several spells during which he'd black out for hours at a time. As a result, he didn't have a driver's license. A man of very limited means, he couldn't afford a bus ticket and he was too proud to ask anyone for help, yet he was determined to go to his brother's side.

He gassed up his riding lawn mower and hooked a small lawn cart to it. On the cart he placed a pop-up tent, a cooler, an extra can of gas, and a few changes of underwear. Then he set out on his way to Wisconsin on Highway 18, a two-lane rural road that goes across the top of Iowa.

The trip was over 250 miles, and along the way he ran into some problems. His lawn mower wasn't in much better shape than he was, and it broke down a few times. On one such occasion, a man in a pickup truck happened by. The driver stopped but couldn't fix the mower. They tied the mower to the back bumper of the truck and towed it a considerable distance into town. The implement dealer there figured out what was wrong but didn't have the necessary parts on hand (the mower was too old), but he could order them.

The Good Samaritan with the pickup told the dealer to do just that and to put it on his bill. Then he turned to Straight and said, “You can pitch your tent in my backyard, and we'll park your mower in the garage until we can get it fixed. I'll leave the back door open in case you need to use the bathroom or the refrigerator. Supper's at six, if that's okay with you.”

There were several variations on this theme throughout the movie. Someone always came to the aid of Mr. Straight whenever he ran into a problem. I was totally mesmerized. They have these Iowa people down to a tee, I thought. That's exactly the way they behave. But this movie won't do very well at the box office. Folks in places like New York or LA will never relate to it. They won't believe there really are people that nice. As predicted, the movie didn't sell many tickets, but it did get a few Academy Award nominations (in the science fiction category, I think). I can understand why the rest of the country wasn't impressed.

When I was 18, I moved away from Rembrandt to the big city and only then did I realize there were people who WEREN'T like the guy in the pickup truck. Until then, I thought everyone in the world was good-hearted, considerate, and had everyone else's needs foremost in their minds.

I witnessed hundreds of good deeds when I was growing up, just like the ones in the movie, and was even the recipient of a few myself. One stands out in my mind above the rest. I never realized it at the time, but things were not going well for me as a teenager. My mother was a severe manic-depressive (modern term: bipolar disorder) and had been in a hospital since I was in the eighth grade. My father had his hands full running a farm. I was an able-bodied lad and could have been more help to him, but I was also very high-strung. (Today I'd be on Ritalin, but in those days, there was no such thing as hyperactivity or attention deficit disorder. Well, there was such a thing—I had it—but they hadn't identified it yet.) Keeping my mind on something like a plow furrow for more than three seconds was just not going to happen. My father's farm was flat as a pool table, and he just didn't think that contour farming made any sense in his situation. If he wanted things done right, he knew he'd just have to do them himself. As a result, I had plenty of time on my hands and spent more time in town than some kids who lived there.

In the summer of 1960, I was a rising junior at Rembrandt High and that's when the Dave Bennett family moved into town. They had three nice-looking daughters in my age group, and that attracted me to their home. After visiting with me, Dave and Lucille (his wife) evidently recognized a child at risk and set about trying to be a positive influence. They never once tried to act like my parents—they knew I had a set of those—but they did all they could to keep me from going astray. They occupied my time, if nothing else.

Their door was always open. I could go there anytime for a cup of coffee, a plate of potato salad, a hand of cards, or just some conversation. When I say the door was always open, I mean ALWAYS. Dave was a mechanic for the truck line across the driveway and Lucille was the dispatcher. Trucks were coming and going at all hours, so their door really was always open. And I was liable to turn up at any hour.

Dave and Lucille were always interested in my plans and, being a typical self-centered teenager, I was more than willing to talk about myself. Upon hearing some of my plans, they must have been hard-pressed to stifle a gasp or keep from rolling their eyes. But they never once told me not to do something or even directly discouraged me. They just talked with me about it, and before long, I'd announce that I had a better idea. At least I thought it was my idea at the time, but I now realize that they planted the seed.

I'll never tell anyone that I turned out great, but I'm certainly quite a bit better than I would be without the Bennett influence. I know they never thought much about what they were doing. It was just natural for them to do the right thing, just like most of the folks in rural Iowa. These Good Samaritans never hesitated to help and never felt comfortable about getting thanks when it was over—they just knew that's what you were supposed to do.

On Thin Ice

On Christmas Day my senior year of high school, my family and I went to church service and then came home to eat a noon meal. After the dishes were cleared, my folks went to their easy chairs and soon dozed off. Not even remotely interested in a nap, I hopped in my ten-year-old Plymouth and headed for Rembrandt. Apparently, everyone was doing the same thing as my parents because I saw not one person on the four-mile drive into town.

When I got there, I found a friend driving around town (his parents were also in the arms of Morpheus). I parked my car and hopped in with him. We then drove over to another friend's house—he was the only one awake there so he came along with us. We drove around for quite a while before we finally found another ambulatory person, another young man from Sioux Rapids, a nearby town. This guy drove a Mercury that was supposed to be very fast. We thought our Ford was pretty quick, too, so we challenged him to a drag race.

We drove to the corner just west of town, not a long drive considering the city limits are about 2 x 4 blocks. We lined up side-by-side, and someone yelled GO! After a quarter mile, both cars were going over a hundred, but no winner decided. We were bumper to bumper, door handle to door handle, so we kept going hoping a winner would eventually emerge. It just didn't happen! We raced for more than two miles with neither driver able to move ahead. As mentioned above, everyone in the county seemed to be down for a nap that afternoon, and we encountered no other traffic, which was fortunate indeed.

That part of Iowa is very flat, but there are some small knolls behind which oncoming vehicles could easily be obscured. I thought we were in good shape if we happened to meet oncoming traffic because we were in the right lane and the other guy was in the left on a two-lane road. Just past the two-mile point we came up over a small rise and were instantly on a patch of glare ice about 100 yards long—in the right lane! We immediately knew that the only thing controlling the vehicle was momentum, and we had plenty of that (at least 120 mph!). As I held my breath and stared out the windshield from the right front seat, I could see the edge of the pavement drifting over in front of me. Just before the car hit the shoulder and the three of us hurtled into oblivion, we reached the end of the ice patch! My buddy behind the wheel quickly pulled the car back to the center of our lane. Simultaneously, the three of us let out a low whistle.

I have no memory of what happened after that: did we continue door handle to door handle for another few miles, or did we let up on the gas and drive back to town? Curiously, I recently asked my buddies (names withheld to protect the guilty) if they remembered that ride, and neither did. Maybe the human mind has some sort of defense mechanism whereby it blocks out near-fatal experiences. If so, how come I remember the incident so vividly?

Where the Girls Aren't

As a male growing up in Rembrandt, your adult job opportunities in agriculture were abundant. If you didn't operate your own farm, you could easily get a job helping someone else run theirs. In town, there were other ag-related professions, such as machinery sales and repair, or the feed and grain business. Aside from ag, you had to go to a bigger town, like Storm Lake or Spencer. There, you could find employment in any number of industrial operations.

As a female growing up in Rembrandt, your adult job opportunities were much more limited. There just weren't that many traditional female jobs available there, nor even in the larger surrounding towns. Consequently, most girls who weren't engaged by the time they graduated from high school left and went elsewhere, either to college or to the big city to find employment. In either event, they seldom returned to Rembrandt.

You probably see a problem in all this: Plenty of single guys but very few females for them! On the other hand, guys who were lucky enough to acquire a wife before she escaped to the bright lights and big city did their best to hang onto them. Married men in that part of the country tended to behave themselves and didn't indulge in hanky-panky. The high moral and ethical standards of the people in Rembrandt would have accounted for the extremely low divorce rate there, but the paucity of single females helped, too. A husband there held his wife in much higher esteem than did a man in another part of the country because a replacement was nearly impossible to find.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Rembrandt in 1962 and then attended DeVry Technical Institute, an electronics trade school in Chicago. Upon graduating, a contractor hired me to teach electronics to sailors at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, just north of Chicago. After eight years, I was downsized but now a civil servant, and placement services found me a job with the Army in Atlanta, where I worked from 1973 until retiring in 1999. My wife Connie and I are now living happily ever after in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Our children and grandchildren still live in the Atlanta area, 200 miles away, where they're close enough to visit frequently but not so close that we can baby-sit

Lenora Odor Peterson - Class of 1962

The school year seemed packed with activities, with basketball and marching band being my favorites. Mr. Teague was great, and it was so good to see him at Rembrandt's Centennial.

I would love to walk down Main Street again as it was in the 1950s and early 1960s. Some of my fondest memories that I would like to see again are Hegna's store and the meat market, both run by my uncles—Ole, Art, and Herman Hegna. My grandmother, Iva Odor, lived for a while in the apartments above Hegna's store. Saturday night at the theatre with a movie and popcorn was the highlight of the week. Also, I

would love to walk into the Café and see the Webers standing there to serve you as they once did.



Rembrandt was a great place to grow up because of the closeness of a small school and community. I have many fond memories of all of my 11 classmates who graduated in 1962, as well as those who left for other schools during my 12 years at Rembrandt.

A humorous memory that I have not forgotten in all these years happened about 1958. We, the eighth grade class, were waiting for Mr. Brower to come in the room to begin our science class. When Mr. Brower entered the room, he went straight to the green board and wrote down the initials PDQ. Mr. Brower then asked Lucille Cleveland what PDQ meant. This question was obviously supposed to be related to science. Lucille hesitated a bit and then answered in a low disgusted voice, “Pretty dumb question!” Lucille's answer caught Mr. Brower totally by surprise, and one could see that he tried hard to maintain his authoritative composure. I think I giggled the rest of the class period!

Corn fields, bean fields, lots of fields! Walking bean fields and cutting corn out of the rows for \$1.00 an hour. The highlight was at the end of the row where your thermos was and that ice cold drink. Sunburns, suntans, heat, humidity and bugs were all part of the picture. However, the reward at the end of the day was a long swim at the Sioux Rapids pool, usually with Judy Fairchild, who also walked the beans. While I'm on the subject of fields and summer, the big “Treat” often came at the end of the day when my dad, Glenn Odor, would ask my mom and me if we wanted to ride around the section to look at the fields—AGAIN—whoopee!! I always wondered what could have changed in the last few hours???

After Rembrandt

I graduated in 1962, and beginning in the fall of that year I attended Augustana College for the next two years. In 1965 I acquired a job with the airlines and moved to Seattle, Washington, where there was a job opening as a reservation agent for Northwest Airlines. This was quite a cultural shock!

Hawaii was where I was married and lived in 1967, and in 1968 I made my first of four trips over the next few years to Europe. My two sons, Shawn and Chris, were born in 1972 and 1976, and in 1985 I became a single parent for the next 14 years. Now I am living on a ranch in Eastern Washington. In May of 2000 I married my husband, Gordon Peterson. The last two winters we have been Arizona “snowbirds,” living in our fifth wheel mostly around Quartzrite, Arizona.

Fortunately, my mother Hilda Odor, at age 93, still lives in her own home in Rembrandt. She enjoys good health, has a great outlook on life, and is a blessing to all of us.

Sandra Hegna Taylor - Class of 1962

A Saturday at the Store

Another Saturday had rolled around, and getting up early was not one of my strong points. The away basketball game the night before and a jaunt to Alice's Steakhouse afterward had lessened my time for slumber. I ate a quick breakfast, grabbed my work apron, and raced down the street to my father's grocery store. Dad had always emphasized punctuality, and as I reached for the handle on the door, I wished that it was closing time. The first friendly face I encountered was that of my co-worker Emma, who was a compassionate, spry woman in her early sixties. She was fun to work with and continually displayed a sense of humor. We had a way of knowing what the other was thinking. Just a wink from Emma seemed to say it all.

Saturday was always our busiest day. As I hurried to the back of the store to the dry goods department, I began putting on my apron. It was then that I noticed a phony black and gray spider on one of the lower shelves. Thinking that it was probably some small child's Cracker Jack prize, I tucked it in my apron pocket and headed to the corner cubicle which was Dad's office. He was occupied with invoices and customer accounts, so after I let him know that I was there and ready for anything, he left for a coffee break assured that the store was in good hands, no doubt. As Emma diligently wiped off the counters, I began to unpack and arrange the fruit. Soon I heard the sounds of a truck backing up to the storeroom door. That noise signaled jobs I dreaded most; the back room jobs were not as much fun or as interesting as the contact with the customers.

After wrestling with boxes and rotating stock, I headed for the front of the store where I heard Charlie's voice. He was a bachelor, a small wiry man who always seemed to be in a hurry. He reminded me of the roadrunner cartoon character as he darted about from aisle to aisle. Charlie's love was fishing, and he often had a new story to tell—on the run of course.

Noticing that it was almost 11:30 and our dinner shifts would soon begin, I was relieved that my turn was approaching. Mom's homemade bread was a favorite on the Saturday menu. However, the lunch hour sped by too quickly, and in no time at all, Emma and I were waiting on customers again and filling orders. As I carried out groceries to a car by the side of the store, an older lady, a regular customer at Hegna's, entered the side door. Since Emma had left for her coffee break and Dad was engrossed in office work, it became all too clear that I was the one who would be waiting on her. This particular customer was picky and fussy and asked too many trivial questions. "Are the eggs fresh today? When was your fruit delivered? Can you cut a half pound of cheese for me? You know a whole pound is just too much." There was just no way to satisfy her, and I was becoming less tolerant by the minute. While reaching into my apron pocket for a pencil, my fingers touched the rubber spider, and I was overcome by an uncontrollable urge. Knowing that she bought bananas every Saturday, I inconspicuously planted the spider among the bunches of bananas. Returning to the

counter to cut her “half” pound of cheese, I waited. The door slammed and two small boys came to exchange a pop bottle refund for candy. As they hurried on their way, I heard a scream from behind. I turned in time to see several bananas and eggs crash to the well-oiled wood floor. In no time at all, Dad's footsteps, which sounded like thunder, meant the storm was brewing. Kneeling down to clean up the mess, I frantically searched for the spider, wishing that I might discover a secret trap door instead. Ironically, I had miscalculated my father's reaction. As he removed the plastic spider from the bananas, he apologized, “I'm sorry if this frightened you. Some kid must have left it there.” My relief at my father's mild (and misdirected) reaction lasted for the rest of the day. However, on my walk home that night, I was convinced that Dad knew that “some kid” was me.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Buena Vista College with a B.S. in Elementary Education and married David Taylor, my high school sweetheart, in 1965. We have two children. Our son, Terry, lives in Dallas, Texas, and our daughter, Kristine, lives in Des Moines. She has one son, Devin. Dave and I reside in Storm Lake, Iowa, where I have taught second grade for 23 years.

Sherry Enderson Haviland - Class of 1962

Rembrandt is like a close family. We get together to laugh together, have fun, reminisce and take home with us new memories after a goodbye and hug. That's what we do and in fact we still do.

Memories:

- Hegna's store
- Movie theatre
- Weber's café
- Rystad's Hardware
- Elmer and Leota Peterson
- Ronnie and Janet Haraldson and his parents
- Always I will feel blessed that I had teachers such as:
 - Mrs. Parker
 - Mrs. Schneck
 - Mr. Rath
 - Miss Davies

Sad was losing my best friend and classmate, Marilyn Peterson (Blackman), in 1974. We had shared so much.

Jim and I live in Canton, South Dakota (population 2800), and it's a great town to raise a family.

Carol Halvorson Martin - Class of 1963

Family, church, school, going to town on Saturday nights, ten cent movies, roller skating, family reunions, church picnics, LCR, Luther League, Bible camps, Luther League trip to Miami Beach, band concerts in the park, Christmas caroling, baseball games, basketball games, band contests, the band marching in parades, helping with the farm work, being able to walk across the field and creek to play with the neighbor, riding bikes with the neighbors, classes in school, teachers who really cared, walking the bean fields (even though it resulted in some bad sunburns), 4-H, county fairs, Girl's State, class plays, senior class trip to Chicago, last-day-of-school trips to Arnolds Park, Confirmation, graduation, best friends for life. Picking out one specific thing about growing up in Rembrandt is impossible. It was a special place to be raised and a special place to attend school. When I look back, all of my work ethic and all of my social skills were learned and instilled in me by my mother, my teachers and my religious instructors.

After Rembrandt

After leaving Rembrandt I attended school in Minneapolis to pursue a career in medical technology. My first job was in Iowa City, and I'm still here. I have been working as a medical technologist at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics for 24 years. I have one daughter, Nicole. She received her degree in social work from Mt. Mercy College in Cedar Rapids.

Helene Ducas Viall - Class of 1963

At School

We were busy, but we were fortunate because we didn't have to limit our participation or make difficult choices because of scheduling conflicts. Teachers worked out the scheduling, and the two churches in town cooperated as well, which made it possible for us to be in whatever we wanted—sports, music, class plays, speech contests, church youth groups, etc. Rembrandt was a small school, but it never seemed like we were lacking in willing or talented participants.

In sixth grade our Christmas project was to make a small Christmas tree using real turkey feathers. We collected the fluffy white feathers in a big barrel in our classroom. One noon hour a few of us were there without a teacher. We pulled the barrel into the front center of the room and took turns trying to run and hurdle over it. Someone didn't quite make it. The barrel tipped over and feathers flew all over the room. In an instant we heard a teacher coming from the junior high room across the hall, so we all hid in the little closet in the cloakroom. I was kneeling down in front and could see her shoes through the wire mesh at the bottom of the closed door. I was so scared. She stood there for what seemed like an eternity and finally opened the door. Looking straight up at her was so hard—I knew I was in trouble both at school and at home.

It seemed like no matter what we did at school, somehow my parents, Bruce and Margene McKibben, would hear about any of our “unusual activities” before we got home. On those rare occasions when they hadn't, we (there were seven of us kids) knew that someone would probably “spill the beans.” One suppertime the “guilty” kid kicked hard to stop the “talking” kid, but since we'd evidently all tucked our feet under our chairs anticipating what might be coming, the table was kicked up off the floor. Everyone got totally silent and just continued eating as if nothing had happened. Most of our meals were fun—not that one!

Bad news travels fast in a small town, so getting the Driver's Ed. car stuck in the mud on a dirt road was not a good thing. A nearby farmer graciously pulled us out with his tractor and chain. Unfortunately it happened close enough to Highway 71 that it seemed like everyone knew what had happened before we even got back to school. So embarrassing.

Once we thought we were being very secretive about using our squirt guns in study hall, but a teacher noticed the blackboard behind us had big water splotches and water running down from them. Very embarrassing and impossible to deny the evidence.

Every year on the last day of school we went to Arnolds Park. “King of the Mountain” in the Fun House was always a big ego contest; the big high school guys had a huge advantage. For the bus ride home, younger kids would try to get the very back seats—to make life not quite so private for the “couples.”

Everyone in high school had his or her own assigned desk in study hall. Since we did not have lockers, we hung our coats in a hallway downstairs (elementary rooms had cloakrooms), and we either carried our books or left them in our desks. Nothing was locked up—honesty was assumed and was modeled by the adults in our lives.

My dad was on the school board for years. It was really special that he was president during my senior year; he personally presented my brother Jerry and me our high school diplomas and my brother Paul his eighth grade diploma. I am so thankful that my parents always encouraged us to do our best—and to have fun doing it!

In Sports

Many evenings kids came to our place to play basketball. Living just a mile from town and having several kids made it fun and convenient—instant teams. When we played in the barn, however, it was difficult to shoot base-line lay-ups from the right side because the feed bunk was in the way. I always preferred playing on the left side of the court because that's where my practice was at home. (Shooting left-handed lay-ups is still a great way to be competitive in a game of Horse.) Practicing in an unheated, dimly-lit barn on cold winter nights, wearing a parka and mittens, made playing in the gym at school a real treat. Shooting 25 free throws in a row was a great way to learn equivalent fractions and percentages. Forcing myself to compute the percentage in my head after every shot was a great incentive just to memorize them.

We also had a basket on the garage. When they blacktopped the road in front of our place, my dad told the men that if it ever started raining and they had to get rid of the blacktop material quickly they could bring it up and dump it in front of the garage. We were ecstatic when they drove up the lane one day. The blacktop made a wonderful basketball court for us—complete with a painted free-throw line.

There were basketball games at school many Tuesday and Friday nights. Most people in the community would come to watch. I don't think my folks ever missed a game, home or away, in all the years that I played. Grandpa Henneberg made me a new bang board for my tenth birthday and also loved going to our games. My folks had me emotionally prepared that due to his heart problems he could have a heart attack during a game. However, if that happened, I was to remember that he was doing what he wanted, and he would rather die watching a game than be sitting at home missing it. Fortunately, he was always just fine.

The janitors and teachers were very conscientious about “no street shoes on the gym floor” (only tennis shoes or stocking feet). They taught us respect for property—even today it bothers me to be on a basketball court wearing street shoes.

When we were younger, we played “eeny-einy-over” a lot. As we got taller, it was easier to actually get the ball over the garage, especially on the side near the house, because you were standing on a little hill.

As we got older, we played a lot of games of “Work-up” and “500” (baseball and softball) in our yard. When Valerie Haraldson began getting really good, we started getting hit trying to catch for her—she pitched faster than we could handle (playing shortstop was much easier than catching)! So we'd persuade my dad to come out and catch—he was still good, even at that age. Eventually he got us a complete set of catcher's protective equipment—face mask, chest protector, etc.—so we could play without getting hurt and he wouldn't have to catch all the time. Valerie is now in the Hall of Fame for Iowa softball pitchers.

Other Fun

My brothers tied a bag swing (filled with straw) in a very tall tree. We would climb up onto the roof of the tractor shed using old tire chains as a make-shift ladder. Someone standing on the ground would throw us the bag swing, and then we would “go for it.” Sometimes to get a higher swing, we would place an oil drum on the roof to stand on before jumping off onto the bag swing. People who were really good could grab onto the tree across from the shed and still be holding the bag swing while standing on a tree branch.

We played “Kick the Can” many evenings using all the farm buildings to hide in. It was really fun with extra kids there and was really challenging after dark. It was definitely more fun to hide and run in and kick the can than it was to be “it.”

Sometimes after ball games in the summer, a bunch of kids would go swimming in the gravel pit by Marathon. You could swim to the bottom, scoop up mud, and cover yourself with it so you looked like you were wearing a black “wet suit.”

One time someone noticed a fence post covered with a swarm of bees. Don wanted to find the queen bee and lead them to a place farther away from the buildings. We put together this wonderful “bee-proof” outfit for him out of things we had around the house. My folks and some of us kids were in the car near the fence post to watch him (we had all the windows up). Unfortunately, his outfit turned out to be not quite bee-proof. It was horrible—I couldn't stand to watch. I don't think anyone ever tried that again.

Sometimes on really icy days during the winter, my dad would hook several sleds to the back of the tractor with long ropes and drive on the icy blacktop to town and back with us lying on the sleds. (Obviously, there wasn't any traffic). It was great fun, but it was a real trick if your sled slid down into the deep ditch. After snowstorms he would drive the tractor with the loader on the front into town and would often plow out several people's driveways on his way to the café for coffee with the guys. When my brothers got older, they often did the plowing. We would build huge snow forts and caves and spray the insides with water so they'd last a long time—great place to store snowballs.

Grandpa and Grandma Henneberg always loved to have kids come to their place. Many weekend evenings we would go there with friends and play ping pong and pool for hours in their basement. They would always have gooey rolls, desserts, or other treats for us to eat before we left. Constantly getting hit by ping pong balls from “hard slams” was not fun, so I was forced to learn to play defensively against my older brothers and their friends—that's really come in handy through the years.



Easter 1959 (right to left): Bill, Don, Jerry, Helene, Paul, Barb, and Betty

At Home

On the farm each kid had work to do. As the oldest girl, I usually cooked and sewed. Typical meals in the summer included pancakes, eggs and toast, or French toast for breakfast. Dinner (noon meal) was meat, potatoes, gravy, vegetables, and salad. After breakfast I would make a pie for dinner (great practice for a 4-H demonstration team). Usually it tasted okay, but a couple times my brothers told me it was so bad that I should bury it in the backyard or throw it out to the pigs—bad news when you have hungry guys expecting pie for dinner. After dinner, I would make a cake, and then about 3:30 in the afternoon we would take sandwiches, cake, and ice water to the men in the field for lunch. (My folks were big on safety and said most accidents happen when people are tired, so they insisted we take a short break in the afternoon). For supper we usually had a casserole, vegetables, and salad, as well as finishing off the cake. We would repeat the process the next day.

My dad always planted a few rows of sweet corn—enough to last us all winter. On a hot summer day the boys would pick a pickup load full, and we'd sit around the edges of the box and husk and silk it. My mom and grandma boiled the corn, cut it off the ears, and put it into quart freezer containers.

It was my job to keep a small container in the kitchen cupboard filled with lard to use for cooking. I hated when it was empty. I had to take it to the small basement room with the dirt floor, open the huge metal container filled with lard (from butchering a hog), and scoop out the awful juicy stuff. It may be an unpleasant memory, but pie crusts have never tasted quite as good without that lard.

We made most of our clothes (for us girls). Many days my mom or I would literally sew all day long while the other did the cooking. I felt sorry for people who had to buy their clothes at stores, because they couldn't choose the color and fabric for the style they wanted. When I would get frustrated sewing, my mom would say, "No one will ever know how many times you had to rip it out." Those sentiments have been passed on to my daughter Aimee, and it has worked. For several years while she was in college, we did freelance sewing for books and magazines published by Meredith Corporation (publishers of *Better Homes and Gardens*).

Many high schoolers today can't imagine sharing their bedroom with other siblings, but it was no big deal at the time—most kids did. My two younger sisters and I (and once a year my Grandma McKibben for several weeks at a time) shared the downstairs bedroom. Two of my brothers shared an upstairs bedroom, and my other two brothers had to walk through it to get to theirs. Lots of privacy!

We were always on a party line and our one and only telephone, a dial phone with a very short cord, was in the corner of the kitchen close to the table. That was not conducive to lots of privacy. Our "ring" was two shorts and a long. Once in awhile when you would pick up the phone to make a call, it would be totally quiet—no dial tone. That usually meant we couldn't make a call, because someone else on the line had left their phone off the hook. The old dial phones did not have that obnoxious sound to alert you when that happened. So to get their attention we would progress from yelling into the

phone, to using pan lids as cymbals, and as a last resort my dad would say, “Well, I guess you need to go get the piccolo.” That usually worked.

In Town

One time people having coffee at the café noticed an unfamiliar car driving slowly west down Main Street. Someone remarked, “They’ll be back.” Everyone knew who was expecting company, but the car was headed in the wrong direction. They came back. In the rare instances that an ambulance came into town, you knew whose house it was probably going to.

When my college boyfriend (later husband) drove into Rembrandt for the first time, he stopped at the bank to cash a check before he came out to our place. He hadn’t said a word to anyone, and no one had met him yet. When he got up to the counter, the teller looked up at him and said, “Oh, you must be going out to Bruce’s.” Welcome to a small town!

After Rembrandt

I didn’t want to go away to college because I really enjoyed being around Rembrandt, but my parents said we all needed to, so I did. I received my A.A. from Stephens College and my B.S. in math and M.S. in counseling from Iowa State University in Ames, which is where I met Nate. I loved being a “stay-at-home” mom and helping out in Aimee’s and Dan’s grades at both church and school, and I also home-schooled them for a couple years. I got back into teaching when I was asked to sub at their high school here in Des Moines, so I got to experience many fun high school activities all over again (this time as chaperone and “band mom”). I had no clue how to raise kids in a city—no fields to work in. Living History Farms provided a wonderful solution—they volunteered at the 1850 Pioneer Farm (and blacksmith and millinery shops) for many summers. We’ve also done a lot at State Fair. I loved being on the ISU Parents Association Board while they were students there. Aimee received her B.A. and Master’s and Dan received his B.S. and is a technology consultant in the Kansas City area. I have also been very thankful for the privilege of serving the Lord by playing the piano at church through the years.

Jerry McKibben - Class of 1963

On the Farm

Growing up on a farm, you just expected to work hard and do whatever it took to get the work done. We didn’t think anything about putting in long hours because that’s what everybody else did too. We didn’t resent working so hard either. That’s what everybody did on the farm, so we didn’t know any different. I’ve been very thankful for the work ethic learned from the farming community.

We used the phrase, “Make hay while the sun shines.” Often in the morning our phone would ring and someone would ask, “Do you have a boy available to help us bale today?” I remember one year when I handled about 10,000 bales. When it rains, a lot of city people complain about the weather, but on the farm when it rained we kids would get a day off. So for me, I still have the feeling that rain is a good thing. I’ve heard other farm kids who have felt the same way.

We had to pick up rocks from the fields because when our equipment would hit the rocks, it would break—plows, discs, drags, etc. We would do this in the spring because the ground was black at this time and you could see the rocks sticking up. We hooked a flat rack on the back of a tractor, and all us kids would get on the flat rack and ride out to the field. We would walk behind and throw rocks onto the flat rack and then bring them back to the house and throw them on our rock pile. (The rock pile was given to Storm Lake so they could line the lake with rocks—someone came and got them).

We named one of our 40s “Rocky Acres” because there were so many rocks out there. I remember working in Rocky Acres one year. The flat rack was full of rocks and kids, and we were coming back to the house because a storm was brewing and the Grain-O-Vator was sitting outside. We had to get it in before the rain got into it. So the person on the tractor was driving too fast, and we were coming up to a corner. I was standing up for that momentum, we turned the corner, and there was a small five-foot puddle. I landed in the puddle and totally turned black from the mud. All my brothers and sisters were laughing at me. It wasn’t funny to me because I broke my arm. The ironic thing was that my Uncle Clarence saw the storm coming and knew we were in the field, so he had come over and put the Grain-O-Vator in already (it was his).

Machinery would periodically break down, and we fixed most things ourselves. We raised a chicken house two feet, put a foundation under it, and made it into a tractor shed with an overhead door. That’s where we had our welder, air compressor, tools, tool bench, nuts and bolts, and where we worked on our cars, pickups, tractors, machinery, and anything else that needed fixing. We also needed gas for a small heater just to take the chill off in the wintertime. The gas was from an LP tank several feet from the building. The copper pipe was buried in the ground about 12 inches or so deep. In the summertime we found out that if we would hook 110 volts directly to the copper pipeline that the LP was coming in on, we could go out in the area where the pipe was buried and pick up night crawlers to go fishing. It worked like a dream—no digging.

We had a coal furnace. We had to put coal into the stoker, and it fed the coal automatically into the furnace. You had to scoop that stoker full of coal every night, and it was my job to fill it. (Every time you filled the stoker, first you had to pull out the clinkers from inside the furnace. Then on Saturday mornings we’d fill bushel baskets with the clinkers and carry them out to the driveway, where we’d put them in the low spots). If you forgot to fill it, about 4:00 in the morning the furnace would smoke back through the stoker and fill the house with smoke. Two things would happen. First, I would have to get up and fill it, and second I would get chewed out for not filling it the

night before. Instead of sleeping in a smoke-filled house, sometimes I would just go out to the hut and sleep for the rest of the night.

What was the hut? The hut was our hideout and get-a-way. There were seven kids in our family; I shared my bedroom with my younger brother, and my two older brothers had to walk through our bedroom to get to theirs. When you're young and don't know anything different, it wasn't a big deal. But there were times when having the hut was nice. There was an old wooden chicken house in the grove in back of the machine shed that was dilapidated and falling down. My brothers and I fixed it up by using old lumber and stuff that we had at the farm. First, we fixed the roof so it wouldn't leak.

Now, the interior. We needed something really cool. We went to George's, and he had corrugated paper—"From the land of sky blue water"—a mural of water and mountains. George had some extra, and he just gave us a couple rolls, so we used that to paper the inside of the hut—it was about four feet high and really looked cool. In those days you didn't just go to a store and buy stuff—you just used whatever you could find. We wired it with electricity from the machine shed next to it. We had an old couch and an old chair to sit on, I made a little table in shop class which held our record player, and we found an extra lamp someplace. We laid bricks in between the grease shed and the machine shed, and that was the walkway going back to the hut. We also had a door out front. It was a fun place for us and our friends to hang out. We also rigged up a system to warn us when little sisters tried to get in.

The Volkswagen (1957) came without a gas gauge. If you flipped the lever for the reserve tank, you had a gallon and could drive another 30 miles. However, too many times the person who flipped the lever forgot to mention it to anyone (no one wanted to fill it at midnight after a date). The next unsuspecting driver would probably run out of gas. Solution: If you flipped the lever, you were supposed to drive it up by the gas pump when you came home, so the next person would know to put gas in before driving it again. To repair dents in the fenders we would inflate a basketball underneath the fender to push the dent out; we could also use a plunger.

One afternoon my dad (Bruce McKibben) drove a bunch of our family for a "Sunday afternoon ride" in the new '59 Mercury. He said something about how fast it had already gone—you could see the exact point to which the dust had been moved on the speedometer. (It was sort of like a thermometer). Everybody thought it was really really funny except one. He didn't laugh at all.

We were not supposed to shoot shotguns in the barn because it would blow holes in the roof. We were in the barn shooting because pigeons were there. My dad would come out and look up and say, "I see some extra holes in the roof—you guys haven't been shooting holes in there have you?" So we had to cut that out. After that we had to use a .22-rifle with bird shot, so it wouldn't make any holes inside the barn. We couldn't hit anything with the rifle.

Adventures with Vehicles

My dad had a 1947 red Chevy pickup, and after some years it started to fade and needed a paint job. All us boys decided to paint it black with white running boards and white rims, and then we thought it would be really cool if we had pipes up alongside the cab. We painted them silver (didn't have the means for chroming back then). Silver paint looked good enough. We split the manifold on the six-cylinder engine (which is rare to split) in the pickup which would give us two exhausts—one on each side, and we used flex pipe to make our bends. Instead of putting on a muffler, we just used flex pipes straight back to the stacks. This made the pickup cackle which you could hear clear into town (we lived a mile west of town). This was one of the vehicles that we drove to school, but there wasn't much conversation on the way because it was so loud we couldn't hear each other.



*"Before" picture of McKibben's
1947 Chevy pickup*

We always liked those pipes to make as much noise as possible, so if you would wrap it up in second gear it would really cackle. When you wrap the motor out to that extent, something has to give. When the transmission gave out, we went to the Sioux Rapids junkyard and bought a used transmission for \$15. We put it in, and it lasted for two weeks. We took the transmission back to the junkyard and told the junk dealer the transmission wasn't any good. He looked at us and said, "Boys, there's two things: there's use and there's abuse." (He evidently could tell we'd been hot-rodding it). So he went clear back in the junkyard, dug deep, and found a four-speed transmission out of a panel truck. It was so heavy it was hard for us to install. We had to cut a hole in the floorboards because that's where the shift came out. Instead of "three on the tree," it was now "four on the floor." The transmission was super heavy duty, and from that point on we never lost another transmission. We could do some real hot-rodding now without worrying about the transmission coming through the floorboards.

The Lost Volkswagen

One night we had an "away" basketball game, so I drove the Volkswagen into town to get on the players' bus, parking it in the normal place—right in front of the school. It had snowed, probably about an inch. The sidewalk had been cleaned, but there was a little drift on each side. The bushes in front of the school were covered with snow—it was beautiful. It had been cold, and the snow had not melted off that day.

We went to the ball game on the team bus as we'd done many times before. (The entire girls' and boys' basketball teams, the managers, and the coaches rode on one bus). I remember that it was Friday night, because my brother, Bill, was supposed to come back from the Army that night. However, there wouldn't be any cars or pickups left at home for him to drive when he got home. When we got back from the ball game, I

noticed the Volkswagen that I'd driven into town was missing, but I didn't think anything of it because I just thought Bill had picked it up and was out using it. So I just asked a friend if I could ride with him to the Steak House at Sioux Rapids to get a hamburger and French fries. Several kids from Rembrandt would typically hang out there after games.

After a fun time with our friends, he took me home, and I noticed that our yard light was on. This meant that there were still some kids out. The rule at our house was that the last kid in for the night had to shut the yard light off. It shone directly into my parents' bedroom, so that way when they saw the yard light go off, they would know the last kid was home (most of the time). Since it was on, I just figured that Bill was still out with the Volkswagen.

I can remember this just like it was yesterday. Walking up those steps, I knew to skip steps #3, 7, and 8 because they squeaked and would wake my parents up. When I very quietly got to the top landing, a voice from my parents' bedroom asked me, "Where is the Volkswagen? We heard a car leave."

"Well, I don't know."



Jerry and Barb and the "lost" VW

"What do you mean, you don't know?"

"I thought Bill was using it."

My parents told me that Bill was in bed and that I had better get in the pickup and go look for the Volkswagen. So I did. I got into the pickup, and my dad was right behind me in the car. I drove all over town looking for the little red bug but couldn't find it anyplace. My dad looked for a little while and then drove back home. By this time, I was really nervous. Finally, after searching for at least half an hour (in a town of 250 people), I stopped

by the schoolhouse one more time and got out of the pickup. This time I noticed car tracks. Since they were the same width as the sidewalk, they were partially covered by those little drifts on either side. A car had been pushed up the sidewalk and hidden behind the bushes. Since the bushes were still covered with snow, the Volkswagen was totally hidden. I was really glad to find it, but I knew I would have to face my parents when I got home.

Since I was now by myself and needed to get two vehicles home, I had to go home and get my father, at which time we had a little discussion of, "How could you lose that Volkswagen?" With six brothers and sisters, I've been hearing about it ever since. It's still not funny to me, even 40 years later.

Zapped and Other Adventures

In the 1950s we had a 1954 Dodge, four-door, green and white, automatic—the family car. The boys in the family thought it would be fun if we had a Model T coil to zap people when they leaned against the car. We rigged it up with a knife switch on the inside of the car under the dash, so that when anybody would lean against the car, we could use the knife switch to make the car give shocks. Once in a while when we were bored and wanted to liven things up a little, we would drive into town and invite some unsuspecting friends over to talk, trying to get them to lean against the car so we could zap them. It didn't take long for the word to get out that the car was hot. The ultimate shock was when a guy leaned up against the car and we hit the knife switch and he did not get shocked. My brother was driving and told me to get out and put the ground wire so it was actually touching the ground. When I grabbed hold of the car and the ground wire, he zapped me. I was so angry, I came up and slugged him in the arm. He thought it was really funny. I didn't. Did our parents know we were doing this? NO!!

My brothers and I would put motors on bikes. We used old lawn mower motors and designed them so that you could ride the bike without starting the motor. There was a lever on the side which you could pull up and start the motor while you were riding. We would make a metal platform for the motor to sit on behind the bike seat over the back tire. The motor was hooked to another roller which rolled on the tire, and we had a V-belt from the motor to the roller. That V-belt had to be exactly the correct length or it wouldn't work. It was a lot easier riding with the motor than just pedaling because there were only one-speed bikes back then. We tried to get the motor to make as much noise as possible by taking the muffler off. Using a piece of pipe larger than the muffler with an air gap would make the most noise. We just thought it was cool to hear that sound.

One Saturday night I was driving back from Cobblestone and, as usual, had to be home at 12 midnight, so the closest and fastest way to go would be the gravel road right in front of Clarence's house. It had snowed a few days before and the gravel, where it was protected by trees so no sun could shine on it, was packed like a glare of ice. While driving the Volkswagen on the curve by my Uncle Clarence's place, turning the wheel did nothing and I shot right off into the ditch into the snow bank. I went into his corn crib where he kept his tractor. (I did tell Linda that I was going to borrow their tractor to pull the car out of the ditch). I hooked a chain onto the car, pulled it out, put the tractor back into the corn crib and drove on home. I was a few minutes late, and I couldn't believe it but I didn't get caught. The next morning as my dad was dropping me off to go to Sunday School, I casually mentioned that if he wondered who went off into the ditch by Clarence's, that it was me. I hurriedly shut the car door and went into the church.

After Rembrandt

After I graduated from Rembrandt, I graduated from DeVry Tech in Chicago. I was Maintenance Engineer for Des Moines Golf and Country Club for 25 years and retired in 1999. Through the years I've bought a number of duplexes and single-family

houses in and around the Des Moines area. I like to manage and maintain them myself. It has been an enjoyable challenge to go into a property, visualize its potential, and fix it up to be a home I'd enjoy living in myself. Since I like to stay productive, I am currently working as a subcontractor. I enjoy meeting and talking to people, especially farmers. I can really relate to them because of having owned my own farm.

I have two daughters, Brenda and Marla, and seven grandchildren.

Larry Frederick - Class of 1963

What I remember growing up in Rembrandt, Iowa:

- school teachers: Mrs. Waldron - Mrs. Biggins - Mr. Teague – Superintendent Cleveland - Superintendent Bryan - Mr. Gillespie - Mrs. Parker
- riding bicycles out to the creek by the McKibben farm, playing in the creek and building forts out of anything we could find like we were real survivors; also riding bikes to Sioux Rapids on the gravel back road and getting a Dairy Queen.
- playing baseball for George Engebretson in summertime leagues and hanging out in George's Place reading comic books, drinking pop, playing pool, and eating peanuts.
- going to summertime movies at the theatre, attending band concerts in the park, and eating ice cream. Stores stayed open late on Saturday nights—Peterson's store and Hegna's store.
- getting out of school early a couple times a week to attend catechism classes at the Lutheran Church with Pastor Jorgenson.
- Christmas programs at the Lutheran Church—kids got an apple and Hershey bar in a clear plastic sack.
- ice skating rink at the base of the water tower.
- knowing everybody in town and being in almost every home at one time or another.
- baling hay, walking bean fields, detasseling corn, working at cannery in Storm Lake.
- going to Cozy Café for a malt or ice cream cone. Watching Roe Cain (veteran) feed his dog (a little black Scottie) ice cream cones.
- people's great work ethic and their pride in their community, homes, and property; no worry about crime; never needed to lock our homes. A lot of people in the community were not that well off materially, but that was not an issue for most people.
- receiving a great education at Rembrandt Consolidated. Elementary grades on main floor and high school years on second floor.
- basketball games, school plays and assembly programs in gymnasium.
- riding around town with Harvey Buckendahl, Allen Kruckman, and Rodney Hatlen in their fast cars.
- attending Sunday School every Sunday at the Lutheran Church.
- attending Iowa State Speech contests.
- learning how to work at an early age and understanding the value of a dollar.
- learning how to make a little go a long way.

Pat Teague - Class of 1963

The Game

I was fifteen again. It was a freezing, snowy December night in 1959, the kind of silent, deep and dark cold night that cloaked the rural Iowa landscape like black velvet. It got very dark, very early in Iowa in December. Rembrandt's few outdoor lights cast a ghostly pale ring of illumination onto the snow-covered objects nearby. The only sounds were those of my boots trudging through snow, and of my own breathing as I walked toward the school gym for tonight's basketball game. Dad, Graham and Cindy had left earlier in the car. I wasn't ready, so I walked. I liked the walk, the silence, the night and the solitude. Main Street was virtually deserted but for a couple of cars parked beneath the glowing blue and white "Hamms Beer" sign over the front door of George's saloon. A gentle but steady powder blanketed the cars, giving them an eerie whitewashed appearance. I walked by the cars, past George's, around Elmer Peterson's store on the corner. A left turn put me on a direct route to the school, now only a couple of long blocks straight ahead. There was precious little street light on this final leg of my journey to the school gym that night. It did not matter. I knew every foot of that sidewalk, just like I knew every foot of every sidewalk in town.

As I approached the gym, my anticipation rose. A few more cars drove by as folks came in for the game. Lights from the school beckoned me to come in and warm myself. "Come on in," they said, "things going on here tonight"!! I entered through the huge steel and glass doors into a flood of light, noise and activity. The smell of freshly popped corn replaced the outdoor winter night in my nostrils. I greeted and was greeted in return by familiar faces. In Rembrandt, every face was familiar. I ran downstairs to the band room to shed my coat and boots and to pick up my saxophone. The old, battered door to the band room squeaked and creaked as I grasped the loose doorknob and pushed it inward. The old gym, now cafeteria and band practice area, was right off the band room. There was a smell associated with that old school that never left my olfactory memory. It is not easily described. It was sort of a combination of cigarette smoke, floor polish used by the custodians on the wood floors, and other soapy and ammonia type odors used to clean the walls and other surfaces. In the band room itself, there was a distinct odor of leather instrument cases, slightly mildewed stacks of sheet music and my dad's Old Spice. (The band room was actually below ground, sort of like a basement, hence the mildew problem.) The baritone sax was big, heavy, old and easy to find. I snapped open the black case and grabbed the dull silverish instrument from where it lay on a soft, purple velvet-like cushion. I crammed the mouthpiece on and pulled the strap over my head and hooked it on to the ring designed just for that purpose.

The band was already warming up as I entered the 'real' gym and headed for the stage. I jumped up and pushed to the side the massive purple velvet curtain with the giant gold "RHS" at the top and took my place among the saxophonists in the pep band. There was Dad getting everybody pumped for the first rousing strains of the school fight song.

In this case that happened also to be the school fight song of The University of Notre Dame, with a few local variations (apologies to ND). Dad had everything under sort of a chaotic control that was incomprehensible to anyone outside the band. The secret, I later figured out, was that every kid in the bands, choruses, group ensembles, etc. that Dad directed knew what to do and what was expected of them. Not that there weren't kids who were famous for being hair-brained, but even they knew what to do and eventually did it. How so? In my unbiased opinion, they simply refused to be responsible for disappointing Dad. Result: success!

That pep band! It was made up of whoever from the regular band could make it and wanted to play. A couple of quick run throughs, and we could belt out some crowd-pleasing 'basketball music.' We usually had about 15 or 20 show up on any given night. Of course, the girls on the basketball team could not play for pre-game stuff since their game was first on the agenda. My dad, the Rembrandt school's "director of music" knew how to whip up a pre-game crowd. He knew what a pep band was for and what they were supposed to do—provide pep! Get the crowd pumped and ready for victory. It's what we used to call "school spirit," and it was emphasized. Pep rallies were held for the entire school before every game. Sometimes the pep band would play at the rally. We had a large repertoire of rousing music Dad had collected over the years. All of the main fight songs from colleges and universities, the theme songs from all four military service branches, a ton of John Philip Sousa, and much more.

The 'Raiderettes' (back then the female gender of anything was created by simply tacking "ettes" on to the word) were on the floor now in their white uniforms with purple numbers and trim. The opposing "ettes" were on the far end of the floor going through their routines, each team sizing up the other. Tonight it was Sioux Rapids in their red uniforms with white numbers and trim. They were an old rival and very good. The game was played, and the crowd loved it. Who won? I do not recall, but what does it matter? Rembrandt won its share of games, and the whole town reveled in the experience—win or lose. Either way the game provided ammunition for a thousand discussions, as plays were replayed and each player's performance analyzed and reanalyzed.

Back then girls played a half-court game. Three played offense, and three played defense. They could not cross center court. In many ways it was a more interesting game than what the boys played, with entirely different strategies and skills needed for success. Regardless, we thought it was the only way girls could play basketball, so it was never questioned. That's the way it always had been as far as I knew. The girls' game was every bit as important in the basketball scheme of things as the boys'. In some years and some towns, girls' basketball was King, or, Queen or whatever. I do recall that in Rembrandt and surrounding towns, all basketball, be it girls' or boys', was serious stuff.

My night at the game was mainly spent running around looking for friends, finding friends, fooling around with friends, and oh yes, watching the games. Of course, I always watched the boys' game intently since my brother Graham was on the team. After the girls had disappeared into the mysterious realm of the girls' locker room, out came the boys' team and immediately went into their pre-game warm-up routine as the pep band

belted out the school fight song. I did not approve when the team switched from wearing full warm-up suits, i.e., long satin-like pants and a matching long sleeved sailor-type top, to just wearing a white, fuzzy short-sleeved top and their regular uniform shorts. The fact was, the full warm-up suit made them look taller and more intimidating. Another decision about which I was not consulted!!

There was much activity between games. People were streaming out of the gym headed for the school cafeteria to smoke. Everybody smoked cigarettes then, including my mom and dad. That cafeteria became as cloudy and smoke-filled as any saloon in the country. The management had thoughtfully placed empty gallon tin cans around the floor for ash trays. Even so there were those who would crush out their cigarettes on the floor making a huge cleaning problem for our crack custodial staff. But, so widespread was smoking that no one dared complain; even the custodians themselves smoked like chimneys.

The custodians were lucky in a way, I guess, since they had their own smoking lounge in the boiler room. My dad used to go over there for a smoke break during the school day when he could not smoke at his desk. That was one thing about my dad—he never thought of himself as any better or smarter or higher up than anyone else. He was as good a friend with the custodians as anyone in the school. Heck, we used to go fishing with Oslo (Harold Olson) over at the river in Linn Grove. ‘Pap’ Clarence Cannoy lived across the street from us. His wife Cleo and my mother were best of friends.

By this time the boys' game was underway; I was back in the gym roaming around until half time when once again the pep band would keep things lively until the game resumed. By ten o'clock it was all over. The home folks were either celebrating or glum depending on the outcome of the games. But such was life in Rembrandt in those days when things were kept in perspective. The loss or victory of a high school basketball game was important for the moment but was not permitted to control the ebb and flow of life. Coaches were not fired if the team did not win every or even most games. Coaches were friends and valued members of the faculty. In addition to coaching, they taught physical education and substantive courses such as health, social studies, math or whatever their strong point may have been. Usually they taught U.S. history to juniors.

Our family knew the coaches well since they lived in the other side of a duplex from us. The school had purchased the duplex in order to have available some decent housing for any new coach or band director. Oh, yes, we only had one coach, and he coached everything, just like the music department where my dad did it all.

The games were over, but the night was not over for Dad and anyone else who volunteered to help. We had to take everything down and put it in the band room. Some of those music stands were iron and must have weighed at least a stone or two. No matter, the cleanup was finished quickly. Sometimes we were the last ones left in the school except for the custodians.

The old school was an eerie place late at night after the crowd had left. It was at these times that the urge to explore the almost-dark school building was at its most compelling. After all, what fun was it to wander around the halls in broad daylight? With

the lights still on in the band room and cafeteria, I decided to go up the painted gray concrete steps to the first floor. Even the “first” floor was largely below ground level. The only classroom I can recall there was the first grade room. That poor teacher had to put up with the noisy band practices and individual musical instruments noisily invading her first grade domain. I decided to go up to the second or 'main' floor of the building—a very tame place during school hours with just some elementary classrooms and the superintendent's office.

The light was fading quickly, so it was necessary to find another source of light or abandon the exploration. I headed for the third floor. At the top of the stairs it was dark, not just dusk, but midnight dark. It began to occur to me it was more than a little bit spooky. I was able to locate a light switch after much wall touching. One light came on, illuminating the surrounding 20 feet with all else fading into dark shadows and indistinguishable shapes. I peered into the big, main study hall where everyone in high school had a desk. During the school day it was the scene of constant activity and all of the noises that go with that. Now it was empty and silent and foreboding in the partial light. I was mesmerized by the scene. Everything in the room was familiar, yet peculiarly uninviting and unfriendly, almost alien in the shadows. My instinct was to turn and leave as quickly as possible, yet somehow I had fallen under the strange spell of this place. I have heard of people being repelled by some fearsome and frightful thing, yet without the power or will to break free from its spell, they continued to gaze upon it, helpless to turn away. The room drew me in until I found myself at my own desk. Should I open it? To what end? No, I will not open it. It is far too noisy to open in this pristine silence. I was certain that every creak of the old wooden floor was alerting the night spirits or beings who inhabited that place in the dark, to my presence in their domain.

I looked around the room half expecting to be confronted by an after-dark schoolhouse spook. I saw instead out in the hallway the familiar figure of my dad. He was looking for me and calling my name: “Pat, are you up here? Come on, we are leaving; the place is being locked up!” I was saved. Reality had intruded and broken the hold the dark room had on me. I left the room easily and unafraid as I walked to meet my dad. It was then that I began to realize consciously that as long as Dad was around, I had nothing to fear.

The Town

The reader of these words who is not familiar with the town of Rembrandt must understand one thing very clearly. It is a very small place. It would not even make a decent sized neighborhood in most cities. It is more than a “spot on the road” but less than a typical “small town.” It is smaller than Mayberry, Hooterville, River City, Bedford Falls, Twin Peaks or other similar towns of popular TV or Hollywood fame. It had and has one main street for business, about three blocks long. In its heyday there were many businesses along both sides of the street.



When I lived there in the 1950s, the Rembrandt business community was still quite vigorous and existed for basically one purpose. That purpose was to serve the surrounding farm families. After all, farming was the main industry in that part of the world. Of course, businesses also served those of us who lived in town, but we were merely an afterthought at best. It was the farmers who ruled. The main street reflected this reality. On the north side of main street was a lumberyard. They sold pretty much anything the farmer could want in the building material department. I can only speculate as to what the farmers were building with the lumber, but it must have been important. Farmers, as a rule, were not frivolous people. They would not be prone to buy things they did not need.

The Taverns of Rembrandt

Witness the fact that there were two taverns in town. One on the north side and one on the south side of Main Street. These two venerable institutions deserve special comment. They provided not only a watering hole for the thirsty, but more importantly, they served as a public gathering place where democracy in its purest form was practiced daily. These were not the dark and lonely places so characteristic of many bars in large cities. No, these taverns performed an essential public service within the social context of that time and place.

The north side of Main Street claimed “Mike's Place” as its tavern and hangout. My knowledge of that tavern is extremely limited since we kids rarely crossed its threshold. Mike was not all that interested in having kids around his bar. It's not that he

was mean or anything; he just preferred the company of adults, especially in a drinking establishment. I guess he can't be blamed for that. The problem was, we kids were totally spoiled by the proprietor of the south side tavern, one George Engebretson.

George was the owner and proprietor of "George's Place," a local saloon and hangout for every kid in town. Unlike "Mike's Place," kids were welcome at George's. George was critically important to my life and to most kids of that period living in and around Rembrandt. Now I suppose it would be better, to some people, if I could say I spent more time in church than at George's, but that would be the blackest of lies. You see, George had kind of a library at his saloon consisting of many comic books and the latest magazines, even a paperback or two. My library table was a massive, comfortable booth next to the magazine rack. I am not talking about some cheap wire magazine rack here, but rather, a big wooden display case with actual shelves. It was a permanent structure containing the most fascinating reading material any kid growing up in the Great Plains could possibly ask for. Close at hand was an ice cream freezer and a soft drink cooler. If one were lucky enough to have some pocket money, nothing went down better on a hot summer day than an ice cold 16 oz. Royal Crown Cola, a Frosty Root Beer, maybe even occasionally a Nesbitts Orange or Grape Soda. Huddled in a booth with one of those lovely cold bottles of pop and the latest issue of *Gene Autry*, *Roy Rogers*, *Batman Action Comics*, *Atlas War Comics* (my favorite), or heaven forbid, *Argosy* or *True Man*, was sheer spiritual bliss to me.

Eventually, every boy in town and many from out on the farms would wander into George's during the course of a summer day or on a Saturday during the winter. Socialization was the order of the day at George's Place. If you couldn't find something to do at George's, you just weren't trying. Even adults who did not drink beer would show up at George's for any number of reasons. The back room pool table was always busy. We kids used it constantly. As Professor Harold Hill from the *Music Man* put it: "I consider the time I spent with a cue in my hands to be some of the most rewarding of my life" (or something like that, apologies to Meredith Willson and Robert Preston). This was a slightly smaller than "official" size table. It had to be to fit in George's back room and still leave room for shooting. There were no chairs. Cases of beer stacked against the walls served as furniture. We played mostly straight pool or eight ball. A few of my contemporaries were notorious as sharp pool shooters, but alas, not me. I seldom won, but then that was not really important to me. It was just the fun of playing and being there watching others play, listening to the banter across the table. It was just plain fun. Nor do I recall any of us kids suffering from hanging out in a saloon either. To us it was as natural as being at a soda fountain, or so we imagined since no such establishment existed in Rembrandt.

As I said before, George's was a microcosm of a democratic institution where the right of free speech was not only recognized but exercised daily. It was also the center of the most American of institutions ever known—baseball. George was much more than a mere saloonkeeper. In addition to being our librarian and spiritual mentor, he was also our baseball coach for little league and every other youth baseball league in town (except

the school team). George loved baseball. Back then TV baseball consisted of the “Saturday Game of the Week” with Dizzy Dean and his sidekick, Buddy Blatner. If you were lucky enough to be at George's Place on a Saturday during baseball season, the same scene would greet you no matter what else was going on in the world. Inside the darkened saloon there was a small black and white TV on a platform, high up in the corner at the far end of the bar. It was in an exalted position because it had “the game” on. Behind the long bar stood George, lord of his domain. I do not recall George ever having anyone else work his bar except in an extreme emergency. It belonged to him completely. Along the bar, seated on high chrome bar stools with red leather or vinyl-covered seats, would be an assortment of local characters, all men, drinking ten-cent taps, eating peanuts or pickled “red-hots,” smoking, watching “the game,” kibitzing, and just generally having a good time. The talk was of ‘the game,’ of baseball, not of crops, cattle, hogs or other ‘farm stuff,’ which normally would be the only topic of conversation where two or more farmers gathered. For the most part these were not frivolous men loafing around a saloon; rather they were hard-working men enjoying a short break from their daily labors and worries. Sports, mainly baseball, was one important way for these men to “get away from it all” for a few short hours.

George, a large, heavy-set man always looked the same. He wore a white or light-colored short-sleeved shirt, black horn-rimmed glasses, a full head of white hair, a burning cigar clenched between his teeth, and a smile or wisecrack for everybody who came in, even us kids. The movement of his large frame behind the bar as he pulled and served the taps, collected the dimes, nickels and quarters, washed beer glasses and even made burgers, all while watching “the game” and puffing on the ever-smoldering cigar, was pure poetry in motion. It was, of course, his work, but when he was in action, it didn't look like work to me. What it looked like (and what it was), was a man completely and totally the master of his world.

In retrospect, we kids could have done a lot worse than George Engebretson as a role model. Like most folks in Rembrandt of that era, George was a friendly, humane individual with a streak of generosity and kindness a mile wide. I can't say how many kids' lives he influenced in a positive way, but over the years, it must have been many hundreds. I was lucky to be one of them, and we were all lucky to have him around. Life in Rembrandt of the 1950s would have been vastly less interesting without him.

Religion

Religion, as it was practiced by my family in Rembrandt, Iowa, in the 1950s, was defined by our relationship with one man. The Reverend Ralph Grote, preacher, philosopher, poet, friend, and confidant, was the most amazing minister I have ever known. In addition, he was a truly good man in every sense of the word. Most religious leaders, preachers, priests, etc., have, to me at least, been rather distant, authoritarian figures. Many, it seemed, did not always practice what they preached. Ralph Grote was an exception.

As a kid growing up in Rembrandt, to me the world of religion was divided into two camps. In one camp were the High Lutherans, whose personality and creed were personified by their then leader. The Norwegians of our area seemed well suited to the good Reverend, who from my kid viewpoint, seemed like a rather stern, humorless individual of pronounced military bearing. I suppose he was okay at preaching and doing 'pastor' stuff, maybe even better than average. My knowledge of that is admittedly, practically non-existent. My adolescent mind paid scant attention to the daily machinations of the 'other' church. What information came to me was by way of the Lutheran kids. They always loved to tell me how hard their religious training was and how getting confirmed was tantamount to achieving sainthood. They were constantly going to 'catechism' when, in my opinion, they should have been out playing. I was led to believe it was far superior to the pathetic little amount of training we Methodist kids got before our so-called Confirmation. It was sort of like a rite of passage. I rather doubt that the possibility of going to either heaven or hell 'someday' was uppermost in the minds of many of the youth of Rembrandt, be they Lutheran, Methodist or otherwise . . . at least, not the kids I knew. Certainly, none of my gang spent much time discussing theological issues.

Our little band of outcast Methodists in Rembrandt looked to Reverend Ralph Grote to protect our souls. The exact numbers are not known to me, but our congregation could not have exceeded 20 or 30 families. The Lutherans, on the other hand, had everyone else. Oh, there was a Catholic family or two, and some Baptists, but they had no church in town so they did not count in my young mind. We Methodists were a small but determined lot, even religious in our own way.

When my family came to Rembrandt in 1953, the only place fit to live in town that was sort of available was the Methodist parsonage. It already had one occupant. The Reverend Ralph Grote, a confirmed bachelor, was in residence. It was somehow determined that he would move into a part of the house and we, the Teague family, would occupy the rest. It was not known how this would work in practice, but we were willing if he was. So it was done. Reverend Grote in his two rooms and the Teague family—Myron, Betty, Graham, Patrick and Cindy—in the rest of the house. There was enough room to be sure but included in the amenities was only one bathroom and one kitchen. The Rev. Ralph Grote shared the same bathroom with the Teague family. If we thought the idea unpleasant, what must he have thought! To be descended upon by three kids, a dog, and all that went with that would test the patience of a saint. Compromise, tolerance and cooperation were required. Amazingly, it all worked out. I believe he was happy to see that old, dusty parsonage turned into a home. He loved kids and was especially fond of Cindy, then only about three or four years old. To get a rise out of her, he would tease her by singing, "Get along home Cindy, Cindy, get along home, I'll marry you someday." Cindy would just scowl at him, but he loved it.

To me, a ten-year-old who had already lived in at least five different places, the entire arrangement could not have been more natural if we had been living with my own grandfather. My brother Graham and sister Cindy and I were quite contented and happy

to share living quarters with Reverend Grote. Mom and Dad adapted quickly and well to what might have been an impossible arrangement for some people. As I reflect upon that whole experience, it occurs to me that our family's easy-going, humor-filled life style was a perfect fit with Reverend Grote. He was very much like us, and we took a liking to each other in no time. We were pretty much Reverend Grote's 'family' in almost every sense of the word. We ate together almost every evening. After all, he had no kitchen, and Rembrandt was short on gourmet eating establishments for the gentleman bachelor. Besides, how many times can you be expected to dine alone on an open-faced roast beef sandwich with mashed potatoes and gravy, no matter how expertly prepared. That was not for Ralph Grote, a man who appreciated home cooking.

Reverend Grote was a bachelor of undetermined age, although we kids knew he was older than our parents. Large, bushy eyebrows sat like a hedgerow over intense blue-gray eyes that often revealed a mischievous twinkle or wink. The Reverend was always well-groomed, clean-shaven, nails manicured, shoes shined and clothes pressed. The smell of male shave lotions, colognes, and hair tonics accompanied him at all times. It was as if he had a barbershop in his apartment. The uniform of the day for the Reverend was a gray suit, white shirt and tie, black shoes and a gray fedora atop his head. This was in the days before 'casual' dress was the norm. To Rev. Grote, casual meant loosening the tie and maybe removing the suit coat. Understand, this was only for the most casual of occasions, such as a picnic or the like.

The greatest things about Ralph Grote were his sense of humor and razor-sharp wit. One of his favorite things was to quote famous humorists of the day such as Bennett Cerf. The Reverend loved puns and limericks and would weave them into his conversation whenever possible. Exactly what his higher education consisted of, I do not know, but he had an extremely well developed command of the English language. He was very low key, subtle and almost impish with his humor. Ralph Grote was above all a supremely humane person utterly lacking in pretense—an unusual trait in a minister in my opinion. These traits served him well in his relationship with our family.

Winning over my mother was no easy task, but even she soon thought of him as 'one of the family.' Mom, of course, had to do the cooking for everyone, including the Reverend. It did not start out as an absolute requirement that we feed him all the time. Around dinnertime when the aroma of mom's spaghetti and meat balls, meat loaf or whatever culinary delight she had managed to put together was wafting through the parsonage, the Reverend would appear in the alcove between our dining room and his apartment. Soon he had engaged my mother in conversation on some pressing issue of the day. He was a most gifted conversationalist, and soon Mother was putting dinner on the table for six instead of five. Those quiet evenings in rural Iowa sitting around our heavy, round, oak dining table enjoying my mother's cooking, conversing among ourselves and with Ralph Grote were priceless. If only I had a tape recording of a few of those dinner conversations, wow! what I wouldn't give.

Being a kid and interested in other things, I made no effort to remember or take note of too many specifics of our dinner-table discussions. They were mostly about

current local events in town, in the school, the church or about family. Occasionally we would wander off into national or even international topics. No matter what the topic of conversation, it was frequently punctuated by one of the Reverend's famous (to us) puns, limericks or just plain witty remarks. For example, Rev. Grote never asked for the sugar, he always asked for the C12-H22-011, the chemical makeup of sugar. It is 45 years later, and I still remember those numbers! The fact that he said it about a hundred times might have something to do with that.

The Reverend loved Mom's spaghetti and her ever-popular cornbread. Every time we had the legendary cornbread, which was often, Rev. Grote could be counted on to exclaim in an extremely theatrical way: "Ahhhhh Boy! That's good cornbread!!" He liked to say things we kids would laugh at and think strange. To this day if we are having cornbread with someone in our family who lived through the parsonage days, one of us will invariably exclaim using their best Ralph Grote imitation: "Ahhhhh Boy! That's good cornbread!" Everyone laughs and remembers those marvelous days in the Rembrandt Methodist parsonage.

No one involved in our talks was closed by rigid, inflexible doctrine to the thoughts and ideas of the others. Even the Reverend, trained in his creed, was more like a teacher or professor than a proselytizer. I do not think our family could have tolerated for long living in such close proximity to any minister with a puritanical, severe, doctrinaire attitude. On the other hand, I doubt seriously that any minister of that description would have lasted two weeks with us either.

Even Bimbo, our black cocker spaniel, was a devout Methodist. He was possibly the most devout critter around those parts. Bimbo was a regular at Sunday services for as long as we lived at the parsonage. The church was directly across the street. In temperate weather the front door of the church was frequently left open on Sunday morning. Why would the door be left open if not for Bimbo to enter? So enter he did. His entrance did not take place in some back door or out-of-the-way corner. No, Bimbo preferred the main center aisle of the church for his entrance. Reverend Grote did not miss a beat. The sermon continued without so much as a pause, the Reverend glancing out over his bifocals with that twinkle in his eyes and perhaps just a hint of a grin on his lips. Occasionally Bimbo would stay for the entire service. Normally though, a few words from the gospel would suffice for him, and he would exit the same way he came in. It was as if he was checking up just to make sure everything was in its proper place. It must have reassured his canine soul that all was well with the universe.

It was fortunate for Bimbo that he was a Methodist. It was my impression that the Lutherans did not welcome dogs and other soulless critters wandering down the church center aisle during Sunday service. I may be wrong about that since, as I have said, I never attended that church. My imagination simply did not permit me to believe that the Rev. Colonel would see the humor in it. To Rev. Grote, Bimbo's escapades were just one more of the charming details that gave substance and texture to our existence. Our hardy band of Methodists welcomed Bimbo, as we did all new members.

Mom always tried her best to keep us kids and Dad well mannered and polite—a Herculean task to be sure. Her investment in this life-long endeavor had varying degrees of success. One of the things she always tried to make us do was go to church. When that failed, at least Sunday School and Confirmation training. Although not a devoted churchgoer herself, Mom believed it had some value for kids. There was also some social pressure to attend church simply by virtue of my dad's position as a school teacher in this very small town. Social pressure to conform to someone else's idea of propriety has ever since been a thing to which no one in our family has paid an inordinate amount of attention.

Rembrandt the Community

We were fortunate to grow up in rural Iowa in a town like Rembrandt. Yes, we had different churches, but in truth, we really did not need more than one. We were a community of people with common interests, beliefs, and goals. Not that we were totally homogeneous or agreed on every little thing, but we all lived together in relative peace and harmony. There was not even a real policeman in town, let alone a jail. Law enforcement was an occasional sheriff's deputy or state patrolman cruising through town. Even that was rare. It's a cliché now, but the fact was, in that place at that time, we did not lock doors to our houses or our cars. We kids roamed the town and countryside at will on our bicycles or on foot. We might not see our parents from breakfast until dinner. Living in town, my parents never had to drive us kids anywhere for our daily activities. There was no place in the whole town we could not get to in five minutes or less on a bicycle. I contrast this to my own experience as a parent in the 1980s and 1990s living in a medium-sized southern city, Columbia, South Carolina. It is not a large city by any modern measure, but of course to us Rembrandt-ites of the 1950s it would seem like a giant metropolis. My wife and I must have put 50,000 miles on our cars driving our kids around town to different activities and functions as they grew up. It is too far and too dangerous for them to ride a bicycle or walk anywhere but within our own neighborhood. The cities of today are built to accommodate the automobile, not the bicyclist or pedestrian, and certainly not children.

Rembrandt, on the other hand, was a people town. Small and user-friendly, it accommodated human needs on a human scale. Here in the year 2001 in Columbia, the screaming sirens, bells and horns of emergency vehicles of every description pierce the night, every night without exception. Rembrandt was one of the quietest places on earth. There would be a noon siren, a six-o'clock siren every day and on rare occasions the volunteer fire department would have to head to a fire accompanied by the obligatory wailing siren. It was rare enough for us kids to take notice and try to follow the truck on our bikes. Our fires generally turned out to be just some grass, or more exciting for us kids, a barn.

After Rembrandt

We left Rembrandt in 1961 after my sophomore year at RHS. My dad had taken a job with the music department in the Adrian, Michigan, public school system. To me, at that time it seemed like a one-way ticket to the dark side of the moon. Everything and everyone I knew was left behind, and a new, strange world was opened to me. As it turned out, it worked out well for me. I graduated from Adrian High in 1963 and went on for a Bachelor of Arts degree from The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1966. I had always planned on a teaching career, and in fact, I did teach for eight years in the Utica, Michigan, public schools. It was there that I met and married Mary in 1972. We were both teachers but decided to pursue a new direction. That decision brought us to Columbia, South Carolina, in 1974 where I entered law school at the University of South Carolina. Graduation and admission to the South Carolina Bar followed in 1977. A career as a state government attorney has occupied me professionally to the present time. We have two children, Jessica, a professional dancer with the Dutch National Ballet in Amsterdam, and Patrick, an eighth-grader who loves sports.

Bill Henley - Class of 1964

We were street-wise kids. The kind of hip that comes from growing up on the city streets of Rembrandt. And at 12 years old we had the confidence that comes from knowing we were cool. We had just read the latest issue of *Mad* magazine and had found a great joke to share with our favorite teacher, band director Myron Teague. And there he came, up the steps of the Methodist Church for Sunday worship. We were there to greet him. "Hey, Mr. Teague. We have a great joke for you." He had the perfect response. "Thanks, guys. Be sure to tell me tomorrow." And we left, still firm in the knowledge of our coolness.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from the University of Iowa (Bachelor of Music) and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (Master's in Trumpet Performance). I am a band director at Gateway High School in Kissimmee, Florida. I play first trumpet at First Baptist Church of Orlando. I am married to Myra Velez-Henley. We have five children and three grandchildren.

Jim Graeber - Class of 1964

Believe it or not, I learned tolerance in white-bread Rembrandt, Iowa, during the 1950s and early 1960s. It may seem unlikely to develop a tolerant attitude in an environment where everyone appears so similar. I'll try to relay the influences and lack of influences that contributed to this lifelong characteristic blessing.

My formal schooling began in grade one, since Rembrandt hadn't implemented kindergarten in 1952, and 17 classmates joined me. Fourteen of these classmates graduated with me 12 years later. All 18 of us gathered on the first floor of Rembrandt Consolidated School. As we advanced through the grades we moved "up" the stairs until we reached the third floor and were in "high" school. The times we climbed on the roof made us feel like we were in college.

We made up one little melting pot. We were a diverse group. Both sexes were represented. We farm kids were joined by our new "city" friends. Methodists and Lutherans sat down beside the minority Catholics. Sons and daughters of landowners played with sons and daughters of share croppers and auto mechanics. Everyone was accepted. Backgrounds were not considered when choosing friends. It was the norm to be friends with everyone.

The trend of acceptance began in first grade and continued on year after year. Never once did I think I shouldn't play with someone, not stay at someone's house, not date someone or ever concern myself with how much money a schoolmate's parents made. I was naive, accepting and non-judgmental. In fact, kids in Rembrandt didn't even practice ageism. We often hung out with kids who were a year or two ahead or behind us in school. Children were even spotted working (especially) and even playing with adults!

We were even welcomed in George's Beer Hall, anytime. However, George did seem to like it best when we drank our pop in the back room while we played pool and sat on cases of warm beer. The poolroom also served as the storage room.

Growing up without prejudice being modeled, even when there wasn't racial diversity, can actually result in an adult who doesn't get into a habit of prejudging others. These people, once faced with more diverse situations, can be much less likely to worry about skin color when choosing friends and associates. At least it affected me that way.

Rembrandt cannot totally take credit for all my low level of prejudice; my home contributed as well. While my parents were totally naive about relations with other races, they never made racism the slightest issue with me. In fact, the model for acceptance was to judge, if judging at all, people not by appearances or background, but by how they behaved.

The characteristic of tolerance, accepting differences, has served me well for over 30 years of work in education. The ability to look at others as just being different from me, not wrong or less than, has led me to value others from any social class, background, or race. White-bread Rembrandt guided me well on the journey of appreciating the multitude of breads that have been put on this earth.

After Rembrandt

After attending Morningside College, I married Bonnie Tyrpa, a native of Minneapolis, and we moved to Des Moines where we have lived for the past 34 years. We have both been elementary principals in the Des Moines Public Schools. Bonnie is currently serving the district in the human resources department, and I am finishing up a three-year leave at the Iowa Department of Education. I will be returning to the DMPS as

an elementary principal in the fall of 2002. We have two wonderful children, Jodi and Ben. Both are currently living in Des Moines. We all love to travel and have visited most of the world's continents.

Rosalyn Hadenfeldt - Class of 1964

Growing up in Rembrandt

When I tell people about Hegna's store in my small home town, I mention the counters made of glass on the top and sides, so you could look inside and see the merchandise on the shelves. There were round wooden stools that you could sit on and look at the yard goods material or anything else they had on display. (My mom and my sisters and I made a lot of our own clothes, like a lot of other ladies in the community, and we bought the material at Hegna's). They had shoes and some clothes, toys, games, candy, school supplies, but most of all they had groceries. I remember the big round block of cheese on the counter; they would cut out a wedge for you if you asked for it.

I remember the show house, or theatre, and seeing the movies for almost nothing. (Remember this was the early 1950s—not like today's prices.)

I remember when the show house closed, and it became a roller rink. I remember what fun we had. I enjoyed watching the “whip” where the kids lined up, and as they were moving around, a new one would join the line-up. When it came to the end of the line (the width of the room), it was harder to hook up to the line. Once my sister, Loretta, was the one on the very end. It took her a couple tries, but she finally made it and everybody cheered. I remember a lot of us walking together over to the café afterwards to have a soda or an ice cream cone.

I remember in the summer, in the bandstand in the park, the kids in band playing their instruments with a lot of cars parked around the park, honking their horns at the end of each number.

What I remember most growing up on a farm just outside of Rembrandt was when my father broke his wrist and had to have it in a cast for a long time. He could hardly do anything. It happened about the time the crops were supposed to be harvested. Our neighbors, friends, and relatives came together with several corn pickers and many tractors and wagons and hauled in our crops in one weekend. The women brought prepared food to help feed all the men in the field. I thought this act of kindness was the nicest thing to happen to us in our time of need. I will always remember it.

My mother took up cake decorating in the early 1950s for a hobby and to earn extra money. She did wedding, birthday, and graduation cakes. When she made the wedding cakes with several tiers, she had one of us (my sisters and I as we got older) go along with her to the church to help her build the tall-tiered wedding cakes. We would have to stick pointed dollies up the bottom of each tier and stand on a chair and look down at the cake to see if Mom was putting each tier on perfectly centered, on the previous tier. We were taught to make wedding cake frosting so Mom could go on

decorating the cake and not have to stop and make frosting. We were taught how to decorate too, especially the roses.

After Rembrandt

After we all left home Mom asked my cousin, Peggy Hadenfeldt (Mosbo), to help her when she made wedding cakes. Peggy later went into the cake decorating business also. Later, Mom asked Betty McKibben (Branhagen) to help her, and she began to decorate cakes also. Mom often referred people who wanted birthday cakes to Betty, while she continued to make the wedding cakes.

I'm now retired after working as a beautician and also working at the turkey plant in Storm Lake for 18 years and getting a muscle disease and carpal tunnel in both wrists. After both of my parents and also my sister Harriet passed away, I decided to move to Florida to be near my other sister Loretta and her family.

Hal Christianson - Class of 1965

Our family (Ken, Mary, Hal and Clark Christianson) moved back to Rembrandt in January 1962 after being away for about six years. Dad decided to operate Rembrandt Oil Company (service station and fuel delivery to farms) again, which he had done with his brother, John, before we moved away. (Dad and John both graduated from Rembrandt—Dad in 1940 and John in 1937).

Mt. Vernon in eastern Iowa was a much larger college town built on a hill. Rembrandt was very small and flat. There were separate buildings for the elementary, junior high, and high school. In Rembrandt, all the classes were in one building. I went out for junior high football in Mt. Vernon. Rembrandt didn't have football. My freshman year I was taking Latin there. I don't think Rembrandt even had Spanish at that time, so I had to take shop (industrial arts) the second semester.

Our service station was three-fourths of a mile east of town at the intersection of C25 and U.S. Highway 71. Once in a while we rode our bicycles out from town and back. There was a hose across the driveway that a car would drive over, and a bell inside would ring. The attendant would go out and ask the driver what he needed. While the gas was going into the gas tank, he would clean the windows and maybe check the oil or air in the tires. I don't exactly remember when I started working, but by my senior year I was at the station when I wasn't in school. One thing I didn't like when I was alone was when somebody would ask for directions to a farm or how far it was to someplace, because I didn't know. Dad would have known if he had been there. I often wondered if anything interesting was going on in town while I was at the station by myself.

March 1966 there was an ice storm that broke the electric line poles, and the electricity was off for several days. We spent that first night in the station because the oil heater didn't need electricity to run. One of us slept on an old Army cot, another on the wood desk, and another on a couple of stacks of car tires.

We put up a drive-in restaurant to the south of the station. At the back was a screened-in patio with picnic tables, and that's why it was "The Patio." It was open from when school got out in May until Labor Day, and we served hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, chicken, soft serve ice cream, shakes, and pop. We ate our meals there all summer. Once in awhile we would make some strange combination of ice cream, pop, and syrup for something different. At supper time (evenings) a car hop(s) would go to the car to get the order and take the food to the people in the car when it was ready. The nights that there were ball games got very busy after the game was over.

In early 1968 the station contents were auctioned off. We ran the drive-in that summer for the last time.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I went to Buena Vista for a year while continuing to work at the station, and in 1969 Clark and I went to DeVry Institute of Technology in Chicago. I graduated from their three-year technology course and was hired by Western Electric in Rolling Meadows, Illinois. I currently live in Rembrandt.

Jim Larson - Class of 1965

I honestly feel that my generation growing up in rural and small town Iowa in the 1950s and 1960s was extremely lucky. At that time, it was still possible to make a living on the small to mid-size family farm, and those family farms were, in my mind, close to the ideal setting for a young person growing up.

Baling

In our area, near the town of Rembrandt, almost all the farmers were diversified, in that most had several species of livestock and practiced a rotation which included oats and hay. Those two crops not only furnished feed and bedding, but they also furnished potential employment for countless young men and boys like me. This was an era where almost all the hay was put up in small square bales that weighed around 50 to 70 lbs. each. Handling these took manpower and plenty of it. The process started with a tractor pulling the baler which gathered the hay and compressed it into small squares which then proceeded up a small chute to a wagon which was pulled behind the baler. Usually there were two men or boys on this wagon or rack as we called it, and it was quite an art to build a load of these bales that would not fall off during the sometimes rough ride in the field. When the load was full, the wagon was taken to the barn where other men loaded the bales into the barn. On a hot day, handling those bales inside a hot barn built all kinds of character, which I am not sure any of us boys appreciated at the time. The whole task also built muscle. There was absolutely no need for weight lifting during that era to stay in shape.

I can vividly remember two men who owned and ran those balers. One was our good neighbor Glenn Odor. Glenn was the first man who hired me as a young boy to help bale. I found him always to be a patient, kind employer who expected you to do the work but always treated you fairly. I can remember one time when for some reason the other boys hired did not show up, and I worked on the rack by myself and then went in with the load to the barn and stacked the load in the barn by myself. At the time the going wage was a dollar per hour, and I can vividly remember Glenn paying me two dollars per hour for that day's work. That does not sound like much money now, but I can tell you I felt like a rich boy when Glenn paid me twice the going rate.

One other event sticks out from that activity and involved one other man named John, who was a good man but kind of a character. I can still remember him taking a drink from a well on various farms, smacking his lips, and pronouncing, "Not bad but needs a few more mice in the pipe to add flavor." I can also remember when one other teenager and I were working for John, and feeling good as we were, we were giving him a hard time. He did not say a word but just tinkered with his baler with a smile on his face. We soon found out what he had done, as he with that tinkering had made the bales bigger, and in fact a few of those bales were all that two strong teenagers could lift working together. He let that go on for a few bales and then stopped and adjusted the baler again, and two rather chastised young men did not bother old John for the rest of the afternoon. Those days were hard, but I look back on them with fondness.

Looking Back

I grew up on a small farm northwest of the town of Rembrandt, Iowa, in the 1950s and 1960s. I realize now that that era was unique in agriculture, as it was a time when the horse had been replaced, but the era of mechanization of harvesting crops was still evolving. Today modern combines go through a field of corn, harvesting just the grain and leaving the cob and other material in the field. In the days of my youth, we ran corn pickers which picked the whole ear of corn, which we then stored in cribs. This product then had to be run through a machine which separated the grain from the husk and the cob. This activity furnished work for many teenage boys in the area. Our job was to rake or scoop the ear corn into a drag, which then took that to the machine which separated the grain from the cob. If we were lucky, the crib we were working in had a sunken driveway, and in those all you had to do was rake the corn into the drag with a little scooping at the end. At the other end of the spectrum was the upright wire crib which in many cases meant that getting that corn into the drag was extremely hard work with a rake or scoop or pickax. I can remember that there was kind of a scramble for the available rakes, with the lighter ones made with wooden handles going first and the unlucky slow guy getting some old homemade rake that must have weighed about 20 lbs., with which you bludgeoned the corn a cob at a time into the drag.

There was a little free entertainment doing that job as when you neared the end of the crib, just about every rodent in the whole crib started putting in an appearance as their hideouts vanished. This led to an interesting happening at one job. The farmer we were

shelling for had a small son about seven years old. The boy wanted to watch, and he was told to sit in the corner and stay out of the way. I can still remember after almost 40 years seeing that young boy get seriously animated as one of those escaping rodents ran up his pants leg. I can guarantee you that for a moment in time that boy gave that mouse his very undivided attention. I run into that boy, now grown into a man, from time to time. He never remembers that incident quite as fondly as I do (grin).

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Iowa State in 1969 and went back to the farm. We currently farm around 400 acres of farm land and rent about 150 acres of pasture. We run 80 purebred Angus and Charolais cows from which we sell breeding stock. I also have a 15-county sales territory selling an ag product part-time. My wife, Marcia, is a nurse. We raised two boys and a girl, all of whom graduated from Iowa State. The youngest is currently working on an M.B.A. and will graduate this spring.

George Engebretson Jr. - Class of 1966

Rites of Passage

The school at Rembrandt was nearly enveloped in greenery for all the early years I attended. There were more than head-high bushes along the west side, creating an almost tunnel effect, school building on one side, sidewalk for a floor, high reaching bushes on the other. The south end of the building had a tall elm at each corner, higher than the building itself; these elegant ladies kept the sun from the building in the daytime and threw some wonderful shadows at night.

East of the building, across the gravel parking/bus circle area, someone had planted rows of trees; I guess they were elm, as they disappeared sometime in the seventies. These trees were planted in the old check-row configuration, making a great obstacle course for drivers-ed classes, especially when practicing the art of backing a manual transmissioned 1953 Chevy in and out of the trees, like an overweight wood-tick on a slalom course.

To the north lay the wide-open spaces, so to speak, The Ball Field, nearly a hundred yards square. The main backstop and home plate area lay to the east; north was wide open with the exception of the single apple tree very, very deep in right field. At approximately 150 yards out stood and still stands the Engebretson home. Along the western border of the grounds, near the sidewalk and street, connecting this institution with the rest of the town, stood a single row of trees. Planted long ago, long enough that in the 1950s and 1960s they had achieved maturity and reached out to their siblings across the roadway, they formed a single canopy effect.

Rembrandt Consolidated never had the number of students needed to field a football team; however, there was sufficient competitive spirit in the youth of the community and surrounding farms to put on some hellatious battles. Oh, sure, we didn't ever have 11 players on each team; usually our field would be about 70 yards long, with

the south goal being the last tree in that row spoken of earlier. More often than not, the north goal line would be marked by a couple of well placed bicycles or baseball caps. The east boundary was usually an imaginary line running from the edge of one of the gym doors to wherever the cap or bike was placed.

On a couple of rare occasions there was an actual football field marked out with lime, five-yard separations, “The Whole Nine Yards.” This must be attributed to Myron Teague. In his tenure at Rembrandt he developed a Marching Band that took first in state competition. In order to do this, the band needed a field to practice on, and Mr. Teague laid one out. We thought we were in Green Bay or Chicago, playing on a field with real markings. Thanks, Myron.

Games were played at almost any hour of the day, as long as there was a semblance of daylight. Morning games were a rarity, with maybe a few starting at 11 a.m.; however, nobody wanted to miss the noon meal, so those contests were usually cut pretty short. Evening games and after-school events were pretty commonplace. Whenever there were enough kids around and someone had a football, away we went. No pads, no helmets, no cups, no cleats, half the time no shoes (you can run a lot faster in stocking feet, kick better too!) Age limitations, I guess there were none; if a small kid wanted to play, let him in—just try not to get run over by the big guys. Of course, those little guys did work well as obstacles. When the plan for the play was drawn out in the dirt, during the huddle often was heard the phrase, “Little Guy—You Stand Here! Don’t Move, Just Stand There.”

Sunday afternoon, 2 p.m., that was a ritual in the fall of the year. Around 1:30 things started to happen; a few cars would pull up, maybe a Cushman scooter or two, bicycles, an occasional horse, whatever means it took to get there, the youthful gladiators rallied. Warm-up meant throwing the ball back and forth, running out as far and fast as possible and determining whose arm could launch the longest throws that day. No goalposts were available so the “Field Goal Kicker” was a non-entity; there were some guys who could really punt a long ways; that was the kicking game.

Oddly enough, when it came time to choose up sides, even-handedness came into play (Never thought of this before—no politicians came off that field); the goal of choosing sides was to form “equally talented” teams to provide the participants with the impetus of good competition. Oh sure, it’s always fun to win; however, the scouts—obvious in absentia—evidently hadn’t heard of our contest.

The options were—one-hand touch (Wimpy), two-hand touch (more aggressive); of course both of these were “Below the Waist,” ooooooh, the phrase “Racked Up” comes to mind. Ninety per cent of the time these options were tossed in favor of everyone’s glory game—Tackle. Few if any of us had any formal training in the art of football. The kids who did had moved to town from somewhere the sport had been offered. They possessed a certain flair in the way they hit while blocking and tackling, and we sort of modeled our play after their techniques. Tackling around the neck was prohibited (well, usually), clotheslining was not good, and totally unfair was the practice of grabbing your opponent’s arm, pulling him across your body and throwing your hip/leg under him and

flipping him to the ground with a thunderous crash. In other words, if the other guy got up and you did too, there might be an argument, but whatever happened was resolved by “I Won’t Do It Again” followed by “You’re Damn Right You Won’t.”

These “Games” were played with all the vigor that could be mustered. If you didn’t play hard, look out, you were gonna get “plowed under” sooner or later. The event usually lasted from two in the afternoon until four or five, depending on injuries, players having to leave for other commitments, long arguments, or girlfriends drawing their guys away. In the junior and senior years, getting ready for Cob brought an end to many battles. (“Cob” being the Sunday Night Teen Dances at the Cobblestone Ballroom).

Injuries, I guess there were a few. Going to school Monday morning was hilarious. All of those who had participated in the previous day’s actions were “Gimped Up,” limping around, rubbing sore spots on arms and legs; occasionally a knot on someone’s head would gain some notoriety for a particular hit or tackle.

Perhaps I spoke erroneously when stating that the field was “wide open.” There were a few light poles out there. These babies were about 40 feet tall; at the top were lights for the baseball field. The base of each pole was approximately two feet across and firmly anchored in the ground, not a bit of give to them. One particular pole was placed just inside the last tree (The Goal Line) at the south end of the field. Might have been a hazard. In one particular instance, Richard Hegna was on a long run for the goal line; this kid could fly, and he was zipping down the sideline full-tilt, wide open and whatever other adjective would fit here. Whoever it was chasing him was not gonna catch him but got just close enough to grab-push on his left shoulder and spin him just a little, enough to throw him off balance so that he had to nearly turn himself backwards, in mid step, to keep his balance; well that almost worked. Richard went airborne, backwards, not too high; just as he was about to hit the ground, the pole came into the picture. Yep, he bonked his head against that pole, just the way all of us had feared might happen to us someday. Describing the sound created by the back of his head against that pole pretty much escapes me. Well, I guess it sounded like someone running at full speed banging his head into a wooden pole. The pole did resonate a bit. We all thought he was dead or soon would be. He lay there for a while, had to have had all kinds of cobwebs and stars in his consciousness for a few minutes, then started to get up slowly and stated, “Fellas, I think I got a concussion on that one.” I don’t remember if we played any more that afternoon; it was getting late in the day, and it seemed like a good point to call it a game.

Another particularly interesting “hit” took place between Dennis Sassman and James Larson. James was the ball carrier, running at full speed, a large-framed fellow without an ounce of fat on him. At about six feet tall and very strong, he presented a formidable adversary to bring down, especially at a dead run. Enter Dennis. Dennis was about six inches shorter than James but weighed in the same, if not more.

James ran in a straight-up manner, powerful strides (You wouldn’t want to get your arm caught between his shins). Dennis had attended school at Alta for a while and had training in football technique. He knew to keep low and make use of shoulders, etc. Also, Dennis was very quick, able to explode in short distances.

So here comes James, north to south, down the center of the field. I knew it was gonna hurt to get him tackled and I would be in on it. Suddenly, from the east, like a shot from a cannon, came Dennis—low to the ground, with the impending contact, launching himself upward, making use of the leg muscles and Banging!! against James. T'was as if two autos had collided at a blind intersection. Down they went in a pile; both were a bit dazed by the impact and got up rather slowly. If I remember correctly, Dennis noticed his front tooth missing, shortly before it was discovered planted in the side of James's head.

Living at the north edge of the field presented me with many opportunities to participate. I could always see if there was a game about to begin and usually had the desire to get involved.

Remember the statement about the little guys being used as obstacles in play strategy, and just don't get run over?

It was one of those late afternoon games. I had to have been pretty young at the time—Jerry Hegna and Richard Obman were playing (they have to be at least 100 years older than I am, OK 6-7). Those two were fast, I mean, really!! Fast!!

Jerry, when catching for the baseball team, could run to first base and back up throws to the first baseman. He'd be right beside the base runner and have all the catching equipment on. Amazing. Richard was always up on his toes and ran like a deer, so light on his feet. These two were very competitive, the best of friends, but so competitive.

Jerry had the ball running an outside sweep from south to north. He had completed the turn up field and was really kicking in towards top speed. Rich was coming across the field from west to east and going to have a chance to make the tackle. There was a little guy between them; obviously, he was going to be in the way of the tackler and unable to knock Jerry down. Rich was able to see that Jerry was going to get past him and go for the score, so he just grabbed that little guy and kind of flipped him in front of Jerry.

I think Jerry tried to hurdle me but didn't make it. We went down a jumble of arms, legs, knees, and elbows, whatever. It was dark for a while; then I realized it was just because I was under Jerry. He muttered something about thinking his wrist was broken—don't remember if it was or not. It was close to suppertime anyway. So ended the day's game.

We also used the field to play "Keep Away," with girls, in the dark; a different type of collision took place in that game.

Suddenly that Sunday

About the first weekend of August 1964 a rainy spell set into the Rembrandt area and just stayed. We were walking beans for the Mosbos, and the rainy weather gave us a break from that activity. I had hit 16 a couple of weeks earlier and fascination with the opposite sex was reaching fruition, so of course acquiring a "car" was the most important item in my life.

That Friday afternoon was as gray and dreary as late summer produces, but my spirits were high. Rich Jackson's car lot, up in Sioux Rapids, held the beauty for me. It was a 1949 Oldsmobile, formerly owned by the Fahrencro family, great shape, not a dent in her, a tiny bit of rust on the rocker panels, visible only when the doors were open. Straight six for a power plant, probably wouldn't win any races or compare with a 1962 Impala for looks, but it would get me down the road to that house in the country in which dwelt the object of my affections those hot summer nights. Didn't even care that it was a four-door.



I think it was Donnie Gibbons who gave me a ride up to complete the transaction. The price, ha, 25 bucks went a lot farther in those days, and that's what I paid. Cash on the counter and out the door I went, title in pocket, would have headed right to the Courthouse in Storm Lake, but it was too late in the afternoon to get there so planned on getting it registered in my name the following Monday.

The balance of that day and all of the next was a mixture of cleaning, radio adjusting, and driving around town again and again with whoever would stop and want to check out “my wheels.” Well of course it was parked at the end of our driveway, and nearly everyone who came to town drove right past me with my whisk broom and Windex in hand. Did notice that there was a “snow tire” on the left front of my chariot—will get that changed Monday also . . .

The Buena Vista County Fair was running that weekend, and “That Girl” had her horses entered in the 4-H competition. I caught a ride with Donnie G. again, and we spent Saturday evening at the fairgrounds. I couldn't drive the Olds to Alta, didn't have any insurance yet (Monday was going to be a busy day for me), but when we returned to Rembrandt around 11:00 p.m., a little spin around town was in order. I drove down the street past the school, left on the blacktop the mile out to Christianson's Mobile Station, left again and up 71 to the Junction of 351, through the quarter mile from the stop sign to Schertz's mailbox at the top of the hill overlooking town, then down that gently sloping and curved slab of concrete into town. As we reached the east edge of town, it became apparent that the headlights on “The Olds” needed a bit of adjustment. One of the lights was shining in the treetops in front of what was then the Bill Gibbons' residence. “This will be good for hunting at night” was the comment. Monday was coming—will fix that light then.

Sunday afternoons were for hanging out. Somehow the crew that afternoon ended up being me, Donnie Gibbons, Ronnie Sievers, Philip Mosbo, Richard Mosbo, and maybe Jim Graeber. They were all a couple of years older than I was, but it didn't seem to matter. The sun was finally breaking through the overcast, and the humidity was rising. We just basically drove around and around town, each guy taking his turn at providing the ride, as long as there was a radio in his car that is.

When it came to my turn, I had to have been beaming. My own wheels, a carload of “The Guys” on a Sunday afternoon—it didn't get much better than that. Oh sure, there

were some quirks and foibles; the back door popped open once on that gravel street north of the Cargill Elevator, up there where the metal Quonset was located. I came back around there right away just to see if there was a "bump" in the road that would have caused the door to "pop" open. That's when I noticed my bean-walking boots, corn knife, and the whole seat portion of the back seat of my car lying in the middle of the gravel street. All these had "fallen" out when that door "popped" open. Somehow those guys in the back had pulled the seat loose and flipped it out the door when it was open. Oh well, we had to improvise for amusement in that small town.

Evidently boredom set in with just riding around, and someone came up with an idea for a little excitement. That particular summer there seemed to be great interest in seeing who could negotiate the "S" curve in front of the Clarence McKibben farm about three-quarters of a mile south of town. The road was on a downhill slope when approaching from the north, and the railroad crossed right in the middle of the "S"; this added a degree of interest to the situation. From the south everything was uphill; gravity played a role in slowing the momentum of a vehicle approaching from this direction. Now this whole idea of racing through the curve doesn't appeal to me much at all these days; however, on a hot hazy Sunday afternoon in the early 1960s it was all right. Besides, all our applications to Rocket Scientology University had been rejected.

The general idea was to drive into the first curve at as high a speed as possible, brake hard up to the point the curve actually broke into 90 degrees or whatever angle it was, then release the brake and romp the footfeet through the straightaway, across the railroad crossing and around the second curve. Usually this produced a fishtail of varying degrees, according to the speed the driver could maintain and still control the vehicle.

Not everyone tried the curve that afternoon. I think Don Gibbons, Phil Mosbo and Ron Sievers all ran the course, and the top speed anyone made it through was around 60-65 miles per hour. The afternoon was wearing thin, and the group started to break up. One by one the guys went off towards home and their other Sunday evening activities. Around 5:00 p.m. it was down to Ron Sievers and me and one last spin around town in "The Olds." Surprise! I decided to try my hand at running that curve. Heck, I could probably run that thing just as well as anyone else, maybe.

Who knows what thoughts were flowing in the mind of that impetuous 16-year-old driving breakneck down that straight stretch of gravel road towards the Obman and McKibben farmsteads with the afternoon sun shining brilliantly now at full summer power. We passed that swampy patch of land adjacent to the railroad tracks named "Obatanna" (the title had been bestowed by Brian Hanson, on one of the numerous forays into that remaining portion of prairie and brush, a favorite haunt and hunting ground in our even earlier years), past the spot where Al Kruckman dumped his 1956 Ford a few years earlier and up the slight incline in front of Obman's, then down, down towards the north end of the curve. Get that speed up as fast as possible, watch out for the loose gravel along the side of the road, deposited in a long loaf by the county maintainer. Now into the curve, let up on the footfeet, hit the brakes just a little, zoom past McKibbens' driveway, ah the straight stretch, romp it hard, floor it, across the railroad crossing's wood

planks and big steel, now hard right for the second curve. Oh oh!! The back end is coming around more than planned; now it's becoming a huge fishtail; we're sliding almost sideways now. The front end is at 90 degrees to the road, and we're looking right into the ditch with the railroad berm and the front door of McKibbens' house behind. God, I wonder if anyone is looking out the window? Correct the slide, correct correct! Ah, here it comes back now almost straightened out, whoa, oh no!! Now we're fishtailing the other way; the right rear wheel is in the ditch and we're skidding sideways half in the ditch and half out. Hang on! Passenger door is popped open. Oh Oh! There goes Sievers right out the door. Oohhhh! It's on its side now, aarrghh!! It's on its top, sliding down the middle of gravel. I'm on the roof inside with rocks and sand coming in everywhere; now it's back on its side, one more lurch and whump! Back on its wheels at a dead stop. I'm lying full length across the front seat, looking at the ceiling of the car. Where's Sievers?

“Sievers? Sievers!! Sievers!!! Where are you?”

Seemingly years later came the reply, “Hey!! I'm down here in the ditch.”

“Whew! Thought I lost you.”

We looked each other over a bit and decided that no injuries had occurred; I had a couple of rips in the shoulder of my shirt and a couple of scratches underneath, no big deal. The car? Well, it was right side up, the windshield was gone, the top was wrinkled a bit, and fluids were running out beneath the motor compartment. Try to start it. Nothing! I opened the hood to find the battery had come loose and banged against the fan, forcing a blade into the radiator. Something had also severed the fuel line just off the carburetor. We pushed her off to the side of the road and started our walk back to town. I don't recall whether or not we stopped at either McKibbens' or Obmans' place in search of a ride. I think not; we were probably too embarrassed and were hoping no one would notice. The walk in was nothing new for me; I had traversed that roadway hundreds of times on foot, hunting expeditions, fishing at the creek or just plain adventuring. The path had grown longer that Sunday afternoon; hopefully, I had grown wiser.



Left to right: Dean Boettcher, George Engebretson Jr., Dennis Walter, Roger Gustafson, Bob Hegna, Willy Henley, John Binder, Chuck Arthur, Rolf Mosbo, Scott Bryan, Tom Cavanaugh, Robin Brown, Ron Pingel, Bill Binder.

Our Front Porch

There was a constant routine at our house on sunny Sunday summer days. Mom would prepare a rolled roast for dinner. This always had to be done by 12:30. Anytime there was an “Away” baseball game to be played (mainly the Town Team), the game was scheduled for 2:00 p.m. Therefore, leaving time would be 1:00 p.m., and the gathering point would be the front porch of our house.

I don't know how many times this scenario was replayed. We would get sat down together at the dinner table (quite often this was the only meal our family would be together for all week), and the sound of people playing catch, swinging on the porch swing, horseplay of various sorts, and just plain conversation would waft in through the door. Frequently, the Sunday dinner was a bit “Rushed.”

“Duane”

So many memories of Rembrandt are centered on the baseball teams “George” coached. There was another person behind the scenes who needs to be recognized—Duane (Constance - “Connie”) Doyle Engebretson, George's wife.

Countless would be the number of phone calls she fielded. Is there practice today? Is today's—tonight's game still on? Did it rain in town? Did anyone find my glove, hat, shoes, etc.? What time are we leaving tonight, and who's driving? When uniforms were turned in and needed washing, Duane did the job. Many times Duane was recruited to go uptown and “Run the Place” (The Tavern) while George was off to the game(s) or practice.

Duane rarely complained about her duties. I guess she understood how important it was for the youth of Rembrandt to have such a worthwhile outlet for energy. She never wanted any credit for the tasks she performed through the years, helping to make the program successful.

Dad would want to be sure her contributions are noted when the summer baseball programs he operated are mentioned. I guess that old story is still true. Alongside every good man, there's a good woman; “this one just wasn't seen as much.” Thanks, Duane!!

Highway 71

About three-quarters of a mile east of Rembrandt lies U.S. Highway 71. Filling that three-quarters mile are some gently rolling hills, growing larger to the north and smaller to the south. I guess that's why we always went “Up” to Sioux Rapids or Spencer and “Down” to Truesdale or Storm Lake. Thinking of those hills now, I realize they are like huge but smooth-edged snow drifts and that there is a ridge of them running as far as the eye can see. The two most prevalent, to the east of town, are shaped almost as if Mother Nature herself were lying on her side. Atop her shoulder would be the old Sam Rystad place with its two large homes, one once occupied by the Eastman family. At her hip nothing but its graceful curvature, broken only by the knowledge of the spot where Christianson's Gas Station operated long ago, is on the other side.

Late at night, whether in one's bed, on the porch swing, roaming the streets or whatever, the sound of the semi-trucks shifting gears and straining to make the grade would permeate the air. Such a lonesome sound it was, thoughts of who might be out there on that highway with their load, where they were bound for and where they had been, must have drifted in and out of the minds of all who heard.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I attended Buena Vista College, served with the U.S. Army Infantry in the Republic of Viet Nam where I was wounded twice, received an A.A. in Business from Iowa Central Community College and a B.A. degree in psychology from Mankato State College. I married Karyn in 1973, and we have three children, Jesse, Joshua, and Amy. I was in sales, then worked for Illinois Central Railroad, and since 1982 have worked for the United States Postal Service. I'm currently the postmaster in Marcus, Iowa.

John Binder - Class of 1966

As was the custom for farm families in 1959, March 1st was moving time. That was the date that my parents, Calvin and Freda Binder, my sister Marilyn, brothers Bill and Scott, and I, John, moved to a farm three miles south of Rembrandt.

Growing up on that farm and going to school at Rembrandt provided many memories of an ever more distant past. Hard physical work was the norm and running a tractor until dark after school or throwing bales all day on a hot summer day were tasks that were just accepted. Hard work was followed by hard play. No matter what the season, there was always time to participate in the sport of that season or any other school or church activity going on. In the earlier days transportation to summer baseball practice was not always available. There were many times that Bill and I pedaled bikes down the gravel road to a hot baseball practice that was followed by an icy soda at George's Place.



John, Bill, and Scott Binder

One of the great benefits of small town life is the involvement in all the various activities. Being able to participate in the various activities led to camaraderie amongst our peers as well as a bonding between families and extended families due to all having a common interest.

My older brother Bill graduated with the Class of 1965 and attended college until he entered the Army during the Viet Nam conflict. His leadership abilities were recognized, and he was sent on to OCS (Officer Candidate School) where he achieved the

rank of 2nd Lieutenant. After various duty assignments, he received his orders to ship out to Viet Nam. While he was home on leave in Rembrandt, he came down with



Bill Binder

hepatitis and was hospitalized in Storm Lake. Apparently, he had become infected while he was getting his inoculations to go overseas. After dismissal from the hospital and the following recovery period, he was issued new orders. He would not be going to Viet Nam after all; he would spend his remaining duty stateside.

It was during this period of time that Bill's strength of character became evident to all who were close to him. He felt a strong duty to his country and felt that he needed to do what he could to contribute. Instead of serving out his time and coming home, he re-enlisted and signed up for flight training. He became fixed wing qualified and then went on to helicopter training. He told me that he had always had a fascination with helicopters, going back to 1961 when a weather balloon landed on our farm and two Army helicopters came to recover the instruments. We have photos of our family sitting in the cargo door of one of those helicopters, little knowing how they would play into a personal role in the future.

Bill went on to qualify on helicopters and received his orders to Viet Nam. By this time he was a Captain, and he would be flying a Cobra attack helicopter. What followed became one of our family's darkest hours.

After only a few weeks in S.E. Asia, his gunship was shot down over Cambodia. There were no survivors. In June 1970, Bill came home one final time. He lies at rest in a Storm Lake cemetery.

After Rembrandt

My sister was the first to leave the confines of the Rembrandt community. She graduated as a member of the Class of 1963, then went on to nurses' training and marriage to Bob Saathoff, another member of the Class of 1963. Their careers have led them to various locations, but they have spent the last 20 plus years in Texas, where they currently reside in Austin. They have two grown children and are waiting (anxiously, I think) for grandchildren.

My parents stayed on the farm until 1975, when they and my brother Scott moved to Alta. Scott graduated from Alta after having spent his first eight years at Rembrandt. Scott continued his education in Iowa and has followed his career path about the country. He and his wife Denise and two sons have lived in San Antonio and Houston, Texas, Detroit, Michigan and currently reside in Charlotte, North Carolina.

My parents lived in the Alta community until 1998 when they moved to Clay Center, Kansas. This is the area of Kansas where they grew up and lived until moving to Iowa in 1952. In February of this year, they celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary.

As for myself, I was a member of the graduation class of 1966 from Rembrandt. I stayed in the Rembrandt area for several years after school. Our last year for farming was 1986 when my wife, Kat, and I and our three sons moved on to explore other opportunities. We have lived in Minnesota, Nebraska, and we now reside in Galesburg, Illinois.

In July 2001, all three generations of our family returned to Rembrandt to help celebrate the Centennial. We traveled from Kansas, Texas, North Carolina, Nebraska, and Minnesota. We surprised our parents with an M tractor (Farmall) that we had rebuilt and painted for the parade. This M was the only piece of farm equipment left from the years spent farming. This tractor was also the first piece of equipment that Dad bought when he came home from Italy after World War II.

Many reunions were made, and many memories were recounted at the Centennial. One common thread of conversation was the many and varied success stories of Rembrandtonians. As I look back at the various conversations and observations of that weekend, I have realized that there are many types of success stories from this little community.

Some have achieved great financial success. Some have made high scholastic achievements. Some have raised wonderful families. Some have traveled extensively and lived in exotic places. Others have stayed in the Rembrandt community and continued to contribute their time and efforts into maintaining a quality of life. Indeed, there are many types of success stories. These hometown values of hard work, honesty, pride of accomplishment, concern and care for others, should be passed on. If my sons, who have only visited and never resided in Rembrandt, could absorb and carry on these values, then that would truly be success.

Peg Hadenfeldt Mosbo - Class of 1966

Growing up in the small farming community of Rembrandt in the 1950s and 1960s was indeed a wonderful time in my life. As kids my sister Dixie, my brother Mike, and I made our own fun and were never “bored.” Riding bikes to the neighbors or the creek down the road, playing with new kittens in the haymow, building a tent on the clothesline with blankets and clothes pins, sledding down the hill on the old wooden sled, making a playhouse in the grove and baking mud pies with real eggs and flour (that one got us in a bit of trouble)—those were fun times!



Dixie, Mike, and Peg Hadenfeldt

Of course, there were many chores around the house and farm to help with. Our family raised turkeys, so we helped out with debeaking, catching them for market and dressing them for customers. Sorting cattle and hogs was always fun, especially when a

“manure cob” fight broke out! There was silage to pitch out of the silo and then carry to the bunks to feed the cattle, hog pens and cattle barns to clean out by hand, gardening, canning and cooking for extra men. I don't recall arguing about it; we just knew we were expected to do our share.

Field trips to the Spencer Dairy, skating parties at the Trianon Roller Rink, 4-H, school operettas and Halloween parties were some of the highlights of grade school. The Youth Center, MYF, church camp, Christmas caroling with the Lutherans, Viking Days in Sioux Falls, the band marching in Sioux City for homecoming at Morningside College, chorus, speech, softball, basketball, annual staff and going to the Sunday night Teen Hop at Cobblestone were the activities as I got to junior high and high school.

Getting your driver's license was always a big deal. We had driver's training in the summer. We had class to study the book, and then we had to get our permit before we could get behind the wheel. Linda Buckendahl (Collins) and I did not pass the test that morning, so we talked someone into taking us to Spencer so we could try again. We passed and felt pretty good about that the next morning in class, but I am not sure if we shared with our classmates that we had taken the test twice the day before.

I recall Sandra Eastman (Mastaw) and me doing some things we should not have! We were probably in junior high and wanted to see the junior class play that was being presented on Halloween. Sandy talked me into going to the matinee and then going to her place after school, so she asked her parents to take us into town to the play. Of course, we never went to the play but roamed around town and soaped a few windows and nearly got caught by the cop. That was pretty exciting back then!

Other fun times included marching in the band at Morningside. After the parade we had some free time uptown to shop, go bowling or whatever. Jewel Bennett (Kruckman) and I decided to visit her older sister who was living and working there. For some reason Jewel and I swapped outfits, and I ended up wearing the majorette outfit with those big old white boots. When we were leaving her sister's apartment building, I slipped on the stairs wearing those boots and went all the way down on my backside. We were a bit late getting back to the bus, and just as we approached the parking lot, a long train came down the track and we had to wait, making us even later. I don't remember if we got into trouble for being late, but it seems we had some explaining to do. Another time Jewel talked me into trading dresses with her when we were at church camp and had to dress up for meals. We were not the same size, and I was pretty miserable in her sundress!

The saddest memory of my high school years was when we lost our classmate, Dennis Walter, in a car accident. That was pretty traumatic for the school and community.

As I look back I think of all the good teachers both from school and Sunday School that made a difference in my life. Our class was fairly large by Rembrandt standards (17 students) but very small by today's standards. It was wonderful to go all through your school days with many of the same kids from kindergarten to your senior year.

Our class has remained close and has had a reunion every five years. The past year was our 35th year reunion, and we had a very good turnout and a wonderful time. I would like to thank the many local people who planned and carried out the many activities, but what really made it happen were the many alumni who returned to the area for the Centennial Celebration!

I left the area for about six years and then returned with my husband, Richard Mosbo, to farm for about 20 years and raise our three girls before moving to Park Rapids, Minnesota, where we own and operate a sewing machine and vacuum cleaner center.

We always enjoy coming back to the Rembrandt area to visit family and friends. It was and still is a great little community!

Sandra Eastman Mastaw - Class of 1966

Growing up in small town USA

Growing up in a small town in the U.S.A. is certainly not a bad thing, as I have found out, as long as it was a place like Rembrandt, Iowa.

Being raised on a farm and thinking that I was helping out was a big deal to me even as a small child.

Some of my fondest memories are going into town to visit; I had quite a route set up. It started at Ginkens' garage where I would go in and visit with Homer and Howard; after many inquisitive questions, I knew it was time to leave when I was given a handful of peanuts out of the old peanut dispenser and off I would go. Next stop was the newspaper office to visit with the Lyons, who always had time for a cheery hello and let me watch them set the print. Next stop was at George's; he would always let me stay for a short time to visit, and then it was time to leave with a quick wink from George. Next stop was at Peterson's store, watching the people and visiting with those I knew and off I would go. Then it was to one of my favorite places—the First National Bank and a visit with Lloyd who always had a smile and seemed as though he was glad that I stopped in to play on his typewriter or just visit for a time. Then to Bill Smith's and down in the basement to watch them candle the eggs. I thought that was amazing and they always let me try my hand at it. At Hegna's Locker it was always fun to watch Herman cut up the meat with all those saws and knives and watch Beulah help wrap the meat in that crisp white paper. Then to the library to see what was new and across the street to Mickelson's for a quick visit. After all, I was only a kid, and my legs were short at that time. Hegna's store was where I would usually run into many people that I knew, and there was always candy in those big bulk boxes that sat at the end of the counter. Then to the Café where Mrs. Weber would be willing to take a little time out of her schedule for a big "Hello!" What really needs to be said about my route was that no one ever made me feel like I was out of place or that they didn't have time for me.

Now if it was a Saturday, then you were in for a real treat; you had to get to town early to find a parking place. There was the concert in the park and then the theatre for a

show, and afterwards we all took down the chairs and did some roller skating. Where else could you find that kind of entertainment for under a dollar? Remember that included popcorn and pop!

People always say everyone else knows your business in small towns, and that was often true. If you had done anything that you shouldn't have been doing, you knew that your parents would know about it before you got home. Or if you were lucky enough to get home before someone else corrected you, that was always done with kindness because people actually cared!

School was filled with tons of memories—sports in the gym and stands always full of cheering parents and fans, band, chorus, class trips, quick stops in the cafeteria to steal a cookie from Berniece and Beulah and, oh yes, classes. The best thing is the fact that you knew everyone from kindergarten to the seniors by their names and knew who their parents were. Try that in those big schools today. You made lifetime friends, and I really mean friends that you know you can call and rely on. As soon as you say “hi,” they know who you are. The biggest reward was to have teachers who took the time out for each of their students to be sure no one was left behind.

Church, MYF, camp, Christmas caroling, and the fact that the school never had anything on Thursday nights which were set aside for church activities for all the churches—that only happens in a small town.

I could go on and on and take you down memory lane and mention hundreds of people that touched my life in one way or another, but I know all of you have similar memories.

People say about an all-school reunion—why would you go all the way back to Iowa for that? That is an easy answer for me—to see all your old friends and to reminisce; it doesn't take long before you feel like you never left.

Last year being the centennial for Rembrandt was really special. To look down Main Street and see all the people and the cars, you would have thought, “hey it's Saturday night and time to get ready for the band concert!”

After Rembrandt

I am married; my husband Tom has his own company selling new merchandise. I am a Medical Technologist and supervise a lab at a family practice clinic; I also do OSHA inspections of other medical facilities. We have two grown sons. Presently we are living on an acreage in South Range, Wisconsin, overlooking Lake Superior.

Paul Ducas – Class of 1967

As a parent, one of the things that you try to do is to instill in your children a set of values, morals, principles, a sense of what is right and wrong, and so on. Looking back on growing up in Rembrandt, one realizes that there was (for the most part) a consensus of, or a set of morals/values that was consistent throughout the community. We basically

got the same messages wherever we went, whether it was church, school, baseball practice or friends' houses. This is in contrast to my experience of raising my children in the greater metro Atlanta area, where there were constantly conflicting sets of values coming from the community. But then again, Rembrandt was in another time, another place.

What did you do on the farm?

My kids have asked me many times, “What did you do on the farm?” I have always had a problem with where to start. But one thing about growing up on a farm was that there was always something to do. I learned at a very young age not to say “I’m bored” to my parents, because they always found something for me to do—like cleaning out the pig pens or mowing around the buildings. I had three older brothers, an older sister and two younger sisters. Each of us had assigned chores, and we spent a fair amount of time each week working around the farm both before and after school.

As was typical at the time, we raised cattle, hogs, and chickens. The worst part about this was that you were really tied down, because the livestock liked to eat on a regular basis and they were not potty trained. My first chores were feeding and watering the chickens. This doesn't sound too bad except that the chickens were housed on the second floor of a building—the first floor was divided into pig pens— and the feed and water had to be carried in a bucket up a flight of stairs. The bucket was just about my size (I was in first grade), and I still remember lifting the bucket up with both hands to the next step, one step at a time until I got to the top. I discovered that water is heavy and chickens drink a lot of water.

We were given responsibility at an early age. I was in the field operating a tractor by first grade. I was allowed to do two things: roll oats and pull a drag on a plowed field. We had an old (even at that time) Farmall F-20. This tractor was not like tractors that are available today, many of which are “fully automatic” and come equipped with climate-control, stereo and GPS equipment. The F-20 had an engine, hand crank to start it, two small front and two large rear tires, steering wheel, throttle, clutch, brake, gearshift lever, and seat. Operating it at my age was a rather complicated maneuver. I had to stand up, hold onto the steering wheel with both hands, and brace myself against the front of the metal seat to stretch to push in on the clutch to start or stop or change gears. The tractor was started by hand cranking. This crank was a metal rod (in the shape of an “L”) that stuck out about one and a half feet from the front of the tractor just above the two front tires. It was about shoulder height on me and had to be pushed in about an inch and then turned fast. I wasn't big enough or strong enough to turn the crank. Turning the crank to start the engine makes today's “gym” exercise equipment seem like child's play. My greatest fear was that I would stall the tractor while out in the field and then have to walk clear back to the house to get someone to come out and start the tractor for me.

I remember one time a farmer had a heart attack and faced an extended recovery time. I don't remember who the farmer was or who organized the community effort, but I do remember that other farmers got together and farmed that family's farm from spring

planting clear through the fall harvest. What really impressed me was even though everyone was hard pressed to get their work done at home, prime time was taken to help a neighbor. And the relatively short amount of time it took to plow a 40-acre field when there were 15 or so tractors in the same field was unbelievable. Man, it made it seem slow when you went home to plow by yourself.

Growing up, my friends and I built a lot of things. We would build forts by constructing tunnels and rooms in the barn haymow using bales of straw or hay. The bales were maybe 20" deep by 18" wide by 36" long and stacked 30 or 40 feet high. Looking back, it is a wonder that no one was trapped by a collapsing fort. We built tree houses in the grove of trees that surrounded our farm buildings. We got into tunneling and dug a labyrinth of tunnels and underground rooms in the grove. One summer we built our own swimming hole by damming up a creek that was about five miles west of our farm. It wasn't that big, but it was within bike-riding range and was a great way to cool off in the summer.

Some of my friends and I learned to shoot rifles and shotguns while we were in third or fourth grade and did a lot of hunting together. Well, sometimes it was not really hunting but rather shooting at anything that moved (or didn't move), depending on the situation. When we did hunt, it was mainly for squirrels, rabbits, and pheasants, with an occasional jackrabbit or fox thrown in. There was always a friendly competition as to who was the best shot. I will now reluctantly concede that Georgie (George Engebretson Jr.) probably made the best shot of all of us with his .22 caliber rifle, when he killed a fox with one shot at a distance of about three fourths of a mile. No, let me rescind that. Make that the luckiest shot.

Baseball was a big summertime activity for many kids, myself included. It's odd, but one of the things I remember was that while we all had uniforms, they didn't always look identical. The design was the same, but the colors didn't exactly match because some of the uniforms had been around for more seasons than others. No big thing—we just went out, had fun, and beat just about everyone we played.



Paul Ducas with the F-20 in the background

I was not a particularly good baseball player but was fortunate to have grown up at a time when there were many very good athletes. One year our baseball team was playing in the Babe Ruth State Tournament at Fort Dodge, Iowa. The pre-game ceremonies were concluded and the team had come back to the dugout for a quick pep talk before taking the field at the start of the game. (At this point, there are a couple of things you should know. First, this was an incredibly awesome spectacle intended to inspire confidence in ourselves and to intimidate the opposing team. And second, the dugout was

fenced in with about a five-foot-wide opening on one end.) The crescendo of the pep talk rapidly accelerated, until everyone was yelling and screaming “Let's Go, Let's Hustle” at a feverish pitch. At the height of the frenzy, the team burst out of the dugout onto the field to seek its glory. Suddenly, there was confusion, a cloud of dust, a glove flying here, a cap going there, a foot in the air, an arm on the ground, and no players making it to the infield. What great calamity befell this mighty team? Well, as the team stormed onto the field, someone (unknown to this day) tripped and fell. Most of the team ended up dazed and disheveled—piled in a heap in front of the dugout. The crowd loved it. For the record, it is my recollection that our third baseman, sitting in the dirt facing the dugout, looking bewildered, glasses askew, missing glove and cap was the last survivor to stand. We did OK. This was the tournament that we beat teams from Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Davenport, and Sioux City. One of our pitchers, Chuck Arthur, set a state tournament record striking out 17 of a possible 21 and won the best pitcher trophy. To the rest of the team it seemed like Chuck and Bill Binder spent the whole game just playing catch with each other.

Then there were the Sunday afternoon autumn football games played in the outfield of the baseball field next to the school. Whoever showed up could play, and sides were chosen to try to have balanced teams. These were “full tackle” games and could get pretty rough. So rough, that kids from other towns, who would occasionally come by and who actually played football for their school, refused to play because it was too rough. The playing field was laid out so that one of the baseball field light poles (like a big telephone pole) was one corner of the football field. After one game, I got home and my mom said, “Your nose is crooked!” Sure enough. It was broken. I had gone out for a pass near the end zone. Running at full speed, I looked over my shoulder, caught the pass, and as I turned my head forward, slammed into the pole in mid-stride, face first. I don't remember if I got the touchdown.

One of the facts of life about growing up on a farm was that things broke and you learned how to fix them. My parents never seemed to get upset if something broke. Their first words were always, “Did anyone get hurt?” We had a tractor shed that housed a wide array of tools that we learned to use. I was most challenged with learning how to use an arc welder. In simple terms, an arc welder is used to “melt” two pieces of metal together. We had a front-end loader that could be put on a tractor and used to scoop up manure, dirt, snow, etc. The brackets on the bucket or the bucket itself always seemed to break. I would weld it to fix it. It would break. I would weld it again. I would repeat this process until the weld would hold. This was a real pain, but that was how we learned a lot of things. You break it, you fix it, and you keep fixing it until you get it right. After awhile you learned how to do it right the first time.

On rainy days or when there was no other work to be done, we would often spend the time in the shop. One of the things that we did was to build and work on cars. My older brothers made a couple of stock cars, and we kept one (a light green two-door coupe) to hot rod around the farm. Several kids learned to drive in that car and in our old black pickup with silver stacks. I was in sixth or seventh grade, so this was a lot of fun

for my friends and me. We had a little road that circled our farm buildings and grove that was maybe a half-mile in length, and we would have “races” on this “track.” We also drove it in our hay fields, spinning and sliding around in both the summer and winter, just having a grand old time. Somehow my parents managed to have “toys” for us to play with. Later we had two snowmobiles and two small dirt bikes (motorcycles) to ride.

My father (Bruce McKibben) liked to make things too. As far as I know, he came up with the idea for dual tires. He had someone make a metal ring about eight inches wide. The ring was then placed on the outside rim of the back tractor tire and then a second tractor tire rim was put against the ring. He welded brackets on each rim and used a combination chain and bolt to attach the second tire to the first. If I remember correctly, we were the first in the area with dual tires on our tractor. I remember people thought it was funny, but within a few years, it seemed like everyone was using dual tires.

He also made a riding lawn mower that was like no other lawn mower ever made. It could mow grass, pull a wagon loaded with corn, and go 50 miles per hour. (We used our pickup like a pace car to determine the mph. This was not the maximum speed but rather the speed at which I chickened out.) It was made from things we had around the farm. The base frame was made with reinforced angle irons. Mounted on the frame was an air-cooled Wisconsin engine taken off an old hay baler. The rear axle assembly was taken from a car, complete with brakes, and the axle shortened, so the back tires were auto tires. The drive train consisted of two four-speed (that's right, eight gears) automobile transmissions and an automobile clutch. The steering and front wheel assembly were made from angle irons and metal rods. The front tires were small, about eight inches high. A small gas tank was mounted on the front and a detachable “store bought” mower assembly completed the ensemble. It wasn't until we painted it John Deere green and yellow that people stopped laughing at it.

As we were growing up, we would, from time to time, go into town with the intent of creating some mischief. As I recall, the things we did were not malicious or damaging to property. The only time that I remember really being scared with what we had done involved some gasoline. We knew that gasoline was flammable so we had not really experimented with it. However, one summer night we decided to observe first-hand the flammable characteristics of the liquid. We decided that pouring gasoline on blacktop (as in road) was not a good idea because the blacktop might burn. What we needed was cement. Cement does not burn. We eliminated Highway 71 (a cement highway) as being too dangerous, what with all the traffic. We then realized that Main Street in Rembrandt was cement, a perfect laboratory for our experiment. We got in a car, drove slowly from the west end of Main Street to about the old movie theatre, a distance of about 120 yards, leaving behind a trail of gasoline from a 5-gallon gas can. We stopped and then lit it. Our observations from this experiment were as follows. When gasoline burns late at night, it is bright. It burns about three to four feet high. It continues to burn for what seems like an eternity. And, if I remember correctly, we also observed that there was tar in the expansion joints between the cement road slabs—tar burns. And finally, a gasoline fire is

hard to stomp out. Our conclusion from this experiment was that it was probably not a good thing to do. So ended our experiments with flammable liquids.

Fire Fighting

One night when I was 12 there was a severe thunderstorm with high winds, rain, and lots of lightning. We lived a mile west of Rembrandt and had a second set of buildings on the western edge of town that had two round, galvanized metal grain storage bins. My father was concerned that the high winds might have blown the tops off the grain bins. He decided that we needed to check things out. This was in line with a long-standing tradition of going out into storms (rain, hail, snow, lightning, wind, blizzards, tornadoes) to see what was happening. It was about 10:30 p.m., and by the time we reached the bins, the storm had subsided to a steady rain. The bins were OK (the baling wire held), but we noticed that the electricity was off in town so we decided to check it out. The only car on Main Street was George Engebretson's so we stopped and went into his bar/pool hall to get the latest news. The place was lit with a couple of candles sitting on the bar, and George was the only other person there. That's when the call to action began.

The fire phone rang. (There was a fire phone in the fire station next door and in George's Place.) A barn on a farm northeast of town was hit by lightning and was on fire. George hit the switch to sound the town's fire siren. Silence . . . no electricity. He picked up the regular phone to call the volunteer firemen . . . silence; the phone was dead. Well, guess who was volunteered to run around town to wake up the firemen. Yep, me. So while George and Bruce were getting the fire station doors open, cranking up the tanker truck and pumper fire engine, I took off to sound the alarm. My first stop was the home of the mayor/fire chief (Emmett Skov). Now, it's about 10:45 at night, you are rudely awakened by a pounding on your front door that will not stop, you go to the door, and are greeted by an excited, breathless farm kid wearing a World War II GI helmet and rain poncho yelling something about a fire. What would you do? A) Call his parents and ask why their kid was out ringing doorbells at this hour of the night; B) Close the door and go back to sleep; or C) Ask what the devil was going on. Fortunately, the mayor chose C. In any event, the firemen were mustered out of bed and sent off to fight the fire. George, Bruce, and I returned to George's Place.

It happened again. The fire phone rang. A fire was reported south of town. This presented somewhat of a dilemma, what with the two trucks and entire fire department having just left town. What happened next, I believe, would only happen in a small rural town. I remember a short conversation in which Bruce and George decided they had to do something. A neighbor needed help.

Now, there happened to be an old fire engine left at the station. It was operable but was not usually used. Bruce asked George if he knew how to operate it; he said yes, and the three of us climbed aboard. One minor problem—we couldn't figure out how to turn on the headlights. (This should have been a clue to us.) We tried every switch and knob we could find. The windshield wipers worked, the siren was loud inside the building, the

flashing red lights flashed, the spotlights glared; everything but the headlights could be turned on. The lighting problem was solved with George illuminating the way with his car. We roared out of town behind George's car, heading south, with siren wailing.

Problem was . . . we couldn't find the fire. We went to the farm where the caller had thought the fire was, and it wasn't. George saw a glow to the north and concluded that the caller had seen the same glow but had misjudged the distance to the fire, thinking that it was closer to him than it really was. And so, off to the north we went . . . to be sure that the glow was the original fire and not a new one. What made the ride more fun was that the old fire truck was the style that had a bench seat and fold-down windshield . . . no cab, no doors. And I have no idea why it had windshield wipers. I remember that as it began to rain harder, the raindrops would really hit you in the face with a splat. As we sped north on Highway 71 (well, 40 mph was fast for that old truck), I remember turning on the siren just as we approached farmhouses to wake everyone up. We met a county sheriff and a Sioux Rapids fire truck (it had headlights) heading south and wondered if they knew more than we did. After another mile or so and seeing no sign of a fire, we turned around and headed back to the fire station.

And so as we pulled into the station, a great adventure for a 12-year-old came to an end. Only in a small town would this happen. While we didn't find a fire to fight (in retrospect that was probably a good thing), we called it a night knowing that we had answered a call for help from a neighbor.

Saturday Nights

There was a time when Saturday nights were really special—it seemed the entire community went to town. I would get 25 cents to spend (which was a lot of money to a five or six year old). I usually spent 10 cents for the movie (Rembrandt did have a movie theatre back then), 5 cents for a bag of popcorn, and 10 cents for a big RC Cola or two 5-cent candy bars. There were swings, a slide, and a merry-go-round in the park next to the theatre, and two horseshoe pits between the café and the theatre that were lit by strings of bare light bulbs.

As time went on, Saturday nights became a little quieter in town. In 1968, Rolf Mosbo, John Binder, and I were home from college and were watching on TV the Democratic National Convention being held in Chicago. There were some large protest demonstrations going on, and Mayor Daley of Chicago decided to send the police in to quell the demonstrators. When the police confronted the demonstrators, fights (actually a riot) broke out. We got disgusted, turned the TV off, and looked for something to do. We decided to go into town and play cards (I think that was around 10 at night).

Things were quiet in town, so we set the card table up right in the middle of the Main Street intersection. By positioning the table in the street, we had a clear view in four directions, so as to better observe the comings and goings of the citizenry.

Well, the only traffic observed that night was at about midnight when Willie Stange came barreling into town in his semi-trailer truck. We saw him coming and discussed whether we should abandon the card game for a safer location. We concluded

that the candle on the table provided enough illumination to clearly identify our presence. Besides, we were there first and didn't want to move. (One wonders how we made it into college with this display of intelligence.) The illumination worked (there was a good four-foot clearance between us and the semi), but we were a little miffed because the breeze generated by the semi not only blew out the candle but also scattered the cards all over the street.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. in Industrial Administration in 1971 and from Washington University in St. Louis with an M.B.A. in 1973. Debbie and I were married in 1977 and now live in Kennesaw, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. We have two children, a daughter Andrea, who is a freshman at Georgia State University and a son John, a junior in high school. My profession is accounting, and I have been a corporate controller for 20+ years. My spare time has been spent supporting my kids' activities, such as Boy Scouts, band, soccer, and swim team booster clubs, and boating.

Rolf Mosbo - Class of 1967

Class Trip

The economic realities and trends of rural America in the second half of the twentieth century are now recognized and well-documented: rapid mechanization of farming and improvements in general health care meant that farm work became less physically strenuous and could be accomplished by individuals for a longer period in their extended work life. With the absence of new and/or better employment opportunities, a major out-migration of young people from rural areas was the result.

In the Rembrandt area, the groundwork for this movement was firmly in place as educated parents had emphasized the importance of a solid schooling experience for their children. Graduates of Rembrandt Consolidated High School had, in most cases, internalized the fundamentals of the three “Rs” and were well prepared to take on the diverse intellectual and vocational challenges present in the larger economy.

Central to the first two “Rs” was the general subject of English—a catchall term for language arts—and an area that received particular scrutiny by the many mothers in the community who previously had careers as teachers. During the decade of the 1960s, Cleone Schneck was in charge of Rembrandt High's four years of English instruction, and she stands out, in my view, as one who went the extra mile (or miles, as it turns out) to give her students an extraordinary preview of the world they would be entering after graduation.

Now, to know Mrs. Schneck was not automatically to love her. She was a bombastic, voluptuous woman: short in stature, pleasantly rotund, but larger than life and dedicated to her academic subject matter. Having studied acting (I believe) at one time, she adopted an authoritarian persona as she carried herself theatrically around the school.

She demanded excellence in her own classroom and was seemingly ubiquitous in her pursuit of discipline throughout the building. But along with her strict attitude and her flair for the dramatic, she encouraged creativity within the structure of her classes and the plays she directed. She was a presence, to be sure, and like her or not, hardly anyone could be indifferent to her.

I secretly enjoyed her—probably because I liked words and language in general—but I admit wondering what good reading *Silas Marner* would do me later in life. Mrs. Schneck, however, left no doubt that it would do me immense good at that moment if I completed this assignment. Such is the stuff of good education, I think, as it is not for the student to determine the significance or future relevance of a topic. But many were the kids who could add emphasis to a private complaint about her class in general, her vocabulary tests in particular, or her demeanor merely by using her first name. There was only one “Cleone,” and memories of her are surely mixed, but few can question her effectiveness as an instructor. Her shining contribution to the education of Rembrandt's young people, though, in my estimation, occurred regularly some 500 miles from Rembrandt.

Senior Skip Day had become a tradition at RHS by the early 1960s—a designated day when the senior class was given the day off for a joint excursion to a Midwest attraction. Mrs. Schneck volunteered for the post of Senior Class Sponsor/Advisor early on and proceeded to take Skip Day well past its original structure as a day trip to the level of an art form. Utilizing some mysterious (to me, at least) contacts from her past, she organized an annual extended weekend trip to Chicago that was an exhausting whirlwind of activity from start to finish.

Later referred to as the “Senior Trip,” this event became the focus of fund-raising events by the junior class each year as they planned and prepared for their eventual participation. And Mrs. Schneck, through her web of connections, managed to see that it was all accomplished in a very cost-effective manner. With all of the money raised by, and for, the class, no one would be left behind because of personal affordability problems. This was an egalitarian, all-inclusive enterprise through and through.

The first step in her scheme was getting the official Skip Day scheduled for a Friday in late April, or early May (as I recall). The trip began in Storm Lake at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evening as the group—senior students along with Mrs. Schneck and her co-senior-sponsor, Duane Rath, and both of their spouses—boarded a passenger car on the Illinois Central train for the 12-hour overnight trip east. Arriving in downtown Chicago at 7:00 a.m., the sight-seeing began immediately, and continued at a frenetic pace until Sunday evening when the same train took them home just in time for classes to begin Monday morning.

As I think back on all the things we did and saw in Chicago in 1967, the length and breadth of the undertaking boggles my mind, and the genius of the orchestration becomes clear. Consider this list of activities: a morning bus tour of China Town and other famous areas of the city that would be “unsafe” later in the day; a visit to the Museum of Science and Industry, shopping time at Marshall Fields (a gigantic

department store); attending an afternoon baseball game at either Comiskey Park or Wrigley Field (depending on whether the White Sox or Cubs happened to be in town); a trip to a large zoo (the name of which escapes me now); two nights (Friday and Saturday) at the famous Palmer House hotel; an evening at a real supper (“night”) club (we saw comedian George Kirby who was a nationally known performer at that time); and an evening performance of a Broadway-style musical (*Fiddler on the Roof* at the Schubert Theater on my trip).

And those are just the high points that I remember. I am sure others in the Class of 1967 have memories of other sights and sounds that were significant to them. I cannot imagine that the whole thing isn't high on everyone's personal list of recollections from school. The travel, by itself, was interesting to me. I discovered Mrs. Schneck was a pretty savvy poker player—who'd o' thunk it? Seeing and talking to these esteemed adults (the sponsors and their spouses) in the relaxed setting on the train made me feel like an equal in a way nothing inside the school facility ever could.

The whole weekend was a terrific window on an urban world that was previously inaccessible to most of us in a truly sensory way. I felt like I was now a part of the American cultural landscape when I got home, and I longed for more. The trip had ritualistic aspects—like a rite of passage—and it could not have happened absent the vision and energy of one ambitious woman who, indeed, went the extra mile(s) for her students.

After Graduation

After graduating from Rembrandt in 1967, I attended Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. During my sophomore year, I went on a five-week trip through Scandinavia, and after that school year, I returned to Norway for summer school at the University of Oslo. That fall, I found relatives on the west coast of Norway who gave me a job in their shipyard for four months or so. I finished my last two years on-campus and graduated from Luther in 1971 with an Interdisciplinary Degree in the Social Sciences.

I studied linguistics in graduate school at the University of Iowa for a semester before coming back to the Rembrandt area for good in 1972. In 1973 I married Valerie Haraldson (RHS 1970) and in 1977 our first child, Stefanie, was born. Also that year, I began farming with the Mosbo family operation and began a purebred cattle breeding business in earnest. Our son, J.K., was born in 1980, and we moved to my parents' farm—about one and a half miles east northeast of Rembrandt—when Ed and Esther retired to their new home in Decorah.

Stefanie attended Iowa State and married Chris Henning of Ogden in 2001. Chris is in the Army, and they will begin a three-year service stint in Germany in June of 2002. J.K. is currently a senior at Luther College but will be moving to the Twin Cities in July to begin his career as an actuary with American Express. Valerie has worked in her family's business, The First National Bank, in Rembrandt for the past 29 years, and we still live on the place where I grew up.

Sandy Smith Hook - Class of 1967

Growing up in Rembrandt provided a very secure childhood. I have a lot of fond memories of family, friends, school, and work. My parents are Bill and Lucille Smith. They operated a produce, a feed store, and at one time a filling station. I have two sisters, Connie and Charmaine.

Our parents' businesses kept us busy making egg cartons, scheduling appointments for Dad's feed grinder, and numerous other jobs. I also worked in the meat market and at the Patio, where I car-hopped. My sisters and I also baby-sat for several families in Rembrandt. Of course, we walked beans and detasseled corn. The field jobs were hard work, but we got great tans and had a lot of fun with our girlfriends. For a small town, there were several job opportunities!

We lived across the street from school, so our house was often a meeting place. Slumber parties were always a lot of fun, as my parents also enjoyed our friends. Mom was known for her great hamburgers and French fries, which seemed to be our Friday night favorites.

In a small town everyone sure seems to know your business, which can be good and bad—good if you needed a hand, bad if you were a kid and tried to get away with something, which I learned the hard way! People were really friendly and always helpful. Parents were involved in their children's lives. We even had a circus come to town one summer.

We made our own fun, such as homemade paper dolls from catalogs, playing Monopoly, "Annie-I-Over," riding bikes, and picnics on a lazy summer day. Living close to Okoboji was really great. We camped often, and Dad built a pontoon boat which we spent hours jumping off. When we were older, the dances at the Roof Garden were a blast, as were the dances at the Cobblestone in Storm Lake. Scooping the loop and chasing boys in Storm Lake and Rembrandt seemed to pass away several nights during the summer. All of us girls took piano lessons, but unfortunately practices seemed like a burden (which is one of my childhood regrets).

I believe that our small town school provided a very good education. An advantage of a small town school is that students can participate in any of the activities offered. I mostly participated in cheerleading, band, track, and basketball. Cheerleading for basketball was my favorite school activity, and school dances were a highlight. We also spent many nights at the school baseball diamond.

My family belonged to the Methodist Church in Rembrandt. I have fond memories of Bible Schools and MYF. The Methodist camp at Okoboji was a really fun week each summer.

After Rembrandt

I graduated in 1967, attended the University of South Dakota, was a flight attendant for United Airlines, and worked for the government in Des Moines, where I met my husband Dick. We've been married 30 years and have a daughter Tamara 28 and a son Rich 26. Dick has been an engineer with John Deere for 38 years, Tamara is a graphic designer for the Heartland Education Agency and has recently become engaged,

and Rich is supervisor of field maintenance for the Pittsburgh Pirates. I'm fortunate to have been a homemaker, very involved with all of our kids' activities, and many volunteer activities with the schools and with the community.

My memories of Rembrandt are pretty special. When I reflect back on those special times, it's amazing how much there really was to do in small town Iowa. The following is a description from my dad about his Rembrandt business.

Bill Smith

I moved my family to Rembrandt in the first week of January 1951. My family then was myself, my wife, Connie and Sandy. Connie was five years old, and Sandy was two. We had another daughter Charmaine born in 1952. My brother Les and I bought a small produce business in which we bought eggs and cream and sold feed. We ran an egg and cream route twice a week and picked up eggs and cream from farmers. I did a lot of poultry work which consisted of culling hens, vaccinating, worming, debeaking, housing pullets in the fall, and anything farmers needed help on with their poultry.

I think Rembrandt was an interesting little town at the time, and it consisted of Smith Brothers Produce and Feed, Bill and Opal Lyons' newspaper, Hegna's grocery store, Peterson's grocery store, clothing store, Ginkens Brothers Garage, the movie theatre, Roy Cannoy's barber shop, the library, August Rystad's hardware, the lumber yard, Hegna's meat locker, Lloyd Haraldson's First National Bank, George's Place, Mike's Tavern, the Post Office, the Café, Milton Rystad's insurance office, Peterson's Brothers hog buying station, Cargill elevator (Bud McCormick, manager), and Skov Trucking.

I remember well George Engebretson's baseball teams. We enjoyed going to those a lot, and I used to help George with taking the boys to out-of-town games. Also, everybody enjoyed going to the basketball games.

When the chickens disappeared from the scene, our business then consisted of selling feed and grinding feed for cattle and hogs. I had a mobile feed mill and went out to all the different farmers and ground feed for them and also delivered feed to them.

I enjoyed living in Rembrandt, had a good time, and had a lot of friends. I sold my business to the Farmer's Coop in 1966 and worked for them for two years and then moved to Ankeny, Iowa, in 1968.

Peggy Cavanaugh Robinson - Class of 1968

I have visited with my siblings, and I'm sure the memories we have are the same as others, but here are a few:

- Being able to “trick-or-treat” at every house in town.
- Feeling safe and not worrying about “strangers”—of course we didn't even think about strangers then, but now that we all have children we realize how lucky we were!
- Our introduction to “broasted chicken” at the Cove—and we still love it!

- Attending a school where the kindergarten through high school were in the same building.
- The overwhelming support that the town of Rembrandt and surrounding community showed our great softball team.
- The Sunday afternoon pick-up football games.

Until you stop and think about it, you just don't realize how great we had it.

David Mosbo - Class of 1969

Yes, You Can Go Home

At least, that was my experience last July. I returned to Rembrandt for the Centennial and felt at home in ways that I never expected.

In many ways, the town has changed very little, or not at all, since I graduated from Rembrandt High in 1969. Many of the buildings are the same, and the names of people in town are the same—or at least similar. The hospitality is the same. In fact, I felt more welcomed than I recalled feeling before—or maybe that was just my imagination.

I also left after the reunion with a new sense of gratitude for what Rembrandt meant to me in my growing up. I looked back at the times when I was involved in “everything”—concert band, marching band, pep band, running the popcorn machine for basketball games, chorus, class plays, speech contests, school paper, class officer, track, and numerous church activities and special events. Only in a small school could you have such a broad range of experience. Only in a town like Rembrandt could you be so involved in so many things. Rembrandt was also a town where there were lots of truly good people, caring people, intelligent, friendly, and dedicated people. Rembrandt cares about kids, and sports, and music, and church, and quality education, and doing things right, and helping people when they need it. I'm thankful for the years I had in Rembrandt.

The pageant on Friday night proved that there are still many very talented people in Rembrandt. Everything that weekend was very well done—the dinner, the parade, the church service, and other food and events. But the pageant was the highlight for me. The program was also a real tribute to the many people who had given a lot over the years to make Rembrandt what it was and is. The tribute to George Engebretson was moving. When the dozens of guys went up to the platform to shake his hand, I tried to decide what to do. I could have gone up myself, because George taught me about baseball, and about dedication. But, having been only a benchwarmer, I didn't feel worthy to go up with the other men.

As I recall, I was a “benchwarmer” in a lot of ways when I was in Rembrandt. Maybe I still am. But I did feel a part of the community. I knew people knew; I knew people cared. Thanks, Rembrandt.

I was proud to be a member of the Mosbo clan. I was proud to be the son of Alton and Phyllis. Mom and Dad valued learning, hard work, and the community. They were staunch supporters of the town, its school, our church, the pastors, the businesses, and the people of Rembrandt. They tried hard to do what was right, no matter what.

Some of my earliest memories are of Mom singing to me about Jesus and praying with me before I went to sleep. She loved to read stories, and I loved to listen. Later, she would read at the library and the radio station, and help blind people to hear what they could not read. Mom had been a teacher, and she taught us a lot. She was a loyal member of several clubs and work groups. She was a good cook, and put a lot into each time that we had a get-together at our house, trying to make it as good as possible for everyone who came.

Dad was a hard worker and a “Renaissance Man.” He did a lot of things and did them well. He was a farmer—going from field work, to cattle, to hogs, then to chickens because of allergies. He worked for the County Soil Conservation Office. He was bookkeeper for the Hesla Oil Company. He was Office Manager for the Farm Automation Company in Sioux Rapids. He did the surveying to lay out the grain bins that were put up north of town. Dad single-handedly built an addition on our house that doubled its size. He remodeled the barn into a three-story chicken house for 5,000 layers—complete with an automated feed system, a walk-in cooler, and an elevator to get to the upper floors. He headed up the building committee at church and served in several other positions there, including choir director. He directed the town band. He was on the school board.

Dad loved to tell stories, especially about the people in his life that he had respected the most. He loved music and really enjoyed listening if it was played and sung well. When he was in college, he had played clarinet with Luther's band. When the band toured Europe, Dad was the interpreter for the band during the tour of Norway.

Mom and Dad modeled a lot of good values. They taught us to rely on ourselves and think for ourselves. Be loyal to your friends, family, and community. Put God first in your life. Don't give up. Do what you can for your church, your community, and those who are less fortunate. Maintain a positive, humble attitude. Think of new, creative ways to do things.

Mom and especially Dad spent almost their entire lives in Rembrandt. They were molded by Rembrandt. And, they helped to make Rembrandt what it is today.

Judy Skov Reiling - Class of 1969

I grew up in a small Iowa town, one Rembrandt U.S.A. I was and continue to be very proud of that fact. That little town was my whole world. What was it like?

Our children, Michael and Jessica, grew up in several different places but spent part of their junior high and all of their high school days in Alpharetta, Georgia. How different our experiences were!!! They had between 700 and 800 in their graduating

class; I had 24. They had around 3,000 in their high school; there were 69 in mine the year I graduated.

Growing up in Rembrandt—so many thoughts go through my head, so many memories!! Here are just a few!!

Kindergarten reminds me of the songs we used to sing and nap time. I was the only one in my class who lived in town, and my dad was the mayor of this little town, and I was very proud of that. I remember my friend Mike McCormick who lived in town too. I remember horseback riding on weekends with Margaret. We would ride for miles on Babe with Margaret in the saddle and me leaning back on the horse's rump, singing at the top of our lungs. I don't remember the songs, just the feelings. I would ride my bike to her house in the country, and we would sleep out on the front lawn, under the stars. I remember Florence's homemade bread and jam. I remember gathering eggs at Donna's house, cold coffee and her scary older brothers, and Alma's garden.

I remember the Spanish songs we sang in Mrs. Rath's sixth grade class, walking beans, study hall, the old band room, Mr. Haupt and Mr. Dewey, softball games and Mr. Johnson, vocabulary words in Mrs. Schneck's class, fish on Fridays for lunch at school, and the black skirt I made in home ec. class that I wore all the time. I remember piercing our ears with a needle, an ice cube, and a potato. I remember our trips to Des Moines for the State Basketball Tournament. I remember our Saturday night trips to Storm Lake, Chinese fire drills and Donna's French fries, and Saturday night band concerts in the park.

After Rembrandt

Thirty-three years ago I graduated from that high school, and very soon after that it consolidated with Sioux Rapids, of all places, our archrivals. My younger brother's best friend, Steve Reiling, became my husband some years later, and my two best friends are still my two best friends, 46 years later—amazing and something that not very many people can say.

Maybe it's not so much about growing up in a small town. It was different from what our kids experienced but maybe not so different really, just a smaller scale to compare. With family being our main base, we all make friends, we all experience growing up, no matter where we are, we all make choices—all of this is a part of life.

And so, my tribute to Rembrandt is just that, but it is also a tribute to family and friends, who mean so much to us all!! It is always about family and friends.

Margaret Mosbo Blomberg - Class of 1969

Growing up and attending school in Rembrandt, Iowa in the 1950s and 1960s embodied all things great about rural America—simplicity, innocence, honesty, humility, and resourcefulness. Sometimes these things seem lost with today's frenzied pace.

School and learning have changed a little. We had Mrs. Henley's kindergarten and nap time cots. There was Mrs. Wolden's first grade with reading circles and playing with trucks and army guys in the closet during recess. On to Miss Carlson's second and Miss Biggins' third and memories of phonics, penmanship and "poodle" skirts. For Bobbi Rath's sixth grade we got to move upstairs. This was also the year I believe the Barbie Doll was introduced. If only mine were still new, in the box, instead of missing parts and having matted hair. Mine had some unique clothes handmade by my mom, Florence, a former home ec. teacher at Rembrandt High.

Grade school gave way to junior high (still in the same building). Seventh grade was the year they tried to teach us "new" math. It was also the year that President Kennedy was assassinated, and there was coverage of the events on TV. Eighth grade may have been the time we started marching band. That was a scary ordeal, being in the same row as junior boys!

High school (still in the same building) brought new small-town opportunities. We played softball summer and fall and, the now antiquated, six-person girls' basketball in the winter. We sold magazines and zip code books to raise money for the annual senior class trip to Chicago, via the Illinois Central Railroad. At that time the IBM Selectric typewriter would be the closest thing we had to a word-processor. Computers had probably been invented, but the internet was a couple of decades out. Wireless phones were just a concept! We couldn't have known that our children would be in marching bands larger than our whole town or that their favorite sports would be soccer and alpine ski-racing. And our English teacher, Mrs. Schneck, probably didn't think that her warning, "A word to the wise is sufficient," would be repeated by us some 30 years later.

Would we want to go back? Maybe not. Would we have changed anything? Certainly not.

Family

My parents were Florence and Ing Mosbo (Class of 1928), and my brother is Richard Mosbo (Class of 1964).

After Rembrandt

I graduated from the University of South Dakota in Vermilion in 1973. I earned a degree in Criminal Justice Studies. I worked only a short time in that field before becoming involved in jewelry, which I've been doing the last 25 or so years. I am currently a contract bench jeweler for several retail jewelry stores in the Empire Mall and have a small shop there. My husband Greg is an Augustana graduate and owns a marketing firm here. I am currently residing in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, with my husband. Our two sons attend the University of Nebraska.

Valerie Haraldson Mosbo - Class of 1970

My earliest memories are from the days we Ronald Haraldsons lived in the north half of the duplex while the Warren Anderson family lived in the south half. The basement was open and shared as a play area. Linda and Pat Anderson were the two girls for me to play with, and my brothers Vaughan and Jim were the two boys. (My youngest brother, David, didn't come along until we moved to the farm in 1958.) My mom (Janet Dunning Haraldson) made my bedroom furniture out of orange crates with pink and white gingham for skirts to cover the crates.

I don't remember leaving the yard much, but I do remember sitting on a block retaining wall that separated the yard south of the duplex from the driveway to the Olga Grodahl house next door. We often made mud pies while sitting on that wall and "baked" them in the cement blocks that were part of the retaining wall. I remember sitting on my



Jim, Valerie and Vaughan

tricycle on the sidewalk out in front of the duplex one summer night just as it was getting dark and getting spooked by bats from the trees in front. I would only have been somewhere between three and six years old, so it's possible the bats weren't dive-bombing me as I thought at the time. I later heard my dad say that the babies would sometimes fall out of the trees onto the sidewalk, killing them. I also remember the neighbor across the street, Bill Hickman, raising chickens in town. I was always attracted to animals of any sort.

It was while we lived in the duplex that my dad's cousin, Alan Engebretson, married his classmate Shirley Bjorklund Engebretson. I was flower girl at their wedding at the United Methodist Church in Rembrandt and remember clearly being scared. I wondered why Vaughan didn't seem to be scared as ring bearer. I remember my fancy dress and that Shirley gave me a necklace with blue rhinestones to wear. I still have that necklace to this day.

Vaughan, Jim and I also spent time playing at the McCormick's way over on the other street west of ours. Bud and Zona had built a sandbox in the back yard where their two boys, Mike and Doug, would play with the usual trucks and tractors. I don't think their daughter, Dianna, was born yet. I just remember thinking how nice Zona looked all the time. I remember "helping" her make beds one morning, and she showed me her wedding dress. That was the first real wedding dress I had ever seen. She also took me outside, and we hunted for four-leaf clovers. We found one, and she pressed it between some kind of cellophane wrapping and gave it to me for good luck.

Another north end of town memory of mine is making hollyhock dolls from hollyhock flowers. I would love to have someone show me how to do that again. As I

remember, Mrs. Ben (Maggie) Voorde had the hollyhocks, but I can't remember if she or my mother showed me how to make the dolls.

My family moved from the duplex when it was sold to the school for housing for the teachers. The Andersons moved upstairs on Main Street above Rystad's Hardware store, and we moved upstairs on Main Street above Hegna's store. I remember my mom making separate sleeping areas by hanging curtains that could be pulled to block out the living area. I remember waking up Christmas morning and finding Santa had brought me a Barbie doll. I later learned that our postmistress, Vira Fosmark, stayed open extra late to check on packages when my mom had ordered the Barbie. I think it came at the last minute. I also remember being sick on the Saturday Santa came to town (as he always did—by fire truck) and leaning out the upstairs window watching all the kids as Santa gave out his bags of candy. I was contemplating jumping down to the awning below but thought better of it.

Vira Fosmark was also my Sunday School Superintendent. I remember running down the stairs from home, through the alley, and to the church for Sunday School. It was a very strict atmosphere as I recall, but I especially remember the Sunday when we got to put in extra offering because it was our birthday. I still have my perfect attendance pins and the bars that were awarded each additional year. They were special to earn. I also still have my memory verse notebook from Mrs. Anna Mosbo Hegna's class. She was a great one for memorizing verses, and she made you feel it was important, too. Mike McCormick, Doug Olson, Lori Waldstein and I started Sunday School together and were together all the way through Confirmation at Our Savior's Lutheran. We started kindergarten together, and all graduated from Rembrandt High together. Our parents were all friends, and we shared a lot of time and activities together, both at church and at school. Pastor Reitz confirmed us, and the other one in our class was Janet Grodahl who attended school in Sioux Rapids.

Growing up in Rembrandt and later within a mile of Rembrandt, I was lucky to have my Grandpa and Grandma living in town. Lloyd and Mildred Haraldson lived in the house J.K. Haraldson had built, four houses south of the bank on the southwest corner of the main intersection in town. I didn't know it was unusual to hit the front door running without knocking and to fly through the three doors it took to get to the living room until



Haraldson Cousins

my cousins from Kansas City came up to visit. They were, of course, used to everything being locked. They had a point that I hadn't ever considered. But I don't remember changing my ways.

The cousins from Kansas City were Jerry, Tricia and Vicki Fox. Their mom, Arlene Graham Fox, was my dad's first cousin. They came up nearly every summer. Sometimes we went fishing to Minnesota together, but mostly I

remember playing at Grandpa's and Grandma's or at our house. One of the times they visited, we girls played upstairs in the hot, dry attic at Grandma's but had the best time playing dress-up when we found a box of old, sheer, white Priscilla curtains. We draped the ruffled curtains around us and found heels, hats and old fur coats.

By this time we had moved out into the country on the farm J.K. Haraldson had farmed one mile west of Rembrandt. It is now a Century Farm, and my parents still live in the house J.K. built there. Jerry and our mutual cousins, Georgie and Doyle Engebretson, and my brothers played together while Tricia, Vicki, and I spent a lot of time together. One of my favorite pictures is one Grandma took in their backyard of the eight of us making mud pies (a recurring activity, I guess) and sitting on the cement that covered their well. Left to right in the picture above are Jerry Fox, Vicki Fox, Georgie Engebretson, Jim Haraldson, Tricia Fox, Doyle Engebretson, Vaughan Haraldson, and Valerie Haraldson.

The Fourth of July was a big day in our family. Lloyd Haraldson was one to enjoy fireworks and was always well supplied with “ammo.” He knew how to draw a crowd of kids. I remember sitting on the front step with him in town, and he would light and throw one firecracker into the yard, then sit and wait for the kids to come. They always did. Fireworks and a family reunion went hand in hand at the Haraldson farm. My mom organized it, and family from Rembrandt, Aurelia, Storm Lake and Sioux Falls would all come and eat a big picnic meal spread out on the big oak dining room table with fried chicken, potato salad, pies and cake. I recall Dad getting up early and mowing with the push mower the huge front and back yards so that it was freshly mowed for the company. We played baseball in the barnyard, using the windmill for first base, clearing off an area in the gravel for second and using a rock near the corn crib for third. The barn was the backstop behind home plate. Firecrackers were set off when Lloyd was ready to pass them out. The adults played bridge and other card games, visited, and sat in lawn chairs outside. The ponies hated the firecrackers and ran around in the pasture until they seemed to accept it. They hid out in the chicken house that was their shelter to get away from the noise. We played and ate all day long, waiting for it to get dark to watch the big fireworks display Lloyd usually got from South Dakota. His sister, Vernie Berger, sometimes brought the fireworks down from Sioux Falls with her, but usually he made a trip himself to get them. It was much later I learned that fireworks were illegal in Iowa and that the display at our place was much anticipated and enjoyed by others. The finale always included sparklers for the little kids (as long as no one left any wires in the yard for the lawn mower to pick up!!!) and the older kids who were tougher held Roman candles. Sparks from the Roman candles landed on my arms no matter how careful I was. We must have gone to bed pretty tired those nights—not to mention Mom and Dad.

The Earl Eastman family did the farm work and raised livestock at our place as we grew up. Earl and his son Norman were there most often working with the cattle, sheep, and hogs, but it was the girls I remember when it was time to bale hay. I remember that Carol, Mary, and Sandy drove the tractor. We had a round, brick pig house, and I remember chasing baby pigs around and into an area for Norman to trap them in order to

give them shots, etc. Squealing baby pigs and unhappy sows are still a sound I remember. I had a lot of respect for moms protecting their young but didn't worry as long as Norman and Earl were around. I once saw Norman pick up a full-grown sheep by the wool on its back and toss it onto a truck!

Shelling corn on the farm was also a memorable occasion. We kids weren't old enough to be a part of the working crew, but we found a way to entertain ourselves just the same. Vaughan, Jim and I would take shoe boxes out to the crib and catch as many of the frantic and scrambling mice as we could. I learned that mice are very agile and that if you pick them up by the tail, they curl right up and bite you on the hand. It's also hard to add a mouse to a box that already has a mouse in it. Not to be discouraged, I stubbornly tried to see if I couldn't have the biggest catch of mice by the end of the day. We usually turned them loose in front of the barnyard cats after all was said and done. That seems a little mean now.

We spent a lot of time playing outside. If I remember anything, I remember my mom saying, "Go outside and play. I'll call you when it's time to eat." Hmmm. At home alone six days out of seven with four little kids on the farm—I'll bet she wanted us to play outside! Sundays after church we always had a roast beef dinner with potatoes and gravy and lots of dishes to do. We couldn't play outside or go to town to Grandma's or anything else until dishes were done. One Sunday (as I recall it was a Sunday), Vaughan and Jim were outside playing in the barn when I came out to play. They were giving each other rides on the rope that was used to open and shut the door to the hayloft. One brother sat on the bale hook while the other brother pulled the rope from in the barn. I unwittingly begged for a ride also. They pulled me up to the top of the barn, tied off the rope inside and left down the lane for town, laughing. I like to think they kept an eye out as they walked to town to see if I figured out how to get down. I did. It was the Tarzan and Jane method—hand over hand like on monkey bars through the top of the barn until I could get to the stacked hay in the back, climb down, and follow the boys to town.

Summers were spent a lot with the neighbors. We shared a lot of things. We had ponies, and they had ponies. We walked beans, and they walked beans. They had a building outside they made into a getaway called The Hut, and we had an old, small round pig house in the pasture that we made into a fort. Barb and Betty McKibben and I were forever forming clubs and electing President, Vice President and Secretary. Boy, was it ever hard to get to be President. I don't remember doing anything much after that except that the President got to choose what we were going to play next.

The school bus ran past McKibbens'; then our place was either first on the route or last on the route. I think it was first on, first off for one semester, then last on, last off for the next semester. Elmer R. Peterson was our bus driver always. He seemed to love his job and later became one of our best softball supporters. On days when we were first on, instead of riding the whole route on the bus, we always rode to town with Dad when he went to work at the bank. We rode the bus home of course because it was the quickest.

Once a week we went to the bank first with Dad. I remember sifting the sand from the lobby ashtrays to empty cigarette and cigar butts. We used sweeping compound on

the floors and took the trash out to burn in the wire burn barrel in the alley. Dad would open the vault and pull out the heavy bus that contained all the check files. There was a ramp both on the inside and the outside of the vault so it wasn't easy to pull that heavy thing out. In the summers, my brothers helped Dad put the canvas awnings on over the windows. None of those chores equaled the chores my Grandpa Lloyd did when he first started at the bank. He told me many times about starting out cleaning the spittoons and stoking coal in the furnace.

On days we were last off the bus, we often walked home instead of riding the bus. I remember warm spring days when Bill, Donnie, Jerry, Helene, Paul, Barb and Betty, Vaughan, Jim and I were all walking home. What a sight that must have been! I don't think that happened often as the older McKibbens soon had wheels of their own. Transportation to and from Rembrandt took a variety of forms. Sometimes we'd walk, sometimes we'd roller-skate (with the clip-on skates and keys to tighten), sometimes we'd ride bikes, and sometimes we'd ride the ponies.

Grandpa Lloyd had taken me with him looking for ponies without my brothers on several occasions. We finally found a pair of bred, white Shetlands, and Grandpa bought them from someone by Peterson. He had them delivered and put into the barn without the boys knowing about it. He came out to the farm that day and brought up the subject of not having any place to keep ponies and played along until Vaughan and Jim excitedly told him to come out to the barn and they would show him just where ponies could go. Were they ever surprised when they came to the north side of the barn to see two ponies eating hay! Needless to say, I felt pretty important having been in on the surprise.

Goldie and Blossom served us well for many years. Blossom was one of Goldie's foals, and Grandpa had them bred so that the next spring Goldie gave birth to a sorrel-colored colt we named Shiek, and Blossom had a white foal we named Sheba. The four of them grew up with the four of us. My brother David always had a love for the ponies and later enjoyed, as did the rest of us, an American Saddle horse called Tip. I got to go with Lloyd in search of the bigger horse, too, as I had done with the ponies. I remember getting Tip from a man near Cherokee called Lou Crane. Tip was trained to drive wagons, but we didn't ever pursue that. He was great fun to ride to town and back though he sometimes would get the bit in his mouth on the way home—then look out. That was a fast trip! Dave and Tip became pretty good partners after Vaughan, Jim and I left for college.

Barb and Betty McKibben had ponies across the road, and often I would take one of ours (usually Goldie) and ride over, and they would mount Brownie and Ginger and off to town we'd go. Sometimes we rode through the fields on their side of the blacktop until we got to the Bob McKibben place on the west end of Rembrandt. We could water the ponies there and tie them up in the barn while we went to see who was around town. Sometimes there would be a pick-up game of tag football at the schoolhouse. It wasn't unusual to see Georgie outside south of his house under the big elm trees waxing his GTO. We'd go ride the ponies around town for a while, then head home. I remember riding the ponies through the ditches (at my mother's insistence) along the blacktop from

our house to Highway 71 to get an ice cream cone at the Patio, the drive-in that was built and run first by Kenny and Mary Christianson. Kenny and his brother Johnny had the oil station on the corner next door. Jan and Herschel Morse ran the drive-in for one year while I was in high school; I car-hopped that summer. Jan put a huge sign out on the Patio when our softball team played Armstrong in a tournament game. I remember it as “Go Rembrandt! Strongarm Armstrong!”

Remembering the ponies, Barb and Betty had the neatest thing called bareback saddles. They were fabric and were light and easy to throw on the ponies. I usually rode bareback because the saddle was kind of heavy to lift and was a nuisance, took time, etc. When we got off in town, Barb and Betty looked great—their saddles had kept them clean; my backside was covered with dirt, dust and hair.

Being neighbors to Bruce and Margene McKibben was like having a home away from home. I remember that everyone had his or her own marked bottle for drinking water in the fridge and that Margene had one marked for me. The north room of their house had a freezer that was well stocked with ice cream bars from the Schwann's truck. We could always help ourselves. It was a big honor to see my picture hanging with the rest of their kids' pictures on the family wall between the kitchen and the living room. Many times we'd sit around the kitchen table and listen to Bruce tell stories. I can remember him explaining to me the meaning the first time I ever heard the term “wind-chill.” The word sounded cold then and still does.

Lots of games were played outside at the McKibbens'. “Kick-the-Can” was a game we played just before I'd go home at night. It was most fun played after the sun went down. I was supposed to be home by dark, but I would always stay as long as I could, often getting home just in the nick of time before getting in trouble because it was getting dark. The rock pile north of the buildings was another great place to play. As I recall, Paul and my cousin Georgie used to order things from the Army Surplus and play combat back on the rock pile. It seems that they made bunkers by moving and stacking rocks. I know Barb, Betty and I used to build little fort areas back there amongst the rocks. I'm assuming here that everyone knows about rock piles on the farm, but guess that isn't necessarily true. Routinely in the spring and summer, a tractor with a loader would go out into the field while one or two of whoever was available would pick up all the rocks that were turned up by the fieldwork. It was necessary for the longevity of the farm equipment, particularly the combine, to remove these rocks. They would then all be unloaded into a pile somewhere they would be harmless. Also there were often holes dug to burn or bury trash, old buildings, etc. on the farm. There was an area that had been dug out at McKibbens', too, though I don't know if it was for that reason. I only remember watching tadpoles and being one up on everyone in class when we got to the study section on metamorphosis. Bag swings were also a big part of the entertainment across the road. One was in the front yard and was innocuous enough, but then you graduated to the big one that was accessed from the roof of the tractor shed to the north. That was great fun, too.

Not all activities were completed safely. One time Barb and I were closing the big barn door on the west side of their barn after putting away the ponies. We pushed it too far, and it dropped off its track and landed on her big toe. She was trapped, couldn't move, was totally helpless and I couldn't lift the door by myself. Margene was gone, but Helene was inside the house. I ran after her for help, and somehow she managed to lift the door enough for Barb to get her foot out. I went home wondering how serious the injury was! Fortunately, X-rays showed that it wasn't broken, but Dr. Campbell even laughed because her toe was as flat as a pancake.

I also managed my share of injuries. Mom was hosting some of her friends one afternoon. McCormicks and Bentleys were there. Seems like Andersons and Siefkens may have been also. The kids were sent outside to play while the moms had their coffee and time together inside. I was sitting on the aluminum cattle gate that was kind of loosely wired shut. It had been muddy from the tractor going in and out of the cattle yard, but the ruts had all dried up hard at this time. Somehow with all the kids running around and riding bikes, the gate suddenly came out from under me and I started to fall forward. Unfortunately, I had on my red Annie Oakley skirt and vest, and the skirt got caught on a nail, my upper body went down first, and my skirt held just long enough to turn me upside down, then ripped and I fell right on my right arm into the tractor ruts. When I stood up, my arm had taken the shape of one of those ruts. Dr. Mattice in Sioux Rapids ended up setting my arm at the Spencer Hospital as I broke both bones. I didn't think about it then, but that must have really put a damper on the coffee party.

All told, in the course of growing up, I broke my arm, broke my leg, and ran a nail through my foot that came out the top. I don't like to think that I was accident-prone; I'd rather say I was more active than a lot of kids.

It toughened me up to grow up with three brothers and spend a lot of time with the McKibbens who also loved sports. I found that I couldn't imagine not being a part of high school sports. At 5' 2" (at the most) I was never a real basketball talent, but I sure did enjoy playing with Nancy Struve and Lori Waldstein who were! I was in the forward court with them during six-on-six girls' basketball, and Marlys Cavanaugh and Lynnette Schertz were in our guard court. It's hard to imagine girls' basketball allowing only two dribbles back then! The five of us were all Class of 1970 classmates, and we also all played softball. I remember staying after basketball practice with Marlys and pitching to her for 20 minutes or so two or three times a week. It must have paid off. We ended up with a pretty good team in softball. I had always wanted to be shortstop, but for reasons including a rezoning of the school districts, I ended up pitching. Evyonne Lundberg (Rusk now) from Linn Grove had been our pitcher but was now in the Linn Grove school district without even moving!

There were some pretty humbling games for a while as I tried to find the strike zone. Larry D. Peterson (a.k.a. LDP or Pete) was behind the plate for nearly every home or tournament game I threw. Though sometimes I thought he was pretty hard on me, I know now how lucky I was to have such a knowledgeable umpire who was always in full control of the game. I learned right away to make the umpire's strike zone my strike zone.

Whining about a call was just not acceptable, not that I didn't show a little emotion more than once. Coach Wayne Johnson was a men's fast-pitch pitcher himself and knew a lot about both pitching and the game. We all knew that and learned a lot from him. He gave



Val Haraldson, 1969

us a written test when I was a freshman that I still have. He made sure we knew the rules and the strategies of the game as well as the fundamentals. I hear a lot of stories now, recounted from some of our games and a lot of plays that involved me or my pitching. I can rarely verify these situations because I can honestly say that when we were at our best, I have the fewest memories. I think I was concentrating so hard on the strike zone that I basically “missed” the games. I remember enjoying practices, and the travel to and from the away games. And at the games in Rembrandt, I remember the fans parked along the road, including Glenn and Hilda Odor and my grandparents. When we made good plays or got hits, the horns honked loudly. My dad, Warren Anderson, Harold Olson, Ed Mosbo, Duane Rath, Dick Brockmann and Frank Truesdell were among those usually sitting in chairs on the cement slab outside the concession stand on the north end of the gym.

I was proudest of the fact that Johnson taught me how to slide, and I could slide for an extra base and be safe more often than not. I remember when he told us that a good slide wouldn't hurt. The flatter I could get, the better I liked it. The only thing was you had to get a hit to get on base. Sliding came easier than hitting for me. In my mind's eye, I still think I could slide into second safely. One thing it's safe to say—I thoroughly loved the challenges and successes my teammates and I enjoyed as we learned the game of softball from Coach Johnson. He always told us, “We win as a team, we lose as a team.” The support and faithful following we enjoyed from the Rembrandt fans were unequalled and will always be a part of my favorite memories.

After Rembrandt

Upon graduating from RHS, I attended Iowa State University in Ames. I was on the first-ever ISU women's softball team, and we competed in the third Women's College World Series in Omaha in 1971. We lost to defending champion JFK in the championship game, but I was proud to be a member of the W.C.W.S. all-star team representing ISU. In 1973, I married Rolf Mosbo in Rembrandt at Our Savior's Lutheran Church. We have lived in or near Rembrandt our entire married life.

After working in Storm Lake for Stille, Pierce & Schaller, an insurance office, I began working at the bank in Rembrandt in the fall of 1973. We now live on the Ed Mosbo home place and have for the past 22 years, as Rolf has continued to farm. Our daughter, Stefanie (25), attended ISU and was married in August of 2001 to Sgt. Christopher Henning of Ogden, Iowa. They now live in New Llano, Louisiana, where he serves in the Army at Fort Polk. Our son, J.K. (22) is a senior at Luther College in Decorah pursuing a degree in math statistics. He has passed the first exam in the series of actuary tests and hopes to be employed as an actuary in the future. Both Stef and J.K. (Justin Kell) graduated from Sioux Central High School in Sioux Rapids.

I continue to work at The First National Bank in Rembrandt, having shared the daily challenges of the banking industry with my grandfather, both my parents, and two of my three brothers as well as my sister-in-law, Jerri. The bank now operates on exactly the same spot where my great-grandfather, J.K. Haraldson, had built Rembrandt's first general store. I feel fortunate to have deep roots in Rembrandt and blessed to have shared such a rich history with the many good people who have called Rembrandt home at one time or another.

John Olson - Class of 1971

My kids have always thought it was really different that I started kindergarten and finished high school all in the same building. Each of them has been in four or five schools already. I had one class or another in every room in the building with the exception of the new addition kindergarten room and the home ec. room.

I remember in junior high, we formed a line from the big static ball to the door, so when someone came in, he or she got the shock.

My junior year I remember playing basketball, and I made two points for the other team after a mix up after a tipped ball. I remember the different schools that we played and how fortunate we were to have a full-sized gym where a lot of the other schools didn't. The smaller gyms gave us the experience our parents had in Rembrandt, because what we knew as the lunch room was their gym. I also have fond memories of going to the Boys' State Basketball Tournaments in Des Moines.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I moved to Ames to work for Arnold Motor Supply. I now live in Boone with my wife, Linda, of 27 years, and our four children. I have been employed at Woodward Resource Center for 15 years. Linda and I have been involved in Foster Care for the last eight years. We have fostered 18 children and have six foster grandchildren.

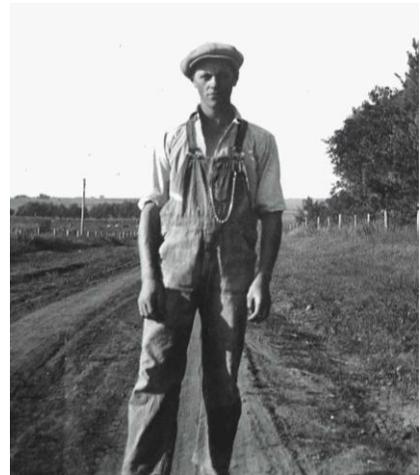
Lester Ness - Class of 1971

I am the oldest of the six Ness children, born to Margaret and Harold Ness in the late 1950s. My grandfather was Adolph Ness, one of the many Norwegian immigrants to the Rembrandt region. He left Drammen in Norway in 1915, attracted, I suppose, by the idea of getting rich quick, then going home—not too different from immigrants today. I know that he was worried about World War I. In 1915, no one knew that Norway would stay out of the war. Finding drowned sailors washed up on the beach of Drammen must have been sobering.

He crossed the Atlantic on a steamer in about two weeks. Once his ship was stopped and searched by a U-boat. Several people were taken off—draft dodgers, perhaps. Once in America, he went through routine processing. After Ellis Island, he took a train to Linn Grove, Iowa, where an uncle lived. He spent the rest of his life in the area.

I only knew him as an old man, but I have a strong impression of his personality, nevertheless. He was short and stout, but quite muscular. I sometimes wonder if he'd been a bit of a tough guy in his youth. He had a small tattoo on one hand (the left, I think) and found it easy to intimidate store clerks by looking them in the eyes and telling them firmly what he wanted. (It may have helped that his eyes were two different colors.)

On the other hand, he did not drink and in some ways was a bookish, even intellectual, man. He listened to classical music on WOI daily and was the first person to tell me anything about history or archaeology. He told me once of the Viking ships excavated in Norway, during what must have been childhood years and not too far from his childhood home. Another time, he told me that when he first came to Iowa, he saw 40 acres of prairie sod broken by special plows pulled by steam engines. No one will ever see that again! (The plot was at his first employer's, Ollie Peterson's farm, I believe, quite near the site of the Little Sioux Valley Lutheran Church.)



Adolph Ness

My grandfather arrived at the end of Rembrandt's pioneer generation. I remember only one other person connected with pioneer days, Mrs. Finley. She had been a daughter of William O. McGrew, the first man to farm the 80-acre plot which my father, Harold Ness, now owns. I forget exactly when or why my family invited her to supper, but she told us afterwards that she'd been born in a covered wagon near Cherokee, Iowa. She had lived with her parents in a dugout, a hole in the ground with a roof on top. (It now forms the southeast corner of the basement of the house.) It had been warm in the winter, but wet in the summer. The floor had been dirt, but was packed hard enough that one could sweep it.

Before moving to his present farm, my father and his family lived for a while on the farm of Ossie Anderson, in a small rented house. I remember playing in the old log cabin which is now in a park in Storm Lake.

Perhaps it was such stories and experiences which made me interested in history and archaeology and led ultimately to my present job in Changchun, China. I have often told my Chinese students about my family's and Rembrandt's history.

After Rembrandt

After graduation I was in the U.S. Navy from 1971-76 (to get the GI Bill). I was assigned to a bomber squadron, VA 52, three years alternately cruising near the Philippines and living on Whidbey Island, Washington, north of Seattle. Much of 1972, I helped drop bombs on North Vietnam. I also witnessed the Marcos coup and martial law in the Philippines that year.

After being discharged I received my A.A. from Iowa Central Community College, B.A. in Biblical Archaeology from Wheaton College (near Chicago), and M.A. and Ph.D. in Ancient History from Miami University. From 1983-90 while working on my Ph.D. I made four lengthy trips to Israel to take part in archaeological 'digs.' My doctoral dissertation was on an archaeological topic: mosaics of the zodiac in ancient synagogues.

After a couple years, I changed careers and studied Library Science and received my M.L.S. from Indiana University, School of Library and Information Science.

I answered an ad on the internet to come to Northeast Normal University, in Changchun, China and there teach Greek and Latin. I was accepted and liked living here so much that I have stayed. I switched to teaching English (which can include history lectures in English), since that was what was in demand. I have since taught at a number of colleges and universities, including Tsinghua University, the best and most famous in China.

I have also published a book, a revised version of my dissertation, since I've come to China, and I'm working on a second.

In case you've wondered, I'm not married, although I'm still looking.

That's a longer story than most, I suppose, but I've had a stranger life than most.

Barb McKibben Binder - Class of 1972

Kinder and Gentler Times

When I think about growing up on a farm outside of Rembrandt, I have more memories of the first half of my life than I do my recent past. The theme that permeates all of the stories is of a kinder and gentler time. It was a time when everything seemed simple. Today pressures on youth are so complex compared to my upbringing. For instance, we certainly had very few pressures to dress fashionably. Designer labels were unheard of. I remember having two pairs of shoes during most of the time I was growing up—church shoes and school shoes. Getting dressed for school in the morning was also

simple. We had two choices of clothing, a dress or a skirt. Wearing pants to school was forbidden. Things loosened up when I was in high school. We were allowed to wear pants when it was below zero. I think it was my junior year when we got to start wearing slacks whenever we wanted. I wish they had decided that years earlier. Bus seats were very cold in the wintertime.

There were no gray areas when I was growing up. Right was right, and wrong was wrong. Based on that theory, teachers were always right and parents were always right. When I grew up, you simply did not question authority.

There was a trust in the community. I don't know of any house that was locked when no one was home. Our old farmhouse didn't even have locks on the doors. It was quite an adjustment for me when I went to college. Imagine—locking your dorm room because people could steal your things!!! Cars were the same way; in fact, not only were they left unlocked, but keys were left in the ignition, even in the big cities of Spencer and Storm Lake.

While I was in high school, we had our “own” parking spaces. OK, they weren't assigned by anyone, but we parked in nearly the same spot each day. One day after school, I went out and our 1966 Plymouth Fury, known to the locals as Herbie, wasn't where I had left it. One of Betty's friends had needed something and had just driven it the two blocks to the store. There was no need to ask permission: after all, it was Rembrandt.

Practical jokes were rampant, probably because there were only two TV stations at the time and we needed to have some fun. I remember one evening going to the Storm Lake Hospital with my sister Betty to visit a classmate who had just had surgery. Naturally, we didn't lock the car or take the keys. When we got back to the car, we jumped in and everything seemed normal until we turned on the ignition. Imagine our surprise when the radio blasted our eardrums because the radio volume had been turned all the way up, the windshield wipers were furiously going back and forth (it wasn't raining), and the heater fan was blasting at full speed. The first order of business was to turn the radio down. That was made difficult because the knob had been removed and carefully placed on the front seat. Most of the next few days were spent questioning people to determine who else had been down there. To this day I'm not sure, but I do have two suspects. A confession now would be good, Bob and Vaughan.

While I had many practical jokes played on me, I was not exempt from playing a few myself. Betty and I were two of the lucky few who had our “own” car. It was wonderful. When we started driving it, there were over 100,000 miles on it, a number that would not be unusual now but was considered a miracle back then. The old family car served us well.

As old cars often do, Herbie was in fairly constant need of repair. One of the most memorable repairs was to the water pump. I hope all of you auto mechanics will forgive me if I get this wrong, but my recollection is unclear as to exactly why this happened. When the water pump was replaced, something was forgotten, maybe a bushing??, and it would move back and forth. This caused the belt to be out of alignment, and it would make this horrible, loud, CHING, CHING, CHING sound. It was very embarrassing

when this would happen. When I told my dad, Bruce McKibben, about it, he quickly determined the problem and showed me how to use a hammer to fix it. One good solid rap on the shaft, and it would move back into place and the engine would purr. My dad was reluctant to give us his good hammer to carry with us in the car, but he did have an old crowbar that was seldom used. It found a home under the front seat on the driver's side. From that day on, Betty and I were never without our crowbar emergency repair kit.

But then, things were never simple for us. We liked to make some kind of drama wherever we were. I remember one day in Spencer we got in the car, started it and got the CHING, CHING, CHING sound. We turned off the engine, got the emergency kit and opened the hood. The horrible sound had attracted two nice farmers. (I know they were farmers because they had white foreheads—caused by hours in the sun with a Cargill or Pioneer cap on.) They asked us if we wanted help, and we said no—we could fix it. Then Betty pointed to part of the engine and said, “Hit it here.” I replied, “No, we hit it there last time.” Then I took my best baseball swing, hit the shaft with the crowbar, and then closed the hood. We jumped in the car, started the engine and backed out of the parking space leaving two well-meaning good Samaritans with their mouths wide open. I sort of feel bad about that.

Adventures With Ponies

Some of my fondest memories from the town of Rembrandt were from my earlier years. When we were young, we had nothing but time on our hands. You see, as a farm girl my fun should have ended when I was in fourth grade—that was the time I started working on the farm, but more about that later.

When I was about five years old my beloved Grandpa Henneberg gave me a



Betty and Barb on their sofa horses

Shetland pony. Soon another followed for my sister Betty. Oh my, what fun we had. Horses were our passion at that time. We watched *My Friend Flicka*, *Roy Rogers*, and *Fury* on Saturday morning television. We even figured out how to take the sofa cushions and drape them over the back of the sofa to pretend we were riding horses. We watched these shows every Saturday from our sofa horses. Can you even imagine what excitement a real horse provided? We named our ponies Brownie and Ginger.

Our neighbors soon had ponies also, and we enjoyed many an adventure with them. Almost every day we would ride to town. The most exciting part was riding home, because the ponies usually wanted to run. It was always fun to let them run down the rows of the cornfields. Sometimes they would jump a corn stalk lying over the row. We envisioned ourselves flying as fast as the wind

and jumping high over the corn stalk. Of course, we were just kids and Shetland ponies can't jump much more than 12 inches, but that didn't matter—we had horses.

This was also the era of the western on television. *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza*, and *Rawhide* were some of our favorites. They always had a common theme—the good guys wore white hats, and the bad guys wore black. And most importantly, the good guys always won!!! This influenced our manner of play with the ponies. We were always the good guys—except when Lloyd Haraldson said we could rob the bank. Lloyd was the town's banker, and we always rode with his grandkids, our neighbors. On one occasion, we rode our ponies into town, ran into the bank with our toy guns drawn, threatened to shoot anyone who tried to stop us, and “robbed the bank.” I still have this mental image of Lloyd sitting by his big oak desk, toothpick in his mouth and laughing at the robbery.



Barb, Grandpa Henneberg and Betty with Brownie and Ginger

He was joined by Ronnie, laughing just as hard, trying to conduct banking business during the robbery.

Certainly the most talked about adventure was the day we were riding ponies in the bitter cold. We rode almost every day of the year. I still don't know if it was because we only had two TV stations to watch or because Mom wanted us out of the house. At any rate, it was a very cold day in winter. Betty and I were riding to town with Vaughan. Since we lived only one mile away from town, we had two choices of routes—through the fields or on the road. On this particular day we chose to ride through the fields. As luck would have it, we saw a skunk half buried in the snow. I was the only one brave (stupid??) enough to walk up to the skunk. It was dead and frozen solid. For a joke I grabbed its tail and stuck it in the snow. Vaughan laughed and said, “It looks real.” Of course it was real—real dead. Anyway we continued our ride to town with me carrying the dead skunk. We concocted a plan. It was to be the mother of all practical jokes. Remember, at the time I was no more than eight years old. This trip to town was different from all our other trips. Since my uncle owned the farm next to town, we put the ponies in the barn there. This was very unusual, since we usually rode into town. We stuck the dead skunk in the snow. I suppose I should mention that the skunk had its tail straight up and one of its front legs up-raised, as if to take a step.

We ran downtown yelling that there was a skunk. Of course, most people paid no attention to us, but Vaughan ran into George's Place (his uncle's place of business) and told his older cousin, Georgie Engebretson, about the skunk. Several of his friends were there, and all got excited at the prospect of a skunk so close to town. At any rate, for some unknown reason, they didn't believe us and raced to see the skunk for themselves.

We stood there, all of us staring at the skunk (which remained perfectly posed in mid-step). Georgie finally said, "I've got to get my gun." He and every kid there left. Since it was a small town, every kid must have called every other kid. Betty and I stayed behind. We had work to do. This time we moved the skunk to the grove. Even at our young age, we knew the skunk would stay where we'd placed it forever—unless, of course, we moved it ourselves, which we did.

Then we went to the lane and waited. It seemed like every kid in town came back with Georgie. They were carrying shotguns, a rifle, BB guns (several) and even a slingshot. There was a battle to be fought!!! I never imagined so many armed kids, but there they were. At this point I'm thinking to myself, whoops, maybe we went too far. But that's never stopped us before—or since.

We directed the boys to the skunk. Since it had been placed in the grove, everyone had to climb over the fence. Please stop for a moment and imagine ten or so, heavily armed boys, ready for combat, climbing the fence with their guns, while staring at a skunk with its front leg raised as if in mid-step the entire time. Just for the record, everyone there got off a clean shot or two and the skunk slowly fell over. Vaughan played the part perfectly. He grabbed a stick and walked over to the skunk and poked it.

"Yeah, it's dead," he said.

I think when Georgie went over to look at the skunk, he realized that he'd been had. There was the skunk, still with its front leg raised as if in mid-step, and absolutely nothing left of its body.

To this day, I regret the frozen skunk incident. You see, the part I left out was that upon the initial sighting of the skunk, Georgie said to Betty and me, "Stand back girls." Again when he was about to blow the skunk to smithereens, he looked for Betty and me and told us to go back to the lane. He was very concerned for our safety, and he knew we would be safe there. That's what made me feel bad. I was playing a joke and he was taking his responsibility very seriously. He was trying to protect those younger than he, especially one of his good friend's little sisters.

After relating the incident to my mom, she reminded me of "The Boy Who Cried Wolf." Also, I spent the winter riding ponies with gloves that smelled like skunk. Now I understand why no one else wanted to touch it.

The Party Line

One of the things I have grown to love doing is telling my children about the "hardships" of growing up in a small town in Iowa. The life that we used to lead is so different from the life that my children have lived. They have lived in a city all their lives and have not gotten to experience so many things that we did in Rembrandt. To them chores simply means emptying the dishwasher and cleaning their room. But the story that they find most unbelievable is that of the "Party Line."

When I was a child on the farm, we, like most farm families, had a party line. This simply meant that four or five families shared the same telephone line. Each individual phone number was identified by a set pattern of rings, for example two shorts

and one long. I remember quite clearly when my folks decided that I was old enough to start answering the phone. It wasn't simply a matter of saying, "Hello." I had to be able to identify our pattern. I felt so grown up.

Because of the party line, we had special rules. Telephone calls were seldom made after 9:00 p.m. If a call was made after bedtime, all your neighbors would know it. Because of the pattern of the ring, we would know who was receiving the call. Generally in the case of a late night phone call, there was some discussion about it the next morning at the breakfast table. Also, nothing you said was private. You always had to assume there was someone else listening on the party line. This was not to say that there was not a built-in warning system. When someone else picked up the line there was a barely audible click. Usually it was followed by another click indicating that the person had hung up. If there was a neighbor with some important "news" to pass on, they might repeat the process over and over. You knew that you were being asked to vacate the line when someone clicked repeatedly. There was one family on our line that got around the privacy issue by speaking to each other in Swedish. Also, as a courtesy to others on the line, phone calls were expected to be kept as brief as possible. It was quite maddening to want to make a call and have to wait 45 minutes before you could place it.

On our party line we had someone who tended to abuse the last rule. It could be quite a source of frustration at times. If I wanted to call my neighbor and the phone was in use by this person, it was quicker to just walk across the road to her house. One day I had done just that, and I told my neighbor why. We searched through the old 45's. I don't remember if it was theirs or ours, but we found one entitled "You Talk Too Much." I'm sure most of you could write the ending, but yes, we put the hi-fi by the phone and played the song right in that lady's ear. Usually when we did something stupid like that, we would get in trouble. I fully expected to, but for some reason, we never heard anything about it from our parents. Hummm, wonder if it was a guilty conscience on the part of the offending party, and they chose not to tell our parents about our creative problem-solving strategy!

After Rembrandt

I graduated from high school in 1972 and went to Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, for my freshman year. After going to college in Missouri, I never moved back to Rembrandt. That first year was a real "eye-opener" for me. I learned some lifelong lessons that stay with me today. For example, what we called dinner was really lunch and what we called supper was really dinner. I also learned, much to my embarrassment, that there was no such word as "kitty-corner," at least that's my presumption, since everyone laughed when I said it.

My various travels have landed me in Yakima, Washington, where I have lived for the last 17 years. I completed my college education, after taking some time to raise two daughters and graduated with a B.S. in accounting from Central Washington University. I now work as a CPA in private industry.

There are some things that will stay with me forever. One is my interest in science and my fond memories of Mr. Woelber's chemistry and physics class. My older daughter, April, is now a biology major at the University of Redlands in Redlands, California, on a Presidential Scholarship. My younger, Kelsey, is in the nursing program at Yakima Valley Community College in Yakima as a high school senior. I'm grateful for the fact that I had a solid foundation in science to point my children in this direction.

On a personal note, for those of you who remember me, my younger daughter is 5'11" and my older is 5'10". So if you see someone short who looks like an older Barb McKibben with two very tall, gorgeous girls, it might be me. My apologies to all I may have offended in my younger days, and my sincere thanks to all for helping make me the person I am today. God bless you all.

Bob Bentley - Class of 1972

I believe that we were in the eighth grade and in English class. The teacher was in the middle of explaining something when Darrell Lester, who was sitting in front of me, grabbed the front pole of the desk I was sitting in. (These desks were the ones that had the washtub-like basin that held all the books and papers with a sloped top that had two grooves in the top for pencils and a pop-down support that would hold the top surface horizontally flat.)

So I was sitting there unaware what was about to happen when the raised desk slammed to the floor with a loud bang. The next thing I see is the teacher coming towards us. I thought, "OK Darrell, you're in for it now." The teacher grabbed Darrell by the back of the neck and gave him a couple of scolding shakes and then turned his attention to me.

Before I knew it, I was defending myself from a barrage of hand slaps about my head and face. One of them breached my defenses and made it to my nose. After a minute of that, he stopped, and I discovered that my nose was bleeding. But feeling that I had been wronged, I just sat there at my desk looking at the teacher while drops of blood were periodically splashing on the desktop. He eventually recommended that I go to the bathroom and stop the bleeding with a Kleenex or paper towel. So that was kind of how the day started. I actually don't remember more about school that day except it was either a Tuesday or a Friday because there was a high school basketball game that evening in the RHS gymnasium, and being an eighth grader I was able to go to the games and play in the pep band.

I believe that this game was in January, and Christmas had already occurred that year. I had received a tie clip from Spencer Gifts (never was able to find their store in Spencer). Now it wasn't just an ordinary tie clip. It was in the shape of a Derringer and could fire blanks. So during the girls' game I worked my way up to the very top row of bleachers (the ones that you couldn't really sit straight up on) and patiently waited until the final moments of the game. At the last second the buzzer would sound, and so did my tie clasp. I felt so happy with myself for providing such a unique ending to that game. If we won or lost though—that memory eludes me.

But I wasn't done yet. There still was the boys' game, and if I could get away with it once, I could get away with it again. Well I guess I was mistaken. One of the side effects of making the loud bang from the gun was the disbursement of a flash due to burning powder. Well there was an observant eye on the floor at that time, and he was the principal. When I sauntered past him to slip out the door to head home, he requested a word with me. He asked me to give him the gun I was using to signal the end of the games, and I stood there for a while like I didn't have a clue what he was implying. I then reached up and removed the clip from my tie and gave it to him. He looked at it and replied, "No, I want the one you were shooting tonight." I had to show him how the gun came apart and where the blank cartridge went and how the hammer would hit the firing pin to detonate the cartridge. Well he finally believed me and took the gun.

Now the story could end there, but since I'm still sitting here typing I wanted to develop it a little further. A week or so later I went into the principal's office (without being sent there) and asked the principal if I could get my gun back from him. He replied that he no longer had it and that he had actually given it to my dad a while back at a school board meeting. My dad just quietly had kept it until I had the courage to face him and tell him about the incident that particular day and the misuse of the Christmas gift at the game.

This is just another story about growing up in a small town; there wasn't much that a person was able to get away with even though it seemed like no one was the wiser. There are other stories I remember, but I don't want it to appear that all I did was get into trouble as a youth there.

Shirley Morse Dodd - Class of 1972

Most kids today can't imagine growing up in small town USA, population 250 or so. We didn't have CDs, or DVDs, or even VCRs. So what did we do?

Winter was always a fun time. In the 1960s we used to get quite a bit of snow. In the mid 1960s, we had a big blizzard; I remember being without electricity for four or five days. There was so much snow, the streets of Rembrandt were only open to snowmobiles or foot traffic. There was about two feet of snow on all the streets. When the streets were finally open, a good share of the snow was moved to the park, which made quite a mountain of snow. We thought it would be a great place for a fort. Several of the muscle-bound boys of town started scooping out snow and tunneling into the center of the mound of snow. There ended up being a rather large room in the center of the snow. It made a great fort for awhile, and it took a few weeks to melt.

I can also remember many a Sunday, when seven or eight kids would come over with their sleds. My dad had a small tractor. Mom would tie one sled after another to the back of the tractor and take us all out for a joy ride all over town. There was usually very little traffic on the streets on Sunday. We really had to hold on for dear life when we got to the street by the school. It curved around, and Mom would see who all she could throw off the sleds and send the kids rolling in the ditch. You never wanted to be on the last

sled. It whipped around the corners the worst. There was more than one sled that would catch a little air on that particular corner. No, Mom wasn't trying to kill any of us. We really looked forward to those Sundays. Remember those good old days, Doug, Bob, Sue Ann, Candy, Murry??? And after Mom filled all our coats with snow, we would all go back to our house, and Mom made all of us hot chocolate. The kids never seemed to ask us to go out and play; they wanted Mom. We just got to go along for the ride. And who can't remember making angels in the snow. I did learn that you don't have to get up on top of your swing set to fall into the snow, to make an angel, especially when the snow is quite hard. Sure knocked the wind out of me!!!!!!

Along about the summer of 1968, Mom decided to rent the little drive-in out on the highway. It was only a mile out of town, so it wasn't far to go for a shake and a burger. We were pretty busy after ball games. And it wasn't a bad place to take a date out to eat before heading to the drive-in movies. We learned how to car hop. My brother Keith and I began to learn the restaurant business, which proved to be a useful tool for my future. We enjoyed working that summer. We met a lot of people and made a lot of friends. My mom enjoyed the drive-in so much, she decided to have Dad build a small restaurant in town. It was a fast-food oriented business, since my grandma, Janet Weber, had the restaurant downtown, and of course Mom didn't want to compete with Grandma!!! Not that anyone could. After all, who could bake a better pie than my Grandma Weber.

Mom decided the kids should also have a place to hang out, so she had a basement included in the restaurant. Dad built picnic tables for the downstairs, all bright colors. And the block walls were painted blue and white. It was very colorful and bright. The kids liked it. Mom had a jukebox and a pinball put in for all to play. John Binder and Mike Kelly played a rather mean pinball, as I recall. And it wasn't unusual to find a fierce game of battleship going on in the afternoon. "The Cove" was a great place to play cards as well. Mom later on got a foosball table. Many a tournament was played down there on a Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. Friday and Saturday nights were always busy. A lot of the local high school crowd would go down and enjoy the music and just each other's company and, of course, enjoy the great food!!!!!!!!!!

The upstairs wasn't large, six tables, but you could come and enjoy a meal. In the afternoon you could always come for a cup of coffee or soda and find Mom engaged in a hot game of spades or cribbage. She loved to play cards. As well as sandwiches, you could get the best broasted chicken in the area. Is there anyone who can't remember Jan Morse's broasted chicken?!

I don't think Mom just had a restaurant; she helped give the kids a place to go and relax. Mom loved kids and wanted to give them a place where they could feel comfortable and have something to do besides just drive around.

So yes, growing up in a small town was really not that boring. I have a lot of fond memories. And as far as Jan Morse goes, who could ever forget her or her Morse Cove???

After Rembrandt

I graduated in 1972 and went to airline school in Kansas City for six weeks. It was a great experience, and I had a great time; however I never used it. I came back to Rembrandt, married, and had two beautiful daughters, Melissa and Carrie. We spent four years in New Mexico, we did a lot of traveling, and we ended up back in Rembrandt. I went into business with my mom and ran the Cove for several years until Mom died of cancer. It got to be too much, so I got out of the business because I wanted to spend more time with my girls.

Things happen in life, as they do to some. My husband and I separated, and I moved to Casper, Wyoming, where I have lived for the last 13 years or so. I remarried and have been working as a waitress. I greatly enjoy living here as it is close to the mountains, and Joe and I love to ski. My only regret is that I am too far from my family and my four precious grandkids whom I miss terribly.

Susan McClintock Tigard - Class of 1972

Rembrandt was the first town I ever lived in. My dad was the depot agent for the railroad in Rembrandt. I remember walking uptown to the store for candy, playing in the park, mother-daughter banquets at the church, and the marching band from school. We thought it was a parade and would run alongside. It seemed so big back then. We moved when I was five years old.

I had just completed my freshman year of high school when we moved back to Rembrandt in June of 1969. I was anxious to make new friends and renew old friendships. That summer I played softball and took driver's ed. In the fall when school started, we were a bit confused. Coming from a bigger high school, I kept wondering where the rest of the class was. As I settled into the whole small town concept, I realized how great it really was. The school was like a private school, and everyone knew your name. There were times everyone knew your business as well. But I did get a chance to shine.

I liked that I could participate in everything I wanted to. I played drums in the band and was majorette. Now I was in the band that would march up and down the street as the other kids ran along.

We all had to work together and play together if we wanted to have any sports. Usually if you were not on a team, you were still part of the team as a manager or a cheerleader. I played softball, basketball and ran track.

The highlight of my softball career was three trips to state. Though not first place, we did pick up second place twice and fourth place once.

In track I ran the half-mile. Since Rembrandt did not have a track, I would run on the road just south of the school out to Highway 71, north on 71 and then run back on the main highway into town and back to the school.

In school all of us were required to take typing, write a term paper, and take speech. I am so thankful, though not at the time, that we had to do these activities. As a teacher, these skills have helped me get through many a tough time.

Other highlights from my time in Rembrandt include class plays, study hall, getting into cars and trucks and riding on the airplane hills outside of town at top speed, and working the fields during the summers on crews.

I could not wait until I graduated in 1972 to move to a big city and see what was beyond Rembrandt. Well, I have had my time in Wichita, Kansas. My husband and I decided to move to a small town outside of Wichita, so my kids could have what I had—a place to shine. Rembrandt and the people will always have a place in my heart.

After Rembrandt

I graduated in 1972 and went on to Iowa State University where I received my teaching degree in Home Economics. I then moved to Wichita, Kansas, where I have taught for about 26 years. I did go back to school at Wichita State where I received my M.A. in special ed. and currently teach at West High School. I have two daughters in college. My husband works for the City of Wichita as a traffic-engineering supervisor. We have a seven-acre place outside of Valley Center, Kansas, which is about seven to ten miles north of Wichita. We enjoy getting together with friends, church, fishing, hunting, skiing, sightseeing, building projects, and just relaxing.

I am part of the Bentley-McClintock family. A few years back we invited my mother, Marilyn Bentley, to come to Valley Center to live because the winters are milder than in Rembrandt. She currently has a place at Sun Flower Gardens, a retirement home. She has found her place in our town by working at the public library and writing for the town newspaper.

Betty McKibben Branhagen - Class of 1973

Learning to Drive

Learning to drive on our farm probably seemed about as natural as “town kids” learning to ride a bike on the sidewalks. I was fortunate to have parents who were very trusting and brave, although some adults may have thought them to be a bit premature in their instruction of us young children.

I am not absolutely certain if I learned to drive the old Farmall H tractor or the 1948 black Chevy pickup first, but I am fairly sure that I first drove our oldest tractor. This is logical because I remember the frustration of being too small, even with multiple pillows, to reach both the clutch and brake and still manage to turn the steering wheel of the “retired” pickup and see through the wheel. (My body was too short for these early ambitions.) I had to defer the task to an older sibling or friend. With the tractor, I only needed to use the clutch to put it into the gear where it would stay and could easily do this by standing on one leg and using the other to press the clutch while I used both hands to move the ball on top of the long steel rod to put it into gear. I remember standing up

and driving the tractor while I looked through the steering wheel and peered over the long red engine cover. The exhaust pipe on top of the tractor always posed an obstacle, but I could easily just lean to either side and see both sides perfectly! This tractor didn't have a pedal for acceleration. Two things determined speed—the selected gear and the hand-operated throttle on the right side of the steering column. The throttle had little notches that the lever would hook to, so it was easy to go up and down, just a little—except that it didn't have power steering and took all of my strength (especially if the front wheel—actually two narrow wheels about four inches apart—was in a rut). Other than that, it was generally simple for a kid who was tall enough to see over the long red engine cowling (cover).

When we were tall enough to reach the pedals and still see over the dashboard and back seat of the car, we graduated to learning to drive the family automobile. Why over the back seat of the car, one might ask—obviously, so we could drive in reverse! We couldn't wait for the mailman to come deposit the mail in the box at the end of the lane. Since we weren't allowed to drive on the road to turn around, my parents would let us back down the long lane and drive up to the house with the mail. At first, going to get the mail took significantly longer than bringing it home! But later in life my riders were often surprised at how well I could “back up!”

Why would parents teach kids to drive so young? I guess it all depends on your perspective. As a kid, I knew that my parents actually worked at having fun; as a parent, I'm still not sure; as a manager, it's perfectly clear—my parents were very good delegators. Although I was the youngest of seven children, by the time I was seven years old, the “labor pool” was significantly diminished—there were only three kids left on the farm. The natural labor pool was also complicated by both parents having significant medical deficiencies that necessitated persistent physical restrictions.

The “field work” progression was clear—back then we had a few acres of oats to “roll.” This would only require driving up and down the field with a small implement behind that was heavy and would aerate the soil. It seems simple enough; you don't have to stay on any rows, and if you make a mistake, it's not all that significant. The problem was that we had little “roads” through our fields with fences on both sides. I haven't yet forgotten (though I am hoping with possible older age memory loss, maybe I will) one of the first times that I turned a 90-degree corner. I neglected to compensate for the obscured loader on the front of the tractor. It was too low for me to see and stuck out about four feet. When I turned the corner, the evenly spaced squares of six-inch metal teeth quite neatly and efficiently pulled up about six feet of fence until I was able to put in the clutch with my left foot and the brake with my right foot while bracing my back against the front of the chair to stop. I also wasn't yet very good at driving in reverse. How humiliating. My remorse endures. (Although my parents were quite understanding and quickly eliminated all evidence of my mishap without any recourse.)

Other than that ego-crushing incident, my other memories are only heart warming and bring a quiet smile each time these fond memories return. Others may remember watching me cultivating soybeans while the cultivator fell off—it took me a while, so

they thought, to notice. You see, I could be seen from our front yard by my father and other siblings, by my cousin, and unfortunately by all who drove by on the blacktop. In my defense, I was diligently watching the row pointer, but I do remember a distinctive shift in the momentum. I have no remorse; I know that life isn't always perfect.

Most of my childhood driving memories remain some of my favorite recollections. Farmers were subsidized by the government then and were actually being paid not to farm a portion of their acreages. The resultant “government acres” were not to be harvested. I am so thankful for such a fun-loving father and mother (Bruce and Margene McKibben). We used these acres as a playground. In the winter my dad would pull a bunch of us riding on a toboggan behind a pickup. He even made a six-foot box kite that we had to fly by using the pickup. He also suggested to us novice drivers that we make an obstacle-driving course in the alfalfa fields.

I've seen the present winter driving training area near Breckenridge in Summit County, Colorado. Ours was like this, only bigger, with lots more curves, and invisible stop signs. The streets (known to us only as “roads” then) were well worn and easily identified. When we were old enough, we could drive the old “retired” pickup through our make-believe community. We taught several of our friends how to drive in this field, in that old pickup. Driving in the fields was perfectly safe, no traffic; the most challenging part was the double clutch. (You would have to clutch to neutral, then again to the next gear.) This black pickup had two long silver “stacks” on each side that made it very loud. It was easy to teach kids how to make the noise louder as they let out the clutch. We would concentrate on accelerating just before the bumps, turning and shifting. The only concern was not to hit the bump so hard that the battery would turn over in the floorboard that was strategically missing there.



The old black Pickup

As we grew, we graduated to drive my dad's road through the fields to town!! That is when true independence occurred—probably about ten or eleven. We could drive through the fields to the farm beside town, park the vehicle, walk up Main Street and get all the supplies on our list. We could even drive ourselves to and from MYF! This was very practical and fun. We'd always volunteer to go to town for supplies although after the first year or two, we usually didn't volunteer so quickly for the field “work.”

By the time we were all finally old enough to drive on the highways, it was a breeze! We'd already had lots of experience in snowdrifts, mud, and ice patches. We knew when we had to accelerate, when to pump the brakes gently to slow down, and when to have plenty of momentum. We only had to worry about less experienced drivers!

Except for maybe a few trips to Iowa on vacation, my children will never be able to acquire and experience the years of driving experience by the time they reach 16 and are eligible for a driver's license. I wasn't much into science until my college courses, but I discovered that through the experiences of my childhood the basic principles of physics were easily understood. These included such concepts as momentum (I'll never forget

frantically trying to slow the tractor to make a left turn while towing two full wagon loads of corn), acceleration, deceleration, leverage, and inertia (that which is in motion remains in motion unless acted upon by an outside force), and how disruptive an outside force can be (a privately held secret). My children won't have the opportunity to experiment like we did. I will try to expose them as best as possible on a smaller scale—maybe with four wheelers, boats or other typical urban off-road toys.

Gravity Defiance!

Okay, so the previous story sounds like driving was basically entertainment, except for having to “work” in the fields. Although this is partially true, one must realize that we took the driving and the responsibility for the expensive implements very seriously.

Rembrandt, Iowa, wasn't in the center of “tornado alley” like Kansas may be. Also our dog was named “Bubbles” not “Toto,” but we did experience our share of whirlwinds and the occasional tornado within miles.

The little whirlwinds occurred frequently, especially in the spring; perhaps we were just aware of them more because we spent so much time out in the open spaces. While driving a tractor and implement up and down a field, it was impossible not to notice a swirl of wind that would lift the dust and corn stalks in a small circle on the ground, with progressively larger circumference and volume into a cone towards the sky—fascinating and fun to watch and certainly not scary when one saw the origin.

Then there were the windstorms. We had frequent windstorms in the spring. (The winter blizzards are another story!) The windstorms were probably more troublesome back then, before the now prevalent conservation methods were common; the farmers would plow their fields, resulting in enormous amounts of dust blowing through the sills of the old farm windows. At any rate, for a kid it was always fun to watch the wind blow items across the fields/prairie. The best vantage point was always out in the open field. We could even watch the wind blow the rain across the fields and know just the moment when we were going to get wet!

To keep us from worrying about the weather when I was younger, my dad used to tell us that he controlled the weather with his various levers located in the corncrib. This was most reassuring for a worried young child who was so afraid that a hail storm might wipe out an entire year's income in one fell swoop. Of course, I'd been fixated to TV every time that the *Wizard of Oz* came on. The same available two TV channels would predict the weather and give alerts, but it was certainly a relief to know my father had levers in the corncrib that could keep a storm from wiping us away!!

We did, however, have a few storms that my father must have thought necessary for the crops. I remember one in particular. The wind was blowing so hard that I watched an empty gravity flow wagon (a large metal wagon, shaped kind of like a funnel) be blown several yards across the yard. My sister and I were home alone so immediately sprang into action. We anticipated that a large hailstorm or worse must be coming, and we knew that we needed to get the implements under cover. Barb drove the huge

combine through the large door in the barn. One of us moved the wagons and a tractor into the machine shed and/or corn crib. The only tractor left was the John Deere 3020. By this time it was really raining hard and the wind was blowing extremely hard, but I was determined. Fortunately, this tractor had a wrap around (circular cab) that protected me from the elements. I opened the door to the “tractor shed” and carefully, but quickly drove the tractor in.

The next morning as we explained to our parents how we had so responsibly deposited the equipment into a safe haven, I remember my father asking me two or three times, where I had put the 3020. I repeatedly told him, the tractor shed. He later told me it took a few hours before he had the nerve to go see the expected damage. I guess that prior to this, the 3020 had NEVER fit into the tractor shed. He told me this before we went out to look at it. I remember it clearly today. Sitting neatly under the V-shaped roof, the center exhaust pipe was slightly bent posteriorly, but wasn't even close to being broken off. When one looked closely, it was rather curious how the tractor had gotten safely into the building. There was not a scratch on the top of the cab.

The egress took far more effort than the ingress. It was necessary to remove the air down to the fluid of the big tires. Then two hydraulic jacks were placed at each end, and angle irons were put on top to raise the overhead door that extra little inch necessary for removal.

Beats me what happened. Someone must have lifted up the building just as I drove it in. Not remembering this story in particular but having experienced many others, at my father's funeral I publicly acknowledged and thanked my guardian angels. I know they have been around helping me; I don't know why, but I am most certainly grateful. I certainly do need all the help I can get. I can't figure any other explanation for this one. Guess it was my first time so obviously to have received divine help. Sometimes little things like this are easy to take for granted. But in combination with others, and upon reflection, it can be both exciting and perplexing, and certainly leaves one with a state of wonder and appreciation. I don't claim to be of sufficient character to try to propose a moral to this story, but I can state unequivocally that some force beyond gravity was assisting me with my well-intended efforts that night.

The Gift

Since having children, I've thought long and hard how to replicate the respect for authority, the expectation of excellence and sense of self-responsibility that almost all of the children in my hometown community experienced as a normal course of daily life. As a kid, I thought the entire world was like our caring little town.

Although as a young child, I knew larger towns and schools existed, it was only later that I would fully realize the difference and truly appreciate the gift of being raised on a farm near Rembrandt, Iowa, a town of about 250 people. In retrospect after so much metropolitan exposure, it's almost like a version of *Star Trek*, where the Enterprise or Voyager would visit a Utopian-type culture, where the people were simple, pure, always

did their best and the simple things mattered the most. Though there was a difference in abundance, one wouldn't know it by observation.

As seen as a child, the center of our “culture” was Rembrandt Consolidated School. Kindergarten through twelfth grades were in the same building that also had an attached gymnasium. We knew everybody, their brothers and sisters, what color of car they drove, where they lived and perhaps other details that we never let them know we knew! For children, there wasn't much to do in a small town, except attend school events. There were certainly the other small gatherings such as church clubs and 4-H, but these only involved small groups. The biggest happenings would occur at the school. There certainly was incentive to do well at school. All the classes were small, and everyone was always expected to work hard and do only their best. Although each of the high school grades' composite averages always rated in the high ninetieth percentile in the nation on the Iowa Basic Skills Tests, the extracurricular activities were certainly the highlight. What else would kids do in a small town if they weren't involved in athletics, band or school activities—except maybe have to work longer in the fields or more around the house!

In early grade school, the high school basketball games were always my favorite. I remember walking through the double front gray and glass doors and smelling the fresh



*Betty in her sister
Helene's uniform*

popcorn from the small concession stand on the right. I could hear the squeaking of the high-top canvas basketball shoes from the players warming up on the smoothly polished wooden floor. I could look straight into the band room and get glimpses of all the different instruments, cases, and older students getting ready for the “pep band.” I'd see other kids my age who were there with their families to watch their older brothers and sisters play. Almost everyone in the community was a farmer and since you can't farm at night, the fathers were also there. I would certainly know everyone who came to sit on the Rembrandt side, the south half of the polished wooden bleachers.

The girls' team would play first; then the boys would play their rival from a neighboring “town.” The toughest teams were usually the ones that were several towns joined together into one conglomerate school, like Clay Central and South Clay. The pep band would play during the halves and between the games while the two janitors used big long dust mops to wipe the floor. Except for maybe some of the families with band members, most of the Rembrandt crowd would leave between the games to go down to the lunchroom in the basement of the school. (My father and others knew this as the old gym).

I thought the room was huge. There were long gray and white Formica-covered metal gray tables with matching benches on wheels that would fold into the wall when not in use. Pictures in dark wooden frames lined the top of the walls, above where the tables were stored. Each frame had a high school graduation picture of each individual in the entire grade, usually oval and about three or four inches tall. The pictures were in chronological order of each graduating class since the school had been in existence. I'd

often look up to catch a glimpse of my father and his 12 classmates from the Class of 1935. This was on the northwest end, usually about where the line would start for the food.

Between the games, the mothers of the Rembrandt players would sell individual servings of desserts that they had made for sale to benefit the school. We'd stand in line, look at the class pictures along the wall, and slowly make our way to the window and counter where the desserts would sit, neatly laid out on plates. We'd pay someone seated near the end of the counter, at a little wooden table with a small gray cash box. We'd scan the room to select which friends to join and step over the long bench to be seated at the table. It was always such a wonderful time—so many people to watch and listen to as they told tales of their lives, so familiar to me.

That food and social event was the very root of my problem on that cold, late fall day. I came home from school in the usual manner, riding one of the three yellow Rembrandt school buses. When the school bell would ring, we'd jump on the bus; it would quickly be loaded, then drive one mile and make its first stop at our large mail box that read "Bruce McKibben" in big, black, homemade welded letters. Our dog, Tippy, would usually be waiting by the mailbox to walk up the long straight lane together with me and my older sister, Barb. I don't remember Barb being there that day; she must have had some activity at school.

When I came in the front door, there was the usual handwritten note from my mother of the daily chores to do, but this was an even better day. Sitting on the kitchen counter was a pan of one of my favorite desserts! It was a cherry pie filling with a crunchy, buttery wonderful topping. The sweet smell was so inviting. We were always allowed to eat a bowl of cereal or some snack when we came home from school. It would be three hours before I ate supper, so I knew it surely wouldn't spoil my appetite. There was no one home to ask, since my mother was probably out working in the fields, rushing to finish in anticipation of the impending first freeze. So I helped myself to a little taste of the treat, and then a little more, and a little more, until I was fully satisfied and content.

That's about the time my mother came in from her work in the fields to check on me. I think that I shrank about three sizes when I saw the look on her face as she looked at the dessert. I felt so terrible; I'd eaten about a quarter of the pan. Before she could say anything, I asked her if I'd been wrong. She told me of course not, that I certainly couldn't have known that she was planning to take it to the basketball game that evening. Knowing that I was upset, she tried to calm me by telling me that it was fine, she'd just take in the dessert that was left. I appreciated her understanding and tried to look relieved as she left to go back to the fields, probably plowing with her favorite 4020 John Deere tractor and either the four or five bottom plow.

All I could think of was the humiliation that I assumed my mother would certainly endure when she carried in the partial dessert. My guilt was relieved when I realized the remedy of replacing it! I had plenty of time to bake a new one. I remembered the recipe, but my heart sank when I opened the cabinets to find no cherry pie filling. The

resolution seemed obvious; I would walk to town and get the ingredients and make another.

In the current days of credit and debit cards, perhaps the story doesn't seem so strange, but in this small town, the idea of a very young grade school kid going to a store to get groceries also seemed normal. I knew all that I had to do was walk up the two wooden steps, open the door of Peterson's Store, go down the three or four short aisles and find what I needed. I would then show my items to Mrs. Gibbons or Mr. Peterson, and they would pull out a little tablet, the size that waitresses even today still sometimes use, and write the items and the price on our list. Periodically my parents would come in and pay the bill. This process worked everywhere in our town. I thought that the whole world was like this. At any rate, the answer to my dilemma was clear; I'd just make another identical cherry dessert.

I donned my winter coat, hat, and perhaps gloves and walked down the end of the lane and turned left towards town. Once I was away from the shelter of the trees near our homestead, the wind was cutting and cold. The mile seemed much longer walking in the cold winter than when riding the bus or during the summers when we'd ride ponies or roller skate to town on the two-lane blacktop road. I had passed one, maybe two, fences marking the 40-acre fields when a vehicle came along the road, headed towards town, just like I was. I immediately recognized the pickup truck and knew it was Henry Hoover ("Hank" to some). He stopped and asked me to get in. I may never forget how wonderfully warm the truck was. I sat on the edge of the front seat to hold my hands and feet close to the heater. Before he started driving, he asked me what I was doing walking alone on the road. I tried to be strong and tell him the story without crying. I told him how I'd eaten the dessert my mother had made for others and how I needed to go to the store to make another one. I never expected him to say it, but to my relief, he told me he'd take me to the store and take me home.

He waited in his pickup while I was in the store, getting all the needed ingredients; then he drove me up the lane and let me out in front of the steps of my front yard. I don't remember if I thanked him appropriately, but I trust that he knew how grateful I was for his act of kindness. Although I didn't anticipate help, I also didn't expect it to be such a windy, cold, long walk. I was so happy to have avoided further discomfort and fatigue but was even happier to make the dessert and surprise my mother with fresh whole dessert to take to the school for the game that evening.

Life was so simple then. I was so satisfied to have righted my perceived wrong. I wonder if my children or others of this world still have such a sense of responsibility for their actions at this young age. Perhaps, as they say hindsight is 20-20, or the grass is greener on the other side of the fence and my historic perspective is flawed. As I contemplate the situation and my problem solving, I try to imagine my children or their friends at this age and their response to the problem. Would they have even considered it a problem? Would children I know today care so deeply that they might have disappointed their parents? Would they be willing to do whatever it takes to resolve an issue? How would their resolution be different?

I can ponder the possibilities all I want, but the answer is the same—I cannot give the gift of my childhood experiences to my children. I cannot expect my metropolitan community to provide assistance, safety, and comfort and always demand the best from my children. I can only try to convey the values from my hometown experience. I can only try to reflect the caring, respect, responsibility and desire for excellence that my family and community demanded from and gave to me.

After Rembrandt

I was born at an early age and have since discovered my life as a “grown up” isn't always as much fun as recollections of my childhood and development! (I still have secret ambitions.) I received an A.A. from Stephens College, a B.S. from Mankato State University, a Certificate of Physical Therapy from the Graduate College at the University of Iowa, and a Master's of Manual Orthopedic Therapy from OGI. As a physical therapist who specializes and is board certified in orthopedic clinical therapy, I own and operate an outpatient rehabilitation clinic in DeSoto, Texas. I married Darrel Branhagen from Decorah in 1983. Our son Andrew is in seventh grade, and our daughter Sarah is in sixth grade.

Words and music by Betty McKibben Branhagen

Dreams Come True

My grandpa was such a wise man
 He taught me to dream and to say “I can.”
 He said, “Can't' didn't do anything for anybody”
 He told me just to say, “I can.”
 Go find what makes you happy
 Pursue it; give it your best
 And give it your all!

Chorus:

And Dream
 Close your eyes and dream
 Dream
 Make your dreams come true
 Dare to believe
 Dare to pursue
 Dare to make your dreams come true.
 When I falter, when I need a friend
 I remember and it all comes back again
 Holding Grandpa's hand over his black farm land
 Hearing him say, remember you can.
 So find what makes you happy
 Pursue it, do your best
 Believe that you can!

Repeat Chorus

Tag:

I dare you child
 Dream, trust God, pursue
 And watch your dreams come true.
 Oh child, remember, your dreams really can come true!
 Oh child, remember, you make your dreams come true!

Mary Ness Ward - Class of 1973

Christmases in Rembrandt

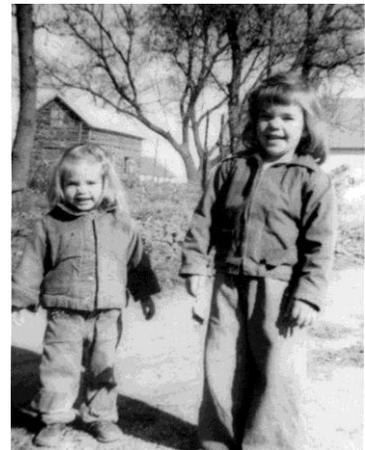
I remember Christmases in Rembrandt, the small rural Iowa town where I grew up. There was the school Christmas operetta that was practiced by all the elementary grades for that highly anticipated night when our parents came and watched us sing and perform. I remember the story my father told of the piano falling off the stage during a Christmas operetta when he was a kid in the same town and the same school. I wondered if it could possibly happen again and felt much better when my assigned seat was well away from the piano.

I remember the greatly anticipated Christmas card given to all the third-graders by our beloved teacher, Miss Biggins. It had Lifesavers and Juicy Fruit gum and other candies attached to help tell a story. I remember the kids who brought popcorn balls for the class Christmas party and wondered how anybody's mother could make such a wonderful treat; it had to be magic.

I remember when the Methodists and the Lutherans, whose churches were a half block apart, combined forces and under the direction of Mrs. Janet Haraldson, had a joint Christmas play on a cold snowy night just before Christmas. Afterwards there was handed out to all the children a small brown bag that had an orange and peanuts and a peppermint stick or two.

I remember Santa Claus coming to town riding on the old red fire truck one Saturday afternoon just in time to take orders for what we kids thought we wanted most. Of course, he had a bag of treats to share as well. Seems like there were some turkeys handed out to a few grateful parents too.

But the Christmas I remember most was the one that brought a shoe box full of cookies to our house. You know the kind: decorated sugar cookies! Sugar cookies cut out in the shapes of Santa Clauses, stockings, reindeer, candy canes, ornaments and



*Mary and sister Ramona
 in front of the log cabin*

stars. They were covered with that wonderful colored frosting that tasted oh-so-good. There were big drifts of snow outside that night and it was already very dark when the knock came at our door. Mrs. Janice Morse, the lady who ran the café in town, brought the box. We accepted it with a little bit of wonder and awe. We put it under our tree, which was just about the only thing under it that year. That box of cookies, shared with my brothers and sisters, was one of the best Christmas presents I have ever had; but that simple act of kindness shown by a neighbor was the very best of all.

After Rembrandt

A week after my eighteenth birthday, I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. Much of the time I worked in reconnaissance photography in Zweibrucken, Germany, fighting the “cold war.” The highlight of my career was when I participated in a squadron exchange with a Norwegian intelligence outfit and spent ten days at a base near Oslo, Norway. Besides work, I was able to visit my father's Aunt Gudrun and fly on a helicopter which buzzed some cruise ships on a fiord. My next assignment was at Beale AFB, California, working with the SR-71 program. When my active duty time was completed, I went on a mission for my church for 18 months to Buenos Aires, Argentina. I then got an A.A. at Ricks College, Rexburg, Idaho; and a B.F.A. in Art Education from Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. While in school I joined the Utah Air National Guard in Salt Lake City. I worked with a unit that installed electronic communications equipment and later switched to another intelligence squadron as a linguist specializing in Persian Farsi and Spanish. In my civilian life I worked for the U.S. Forest Service doing mostly office work and in the summertime fighting forest fires when needed.

In 1996 I married Wade Ward of Sugar City, Idaho. We started out with Wade's two boys, Kyle (15) and Cory (12), and have since added two more sons to our family, Joseph (4) and Merrill (2). I retired from the Air Guard just months before the war on terrorism started. Now I am really grateful to be a stay-at-home mom busy with my own little family. We all help on the farm where Wade grows potatoes and barley and I grow a garden.

Jim Mickelson - Class of 1974

My memories of my high school years come from my 13 classmates, activities we were involved in, and teachers and classes we were taking. I recall how much fun it was to be around my classmates and the things we were doing: magazine sales, playing chess at lunchtime, and just hanging out with each other. So many of the students at Rembrandt were involved in just about all activities that were offered, which created a real family atmosphere. Music and speech contests, concerts, class plays, basketball, baseball, and golf all bring back so many memories.

Here is a list of the things that I remember most:

- Rembrandt's first ever homecoming during basketball vs. Ayrshire—Leanne Stone and I were the first King and Queen.
- Class plays—My senior year I was a Chinese “Charlie Chan” character, and my junior year I was a young traveler in Europe visiting where Dracula and Frankenstein lived.
- Senior trip to Chicago where we went to a dinner theatre, baseball game, and museums
- Athletic Banquet at Stub's Ranch Kitchen (always a fun night of laughter and memories)
- Prom at Vern and Coila's in Arnolds Park— “Colour My World”
- Class Night (Awards Night) and Graduation (our theme - “Graduation Graffiti”)
- Annual staff and the paper staff—It was fun to be a publisher.
- Mrs. Cleone Schneck's speech and English classes—She made you work and be better than what you thought you could be.
- Mr. Melvin Dewey—music director—“a oney and a twoey”—What a great guy!
- Mr. Swigart—Baseball coach (sophomore year?)—I remember traveling home from an Arnolds Park baseball game when driving the school's old Plymouth station wagon. He passed two cars going south up from Goat Hill, barely making it back into his lane with oncoming traffic and some nervous passengers.
- Mrs. Marian Halverson—French teacher—I went on to get a minor in French in college because she was such a great teacher/motivator.
- Mr. Wally Woelber—What a super math teacher and all-around great guy.
- Mr. Robert Lovstad and Dennis Waters—social studies/science, basketball, baseball. These guys put a lot of their time and energy into helping us in the classroom and on the playing field.
- Mr. Frank Truesdell—superintendent/golf coach—What a nice guy who portrayed such a tough guy image. He helped to develop my interest in golf as coach my junior and senior years.
- Mr. Richard Brockmann—principal—I have so much respect for this guy and the job he did as our principal.
- Clarice Peterson—secretary—The nicest woman I knew at school, always willing to help with any problem.
- Other teachers—Duane and Bobbi Rath, Anna Belle McKibben, Arlene Johnson, Marllys Biggins, Delores Carlson, Mrs. Wolden. I look back at these people and think of all the little things they helped me with, in developing as a young student.
- Other people I admired and appreciated: Harold Olson—bus driver and janitor; Warren Anderson—janitor; Nadine Enderson and Berniece Ginkens—cooks

As a teacher in both elementary and high school, I see the effect that I can have on kids in helping them develop a work ethic and being able to work with others. Much of what I do reflects on the people and experiences that influenced me at Rembrandt. I have been a teacher and coach for 22 years at Odebolt-Arthur School in Odebolt, Iowa.

After Rembrandt

After graduating from Rembrandt in 1974, I attended Northwestern College in Orange City, graduating in 1978 with a B.A. in education (phys. ed and history). I taught and coached for a year at Melvin, Iowa, before moving to Odebolt in 1980. I currently teach economics, government, presentation media (video editing), high school PE/weightlifting, and K-5 Phys. Ed.

I coached high school baseball for 11 years, and major/minor baseball for five years. I have been the basketball head coach since 1983. Over the past six years, my teams have a record of 97-32, making it to a substate final game in 2001. I have been the head volleyball coach since 1989. The highlight was that OA was ranked No. 1 in the state in 1991 and qualified for the state tournament that year. I am also the assistant boys' and girls' golf coach (seventh year). It has been a joy to coach so many great kids here at OA and even a bigger treat to be able to coach my own kids as they have grown.

I was married to Kim (Schaller graduate) in 1979. We have three children, Brad, Adam, Kara, and one grandchild, Jaxon. The boys are currently in college, and Kara will graduate from high school in 2003. Kim has been a special education and resource teacher and has also worked as a substitute teacher in the Odebolt area.

My brothers, Gary and Steve, still get together with me (not so often any more) to sing. Our last engagement was at the Rembrandt Centennial. We still sing some of the old numbers from our many years of entertaining as we were growing up. I continue my singing by singing the psalmody and being a song leader each Sunday at church. I served as Sunday School superintendent and Christmas program director for a number of years and continue as the Sunday School song leader. I also am the chairperson of our call committee for a new pastor at Faith Lutheran in Odebolt.

Keith Zorzoli-Morse - Class of 1974

God's Hands Upon Clay

When I first heard of the request for Remembrances of Rembrandt, I thought to myself, how can one encapsulate so many memories into such a short space? For that matter, is there really any singular incident, or time, that stands out above all others?

For myself, I would have to list the following:

- The Sunday afternoons, right after a heavy snow, when my mother (Janice Morse) would start up the tractor and pull the toboggan around town. As she pulled us through the streets, other kids would attach their sleds. Soon we had a joyful train of sledders flying through the streets. At one point, we would take a break, when Mom would make a large vat of hot chocolate, before hitting the streets for another hour or so of merriment.
- Sleeping outdoors during a summer's eve. This was usually nothing more than an excuse for running the streets to see what kind of (innocent) mischief we could get

ourselves into. But nothing can ever replace the smell of the grass and the early morning dew when we finally settled down for a bit of sleep before the dawning of the new day. I miss the weekend go-cart races that they used to hold at the far end of town. The “thrill” of the hometown racetrack always had an exhilarating effect on me. Near and dear to my heart were the days spent with fellow bandmates in the group(s) we used to play in, and the places we used to play. Not to mention the concerts the local musicians used to hold at the old band shell in the park. Music will always be a major part of my soul.

- Hanging out at my grandma’s (Janet Weber) café, during the earliest years of my life. It always seemed to me to be the focal point of all the town’s activities. Everyone came there, either for their meals, or just to have coffee and some of Grandma’s incredible pies. Perhaps they just liked to hang out and converse with others during the course of the day. Not to mention that she was the one who was always there to sound the fire alarm in the event of a fire. As we move through life, we all find ourselves taking different paths. Some of us remained in the area while some of us moved out into the ‘greater expanse’ of the world. There were those who were the popular ones, those that were the outcasts, and those who merely went quietly through the daily doings of our rural community. Whether we were really that close to one another never really mattered, for whether one wants to admit it or not, we ALL touched one another’s lives, even if only for the briefest of moments.
- The most special memory of all is the culmination of the life and experiences that shaped us all. We are, for better or worse (though I am inclined to think ‘better’) the sum total of all the values and beliefs that surrounded our lives as we grew up in the rural Midwest. Some may think that some of our neighbors had noses a bit too long with regard to our daily lives. Yet, that is one of the ‘positive’ aspects of small town living. Take it from one who has lived in the city for many long years. How many of us are living in cities where one is barely aware of who our neighbors really are? NEVER take for granted the truly blessed life of living in a small town. We all are so very aware of the unfortunate events of September 11 and how those events seem to have finally helped to bring a country together. Yet, that ‘togetherness’ was a luxury I lived through during the formative years of my youth. Sadly, it took a country to experience such tragedy, to be aware of something that we (in rural Iowa) daily took for granted in the community in which we grew up. We were always there for one another when it really mattered.
- I sometimes miss the quietness of ‘good ol’ Rembrandt. I miss the friendships of those I grew up with. I miss the inquisitiveness ‘kinder’ of my hometown neighbors. But most of all, I am thankful for all that shaped me into my adulthood. The city may house my body, God may hold my soul, but it is Rembrandt that will always be where my spirit dwells. It will always be home. It is where I learned honesty, integrity, and the life-forming values that are so important today.
- That is, in essence, what I mean when I think of Rembrandt as an extension of God’s hands that formed the (human) clay of who we are.

Deb Wellmerling Hanson - Class of 1975

Looking back on the years growing up in a small town, I wouldn't have changed a thing, especially having the small-town experience and knowing who lived in every house in town. I was fortunate enough to have grown up on a farm and have the opportunity of taking care of animals, tending to chores, and just experiencing the wonders of nature.

Memorable events for me include the following:

- Walking beans and picking up rocks

People hear me talk about both of these past “jobs,” and they think there was slave labor in the 1960s and 1970s. Walking beans to people here in Texas means actually walking on beans (green beans in their interpretation). And picking up rocks—why would anyone do that! Leave the rocks in the ground!

I walked beans as a summer job for ten years, at least. It seemed like I lived in the fields during the days! Not only did I walk my dad's beans but also Glenn Hadenfeldt's fields. During my bean-walking tenure, I had friends who joined the money-earning venture—Elaine Heinen, Julie and John Obman, and Dana Rath. We definitely had good tans and made fairly decent money for pulling, chopping, and digging out the weeds in the soybeans. Our hands were worn and dirty along with our ankles scratched and cut if the soybeans started to grow and tangle across the rows. Where were the bean buggies and the spraying of weeds in our era!?!?

- Butchering chickens and gathering and selling eggs

Another one of my money-earning opportunities each summer for five years was cleaning broilers and selling some of them for \$3 - \$3.50 each. What a gross job! Mom or Dad would chop the heads off of the chickens, and I would take it from there—soaking the broiler in hot water to loosen the feathers for picking, washing them, and cutting them up into pieces. The pieces would have to soak in cold water for about two to three hours and then would be dried off and packaged. I remember going into Rembrandt and selling the packaged meat to our “customers.”

We raised chickens for what seemed like forever! Having to go into the chicken house amongst the aromatic (not) environment of ammonia and dust was an experience in itself. We had to pick up eggs generally twice a day—late morning and late afternoon. We had our regular customers who my mom either took dozens of eggs to or others who would drop by the farm and buy them. My folks enjoyed the visits by people stopping in not only to buy eggs but also to catch up on the local gossip or news.

- Working in the school kitchen during my freshman year of high school

Geor-gene Klahs, Julie Obman, and I did this for (I think) two years. We worked for a couple of hours Monday - Friday helping serve the meals to students K-12 and

washing dishes. Nadine Enderson and Berniece Ginkens were the two cooks we worked with. We girls made it a fun job not only doing what we were instructed to do, but also tormenting the janitors—Harold Olson and Warren Anderson during those lunch hours. Since we girls got to eat early along with the janitors, we would serve Harold and Warren their milk cartons with already punched holes in the cartons, so when they picked them up to drink from the carton, the milk would drizzle out of the hole either hitting their clothes or their lunch tray! A few times we locked Harold and Warren in the food storage area—only for a short time of course! We also would hide their rubber boots so they couldn't find them in the storage area. If I recall correctly, we made Warren give us each a quarter before we would tell him where to find his boots! When they would bring their plates in for rinsing, we girls would take the squirter hose and spray them with water (not all of the time though)! Nadine and Berniece would “egg us on” when we would tell them what we were going to do to Harold and Warren. We never would do anything to hurt them physically; we just wanted to torment and pull some pranks on them. We always got the job done we were paid to do. I remember saving my money to buy a pair of black vinyl chunk two to three-inch heeled shoes. I believe that kitchen job was my first official part-time job.

What a blast we girls had, and I remember Nadine and Berniece telling Julie, Geor-gene, and me later in life that there was never kitchen help quite like the three of us! They never knew what we would do next!

Erik “Hondo” Mosbo - Class of 1975

As the fourth child of Ed and Esther Mosbo in this farm-raised family near Rembrandt, I trained my eyes on the equipment that my dad and Uncle Ing used. Those International Harvester tractors and implements were amazing pieces of mechanical wizardry to a five-year-old boy. What power the sound of the first diesel tractor evoked. The sight of Bodaken's truck coming up the lane with a new 806 tractor on the back was an awesome event. It even had a permanent cab instead of a seasonally installed canvas “heat houser.” WOW!!!

I would memorize the model numbers of all the tractors in the International tractor catalogue. I had to compare them from one year to the next to see when there were model changes. What pride had been instilled in me when I first walked down our long lane to ride the school bus to kindergarten!

Lo and behold several boys from the Ed Madsen house got on the same bus that Harold Phillips drove. Our route was the east one. Two of the boys were older, one the same age, and four younger ones would follow as the years progressed. These kids thought the sun rose and set on John Deere equipment! Tractors with numbers like 4010 and 4020. They not only liked John Deere; they couldn't say anything good about International tractors. And woe to the kids that had Case tractors. They were definitely in the minority. Names were hurled back and forth like “Johnny pop” “InterTRASHenal”

“Case-of-bolts” Whose tractor had more power? Arguments that ended with back and forth “HUH” “Oh yeah?” “HUH!!!” and even louder “HUH!!!!!!!!!!”

I didn't really get satisfaction until we graduated from Rembrandt and my classmate, Pat Madsen, went to work for an International tractor dealer. But then all that changed when in later years International was bought out by Case, and John Deere continues to be a leader in agricultural equipment manufacturing. Such is life. It's as if John Deere were the New York Yankees and International Harvester were the Brooklyn Dodgers.

I was usually the second one on the bus or the second-to-last off. The bus route would travel the same route for the first half of the year and then reverse for the second semester. In the warm-weather months, when I would be the second to last off, and about fifth grade through freshman, I would sometimes ask to be left off at the intersection one mile east of Highway 71. From there I could walk a mile home if I cut across the field. I would get home a few minutes earlier than if I had ridden the remaining route.

Harold Phillips was a peaceable and humble guy. He was a calm and careful driver who instilled confidence in anyone who knew him. We were surprised when on our return home in the winter that we met an old truck that had an icy windshield with only a small circle cleared. As we met this truck on a narrow gravel road, Harold realized that this person hadn't seen us. The road was narrow, and the truck was in the center. We had to take the ditch. I remember sitting in the front right seat and seeing Harold reach down to turn the key off as we rolled on our right side into the ditch. I hung onto the hand bars by the driver's seat just as any kid would do at recess on the “monkey bars.” Out of around a dozen students, I believe Rich Madsen had the worst injury—a glass cut on his head. Several stitches were needed. It was obvious that Harold had picked the safer choice; otherwise we would have hit the pickup and both parties would have stopped hard. I felt bad for Harold when a week later as he drove the old Ford bus, the spare that he had driven for many years, lost the right rear axle, and the dual wheels came off and up through the floor board. He was a very safe driver and a victim of circumstances. No one was hurt by this event. VERY SURPRISED though.

Oh yeah, in between bus rides I attended school. My mother and my Aunt Florence had both taught school at Rembrandt, and respect for teachers was expected. For the most part I did. And for the few times I didn't, I'm still staying mum about those instances. I might get in trouble yet. ??????????

Whether on the bus, in the classroom, in the bleachers, at a game or on a ball team, we were Rembrandt School family.

After Rembrandt

After graduation ceremonies in May of 1975 I was enrolled that fall at Iowa Central Community College for a two-year Auto Mechanics course. Following graduation in 1977, I was hired as a mechanic for a Chevrolet dealer in Laurens before buying the hometown Coop gas station in Rembrandt in May of 1979. I married a Sioux Rapids girl, Mariellen Olson, in 1991. We moved to the Alton and Phyllis Mosbo farm

north of Rembrandt. It is the same farm that my Mosbo ancestors moved to in the 1880s. Mariellen's daughter, Michelle, is now married to Dan Schnetzer. They have a daughter Madison Rose Marie who is my granddaughter and girl friend. They currently reside in Ruthven which is about 35 miles from here. What a life, a wife and a girl friend and they get along just fine!

In 1994 we had to drop the gas business and focus solely on auto service and repair. In 1996 we bought our neighbor's outdoor power equipment business and Mariellen joined the business full time.

What a treat to deliver a brand new Grasshopper zero turn lawn mower to a farm or acreage and see the excitement on the kids' faces as they greet the new addition to their little world. Kind of reminds me of that shiny red 806. You may have guessed, we aren't a John Deere dealer, and we probably never will be. So there.
HUH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

M. Kim “Bez” Combes - Class of 1976

Reflections of the Class of 1976

Twenty six years . . . where did they go? I can still remember the week of graduation like it was yesterday. The decorations. The hype. Class Night. Baccalaureate. Graduation night. The good-byes to friends and teachers. The parties. The last few weeks leading to this major milestone of our lives. Hmmm, where to start???

One story in particular sticks out in my mind, as I'm sure it does in the mind of Mr. W., the student teacher interning with Mr. Lovstad, our government teacher. It started as a normal lunch period, all of us chatting and milling around the congested study hall area waiting for the final bell to direct us back to our respective classes. However, on this particular day a conversation ensued, changing the course of this unsuspecting intern's view of his student teaching career forever (possibly even his chosen vocation).

One member of the Class of 1976 had an idea that would break the monotony of this otherwise bright, boring April afternoon. Shortly into government class, this rowdy individual would ask permission to use the restroom. Upon his return the action would begin.

As he strolled down the hall to heed nature's call, the air became pregnant with anticipation. Underclassmen heard what was to take place, and the excitement grew. One could hear a pin drop as this almost 18-year-old senior meandered his way back to the classroom. After a short drink from the fountain, his prank would be underway.

The door to the social studies room opened, then slowly closed. As the click of the latch was heard, the award-winning performance began. His body gently rocked against the door, his left arm positioned in such a way that the elbow was touching his chest, his wrist at a 90-degree angle with his hand, fingers outstretched in various directions. He little by little slumped to the floor, now in fetal position, rocking back and forth, drooling

from the left side of his mouth. Not a sound came from him except the slight moaning of an individual in the grips of a fake grand mal seizure.

In the midst of this, Syd was to tell someone to get his classmate's meds, but laughter hindered any such command. After about 15-30 seconds, the show was over. He stood up, wiped his mouth, brushed the dirt off his clothes, and announced, "I'm done." Sounds of raucous laughter could be heard from the adjacent study hall where underclassmen could hear the jolting of the body against the door as the "seizure" was in full force. However, they could only imagine the visual effects that just transpired but a few feet away.

As this practical joke perpetrator took his seat in government class, the picture forever painted in his memory was of this poor student teacher, soloing in class this day, standing in the corner of the room behind the old wooden desk, looking terrified. His eyes practically bugging out of his head, jaw dropped, mouth wide open, trying to get back in touch with his command of the English language suddenly ripped from him like a mobile home from its foundation in an Oklahoma twister.

It is my belief that, frequently, anger is a secondary emotion with one primary underlying emotion being fear. This situation could be used as evidence for my theory. Horrified that one of his students was convulsing seemingly uncontrollably on his classroom floor, coupled with not knowing what to do, and subsequently discovering it was FAKE to boot was enough to send him over the edge. The stuttering, the reddened face, the pointing finger, and the evil eye were all indicative that the feeling of fear was overcome and anger had thus kicked in. With all the energy he could muster he emphatically said, "D-d-d-don't...you...EVER...ever...d-d-d-o that again, do...you...understand?"

Yes, it was ME to whom he was venting his fear and anger (and in retrospect, rightfully so). If memory serves, he also threatened the diploma I was to receive in less than one month.

I still wonder to this day the long-term effect this sophomoric prank had on his psyche and his choice to further pursue secondary education. Perhaps as a result of that fateful half-minute, he is currently doing basket weaving somewhere in deep, dark Zimbabwe . . . anything to avoid another incident with an almost graduated senior with a warped sense of humor.

Further Reflections from the Bicentennial Class of RHS

Over a quarter century has passed since our roaming the halls of Rembrandt High School. While some memories have faded, still others stand out, probably never to leave our minds. Each of us will remember different things, not only because of unique experiences throughout our careers but because of the various lenses through which we have filtered those same events. I now invite the reader to join me in a leisurely stroll down memory lane in an attempt to relive some shared special memories as we together walk this path of the past:

- Kindergarten with Mrs. Ruby Johnson at the church (we would discover a few years later that she was Mrs. Santa Claus)
- One student in first grade, when asked by Mrs. Wolden, “Who was Daniel Boone?” replied “Fess Parker” (from the 60's TV show *Daniel Boone*) and a birthday treat filled with maggots brought by one student on his special day
- Miss Carlson teaching us in second grade to write in cursive and having to go to school on a Saturday because of the March 1966 blizzard closing school for several days
- The sandbox table in third grade with Miss Biggins and standing by the lunch room vent on cold winter days when we had to go outside for recess
- Math got harder as Mrs. Arlene Johnson taught us the multiplication tables
- Learning all the states and their capitals in fifth grade and saying “GOOD NIGHT, MRS. GREEN” every day before we left the building to go home
- In sixth grade with Mrs. McKibben—selling junior and senior class play tickets and going to the Shrine Circus with the sixth graders from Sioux Rapids where several of us bought chameleons, one of which got tied to a helium balloon and floated around the bus for a short time
- The tragedy of the Albert City elevator accident in June 1970 killing Mike McCormick who had just graduated in May. His classmate, Frank Klahs, just barely escaped death's stranglehold
- Moving upstairs to junior high in seventh grade, where Mrs. Rath was our homeroom teacher, sharing her with the eighth graders
- Going from one room to another trying to get through all the big kids for each class
- Mr. Brockmann, math instructor and principal with REALLY BIG HANDS (and a finger that could be shaped into the letter Z). Some in high school got to feel HOW big his hands were as one hit their backside after misbehavior—the booming voice ordering, “Bend over and touch your toes.”
- Social studies with Mr. Olson, science with Mrs. Smith, language arts with Mrs. Rath
- Our first school dance with our first dates (and puberty. Oh joy)
- Eighth grade with many of the same teachers and “graduation” with the seniors in May
- One individual (not me this time) faced himself into a corner where he proceeded to put his arms around himself and moved his hands in such a way that it looked to his audience as if he were “making out” with a girl. The more we laughed the more “amorous” he got. What he did not know is that we were laughing because Mrs. Rath had just walked into the room. I will always remember the shocked look on his face when he turned around and went eyeball to eyeball with her.
- Going to the movie *Billy Jack* in Laurens for our class activity
- Entering high school in the fall of 1972 and finally getting to experience the formidable MRS. SCHNECK who introduced us to speech contests and total recall vocabulary tests. (She would give us a few sheets of *Reader's Digest's* “It Pays to Increase Your Word Power” which we were to complete. Then, on Friday mornings she would tell us

to take out a blank sheet of paper where we were then to recall as many of the words as we could from those sheets AND their respective definitions.)

- Doing an all-school presentation of a *Star Trek* play for English class our freshman year. I played the Vulcan, Mr. Spock, and Shelley Buckendahl played the role of my human mother. One scene called for her to slap me. She was to do this softly and a clapboard was to make the slapping sound for the audience. However, she decided to let me have it full force. I did make it through the rest of the play, but we had words when the play ended.
- Driver's licenses, state basketball tournaments in Des Moines, class plays and proms
- Dissecting crawdads in biology class with Mr. Waters. Ask Shelley Buckendahl about her HyVee visit on Saturday following the Friday afternoon of crawdad dissection. On Monday, she confronted a classmate about wrapping up a claw in a paper towel and placing it in her purse. When looking for change in HyVee, she discovered this paper towel and unraveled its contents on the checkout counter. With a loud scream, she embarrassed herself and freaked out the cashier and some HyVee customers. Yep, you guessed it. I was the culprit. That will teach her to slap me during a *Star Trek* play.
- Alan Cremers and I putting REAL LEMON in the 7-Up to be used for the junior class play and watching their faces as they drank it during the performance for the entire school. (Sorry Al, but I couldn't resist telling this one.)
- Class plays . . . *The Gimmick*, *Wilbur Faces Facts*, *Her Girlish Heart* (Syd plays a great heroine, except for the hairy legs.)
- Our senior class trip to Minneapolis chaperoned by Mr. and Mrs. Victurek and Mr. and Mrs. Demers. What an adventure (Marty got his Indy 500 experience that weekend.) I left Iowa being 17 years old and returned being a legal adult.
- Our class receiving a 99% ranking in both state and nation on ITED tests all four years of high school
- Graduation night, knowing that this chapter of our lives was closing and looking forward to the new ones that were just beginning.

Final Notes from the Class of 1976

As the President of the Class of 1976 (and on behalf of my classmates), I would like to say thanks to all the teachers we've had throughout our days at Rembrandt Consolidated School. Our district might have been small in number, but we were great in commitment and dedication to the education of those living within it.

Any of the teachers who blessed RHS with their presence could have received additional pay and possibly more status at larger schools around the state or country. Because they did not pursue the loftier financial rewards, Rembrandt students had the very best the state had to offer (although the formal recognition of such might not have ever come). The educational staff was indeed devoted to excellence, not only in the arena of academia but in character development and quality of life.

To all our teachers: Know that you all had a part in the molding and shaping of who we are today. You didn't let us get by with mediocrity but pushed us beyond our

own perceived limits to discover that we could indeed do more than we ever thought possible. You invited all of us to challenge each other and ourselves to be the best we could be, to whatever level of achievement that might be.

I know when I reflect upon my days at RHS, I believe that a larger school would not have been in my best interest. It would have been easy for me to “get lost in the cracks” of a bigger school system. You as teachers and staff did not let that happen to me. I might not have always appreciated it at the time, but I certainly do now. May you all retire in the knowledge that the world is a better place because of the work and commitment you had in your areas of expertise. So, from the bottom of my heart . . .THANK YOU. God bless you always.

After Rembrandt

My wife, Diane, and I currently reside in Colo, Iowa, with our 13-year-old daughter, Nicole, and three-year-old adopted son, Logan. We are foster parents for difficult-to-place, behaviorally challenged teenaged boys. I have two credits yet to complete to earn my M.S. degree in counseling from Iowa State University.

As director of Combes Counseling and Consultation, I do in-home family counseling, specializing in children and teen issues and behaviors. I am a national and statewide presenter/trainer in the human service arena coupled with being a published writer locally, statewide, and in three national/international foster and adoptive care magazines. In addition, I am a member of a local, statewide, and national foster care association board.

Syd Peterson - Class of 1976

As a member of RHS Class of 1976, I was one of 12 students. At the end of the first and third nine weeks, parent/teacher conferences were held (for the usual reasons), foremost of which was evaluating student academic performance during this period. In my case, this was a mere formality since my mother, Clary Peterson, was the school secretary and this parent/teacher conferencing went on, on a continuing basis.

Since all the faculty at one time or another had need to go to the office, there was no lack of interaction as to my classroom activity (or the lack thereof).

It was decided to have homecoming, but since Rembrandt did not have a football program, the festivities were held at a home varsity basketball game. In my senior year, Shelley Buckendahl McCausland and I were selected by the 55 high school students to be Homecoming King and Queen—an honor which I have never forgotten. Thanks for the memories and to the faculty and staff at RHS for the wonderful education experiences.

Sharon Cavanaugh Gray - Class of 1977

I do have some fond memories of life growing up on a farm and attending a small town school. I can vividly remember the feeling of being in grade school and meeting the

high school students in the hall. They seemed so huge! The remarkable part of being in a school that had kindergarten to twelfth grade was that we SPOKE to each other. I remember saying “hello” in the halls and the upperclassmen answering me! In a city school, students rarely speak to other students in their own grade that they don't know, much less a student from grade school!

The overall support that a small town has for its own people is very special. Church, school, and family gatherings were the focus. If there was a tragedy in someone's life, the entire community would respond. The general trust that we had with our neighbors and surroundings is not present in the city.

After Rembrandt

I went to Iowa State University for two years and then moved to Denver and attended the University of Colorado where I met my husband, Richard. We were relocated to Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1983 and then to Oklahoma City in 1984. In 1986 we were transferred to Kansas City where we have lived for the last 16 years. My husband works for Wells Fargo in their Institutional Lending Division, and I have worked for DHL Worldwide Express as an Account Executive for nine years. We have three daughters: Lindsey (16), Jordan (12), and Elena (5). I completed my Bachelor's Degree in Management & Human Relations at Mid-America Nazarene University in May of 2000.

Dana Rath Rebhuhn - Class of 1978

Rembrandt Memories

I lived in Rembrandt from 1960 to 1977 and moved to Fremont, Nebraska, the summer before my senior year in high school. My parents were teachers in the school for much of that time, so my views are a bit biased along those lines. I feel very fortunate to have been a part of Rembrandt during that time. I call it the “Golden Years.” I've tried to describe what it was like to many of my friends and acquaintances, but it's very difficult for them to understand. I never used to like our school colors of purple and white that much, but as I grow older I find myself drawn to the colors. I bought a purple Rembrandt sweatshirt at the Centennial that I wear in hopes someone asks me, “Where's Rembrandt?”

Since my parents taught, I had an opportunity to get to know most of the teachers who taught there. I have to say we were extremely fortunate to get the caliber of teachers we had, especially in such a small town. Now that my children are in school, I understand the importance of having educators who enjoy their jobs and who are genuinely concerned about their students.

My favorite story to share is about the Class of 1976. They scored in the 99th percentile all four years of high school in the Iowa Tests of Educational Development. That's not to say there wasn't any trouble from time to time, but if there was, it was handled in a stern, fair way. Discipline was extremely important back then as I think it

should be now. I'll never forget Mr. Brockmann and his "grab your ankles" comment if you acted up. I never felt I was lacking in the subjects taught that would eventually prepare me for college. Most of my friends who grew up in larger schools cannot even begin to understand what it's like to have 52 students in high school, grades nine through twelve, but it suited me just fine.

Outside of school, the entire town was my playground. My dad coached for a few years, and I was almost always at practices with him until I was old enough to participate myself. Since he coached the boys' teams, I also had my share of teasing when I'd try to join in. If I wasn't at school for something, I was at the park, a friend's house, The Cove, Main Street, climbing a tree or just wandering around. As a parent now I realize how nice it was for my parents to be able to let me go by myself and not worry about what I was doing or where I was. My mom used a big whistle to call me home. Amazing how I could hear that whistle all across town!

I lived on my bicycle and rode everywhere. Now that I'm living in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, I can't imagine giving my kids the freedom to do that. Our society has changed so much. There was never any fear of bad things happening in Rembrandt because they never happened. Even if it did, the whole town knew who you were and looked out for you. I think that's the greatest gift I've taken with me, the security of knowing that I could depend on my "neighbors." I can still go back today and see people who knew me as a child who will greet me with open arms and a hug. If not for that security, I'm sure I wouldn't have handled going out into the "real world" as well as I did. Not to say it wasn't scary. I never learned how to present or introduce myself to total strangers because everyone always knew me. I didn't do too well when we moved in 1977. It was a learning process. Others who have grown up in larger communities have a way of protecting themselves by being anonymous. I didn't want to be anonymous, and it didn't settle too well with some of my new "neighbors."

My children are nine and eleven now, and I take them back to Rembrandt every chance I get. Since my in-laws are still in the area, we get back quite a bit. I loved coming back for the Centennial and letting my kids have the run of the town. At first, they weren't quite sure what to do. They eventually figured out that they weren't going to get in trouble no matter what they did and they could just be kids and have fun.

My only regret is that my children never got to meet my Chloe. Chloe Cannoy was my second mom and my best friend. She took care of my sister and me as babies while my parents taught, or if they'd travel with the seniors to Chicago for their senior trip. I also spent two to three weeks with her and her husband every summer in Okoboji. I think everyone in town had some story about her and Nadine Enderson. They were the life of every party! I really wished they both could have been at the Centennial. They would have loved seeing all the people who came back. Again, as a parent I realize how fortunate my parents were to find such a loving, competent person to care for us in their absence, especially in a small town. She was a part of the family. When I told her I was marrying Perry Rebhuhn, she looked him straight in the eye and said sternly, "You be good to my baby."

These are the memories that still create a lump in my throat and a little tear in my eye. It seems so sad that everyone can't experience life in a small town as I did. I think we'd all be a little bit more tolerant of other people. You wouldn't be able to pick and choose whom you wanted to associate with; you associated with everyone—that's all there was. You couldn't be anonymous and fade into the woodwork; it was impossible. A small town helps you realize that you can't run away from things; it's best to face problems head on. The sooner you learn to accept yourself and others, the more productive you'll become later in life by learning never to give up and always to do your best. Everyone should have the chance to experience life in a small town like ours. Rembrandt is a warm, nice little treasure I will always keep in my heart.

After Rembrandt

After I graduated from Cedar Bluffs High School in Cedar Bluffs, Nebraska, in 1978, I went to the University of Iowa. I lived in Cedar Rapids until I married Perry Rebhuhn in 1989. Then we moved to North Carolina where our first son Robert was born. We then moved to Florida, Kentucky and Nebraska where our daughter Rachel was born. Our next move was to Tennessee, where we lived until moving back to Cedar Rapids in 1994. Perry works as a sales manager for a branch of Rockwell Collins, selling avionics, and I work at AEGON, a life insurance company. We have taken several of our friends from Cedar Rapids back to Rembrandt several times, usually for pheasant hunting. We live next to a golf course and our kids go to Pierce Elementary. With all of the moving we did while the kids were young, it's very GOOD to be back in Iowa.

Dee Rath Felici

I attended school in Rembrandt from kindergarten through seventh grade and have vivid memories of growing up there. The names and faces have faded, but the smells and sights are still very vivid in my mind—like the smell of the school every fall. When we'd return to school, it seemed as if they painted the floors, stairs and walls every year. I remember how big those staircases were. Since my parents were teachers, I did get to go to the third floor which took forever for my small legs, but I was so proud to be going up there. I remember the closets in the classrooms on the second floor—I'm sure my mom is chuckling now—but they were so big you felt like you had your own little room, and we'd visit before and after school there.

When I read the Harry Potter books to my son, before I saw the movie, the set in my mind was of Rembrandt's school. Why you ask? Because of all the staircases, all the different directions you could go, the area in the boiler room where the janitors were, and the lunch room that was a huge hall to walk down into as a child and so massive with the number of kids there.

I can still visualize my walk home from school each day. I would stop in at the corner grocery store and charge a snack to my mom's account. I thought I was such a big

shot. Sometimes I'd even treat my friends, until my mom got the bill one month. She put an end to that.

We lived in the duplex down the street from the Lutheran Church. I don't remember much in that house, but when we moved across the alley to the "HILL" house, OOOHHH was that big time. That home is burned in my soul with all the wonderful memories my parents gave to us there. I could write a book with all the crazy things that happened.

A few of the memories are

- when we raised a colt in the garage. It was a colt whose mother died when the colt was born. One time that colt got loose and ran through the alley, and we screamed and chased it. We finally caught it, but I was so scared.
- the times we put up our camper in the back yard; learning to ride my bike on that long, winding driveway. Days when my sister and I would lie out on the veranda, and learning to pitch a softball against the garage wall.
- the church. We would walk to church through the alley. It was an incredibly beautiful church in which we had many more wonderful memories. But nothing could ever replace the experiences we had in the Lutheran Church there. The mother/daughter banquets were very special.

The times I cherish and the person I've become all began in a town where we all knew one another and you always honked your horn and waved to your neighbors. No one locked their doors. You walked or rode your bike everywhere, and the PRIDE of community was so thick it could not be cut.

After Rembrandt

I graduated from Cedar Bluffs High School in Nebraska in 1982 and from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln in 1986 with a degree in Speech Communication. I married Tony Felici in 1987, and we currently live in Omaha, Nebraska. I worked for 11 years in management with a national temporary help company and resigned to stay at home and raise our three children—Stefanie 13, Britnee 12, and Joey 10. I've been home for one year now and am actively involved with church and school in a volunteer capacity—I've become a certified taxi driver to all the activities our kids are in.

Kathy Morse - Class of 1978

I have so many fond memories of growing up in Rembrandt. Everybody looked out for everyone else. You could walk down every street and name who lived in each house.

One of my very special memories was when I was younger, before my mother, Jan Morse, went into business for herself. In the wintertime she would drive my dad's small tractor with sleds and/or a toboggan behind it. I'm sure many Rembrandt alumni remember these winters, for she made them special.

In the daytime the kids received rides and then back to our home for hot chocolate. In the night time she gave the adults rides, which were probably a lot faster and wilder, especially around the one curved road down by the school.

This is just one memory of many. I am writing this for my mother, who has now passed on. I know she touched many lives and hearts in Rembrandt.

She was a great entertainer.

Steve Mickelson - Class of 1978

As I think back on my years of school at Rembrandt, I have nothing but positive memories. Even though we were the smallest school in the State of Iowa, I never felt like I was being shorted in my education. Being in a small school allowed me to experience many learning opportunities. Classroom activities were engaging and often fun, and the teachers cared about student success.

There was no problem keeping busy with other activities, such as baseball, golf, basketball, choir, swing choir, band, marching band, speech, and music contest. If I remember right, we had 48 students out of the 52 high schoolers in choir. My love for music was enhanced by my experiences at Rembrandt. To this day I am very active in singing in a men's Gospel Quartet.

Now as a college professor at Iowa State University, I enjoy telling people of the small school in northwest Iowa that set me on the right path to success. I know that God placed me in the right school, at the right time, with the right people. And I will always be thankful for my parents, Roger and Ruth Mickelson, who supported me during my years at Rembrandt.

After Rembrandt

I received my B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from Iowa State in Agricultural Engineering. I met my wife Colette while we were both in Cardinal Keynotes (a show choir) at Iowa State. We were married in 1981, and we have five children. At Iowa State I coordinate the teaching and advising for the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department. I also teach computer graphics, soil and water conservation engineering, and engineering design. My research focuses on best management practices for the agricultural community that improve water quality.

[Editor's Note: Steve was recently named VEISHEA Faculty of the Year at Iowa State.]

Carol Reiling Johnson - Class of 1979

I was a member of the Class of 1979 (the last class to graduate from Rembrandt Consolidated School). Some of you may remember that there was some publicity about

that event. There were eight of us, and our class poem was “Eight is Enough,” the words from the theme song from the TV show that was popular then.

The most kids we ever had in our class was 12, I think. The year we graduated there were only about 47 kids in the whole high school. I remember thinking that being able to put names with every face in the whole K-12 school was a rarity. Basically, the whole community was that way. There was seldom a face that you didn't know.

My parents moved to Rembrandt when I was about three or four years old. They still live on the same farm close to town. I went all 13 years to school there. I have many fond memories about each year.

In the kindergarten room there was “An Old Woman Who Lived In A Shoe” toy that we used to learn to tie our own shoes. First grade was a big change because we went all day. We had to take naps in the afternoon. One day during our naps there was a fire drill, and one of the boys slept through it.

Miss Carlson didn't make us take naps in second grade. We actually got to go up and use the chalkboard. Some had to use it more than others if they did something wrong. They had to write that they wouldn't do what they did wrong again about 50 times on the chalkboard.

In third grade we learned how to write in cursive. There was a neat sandbox table that we got to play in for social studies class. The boy whose desk was next to mine fainted and fell out of his desk right onto the floor after we had gotten measles shots that year.

Fourth grade meant that we could learn to play a musical instrument if we wanted. Mr. Dewey taught me how to play the flute, and I played until I graduated from high school. Mrs. Green was our teacher in fifth grade. She decided that for some reason we needed to dance with each other. We actually had to touch someone of the opposite sex. The boys hated it, but the girls were a little more tolerant. She also made us do tricks before she would give out Halloween treats at her house.

Sixth grade was quite a bit more challenging. We had to cut out current events from the paper and share them with the class. This was homework, something we didn't have much of in grade school. In December we had to memorize *The Night Before Christmas* and stand up in front of the class and recite it.

Seventh and eighth grades meant walking up to the “third floor” to the Junior High Home Room. We still had desks, but we were on the “third floor” with all of the high schoolers. Wow! The “third floor” was where all the action was. We went to different rooms and teachers for each subject. We had to walk through the study hall where everyone stared at us. Our Iowa history teacher always used to fall asleep and snore after giving us reading assignments.

Ninth grade meant we were freshmen in high school. We had lockers instead of desks. The subjects were more challenging, thus creating more homework. There were extra activities like sports, music, speech, plays, etc. Some of these were mandatory and some were voluntary. Being involved in these brought us closer to members of the same groups. During my junior and senior year, we shared a lot of activities and teachers with

Sioux Rapids, with whom Rembrandt later consolidated. That was an adjustment but also a way to make more friends.

Going to college was very scary but exciting for me, being a sheltered, small town farm girl. I learned a lot and grew up fast. Looking back, I might change a couple of things, but for the most part, I wouldn't want to have grown up anywhere else. Rembrandt will always be my "Home Town" that I'm proud of.

After Rembrandt

I attended Northeast Technical Community College in Norfolk, Nebraska, and obtained an Associate of Arts Degree in art. I married Darwin Johnson from Ida Grove, Iowa, in 1983 and have a stepdaughter, Bridget, who is 21 this year. We currently live in Arthur, Iowa, where I am employed as a child care provider in my home.



Faculty Members at Rembrandt Consolidated School

Esther Thorson Mosbo – Elementary Teacher 1934-1938

My salary the first year that I taught in Rembrandt was \$70 per month for nine months. That was one of the better compensations available to beginning teachers in 1934. In exchange for this pay, I was expected to perform my classroom duties, maintain my single status, remain in the community three of four weekends per month, and teach Sunday School. We teachers in training at Waldorf had been advised that there would be miscellaneous duties requested of us and that we should agree to whatever was asked and expected.

Food throughout the weekdays—three meals a day—was prepared at several homes. Several of us had a breakfast and supper eating arrangement with Elmer and Leota Peterson. Bertha Cannoy prepared our lunches the first year. The next year Iva Odor was our noon cook. For my final two years, we ate this third meal at the Petersons'.

Let me add to Doris Hill's memories of the Iowa state spelling contest. There were about 100 competing, one from each county. She went down on a word strange to me. Then a couple of rounds later the 25 or so remaining contestants were served words from *Eaton's Blue Book* which Doris knew from cover to cover because it was our main study tool. I recall our sitting between first and second floors in the south window seat quite often for an hour or so after school. She could easily have sailed off to represent Iowa on the national level. It was fun!

I want to include another treasured memory. With my whistle I sat on the divider overlooking the basketball playing floor when the present lunch room was used for all the things our big gym handles now. Spectators then sat on the balcony level and on the opposite side on stage. It was recess time held indoors due to bad weather. The screaming, squealing, and shouting of those Rembrandt grade school children set up such a racket that I tried competing to test this volume of noise. At the top of my lungs I rendered the introduction to the opera *Lohengrin*, and nobody heard me! I never had to blow the whistle. I wonder if they could have heard even that. In spite of the noise, they were good kids and had lots of fun.

Now we come to what my pupils never heard about. My whole first year at Rembrandt I was a teenager. Much extra work was required of me as there were almost no workbooks for our texts and most of the school day was spent conducting classes. Many teachers stayed after school, for a while at least.

One windy, bitter cold day, I was the last to leave the building. It was very dark at 6:00 p.m. as I hurried down the last stretch of steps, uneasy with no one else around and the last lights turned off. I slammed the door shut and found the bottom corner of my warm coat caught in the automatically locked door. As a grade school teacher, I had never had any building keys. There was nothing to do but unbutton and wriggle out of it to head up the street to the Odor house, short legs in high gear and thin artist's smock flying in the wind. I even shot past the Odor walk and backed up a bit to get into the right

house where, by phone, I could reach custodian Art Johnson to ask him to get my coat to me. Years later when Ed and I were raising our family on the farm, this very house had become the Foval home, which my Eloise knew well, as friend Betty lived there.

It is always a pleasure to get back to Rembrandt! Teaching in Rembrandt brought me to where I found Ed and settled to farm northeast of town just beyond George Brown's place. Our four children are Paul—teaching college math, as does his wife, Vivian, and learning to love New York State; Eloise—on a Rembrandt farm with her husband Richard Obman, commuting to her part-time TAG job in Odebolt and playing organ in a Marathon church; Rolf—married to Val Haraldson, running our home farm and acting as my business manager; Erik—running his small engine business and small-to-large machinery repair service next door. Mariellen is his wife and partner.

The eldest still loves Rembrandt but will stay in New York and visit here often. The other three still live in Rembrandt and are the only descendants of the original Mosbo grandparents who claimed the land. They are solid backers of the town's projects. Erik was on a Centennial Committee, Rolf wrote the book *A Portrait of Rembrandt* summing up 100 years of Rembrandt's history, and Eloise wrote and directed the pageant in which descendants played the roles of their ancestors in that play. I have over a dozen grand and great-grandchildren.

Dorothy Lean Rystad – Junior High and High School English and Drama Teacher 1937-1940; 1944-1946

Regarding Rembrandt memories, I have so many wonderful warm moments, I couldn't begin to enumerate them all! When I came in the fall of 1937 to teach junior high and high school subjects, I was warmly greeted. Mrs. Cannoy, my landlady, introduced me to Milton Rystad, my love for 60 years. We had our first date to the Spencer Fair. When we were married in 1940, we bought a fairly new home in the north end of town. We had many teachers stay with us, and I gave them breakfast, and we fostered several romances with the teachers and local boys!

I always enjoyed singing in the choir at the Lutheran Church and at showers, weddings, funerals, etc. We had a group of friends who were raising their children, called "Stitch & Chatter" club. The Federated Women's Club was very active. When Milt went into service in World War II, we knit sweaters, etc., for the boys overseas. We kept records of all of them. There were many workers always. That's Rembrandt! I can remember concerts in the park, and crazy shows and dances in the community building. The potlucks at church were scrumptious!

I always look forward to our July reunions and trying to recognize my former students. I loved them all! Although I lost my dear husband in 2000, I'll still try to relive our 16 wonderful years of residing in Rembrandt.

I'm leaving soon for my winter in Richardson, Texas, a satellite city of Dallas. My daughter, Ruth Bragg, lives in one half of my duplex with her two teenagers, and I'm

in the other half. My youngest daughter lives four miles south in Dallas. With five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, you can see why I leave Iowa's cold winters for a sunnier climate.

Thank you girls for trying to preserve our memories!

Howard Knutson - School Superintendent 1946-1952

Confessions of a Rembrandt Lover

When I received my discharge from the Air Force in March of 1946, I finished the school year teaching mathematics at Thompson, Iowa. The announcement of a vacancy in the superintendency in Rembrandt interested me immediately because of a number of connections: (1) As a student at Luther College I had known a number of students from Rembrandt: Dale Eastman, Harold Edwall, Reuben Lerud, and Alton and Alvin Mosbo; (2) While on a tour as a member of the Luther Concert Band, we played a concert at the Little Sioux Valley Church, and my roommate and I spent the night at Jerdes, the highly-regarded school superintendent (we later became good friends as neighboring superintendents); (3) As a teacher (later superintendent) and band director at Lincoln Lee Consolidated School, I had given private instrumental music lessons to Rembrandt students; and (4) I had directed the Rembrandt Town Band for weekly summer concerts in the band shell in the park.

But I was also somewhat apprehensive because I also knew their expectations were very high, and I was not at all sure I could meet the school and community expectations. I finally decided to try my very best and am so glad I did, because the time I spent in Rembrandt was some of the most professionally rewarding and personally enjoyable years of my life.

In my first summer in Rembrandt in 1946, I hired a new graduate of a college in Nebraska to handle vocal and instrumental music. In less than a month after school began, a delegation of band members came to my office to report a mass resignation of all band members because of instructor incompetence. Without much choice, I agreed to take over the band temporarily—which stretched out to last the entire six years I was in Rembrandt. The band had quite a number of excellent players, and they were all most cooperative in every respect. We went to the regional music contests every year, winning First Division five out of the six years; we went on to the state contests the five years we were eligible and won First Division at the state level four of the five years. To fill out the band, it was necessary to include a number of elementary school pupils—fourth or fifth grade was the usual time to start instrumental instruction. In 1952 at the state music contest when we won a First Division, one of the judges remarked about the young “cute” little snare drummer. (It was Beverly Hegna, fourth grade.) Another judge wrote that the drum section (Beverly, Eloise Mosbo and Betty Foval, all fourth graders) had done an outstanding job; he just wished he could have seen them better—the music stands were

taller than they were. My daughter, Kristin, fifth grade, was also in the band that year. Probably about one-fourth to one-third of the members were elementary school pupils.

I probably should mention one other incident. In my first year at Rembrandt, when I had taken over the band in late September, it won a First Division at the regional contest. At the state contest in the spring of 1947, I had left early in the morning with some soloists and small ensembles. The band did not play until evening, so my wife, Eunice, with children Kristin (age six) and Karl (age three) came for the evening. The Rembrandt Band was the first one to play so they assembled on stage with the curtain closed. They were nervous and tense (and so was I), the curtain was drawn, and I walked out from the wings. As soon as Karl saw me, he yelled out “Hi Daddy!!” Everyone laughed, the band members relaxed—and we won a First Division.

The students at Rembrandt were great—full of pep, but most of them studious and hard-working, and always respectful. On average, 75-80% went on to higher education after high school graduation, an exceptionally high percentage for that time. The Board of Education was super—and unanimously supportive. (I don't remember a single split decision/divided board). They always wanted and were willing to work for the very best for the school and community. (Initial Board: Quentin Peterson, President; Edgar Eastman, Clifford Green, Helmer Haroldson, J.F. McGrew. Later: J.F. McGrew, President; Edward Breckenfelder, Clifford Green, Edward Mosbo, and Quentin Peterson).

My family loved our stay in Rembrandt, and the decision to resign in order to attend graduate school and finish my doctorate was one of the most difficult decisions of my life. The decision was probably the right one, as I also had a professionally satisfying and successful career in higher education, reaching the position of Dean of the College of Education and Director of Teacher Education at the University of Northern Iowa, rated as one of the top four teacher education institutions in the U.S.A.

I'm glad I had the opportunity to spend six years of my life in Rembrandt. It was and is a wonderful community, rich in tradition yet thoroughly modern. To me, the ultimate compliment it can be given is this:

IT TRULY VALUES EDUCATION

Jeanne de St Paer Green - Teacher, Vocal Music (1-12) and 7th and 8th Grades, 1947-1949

In 1947 I learned of the vacancy for a music teacher at Rembrandt from my former high school superintendent, Edward Holst. Mr. Holst happened to be the brother-in-law of Howard Knutson, superintendent at Rembrandt. My first trip to Rembrandt to apply for the job was 22 miles east on a gravel road from my hometown of Larrabee. I had never been there before. After interviews with Mr. Knutson and Quentin Peterson, president of the school board, I had the job.



The next thing was to find a place to live. G.A. Rystad helped me there, by referring me to Svea Edwall, who had a room to rent. I really lucked out there; she was one terrific lady, as many of you remember.

My morning walk to the schoolhouse was highlighted by a stop at Dunning's Café for my breakfast. Joy and Maurine became good friends of mine and that is how I met Janet, their daughter, now Mrs. Ron Haraldson.

I will never forget my first classroom—two rows of seventh graders on my left and two rows of eighth graders on my right—and I was responsible to teach all of them every day.

They all turned out okay and were the graduating classes of 1952 and 1953 from Rembrandt High School. It's a real joy for me to see many of them when we return for the school reunion every year.

My other challenge that first year was teaching the vocal music in high school and elementary music, first grade through eighth grade. What good voices I had to work with, Girls' Glee Club, mixed chorus, and the special girls' trio of Janet Hegna, Ruth Ann Olson, and Arvilla Cleveland.

I joined the club of schoolteachers who married local, eligible bachelors, when Loren Green and I were married in 1948. We lived in Rembrandt a few years after that, and we both still consider it “home.” We have been blessed with good health and eight children and seven grandchildren.



1950 Staff Party

Wilbur Waggoner - Teacher, Coach, High School Principal 1947-1951

Rembrandt was my first job after graduating from Buena Vista College. My fondest memories of Rembrandt are of the warm, friendly people we met. The whole school staff including teachers, cooks, bus drivers, and custodians were a congenial group. We partied together and enjoyed the nice relationships of the group.

I have very fond memories of the students I had at Rembrandt High School. As a group they were fun to be around and a good set of students. One of the nice things about a school the size of Rembrandt was the fact that you had a personal relationship with each

student. To emphasize this fact, after 50 years I can still remember names and faces of my students at Rembrandt.

I was fortunate to start my teaching career under the leadership of Superintendent Howard Knutson. Because of his guidance, I earned a doctorate at the University of Wyoming and taught in the Mathematics Department at Central Michigan University for over 30 years until my retirement in 1987.

We currently reside in Michigan and Florida. We enjoy golf and traveling. My wife and I have three children, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



The 1949 Senior Class

Carlos W. Bryan - School Superintendent 1952-1960

As I sit down to write, it is a beautiful January day here in Northwest Iowa. It would be warmer in Arizona, where we have gone for about 15 years to spend the winter, but we are perfectly happy in Iowa, especially when we have days like we have today.

Like a lot of years we had some good things happen to us and several bad in the year 1952. Craig, our youngest son, was born in March after Helen had been confined to her bed for a number of weeks. On 22 May 1952 I signed the contract to come to Rembrandt as superintendent and to teach mathematics. The contract, which I still have, was signed by J.F. McGrew.

Quite soon after the school year was over, we went to Cedar Falls to stay with Helen's parents. Soon after that I started back to Drake University to finish my M.A. degree. That was necessary in order to get the superintendent's certificate so that I could fulfill the contract with the Rembrandt school. I finished writing my thesis, so did get the degree. That was toward the end of the summer.

We began our stay in Rembrandt in August 1952. Just before school was to begin, our oldest son, Steve, who was nine years old, contracted polio. We were fortunate that it was no worse than it was, so he didn't need to stay in the crowded hospital very long; we could help him recover at home. So this was rather a hectic time for our family. It was good that we were both young—about 50 years ago.

Trying to remember many things that happened that long ago is rather difficult. It is said, however, that when you reach a certain age, it is easier to remember what happened a long time ago than to remember what happened yesterday. This was my first job as superintendent, but I had been a high school principal and teacher for ten years and had completed a year of teaching in the Army Air Corps before going into service.

When I first started my work in Rembrandt, my secretarial work was done by students. They were all very good but could not work many hours. It was not very long before we were able to have Mrs. Brower as the office secretary. She was very good and a big help.

Part of my duties was teaching. I remember teaching some mathematics classes and later on the physics class. I did enjoy the teaching part of my job as well as the rest of it. There were some very good students. I remember there were two National Merit Scholars—one year separating them.

When we first moved to Rembrandt, we lived in the Eastman house on the corner, across from the Methodist parsonage and the church. Mr. and Mrs. Teague and family lived with the minister, Rev. Grote. Later on when Bob McKibben and family moved to California, they asked us if we would like to move into their house. So we decided on that. There was much open space there and a place to keep a pony. Scott, our middle son, enjoyed that very much.

It is good to reminisce and think back to what the town was like in 1952. We remember the two grocery stores, Hegna's and Peterson's. We think of those times quite often and are reminded of an interesting incident that Art Hegna used to tell us.

Scott liked cheese a lot. He would go to Hegna's store and ask for five cents worth of cheese. That was put on a bill for our enjoyment at the end of the month when we paid our grocery bill. So we would find several bills for five cents in the bills. Mr. Hegna got quite a kick out of talking about Scott and his cheese.

We remember the restaurant that was operated by Mrs. Weber and daughters. We remember taking square dance lessons in the small gym (lunch room), having square dances there, and going to square dances in other towns with people from Rembrandt.

It was a good experience living in Rembrandt and having many good friends there.

I should not forget that we had some very good athletic teams while we were there, both boys and girls, and also some excellent music, directed by Mr. Teague.

I would like to congratulate all those who contributed much to make the Rembrandt Reunion this past summer such a success. There were so many good things about the reunion. Helen and I got to enjoy the pageant and the band with Myron Teague directing it. We met many former students, which was a pleasure. The parade was fun. Everything was very well planned.

Marlys Biggins Faber - Elementary Teacher 1953-1978

I have many happy memories of Rembrandt which I will never forget. Most of the time I taught third grade but spent a few years in the fourth grade and was a departmental teacher for a year. I'm still substitute teaching today, and I can honestly say I did not praise my students enough. You were perfect angels compared to the children of today.

I will state a few things about the students and hope I don't embarrass anyone.

- Linda McKibben Boettcher always wanted to pass out the papers. (She became an elementary teacher and principal.)
- Dean Whitaker loved math. (He became a banker.)
- Sally McKibben-Rodriguez brought partially filled perfume bottles in a brown sack and I would have her put them in the closet. (She still collects nice little bottles.)
- One day all at once the slate blackboard fell off the wall, and several of the children started to cry.
- Kent Binder wore white socks to school. He told me that his mom would get mad if he got them dirty.
- John Demers fell on the gym floor and broke off a permanent front tooth.
- Peg Hadenfeldt Mosbo hated our reading book *Lapland*. I never did tell her she had read through all the basic readers and that was a supplementary reader.
- Chris Blass lost both arms at home. There had been a blizzard and he and his brother Jeff were out playing in the snow. They were kicking the ice off the high-line wire and went to where the wires on a barbed wire fence were drooping. Chris walked over out of curiosity, picked up the ground wire and picked up the hot wire, and it shorted from one arm to the next. (He currently farms a little over a thousand acres plus has livestock.)
- We made puppets, and the students sewed their clothes. Some of the boys stayed in from the noon recess to sew their clothes. They must have liked to sew better than I did.
- Bob Hegna gave me a heart-shaped cake with the words "I Love You" written in chocolate chips on top.
- I was trying to teach a boy the correct use of the verbs *went* and *gone*. I used them in a sentence. Unfortunately, he chose the wrong one. Then he said, "I really don't care because all I want to do is farm."
- Paul Ducas went to New York. He bought me a little red plaid case with a comb, mirror, and file in it. I was so proud of it.
- Stephan Mickelson always stayed after school to study flash cards.
- I gave Iowa Basic Skills Tests every year. They are a timed test. One time when I said, "Go," one of the boys wet his pants.
- One year we put a play on the stage. When it was time to go on stage, one of the boys threw up.
- One afternoon Mrs. Carl Dorr brought a clothes basket full of food and we had a party.
- One Halloween I dressed up as a witch.

- Lester Ness wouldn't do his work unless you stood by him. He would spend the day reading anything he could find. (He received his Ph.D. and is a college professor.)

I could go on and on, but I think this is enough.

I have enjoyed the last 25 years seeing the students I taught grow into fine citizens. It's great to see them successful, happy, and with nice families. That's worth a lot more to me than any paycheck I received from Rembrandt.

I'm a widow living near Storm Lake. This is my 23rd year as a substitute teacher. I work about every day and sub in preschool through high school for Storm Lake Public and A.E.A. I also do the after-school program for second graders from 3:30 to 4:30 four days a week.

Myron Teague - Music Teacher and Band Director 1954-1961

From a teacher's perspective, this is the way it was in 1950, only about five years after the end of World War II. At that particular time in history, there was a great shortage of teachers; I remember the newspapers were full of ads for teachers, about like car ads today—just pick one and you had it. After receiving my discharge from the Navy in 1946, I took stock of my situation, and the prospect of working at a meaningful job seemed remote—oh a job, yes, but one that you liked, not likely unless you went to college. O.K. so college it was, and with the GI Bill of Rights, it seemed possible. I needed work quickly and badly, so two years with an A.A. degree allowed me to teach school—grade school that is. On my first job in 1948, the gods smiled on me; I could teach all subjects in fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades, plus a bonus of starting a band for them. Well, I would do anything to have a band, which is really the only thing I knew how to do. Only one other catch—there was no place to live in this particular town. They finally dug up an abandoned two-room store building on Main Street. It had no running water or indoor plumbing, but I took it; I had to work, and with two kids and a wife who wanted to eat, I had no choice. Suffice it to say, I continued my education until I was qualified to teach high school and music.

After six years of teaching and going to summer school, I found Rembrandt. By this time I had three kids and a dog, but the situation for housing was the same. This time they dug up a parsonage and the preacher along with it. The minister's name was Rev. Grote, the kindest man I have ever known. He opened his house to us like family—we had three fourths of the house, and he was content with two rooms. As we drove down Main Street with our meager belongings and settled into the parsonage, we looked at each other and asked: "What are we doing here? Who would live here?" We soon found out—the kindest, most cooperative and helpful people in the world lived in this town. The kids became acquainted with the town and other kids immediately; in fact, I think it was only three or four days after moving in that our kids decided to pitch our tent in the



yard. As night fell, there were four or five kids staying overnight, and it rained; we became well acquainted with them also. From what I can remember, Steve and Scott Bryan, Jerry Hegna, and maybe another one were our guests.

It is the first full day of school. I have done my homework and put all the music I want to use in folders and passed them out to the students. I really did not know what grade of difficulty they could handle at that time. What I found out at the very beginning was that it was going to take a lot of work. However, the good news was that they all seemed more than willing to work very hard to produce the kind of music we all wanted. Therefore I could make my little practice card tricks work and use my point system. I cannot remember exactly what and how my point system worked, but there was very little cheating. The day and many more days wore on trying to get my rotating lesson schedule to work, by reminding not only the students but also the teachers. Teachers really do not like to have their classes disrupted for anything, but we finally got it running smoothly and made great progress.

I had requested a rotating schedule for instrumental sectionals from our superintendent, Mr. Carlos Bryan. This meant the students were released from regular class work once or twice a week for music. It had to work so that they did not miss the same class more than once a week. This was not the policy in most schools of the day, but Mr. Bryan persevered amid the objections from some of the staff. I firmly believe that this is the only way an organization can be built to perform at the level we did - unless there are two or three directors. Of course, it took very dedicated students, plus incentives like practice cards and threats that death was the only excuse for missing a performance. How else do you explain First Division ratings at almost every festival we attended.

From this point on everything went like a teacher would like it to go - smart kids, cooperative in every way, administration giving me carte blanche for my schooling of lessons, etc. School board complying with my requests for instruments and equipment, as much as possible, so what could go wrong? Nothing really went wrong, just little ups and downs, small problems that could be solved, maybe small irritations, but nothing to have a cow about, just happenings and stories that I recall that really had no significance in the pace or style of life we led at all, something like Keillor's Lake Wobegon, interesting but not earth shattering, except to the participants, and then perhaps for only for a day or two.



Concert Band, Mr. Teague, Conductor, 1960

Band was first thing in the morning. Lunch and band practice were both held in the old gym. Tables and benches folded out of the wall for noon hour. We had to work really hard getting our instruments and equipment put away and those benches down after practice. That part was a pain, but band rehearsal, for the most part, was a joy. I could not wait for the next one; it was just fun. Oh, we had our jokers but nothing that could not be handled.

I had my B.A. by the time I took the job in Rembrandt. I could not afford to attend college during the regular school year, so I attended summer school every year from 1948 to 1952 plus classes every Saturday in Decorah, Iowa, during the regular school year of 1952-53. No use stopping then.

I received literature in the mail about the music camp at Gunnison, Colorado, where you could earn college credits by attending the camp. I think I started attending the camp one year before coming to Rembrandt. It was great, fabulous, in the heart of the Rockies; the scenery was spectacular. The weather turned cool at Fort Morgan, but the trip in August, up to that point was very hot—no air conditioning, windows wide open, with a continuous blast of hot air all the way across Iowa and Nebraska.

What was there to do for entertainment and excitement 50 years ago, almost before TV? People did have TV at that time but usually only those who could afford it. We could not afford it, but we did pick up a used one at the filling station just outside of town on the highway, for \$20. We should have saved our money until there was better reception because most of it was snow. So what did we do? Like we always did—visit with people, plan parties, join in when the town's different organizations had meetings, church activities, choir practice, work, get a good night's sleep and look forward to tomorrow's tasks . . . not too much TV watching.

Here we are back at the parsonage. It is supper time (in Iowa it is supper time, not dinner). Rev. Grote saunters into the dining room very nonchalantly and says, "Oh, potatoes and gravy tonight, with beef roast." "Sure," we say, "Sit down and join us." Well, he does and he does and he does. Finally we said, "Rev. Grote, we will make a deal with



Margene McKibben, Myron and Betty Teague, 1958

you; you eat here for supper and pay half the electric bill." This was fine with him, so we had a working agreement until we moved. I really felt sorry for him, as he would come over a great deal into our part and watch TV with us, even though it was mostly snow. He was a perfect character of a man I cannot even begin to describe. If any woman had known his inner self and his great kindness, he would have been married in a heartbeat.

Of course, living in a parsonage, the church was right across the street. We had a dog named Bimbo that became the mascot of the band and one of the most faithful church goers in town. Every Sunday Bimbo would wait until we were inside the church,

then come walking down the aisle and lie down in front of the pulpit. Reverend Grote would carry on as though he were a regular member of the church

Cindy (my daughter) is sitting on the bottom step of the stairwell with her head in her hands, and here comes Rev. Grote. Out of a clear blue, she says “Bimbo doesn't like ministers.” Thank the Lord Rev. Grote had a great sense of humor. He just started singing his Cindy song to her, something like this: “I love my Cindy, and if I can't have my Cindy, no one can have her at all.” She soon got over her little spell.

Okay, let's talk about money. I started teaching in 1948 for the grand salary of \$2,000 a year, and at that I was one of the highest paid teachers to come out of Waldorf that year, on an A.A. degree that is. That is why I got the shack on Main Street for \$15 a month, plus the fact that it had no utilities. How we managed is more than I know. There was absolutely no insulation in the house. We had to buy an oil heater that did nothing except heat the one room. The other room we had to use for a bedroom. My oldest son, about eight years old, slept there. He developed a massive mastoid, which required ten shots of penicillin. Our family doctor treated him to the tune of about \$2 a shot. It was a good thing there was no insurance then, or it would have been \$50 a shot. We had an old German lady come over and baby-sit with the kids one night and when we got home, she told us we could not live there anymore—it was just too cold. As it turned out, we did not live there any more, only because we had no other choice. My wife, Betty, was about to deliver Cindy. We had to go to the hospital in Forest City, Feb. 14, about the coldest night you could ever think of. We cranked up our old 1938 Chevy and headed out and never went back, except for me—I commuted every day. A few weeks after having Cindy, Betty developed meningitis and was in the hospital for a few weeks, then went to her parents' home to recover, because at that time there was no treatment for meningitis; you just suffered through it, and if you were lucky, you lived through it without being paralyzed in some way. She was lucky, but it took constant therapy by her mother and me. Her head was turned up, and she could not straighten it, and she had to walk on tip-toes for a long while. Again, I reiterate, with insurance, what would the delivery and the bout with meningitis cost. The whole thing cost us about \$300; yes of course, we paid it on a time schedule.

The reason I am still on the subject of money is that I just wanted to tie in with other things the progress teachers made in those days, in increments. I worked in different schools for six years before Rembrandt, and at the end of that period I had increased my salary from \$2,000 annually to about \$2,700 in 1954. I think they started me off in Rembrandt with a salary of \$3,000. I could be wrong, but this is an approximation. The comparison is not relative to today's salaries; the reason is that back then, a half a century ago, usually the bread winner was the only one who worked. There were exceptions of course, but it still was not the rule.

Betty stayed home most of the time the kids were growing up. Oh, she would take Beulah's or Roselle's place as cook if they were sick but that was about it. You have to understand that I receive \$3,000 a month in retirement, so it is not relative. Can you imagine what would happen today if, for the most part, only the man worked. Of course

the well-to-do would be fine, but peons like us would feel the pain. Of course things were cheaper, but not that much cheaper. This is not a dissertation on society; I understand it was the times, and everybody was in the same boat—otherwise why the low salaries. I blame no one; it's just the way it was.

When I left Rembrandt, I was making about \$4,000. I was treated very well at Rembrandt; they gave me fair increments. The only thing I had to do at times was meet with the board and plead my case for a salary increase and for equipment for the band; they usually gave it to me. I would like to mention the school board members, as they were great guys, good friends and very good stewards of the school: Carlos Bryan (Superintendent), Edward Mosbo, Bruce McKibben, Glen Graeber, Gilbert Bentley, Ronald Haraldson, and Kenneth Hadenfeldt.

Helen Bryan - Elementary Teacher 1955-1960

I have many happy memories of teaching school. Never did I dislike a schoolroom where I spent many years with little children. As I thought through the years, many memories came back to me—nearly all of them pleasant—to a greater or lesser degree. However, of all memories, the one I remember most is one told and retold by my own son, Scott. His memory and mine are a little different. Who knows which of us is correct?

As he tells it—whenever he was “wasting time” or about to do something “a little mischievous” or “out of line,” he would feel my “gentle touch” on his shoulder or neck, quietly reminding him “that I meant business.”

I'm quite certain that my gentle touch must have influenced him somewhat through fourth grade because I've never ever been uneasy about him since.



The Rembrandt School Board in 1958

Front, left to right: Ken Hadenfeldt, Ed Mosbo, Gil Bentley, Bruce McKibben, Superintendent Carlos Bryan; Back, Clifford Green, Quentin Peterson, Ed Breckenfelder



The School Board Members' Wives

Left to right: Margene McKibben, Leola Peterson, Marie Green, Elva Breckenfelder, Esther Mosbo (seated), Helen Bryan, Geneva Bentley, and Doris Hadenfeldt

Ken Brower, Industrial Arts and Driver Education Teacher and Ruth Brower, Secretary to the School Superintendent 1955-1960

It all started with parking on the outskirts of town where Ken put on his suit jacket and tie in preparation for the interview with Carlos Bryan, Superintendent, and the School Board members. It went very well, and Ken was offered a contract. Later we found out that the previous candidate hadn't been satisfactory, so one of the Board members told Carlos Bryan, "If this one can write, sign him." After five memorable years, it ended with a great Farewell Party for Carlos and Helen Bryan and us.

We moved into a duplex where Grace VanBuskirk took good care of us, and we began to become acquainted with almost everyone in town. We spent most of our days at school and many of our nights at ballgames and then at someone's home having coffee, great food, and good conversation.

We shopped the two local grocery stores, got the best ever meat at Hegna's locker, enjoyed the “floatable rolls” from the café, went to the library, newspaper office, and Ruth took lots of school money to the bank. We joined the Methodist Church and got inspired by Rev. Ralph Grote. We had coffee with almost everyone in town and appreciated the warm friendships we made.

We liked going to the nearby towns, especially Storm Lake and Spencer, and Ken LOVED being able to go duck hunting at COLD Lake Trumbull and fishing at Spirit Lake and Okoboji.

Our lives revolved around the school, and Carlos Bryan shaped an educational environment “dedicated to excellence” as Ed Mosbo said. The teachers were well qualified, the students were outstanding (Ruth is still in awe remembering the high percentile scores she recorded from the tests the students took), the parents were involved and caring, and the support staff was always helpful. We are grateful to have been a part of this.

We moved from Rembrandt to Cedar Falls where Ken got his M.A. at UNI and then taught at UNI for one year and then for many years in the Waterloo Community Schools where Ruth was a kindergarten teacher for many years. We bought a house and are now retired and loving every minute of our lives. We go swimming almost every day, Ken fishes every chance he gets, mainly on the Mississippi around Lansing, and also goes deer hunting each year. We have lots of friends and enjoy eating out and walking in the malls and reading and taking short trips around Iowa.

Margaret George - English Teacher 1955-1960

Memories flooded my thoughts as I contemplated writing an article for the remembrance book of Rembrandt School. These included thoughts of fellow faculty members, such as Dorothy Parker, Ken Brower, Elizabeth Davies, and Superintendent Carlos Bryan. Who can forget those smiling cooks, Bertha Cannoy, Roselle Johnson, and Beulah Hegna, or custodians Clarence Cannoy and Art Johnson?

My time at RHS began in early spring 1955, when I was interviewed for the position vacated by Lee Spahn. Six board members sat in a ring before me with Mr. Bryan moderating. The interview went well, but I was a bit disconcerted when one board member finally asked nicely, “Well, how much do you want, Lady?”

However, the years at RHS were the most rewarding of my teaching career. Students were nearly all dedicated to learning, and parents were supportive and encouraging.

A few of my memories include

- visiting Janice Youngberg as she lay recovering from spinal surgery in full body cast. She had such a positive outlook and worked hard to maintain top grades.
- watching the whirlwinds Pat and Mike McGrew, whose days always started early with farm chores and ended after a busy school day with more school activities and farm chores in the evening.
- enjoying visits in my home from Eloise Mosbo, Pat Mosbo, Beverly Hegna, and Betty Foval.
- taking Harriet Hadenfeldt, editor of the *Party Line* to the Iowa Student Newspaper Association banquet in Ames, where she received several well-deserved awards.
- correcting papers nearly every night until midnight while my black lab slept near my chair.
- being asked by Helene and Paul Ducas' grandmother to pick them up at her home in Sioux Rapids on my way to school, not realizing until after lunch that I had forgotten them.
- diagramming sentences, assigning book reports and speech projects, and telling my students that they really DID need to speak and write correct English.
- seeing the word SCHEDUAL on the assembly blackboard and quietly changing it to SCHEDULE.
- trying to reorganize and operate the school library with good help from Mary Eastman, Sally Green, Joyce Stroup, Sharon Halvorson, Dixie Hadenfeldt and many other volunteers.
- occasionally having tea after school with Phyllis Mosbo, meeting my husband's great aunt Bessie Hesla for the first time, shopping Hegna's store.

I treasure those years at RHS and my association with students, faculty and parents. You remain fixed in time in my mind—ever young, ever energetic, always busy and achieving.

Dorothy Parker - Math and Typing Teacher; Principal 1956-1962

I came to the Rembrandt school system in 1956, a stranger. Six years later when I left, I felt part of the community. The student body was pleasant to work with, and they reflected the attitudes and work ethic of their parents.

I tried to challenge each student to work up to his or her ability. A variety of activities provided the opportunity to learn different skills. Team sports, band, Junior-Senior Banquet and the yearbook are examples and are as helpful as the academics. I know many students went on to advanced studies and have become leaders in their communities.

Many hours were spent working on the yearbook. Each year the staff put in a lot of overtime to get it ready to go to press. It was a surprise and a thrill the year they dedicated it to me. Decorating for the Junior-Senior Banquet was always great fun and

lots of work. As I recall, the students worked well together and ideas were worked on for many weeks.

Of course after 44 years I have perhaps blocked out some of the trying moments. Your memories are probably more vivid than mine, but some still stand out in my mind. One is Dee Ann Gustafson and her determined effort to pass the 80 wpm typing test. I was tempted to misread the watch, but her standard and mine wouldn't allow that.

Sally Green and many others worked many hours on the yearbook. Her staff was very good and helped selling ads to finance it. Bernie Saggau was the publisher's representative, and he helped us when we really didn't know what we were doing.

Then there were times when my tongue got twisted and I had to live down the results. I remember the time I announced in study hall the practice of the "sex"-a-phone sextet. No one laughed, but I had a hard time keeping a straight face.

After Rembrandt

After leaving Rembrandt in 1962, I taught in Storm Lake at the junior high until I retired in 1975. My daughter, Carolyn, and her husband, Steve Moe, were then teaching in Gladbrook and raising my two grandsons.

My husband, Larry Parker, passed away in 1989. In 1992 I married a long-time friend from Cleveland, Ohio, and we lived there until his death in 1995. After several months, I moved back to Storm Lake.

As I approached my 90th birthday, I decided to "settle down" and move into an independent living apartment in Gladbrook. So here I am working on my 91st year in a relaxed and comfortable home. I do some community work in the nursing home, some in the church office, and play cards, Scrabble, and other games. My hope is that I can stay well, keep busy and helpful, and remember to thank God for a long and good life.

I have had notes from several of my former students, and it has been interesting to hear about what they have been doing since they left Rembrandt High School. Cordy Peterson stopped by one day, and we reminisced about those long-ago days. Betty, Helene, and Eloise are doing a monumental job of trying to save your heritage.

I have only pleasant memories as I look back on my years in Rembrandt. Thank you for including me in your research.

Chuck Skogerboe - Coach and Social Studies Teacher 1959-1960

Sorry I missed the Rembrandt celebration last summer, but I did attend one of the earlier reunions a couple of years ago and spoke a few words.

As for Rembrandt, I have several fond memories! My wife Wanda and I, along with our infant son Dirk, arrived in August of 1959. I was the new boys' and girls' basketball and boys' baseball coach, along with teaching all the social studies and physical education classes.

It was my first year out of college, and I couldn't have found a better place to start my career! The girls' team ended up 17 and 5, and the boys were 19 and 6! I have said

many times since that it was too bad I didn't know as much then as I did later about coaching because we could have been even better! I left after one year because Superintendent Bryan told me he was going to Aurelia, and the Board was talking about reorganization. We went to Story City. I guess we panicked because Rembrandt did not reorganize until almost 20 years later!

I was at Story City four years—Starmont (near Oelwein) one year—South Clay (Webb) three years. Then with three sons, I decided to leave education and join Berkley Company in Spirit Lake as Assistant Personnel Director; over the next 30 years I progressed to Executive Vice President of Human Resources. From 1979-1983 I was also able to coach the girls' basketball and softball teams until my job and travel forced me to give up the coaching.

My wife Wanda died in 1993, and I was fortunate to meet Susie, a speech pathologist, and remarry. I have a step-son who is currently a senior in high school and planning to go to the University of Iowa next fall. I retired from Berkley in 1997 and do some consulting PLUS I am back into coaching (third year) softball for Spirit Lake High School (it never gets out of your blood). My three sons all live within a 150-mile radius of Spirit Lake, and we have eight grandkids.

I have a very special place in my heart for Rembrandt and all the boys and girls who played for me and got me off to a great start in my career! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Cleone Schneck - English and Speech Teacher 1959-1974

At Rembrandt I served as high school English and Speech instructor, directed the junior and senior class plays, was guidance counselor, and also had to take over as superintendent after Mr. Brouwer resigned because of illness. I tried to help the students find their way into something new and different rather than just plain existing.

I had previously worked for a few years in Chicago for American Airlines. My acquaintance with all the areas in Chicago gave me the background for the senior class trips. On our 1962 trip when we left to go to the art museum in Chicago, Ed Nielsen indicated that he was not particularly interested in going to an art museum. That night, after having been there, Ed came and knocked at our door and asked Mr. Schneck if he would take him back to the art museum that night or the next day. That showed that Ed wanted more than he had previously been exposed to. It also showed that nobody truly knew Ed. That's why I felt so strongly about gifted children. You never know where you're going to find them. I surmised that there were several gifted and talented students at Rembrandt that were not recognized at the time.

After I left Rembrandt, I was hired by the Ankeny Schools to write a Gifted and Talented Program. I took a year to write the book, which the school district published. It was called AGATE, an acronym for Ankeny's Gifted And Talented Education, a precious stone for precious children.

I spoke at the Iowa State Teachers' Convention, introducing the Gifted and Talented Program, and was asked to come to the National Education Association meeting in Chicago to introduce my program. Several people throughout the state requested that I help set up Gifted and Talented Programs in their local schools.

The program became quite famous after a Japanese representative came to visit. He stayed with us in our home for a week; it was so nice that he had a different gift for us every day. When he was interviewed by WHO about our program, he was also asked what he liked best about staying in our home. He replied, "Eating hash," a comment I found embarrassing.

I am currently retired and living in Palm Springs, California. We enjoy traveling and have gone to England several times and have also gone on five cruises all over the world.

Joann Oatman - Sixth Grade Teacher 1960-1961

It seemed that for several years in the fifties, any woman who taught sixth grade in the Rembrandt School could expect to become pregnant, and I was no exception. I was hired late in the summer because the previous teacher was expecting, and little did I know that I would end up carrying twins before school was out in the spring. Teachers didn't wear slacks or maternity clothes in the school during these years. I was sweating in Pendleton wool jackets before the last day of school finally arrived in May, but I made it, and I didn't have to resign. In physical education, I remember trying to teach kids to make a three-point stand, in a skirt, so that they could learn to stand on their heads.

One day in the fall, a student brought some Indian corn to school, and we put it on the cupboard in the room, sort of a display with books, etc., and during the day you would look over and there were the mice up on the cupboard feasting on our corn. They didn't scare us, and we knew where they were as long as the corn held out.

I remember looking out the school window and seeing this dog (I think he belonged to the Hansen brothers) climb the steps up the playground slide and then slide down. I haven't seen one since that could do that—amazing!

I remember the high school girls were regular fashion plates. They had the best clothes I had ever seen students wear to school. (Obviously, these were the years before "fishnet" and grubbies, thank heaven!)

I remember when the fourth grade teacher and I traded classrooms a couple of times a week. She taught sixth grade penmanship, and I taught fourth grade music. In college, we were taught that a little plastic instrument called a tonette was a fun, easy approach to teach children musical notes; progressing to simple tunes, they would be able to perform together as a band once they learned the notes. One young man in the fourth grade came up to me the day after I had encouraged the students to take the instrument home and practice and said, "Mrs. Oatman, I won't be any better tomorrow than I was yesterday."

"Oh, why is that?" I asked.

“Because my dad said if I ever played that thing in the house again, he was going to take it outside and throw it in the trash bin!”

I don't remember if it was fun or not. Sorry kids!

It was a rather difficult year in that Mr. Brouwer, the superintendent, became ill with cancer during the year and had to retire, but the parents and the community were very supportive of the students and the teachers. It was only one year, but I do remember that sixth grade with fondness.

I still live on a farm southeast of Storm Lake. The twins were 40 this year, are married and have children of their own. John and I have one younger daughter, and we are blessed to have five handsome, beautiful, above average grandchildren—what more can I say?!?



1963 School Board - Paul Haroldson, Ken Hadenfeldt, Superintendent Alvin Cleveland, President Bruce McKibben, Gil Bentley, Don Gibbons, Ron Haraldson

Duane Rath - Social Studies Teacher, Physical Education, Boys' & Girls' Basketball, Baseball, Track and a Summer Program 1960-1970

After giving this much thought and trying to remember my favorite ten years of trying to educate and be educated by some very hard working and talented students, I have chosen the following to include in my “memory.” I recall the cooperation of the school administration, community, and parents from my many warm and wonderful days, months, and years in Rembrandt.

I know that the community must realize the talented young people I had to work with. My experiences in coaching the girls' and boys' basketball teams and the boys' baseball teams were very rewarding. George Engebretson was so supportive of me and always did a great job of preparing the talent during the summer. His many years of effort kept Rembrandt baseball a talked-about activity around the entire Northwest Iowa area.

The opportunity that the community gave Bobbi and me to go on the senior trips was a cultural experience unsurpassed. As the senior class sponsor with Mrs. Schneck, we benefited as much as the students.

I cannot pick out one coaching event that outweighs another. I can only hope my former athletes treasure some of these successes as I do.

We think of many experiences with so many people with fondness and thankfulness; we especially appreciate the opportunity the school board gave us by hiring a very young and willing-to-work couple.

Thank you Rembrandt—you are embedded in my heart forever.

Roberta Rath - Sixth grade teacher; Junior High Home Room, Language Arts and Social Studies 1961-1963 and 1965-1977

Of course, Rembrandt will always be a favorite memory of mine because this is where thirty eight and a half years of teaching began. My memories of working with such professionals eager for the BEST EDUCATION for its youth is forever imprinted in my heart. These professionals I encountered in Rembrandt were of course the staff . . . spirited by Parker, Schneck, Teague, Warnork, Mankenberg, Jensen, Brockmann, Woelber, Dewey, Cleveland, Truesdell, Johnson, Biggins, Carlson, Walters, Davies, and many more. It was great working with them. Other professionals were the school board, custodians, not to forget the fabulous cooks . . .

One memory I recall was when I was junior high home room teacher, and I had to order IQ tests. I ordered them for an average rural community (one of the categories). You can imagine my surprise when the results came back, and I had a room full of geniuses. I called the area agency that worked with our school and asked how this was possible. She said that many of the farmers in the Rembrandt area had a college background and many had married teachers who came to teach in Rembrandt. Therefore, the quality of reading material in the homes was varied and plentiful. They replied I should have ordered tests for a high socio-economic community . . . another category. I complied, and I still had several very bright students. But that forever imprinted in my mind what a special, special place this Rembrandt was.

I also recall how well dressed these students were. This was before girls could wear slacks to school, let alone jeans. My husband and I were newly graduated students from college, and our clothing budget was limited, but it was essential we dress professionally, and actually the kids out-dressed us.

I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to learn and grow with my former students. Not only did I get to teach them academics, but speech and drama were stimulating experiences also. The audio tutorial foreign language program was innovative and ahead of its time. As the shadow teacher I had further interesting experiences. My love for teaching was ignited in this small warm intellectual community. Thank you Rembrandt for embracing me.

Jimmie Joe Gillespie - Music Teacher and Band Director 1961-1962

Rembrandt was truly an art form that I got to live with once, for the school year 1961-1962. I doubt many times that my teaching career of a short 30 years would have ever come to be without the enthusiasm, the talent, the superb giving, and one super word, *attitude*, that was, and I bet still is, Rembrandt, Iowa. Some afternoons with competition for contests, marching and otherwise, saw more than 40 young people in a superb way jar the memories of one man—a teacher in the early prime of his profession,



Jimmie Joe Gillespie and Mixed Chorus, 1962

with love of music and kids as the fun product to produce it all. I saw enthusiasm, real spirit, unbelievable talent (have to credit some good instructors prior to my time) and a great big giant heart that made it all click. Out of a high school of 62 students, 45 were involved in music activities (groups, solos, lessons, etc.)—almost 75%. No place in my years as a high school music instructor had such a high percentage of students been involved in music. But other activities boasted a similar type number—forensics (speech and drama and Mrs. Schneck), newspaper, and annual staff, and the list goes on. For the young people in music, a few in grades five and six, the rest in junior and senior high—the magic word was *attitude*. The magic spell was their tremendous giving of themselves fully to anything they were doing, be it music, sports, plays, and anything I may have overlooked. All that encompasses a lot called memories.

Five names will always stand at the top of my list of people that I can never repay in words or monetary values for the help, encouragement, and inspiration they gave me. I practically lived in the home of Harold and Joann Olson, the school custodian and his wife. Bruce and Margene McKibben had very kind hearts and gave me ideas, goals, and even advice, superbly and without put-on. And as a young man in his fifth year of a decision, I stayed in teaching not in spite of, but because of a neat Rembrandt administrator I'll always remember as Cleve (Superintendent Alvin Cleveland). A prize

I cherish has to be enthusiasm felt from my year at Rembrandt. I was a music teacher that Rembrandt helped to make.

My career took me to Thompson, Iowa, where I was named teacher of the year for drama and all vocal music. Then I taught vocal music at Clear Lake for 11 years and also taught in Sioux Falls. I retired and live in Canton, South Dakota (a strong music town) with my dog, Skippie. Many will remember that I played a piano—read a melody line, if need be—and everyone stood back in fear for the rest of it. I've played in dance bands and supper clubs for almost half a century.

Rembrandt Marching Band

We won all the marbles at Buena Vista's homecoming with 23 bands entered in competition at Storm Lake. A week later—the big time—was Augustana's homecoming in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. A policeman grabbed my arm on the street (I thought he wanted to march along with us), but he informed me, “No maneuvers on the street—ties up traffic.” I talked to the drum major, Marilyn Peterson, and said when you get close to the judge's station, blow the commands—we're going through that area, maneuvers and all—and we did. We got good applause too. We also held a private parade on a residential street—the Gillespie block—marching in perfect formation, good intonation, and the neighbors came not only out, but alive. They wanted to call the newspaper for pictures in the Sunday paper, but I said, “Don't do it; I'm too young at 27 to go to jail.” (No parade permit or barricades!)

The next year I invited the Rembrandt Band back to my parents' home for pizza and pop after all the homecoming festivities. A good superintendent, a bus driver, two or three super parents, and 40 plus stars did just that—uniforms and all. It was a lonesome few minutes watching that big orange school bus pull away headed for home after a long day. I left a big piece of my heart there at Rembrandt, but the kids, each and every one, left a tiny piece of theirs with me as a professional reminder, lasting 30 years of my chosen profession and still hanging on strong. I guess that's one of the nice things that can happen in one's lifetime, and there can be no price tag attached to that.

A Piano Attempts Passing a Rembrandt Driver

Once in a while nice people want to do a kind favor for schools, especially small schools. It so happened that one Thursday afternoon Harold Olson and Cleeve came in to tell me that a lady was going to give the school a large upright piano. Four of us took a little two-wheel trailer and Harold's Chevy, and we loaded up this unbelievably nice piano. We put it on the trailer and centered it (one heavy brute, I tell you). We headed back toward town about 40 mph, rounded a gentle curve, and all of a sudden, the weight shifted, and I saw that piano fall over the side of that two-wheel trailer and land upright on all four wheels (for a few seconds). I hollered at Harold,

“Have you ever been passed on a highway by a piano? Just step on it; look out your window in the mirror and park this thing.”

The response was, “Oh my God! Jim isn't kidding.”

The piano hit something, luckily, and fell over on its back, sliding into home base. The top and front flew off; hammers and keys stuck out like poorly carved jack-o-lantern teeth on a mad-rush Halloween night. It played its last tune; “ber-rang-a-rang-rang” sounded the keyboard and strings stuck out every which way.

Harold said, “We're only about a half mile from the dump.” That's the only time I was ever there. I'm sure glad the nice lady never came to see where we were putting her piano to good use.

Music Challenges in a Minute

One discovers in a number of years, blessed talent, in my case, outstanding young musicians. To see the lesson books used in most colleges being used by some junior high and high school students in a little school of about 60 in high school and 250 in the whole town—no place in my teaching ever equaled such a finding. Good people tread those hallways before I ever got there. I went to band directors who really knew people to find a flute solo to make me look good as a director for a student I never gave a lesson to. Luckily, I found a record and a solo; thus the epic known as *Flute Flight* came to be. Helene Ducas, a junior, took this piece to contest and shocked a judge—college caliber to say the least. She (and I can take no honest credit) went to Europe with the U.S.A. High School Band, representing Iowa and Rembrandt in the highest form possible. To satisfy my own ego, I have told this story many times to many directors.

The Long, Long Almost Horrible Winter, 1962

Rembrandt lost more than 20 days of school because of snow that year. I spent many evenings at the Olson's place. I started a collection of scale model cars as a freshman in high school. A hobby shop was selling out model cars just before Christmas, and I bought many of them. Some of my band students noticed this hobby, and the craze caught on. About ten students put together and painted cars for me and got started on a collection they would enjoy; it turned out to be the perfect winter for it. I brought prized possessions back from Sioux Falls, and these same super people did all the painting of trim for me. Others were beautifully and carefully put together from kits. Only at Rembrandt were there hearts and fun like that. Today the collection, now in its 52nd year, well preserved and on display, numbers about 380; over 100 are Rembrandt—a possession of hearts I'll always cherish.

The Bobbsey Twins

I can think of a couple little girls, The Bobbsey Twins I'll call them. Only in Rembrandt could a teacher go out to a parent's home, eat a meal, drop in and feel welcome almost any time, and not feel like you have broken all the good laws of the profession: fraternizing with parents and students. I had dinner at Bruce and Margene McKibben's, played all the latest hits on the piano, and for fun I took a “chauffeur” and the two Bobbsey twins (Barb and Betty) in my four-door Continental convertible, and we went sightseeing through the countryside, Sioux Rapids, had ice cream cones, etc. On

our return the two little cheerleaders got the idea, got up on that back boot and waved at the people—real Miss America style—four people having a bunch of home-made fun.

The Closing of a High School

One day up in the hall outside the office at Rembrandt School, Bruce McKibben, Harold Olson, Cleeve, and I were talking after school. The topic was the state forcing consolidation of small schools— “. . . got the list today and that makes 27 in less than four years.” This was fall, 1961. Conversation continued by Bruce, “Sounds unconstitutional to me and if it comes in the next year or so, Cleeve, we'll fight it. We aren't hurting down here; we can operate, if need be, without state aid.” Rembrandt kept their school for another seventeen years.

I'm glad Rembrandt got to keep the school for so much longer, for school is the community, safeguarded by the biggest sign of all—family; and seconded by faith in one another, guided by that symbol that we call church. I owe Rembrandt gratitude of heart. A prize I cherish has to be enthusiasm felt from my year at Rembrandt, when about 40-50 super stars made a young soul-searching teacher really perhaps even better than he really was. I was a music teacher that Rembrandt helped to make.

Wayne “Ole” Johnson - Teacher and Coach 1963-1970

In the summer of 1963 I moved my family to Rembrandt where I had accepted a teaching and coaching position. My family consisted of my wife, Donna, and our two children, Jeffrey born in 1961 and Julie born in 1963. Rembrandt became the first real home our children remember. We quickly adapted to this wonderful little community. I took over the girls' softball program for real in the fall of 1963 with a building program that started to gel in 1966. We started getting some attention around the state and started getting invited to a lot of invitational tournaments and winning some of them. We even held our own invitational tournament quite often and drew some really good teams around the area and some really good crowds.

There was only one class in the state tournament at this time, which meant only eight teams in the state of Iowa went to the state tournament. The format to get there was three sectional games, three district games, and three state games to become the champion. We won seven consecutive sectionals, lost in the semi-finals of the district twice, and lost in the finals of the district twice and won the districts three times. The summer of 1969 we got fourth place in state. We lost in the consolation game by one run in the eighth inning. The fall of 1969 we got second in the state. The summer of 1970 we were rated number one in the state and ended up second. This was the first year the tournament was at Fort Dodge—before it had always been held at Hubbard. Twice we played in the Jack North Tournament, which consisted of a 32-team invitational, and the summer of 1969 we lost in the semifinals to the team that won the tournament, and the summer of 1970 we got second. At one time we held a hitting record in the state

tournament, but I don't know if that still holds. We felt we had accomplished quite a bit, since we were the next to the smallest school in the state of Iowa. This was a family affair, as my wife Donna was my scorekeeper, son Jeff was our batboy, and daughter Julie was our mascot.

A couple of funny moments out of many—one was once when I was talking to some of the coaches who were talking about their junior high girl athletes, and one said he had 57 girls in junior high and hadn't had a chance to look at all of them yet. I stood there and thought, gee, I only have seven girls total in junior high. One other moment was when Donna and the girls went to the restroom before we were to play Urbandale (a softball powerhouse). Some of the Urbandale players were in there, and they commented that they didn't know where Rembrandt was and asked how big the school was. When we told them, they laughed. Well, after the game was over and we had won easily, Donna commented that they probably would remember where Rembrandt was from then on.

One of the summers we were there I took on all the summer programs besides girls' softball, and we had only one Sunday that summer that we didn't have something going on. Our home was like Grand Central Station, and the phone all but rang off the wall. It was a fun-filled summer for the Johnson family, and we had a lot of ball games to go to.

We remember the whole town grieving when a couple of fine young men lost their lives—Bill Binder in the service in Cambodia and Mike McCormick in an elevator collapse in Albert City. I was an honorary pallbearer for Bill and felt very honored to serve as such. This was such a loss to our tiny community.

I enjoyed fox hunting with my father and brothers and friends around the Rembrandt area, and we had some good places to hunt in those days.

We all remember Rembrandt as such a friendly town, and the parents were so supportive of programs. The students seemed to be exceptional also. It was probably the smallest town we ever lived in, but the easiest to get a baby-sitter if we needed one. All my family has many happy memories and many friends from one Rembrandt USA.

We live in Ruthven, Iowa, and I am retired. Donna just retired from Lakeland Area Education Agency 3, where she has been the Business Manager/Board Secretary since 1975. Jeff and Kathy live in Lincoln, Nebraska, where Jeff is the manager for Sofa Mart. Julie, Sid and Carli Leann (born in 2000—cute as can be and a busy bee) live in Colorado Springs, where Julie is a CPA and has her own business. Our second homes are Lincoln and Colorado Springs.

Rembrandt to Continue School Without Aid

June '63

June 11, 1963

State Revokes Funds to Two County Schools

"We're planning to operate regardless." This was the statement made today (Tuesday) by Bruce McKibben, president of the Rembrandt school board, following announcement Friday that Rembrandt is one of four schools in the state being removed from the Iowa board of public instruction approved list.

"There are very few in our community that want to reorganize," McKibben said. "We feel we can operate without state aid." Last year Rembrandt received approximately \$11,000 in state school aid.

In a taped interview Saturday before KTIV television cameras McKibben and Alvin Cleveland, Rembrandt school superintendent, discussed the present situation. They said at that time that Paul E. Johnston, state superintendent of public instruction had been quoted as saying that the Rembrandt school operated last year 11 units short of the minimum standard set by the state board.

Units Lacked

However, McKibben and Cleveland both said that they were actually only lacking 7 units "Two units that were offered were not taken by any of the students so actually we were only five units short," McKibben pointed out.

"Last year three of our four high school classes were in the 99 percentile of all schools around the state. The fourth class was in the top 91 per cent. This goes to prove we have one of the top high schools in the state of Iowa." McKibben said.

Larry "Pete" Peterson - Umpire 1956-present

Being a country kid and going to grade school at Fairview and high school at Highview, I was the first non-Rembrandt kid to play on George Engebretson's summer baseball teams, starting in the Midget League. I have many fond memories of trips going to tournaments where the Legion Post 468 fed us pre-game meals and took very good care of us. I'm very grateful and thankful for having parents who would dedicate their time because of their love for and interest in their children pursuing baseball or any other activity that they participated in. They gave up a lot of their personal time to see us play and progress.

George really cared for young men, and a lot of time was spent in practice and after practice with us. During one of our trips in Midget ball we went to Onawa, Iowa. Before the game, while we were in civilian clothes, Pat and Mike McGrew, Kenny Green, and I were sitting at a table having a hamburger steak. Not knowing how to get a ketchup bottle to flow, I proceeded to hit the bottom of it and made all of the above look as though they'd been shot. Fortunately, they recovered in time for the game.

Upon graduation from high school, I played Legion ball in Rembrandt and also umpired Midget ball there. George asked me to become an umpire, and Vic Shirk, an

umpire in Linn Grove, took me under his wing. Because of the love of baseball, things grew and mushroomed to the present time where I've umpired for 46 years, including about 25 State Baseball Tournaments. Plans of retirement are still unforeseen. I refereed basketball from 1965-1980. Due to the death of my parents, Elmer and Elsie Peterson, I gave up basketball officiating. In 1995 my brother Lanny (Rembrandt Class of 1961) and I were both inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame for umpiring. At the present time we are the only brothers who are in this Hall of Fame. I'm also in both the NW Iowa Coaches Hall of Fame and the Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame (for umpiring).

At the present time I'm no longer engaged in farming but am punching a time clock at Ranco in Sioux Rapids. They are very understanding, so I'm still able to pursue my umpiring career, which consists of the last week in May until the first week in August, when I will work from 80 to 100 baseball games.

For the past 17 years one of my two weeks of vacation has been spent at the Iowa Boys' State Basketball Tournament in Des Moines, where I act as a host to all the participating teams and officials and also set up and tear down the auditorium floor (including the head table for the official scorers, timers, supervisor of officials, and the bench official). This one week consists of about 105-110 hours spent in Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

The IHSAA dwells on having good sportsmanship shown by players, coaches, fans, and officials. This is something that we have to work at in every game that we attend. George taught us that if you didn't like the call, you didn't beef at the umpire but hoped that the next call would go your way.

During Val Haraldson Mosbo's pitching career in Rembrandt, she was the greatest at trying to paint the corners of home plate in the strike zone. If I had given her room, she would have expanded the strike zone to a country mile.

During one of that softball team's games away from home (it was played at Mallard), I made a complete fool of myself as a spectator. Being young and wet behind the ears, I disputed an umpire's call of an infield fly. I would not let him forget it, until he turned around and told me the game would not proceed until I left the premises. Upon conferring with the home team's coach and Rembrandt's coach (Ole), I proceeded to go to the left field foul line and hollered my lungs out until the game was over. After growing up and becoming more of a senior citizen, I look back upon this time and see how hideous I appeared at that point in time.

I've been honored by two videos. The first, "This is Your Life, Larry Peterson" was made by the prestigious organization, National Association of Public Address Announcers of America, NAPAA (actually my fellow workers at the State Basketball Tournament made up this fictitious organization) when I went into the IHSAA Hall of Fame. The second was made three years ago when I was honored with a headstone that is placed at the George Engebretson Field in Rembrandt under a beautiful shade tree south of the concession stand.

Selections from the 2001 Rembrandt Centennial Celebration

Eloise Mosbo Obman - Class of 1960

From *We Cherish the Past*

A Pageant Written in Celebration of Rembrandt's 100th Birthday

Excerpts from Act II, Scene 3 A Legacy

Rembrandt is not just about its past. It is about you right now and about what has been and still is being invested in your future as a young citizen of Rembrandt. Nothing captures Rembrandt's legacy better than this moment in 1988.

George, we need you to come here and take a position of honor for a few moments this evening. This evening we pay tribute to you, George, the man who, for so many years, helped build Rembrandt into the baseball capital of Northwest Iowa. Your Pee Wee and Midget teams have won championship after championship. One of your Legion “boys” pitched a perfect game against rival powerhouse Albert City-Truesdale and went 4 for 4 at bat in the same game! Rembrandt made international news on that one! Several more of your “boys” went on to successful college and university careers, some as pitchers. One of your outfielders made small college All-American. The list could continue. Your trophy case is filled, George, but most importantly, you have helped fill the hearts of Rembrandt young folk with the love of the game. As a gesture of gratitude, we wish for your legacy to take on a visible form. For that reason, we dedicate Rembrandt's newest ball diamond to you. May Engebretsen Field continue to supply many more generations of Rembrandt area youth a chance to play and love the game. We know you're not comfortable being in the spotlight. But before we conclude our dedication of Engebretson Field, we're going to ask you to look out at this field and imagine—imagine some of your former players taking the field one more time.



Engebretson Field

It looks extremely hopeful for the Rembrandt fans this day,
The diamond's set, the fence is up, the kids are here to play;
The bleachers offer firm support for eager moms and dads,
While to the left, the scoreboard shows each run the home team adds.

But look - out there - what's that I see? McGrew on second base?
And who's that pitching? Must be Green - I recognize that face.
That's Hoover out there hugging third, and Hegna's at the plate,
A dancing Eddie leads off first and swiftly shifts his weight.

A host of players fill the field: McKibbens, Obmans, too,
 A Cavanaugh, some Andersons, and Eastman - what a crew!
 There's Peterson - he's stealing home; there's Mosbo, Stroup, and more;
 An Engebretson swings the bat and pushes up the score.

A Siekman, Parris, Binder join our players from the past;
 A Whitaker, the Haraldsons, some Boettchers swell the cast.
 The numbers grow, by dozens now; they pour out from the stands.
 But wait! A single form appears. "Time out!" his voice commands.

His hand is held in gentle sway, but firm is his decree -
 Yes, George, that's you, our trusty coach, and "time out" it shall be -
 Time out right now for all of us to tally up your yield
 And show our thanks by dedicating Engebretson Field.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land, dark clouds may hide the sun,
 And somewhere bands no longer play and children have no fun,
 And somewhere in some dreary lives, there is no hope or spark,
 But Rembrandt hearts are happy now - their George has got his park!

To conclude our dedication ceremony, let's join in singing together some
 special words to *Thanks For the Memory*.

Thanks For the Memory

Thanks for the memory of ballgames in the park, teams with lots of spark,
 You always knew just what to say, you'd never bite or bark.
 How lovely it was!

Thanks for the memory of burlap bags and straw; George, you always saw
 That everyone got in the game, though win or lose or draw.
 How lovely it was!

Sometimes your team was the legion, And sometimes the town was your region,
 Yes, you were a busy Norwegian! For every team, you were a dream!
 And thanks for the memory of knuckle balls to hit, signals from the mitt,
 And who of us will not recall the big cigars you lit?
 We thank you so much!

Thanks for the memory of trips to other towns, though we were sometimes clowns,
 We may have tried your patience, but you never gave us frowns.
 How lovely it was!

Thanks for the memory of victories so sweet, seldom a defeat,
 Of sending some to center left that landed in the street!
 How lovely it was!

When we would smack one to center that soared toward the house of our mentor,
 We all know that when it would enter the coach's lawn, that ball was GONE!
 And thanks for the memory of home-run balls in flight, apple tree in right,
 Of dugout chats and swinging bats, you took us to the height,
 It is our delight to honor you tonight and thank you so much!

George Engebretson Jr. - Class of 1966
Master of Ceremonies
Rembrandt Centennial Banquet, July 21, 2001

For me it is quite an honor to be standing here before so many of the Finest Products of Rembrandt Consolidated School. You may be asking yourselves, “Why is he the emcee?” I guess it is because I was asked, more or less. Two years ago, on a hot summer day, I was trimming the shrubbery in our back yard, when my wife of 28 years came out with the cordless phone.

“It's for you,” said she.

“Hello, this is George.”

“Georgie, this is Rolf.”

“Oh hi, what's up?”

We exchanged the usual pleasantries; then Rolf says, “Here's the reason for this call. As you know each year we have the All-School Reunion the third weekend in July.”

“Ya, ya?”

“And each year there is a new committee formed to help with the arrangements—doesn't amount to much—stuffing envelopes, setting up the tables and chairs, etc.”

“Ya ya.”

“Well, we need to set up the committee for the next two years, and we thought it is your turn to get on the bandwagon.”

“Ya sure. I suppose I can do that—it isn't too tough a job.”

“Great. George, we'll have you be the Vice President this year, and next year you get moved up to President, which means you do the emcee work at the actual supper and program.”

“Well, that's okay. I don't think that will be too hard to handle. I usually can BS my way through most anything.” (I have attended a couple of these events in the past, figured it's not too large a crowd and all friendlies).

“George, that's great. Oh, by the way, there's one other thing to mention.”

“Yeah Rolf, what's that?”

“Next year will be the year 2001.”

“Ya, sure.”

“Well, that's the Centennial Year for the town of Rembrandt, and the crowd at the Reunion may be a little larger than usual.”

Here we are!!!

Remembering Rembrandt: All I Ever Needed to Know I Learned in Rembrandt

- Standing in the early spring sunshine on the south side of the house, being held by your sister is “cuddly”.
- Watching your older brother come home from school in his “initiation garb”— “funny”.
- Rolling down the basement stairs after a slight “push” from a friend—scary and hurts!!
- When lying on your back with friends on the warm earth—the clouds will make shapes of nearly everything.
- The white sand in the kindergarten sandbox can be found far, far away and many years later.
- The “Cloak Room” is a “safe place.”
- Swings, slides and merry-go-rounds filled with happy children make “music.”
- Falling under a fast moving merry-go-round filled with happy children “hurts.”
- Sand gets in your underwear.
- Older kids will run over you if you don't get out of their way.
- Standing too close to the batter can cause a blow to the head!!!
- Head wounds bleed! A lot!!!
- Ball bearings thrown straight up, come down “fast.”
- Ball bearings will fit through the “gap” in a ball glove—facial wounds “bleed” a lot!!!
- In a small town with little to do, throwing things is “fun.”
- Whoever throws the hardest is “pitcher.”
- Gymnasium bricks will break—if you throw hard enough.
- Neighbors four houses down can “chuck rocks” past your head.
- Greyhound buses will stop if you hit the windshield!!!
- A ball field can be created anywhere there's a “backstop.”
- Windows break easily.
- A “hard pitch” to the side of the head makes people “act funny” for a while.
- Foul “tips” can cause the “stitches” from a baseball to be “imprinted” in the catcher's forehead!!!
- Catchers should wear “cups.”
- The rubber tips from the bottom of chair legs can liven up “band practice.”
- Band instructors get mad when the rubber tips go down the bell of a “tuba.”
- Band directors' batons can really be “loud.”
- Batons will break!!!
- Open windows in passing school buses make great targets.
- Superintendents get mad about snowballs in school bus windows!!!
- Teenagers get mad when their “clean cars” are bombed with snowballs.
- When having one's face washed with muddy snow by a mad teenager, keep your mouth shut!!!
- Muddy snow tastes “bad.”

- An older brother with a bow and arrow is fun to watch.
- Robins are a “protected species.”
- School buildings smell fresh and clean in the fall.
- Stairwells may be slippery!!
- Shrubbery surrounding a schoolhouse creates a great place to “play” when you are very young.
- Shrubbery around a schoolhouse creates great shadows when you are too young to drive, but old enough to “neck”!!!
- Junior high creates many “great changes.”
- Junior high girls' “great changes” are more obvious than boys'.
- Junior high girls slap—hard!!!
- A large vocabulary takes a long time to build, at 30 words a week—use it!!!
- Mad teachers can make you climb right up a wall, if they bend your arm far enough behind your back.
- Balls, flying saucers, and anything else will lodge in the rafters of a gym.
- High school basketball is fun.
- You must remember to wear the entire uniform—especially the trunks.
- A basketball, launched from one end of the floor to the other at halftime probably won't go in—but it sure makes a big bang on the backboard.
- Elbows and hips can move large players—sometimes.
- Large players have elbows and hips also.
- One hand or something taped over the exit light in a school bus can transform a boring bouncy ride into a romantic interlude.
- Cheerleaders' uniforms are “cozy,” especially if there is a cheerleader within.
- “Keep-away” is a game that can be played in the dark.
- “Johnny Kick the Can” is more fun in the dark.
- If you step on someone's head while running down the hay pile—don't stop— don't tell anyone you did it.
- When carrying the bass drum in a parade—be aware, a strong wind may cause you to wipe out the woodwind section.
- In shop class, a drill can grab a person's shirt very quickly.
- When two people exit a restroom, one soaking wet and the other dry, it's pretty obvious who had the “squeeze bottle.”
- Field trips to Arnolds Park (last day of school) are a privilege.
- When tobogganing at night, be sure to check for fences at the bottom of the hill.
- Backing excessive mileage off your parents' car is a long, long process.
- Outside spigots “stuck” in the wintertime can be opened with a ball bat. They just can't be shut off.
- When you climb the water tower, don't paint your own name on the tank!!!!

In closing, the most important thing I learned in Rembrandt:

“Practice hard—play hard—enjoy it. Be a good sport and have a lot of fun. If the score is in the other team's favor, you haven't suffered a loss—you have won friends, and the fans have enjoyed good entertainment. You are winners. We are all winners.”

This quotation is an excerpt from the speech my father gave during the dedication of “George Engebretson Field,” June 18, 1988.

Pat Teague - Class of 1963 - Centennial Experience

There can be few experiences as purely fascinating as walking into the old high school gymnasium for the first time in 40 years. It had not been used as a high school for 22 years but looked exactly as I remembered it. Still hanging from the ceiling like ancient, lightless chandeliers are the ironworks that once held the backboards and basketball hoops. They could be back in action quickly by simply installing new boards, hoops and nets. It would be easy. A basketball game could be played there that very night with only minor adjustments. Darkened and stained, but still marked for game play, the hardwood floors gave pause. For a brief moment I stopped to consider my next move. We had been severely warned many times by custodians who kept the floor gleaming—“NO STREET SHOES ON THE GYM FLOOR!!” The rule was strictly enforced. Any kid caught on the playing surface in street shoes could expect no mercy. Forty years later I hesitated to violate that rule.

As my eyes cast about the ancient arena, my mind was assaulted as the memories came cascading in faster than they could be processed. Everything in the place was linked to a long dormant, past life. The door was opened, and I walked through; slowly at first, uncertain of this familiar, yet unfamiliar reality. Would my memories of this place and these people survive such a confrontation?

The old scoreboard still adorned the far wall. It was dark and silent now, but I could hear clearly that unforgettable, but virtually indescribable warning buzzer signaling the start of the game. The little, round red lights that made up the numbers of the score and clicked off the seconds were working perfectly in my mind's eye. How many times had the whole town watched the seconds tick down in a close game as they raised the roof cheering on



the 'Raiders' or 'Raiderettes'! I could hear the familiar strains of “Purple-White fight, fight, Purple-White fight, fight, Who fight, We fight, Purple-White fight fight!”, echoing off the fire-tempered brick walls, down through four decades.

I could see and hear the band my dad so lovingly put together as we held concerts in that gymnasium. The music that came out of those bands of the 1950s did us all proud. Our deep purple band uniforms trimmed in white stripes and braid were worn with pride by all fortunate enough to be in one of those bands. Our gleaming instruments were there for a reason. Dad had no uniform, but he always dressed the part of “the maestro” for our concerts. Both our music and our appearance, or presentation, made a clear statement to anyone in attendance—This is no schlock outfit; this is a real band playing real music!! And play we did. I cannot begin to recall everything we did, but I know Dad does. My memory brings to mind such things as *Quo Vadis*, *Til Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, *Grand Canyon Suite*, *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral*, dozens of marches, Broadway tunes, classics, and hundreds of other things beyond my current ability to recollect.

Of course we also marched. We had no football halftime shows to do, so we were free to work on drills and routines for marching at various festivals and competitions. Parades were part of our thing too as a marching band.

I was back in school for one magical afternoon and evening in July of the year 2001. As I walked into the gym I looked around quickly to see if there were any faces I would recognize after all those years. Almost immediately, I spotted one face that had actually changed very little. It was Steve Bryan engaged in discussion with another familiar-looking face. My God, it was Paul Mosbo! Paul Mosbo! One of Dad's best trombone players. A legend in Rembrandt music history! He must have graduated in 1958 or so. I know he was in the first group of kids Dad took to Gunnison, Colorado, music camp, I believe in the summer of 1957. I went over to introduce myself, since I had no reason to think that Paul would recognize me. After all, I was just a punk, not-too-hot on the bari-sax kid then. In addition to that, I did not look the same as I did then. No compelling reason to remember me. Amazingly, they both knew me, and I was warmly greeted by Steve and Paul as if we had just seen each other that morning at band practice. I looked around and was almost afraid of who else I might see. It was an approach-avoidance experience at first. I then realized someone was playing the piano. It was Helene Ducas (At least that was the name I knew her by—now Helene Viall.) Of course it would be her, the consummate musician. She also had gone to the music camp at Gunnison, the same year I went. Helene is another Rembrandt musical legend. Nearby was Eloise Mosbo looking very much like she did 40 years ago and just as busy as she was in high school. Who is this short person coming over here? Got to be Lenora Odor and sure enough it was. Lenora reminded me of the time she and I almost had a life-altering experience together when she came within inches of crushing my skull with her dad's 1958 Ford. Of course, I did not have to be reminded; I remembered it well and have thought of it many times over the years. Now we could laugh about it, but I can tell you it was close. Thank God Lenora had the presence of mind to hit the brakes or I would have been history. As it was, all I got out of it was a torn-up knee and glad to have it!!

More and more of the band was beginning to show up for rehearsal. We were preparing for a concert that night with Dad directing. Who was he going to be directing in this old-timer band? Cordy Peterson and his clarinet, Paul and Steve on trombone, Helene

and Cindy (my sister) on flute, Don McKibben, myself and Sharon Breckenfelder on sax, Paul Ducas, Bob Saathoff and Roger Gustafson on trumpet, Betty Foval on drums. Steve Green and Jerry Hegna were there, but did not play. My brother Graham was there also but did not play. What a wimp! We could have used another sax. Instead of playing in the band, he had the job of videotaping the proceedings that night. We now have some great shots of the gym floor and the inside of the camera bag. Not to be forgotten were several current students from Sioux Central and their band director who played trumpet. Helene's daughter Aimee was there playing flute and piccolo. No telling what the band would have sounded like without the help of these folks!

The Rehearsal

The time had arrived. Time for band practice to begin. Who were we kidding? A bunch of over-aged rusty musicians and their director, my dad, himself slightly past middle age (77). It did not matter. Once on that stage in the old Rembrandt High School gym, we were transformed for the task at hand. That task was to prepare one, maybe two quick numbers for that night's Centennial Pageant. It would be held in this very gym on this night, merely hours away. We had little time to practice and even less time to sit around and worry about it. Dad took the podium, and it was 1958 again. Fortunately, Helene had sent sheet music out to people ahead of time, so we already knew some of what we would play. Of course, the school song (Notre Dame), *On Wisconsin*, *High School Cadets*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, and Dad's choice, *Seventy-Six Trombones*. It was so obvious that Dad was 'home' again and reliving the best years of his life. Dad had such a great time.

I could barely keep up with anything but the main theme of these tunes. I was not merely rusty, I was really, really, seriously rusty. It was a very good thing that Don McKibben showed up to play first alto sax. It was pretty obvious that several in the trombone, trumpet and flute/piccolo sections had been practicing. Even Steve Bryan confided in me that he had actually gotten out the old slide trombone and practiced for this occasion! Yikes! My 30 minutes of practice began to look (and sound) like, well-----like someone who had 30 minutes of practice in the last 40 years!

Ah, the night of the pageant! Rembrandt's 100th year of existence was being celebrated. I felt like I was in a time warp, like the twilight zone. I kept expecting Rod Serling to show up the night of the pageant on stage just before the band performed. I can see it now.....(stage and gym dark with a single spotlight on Rod standing on stage) Rod speaks in that totally distinctive clipped staccato voice..... “It is the year 2001. You are in an old school gymnasium in a very small Northwest Iowa town, right off Highway 71 in Buena Vista County. It is home to 224 souls, at last count. The old gymnasium saw its last senior class graduate in 1979. Yet tonight the gym is full of people here to take a journey. Not a journey of miles, but of time. A journey not of physical travel, but of the mind. This journey will be unique to each person. Each mind will experience a time in the past known only to that mind. Everyone in this gymnasium is going to the same places, but will not see the same things or the same people. The trip

will be yours alone. You won't find this trip in any travel brochure or travel agent's itinerary. It requires no ticket or hotel reservations. Don't bother to hire a guide. You won't even need to pack a bag. Your money is not good there. Everything is already there . . . waiting for you . . . just the way you left it. Behind this dusty curtain on this stage, right behind me, is a group of musicians. Not just any group of musicians. This is a band and its director who has come here to this old gymnasium to make the trip with you. Like you, they will be returning to the place where their music came from. Their music will stir your mind and hasten your journey. The director, Maestro Myron, is musical mentor to this very special group of aging high school students. He is the closest thing you will find to a tour guide on tonight's journey. Sit back and listen as the Maestro and his students fire your imagination for a trip into the uncharted regions of . . . the Twilight Zone.”

For me, it was a trip back in time. It was as if a doorway opened up to 1958, and I walked in. Rembrandt was not a place to me, but a time, a period of seven years when everything that happened to me after that had those seven years interwoven. I believe it was the most vital and creative period in my dad's career and in his life for that matter. Not that he did not have good years after that, but when he was in Rembrandt, the fire was in his belly, if you know what I mean. I saw that fire again when Dad was directing the band there in the Rembrandt gym. He was having fun. He was energized like I have not seen in years.

Centennials are always observed in one way or another by towns, states, countries, anything that can be dated. Rembrandt was no exception, but it was an exception in some ways. When the school closed in 1979, it was said to be the smallest school in the state of Iowa. That says something about the people of Rembrandt. Stubborn, proud and independent, they fought to keep their own school for longer than any other school of comparable size in Iowa. They knew something about small towns and their relationship to their schools. Looking at the pageant and the historical materials available about Rembrandt, it is easy to see that the school played a central role in virtually everything of any consequence that went on in that town for 78 years. It was the one unifying factor known to all because everyone had the common experience of having gone to school there. It belonged to everyone, and no one could lay greater claim to it than anyone else. While it is easy to see the economics of closing the small town schools, it is not readily apparent, to me at least, that the benefits of some school consolidations outweigh the benefits of maintaining a 'town' public school.

Mr. Teague After Conducting the 1950s Band at the Centennial Celebration

“Only people experiencing what I did could possibly know how I feel. If you could go back in time 40 or 50 years, and relive your finest hour and the happiest time of your life with the same people you experienced these things with, then you would know.”



Helene Ducas Viall - Class of 1963

Written as a "thank you" for Mr. Teague's "Centennial Band" Notebook

Reflections on my Band Time Line

Third grade—I tied pan lids (cymbals) so they'd hang underneath the piano bench, used table knives to drum on the floor, put my band record on my little record player, and played along with those wonderful Sousa marches. Don McKibben, my brother, was already in band, and I wanted to get all practiced up for when I was old enough to join him.

Fourth grade—Mr. Teague's first year at Rembrandt—I was finally old enough to start taking lessons. Big problem—my mom wanted me to play the flute. I had no clue what a flute was, and I had no desire to find out because I wanted to play the drums. The compromise—I'd take flute lessons, and when my folks decided that I was good enough, they'd let me play the drums. Boy, was that ever motivation to practice my flute—let's get this flute thing out of the way fast, so I can play real drums in the real band.

A while later—I came home so excited because Mr. Teague had told me to come to “second band” practice. My family thought it was a mistake—I was barely past the excitement of making a sound on my flute (after blowing across a pop bottle and blowing out matches).

Fourth or fifth grade—I got to be in the “real” band with all those older kids that I just idolized. Wow!! It was so traumatic actually to be in the same room (the old gym) with all those high school kids. I was so excited but very nervous. We got our horns and music out, and I just kept looking around, not really believing I was with these phenomenal people who were great at music, basketball, and baseball. Mr. Teague started directing the first song—I hung in there for a few measures, but then was

hopelessly lost. At home whenever I made a mistake, I would just stop, correct it, and go on. But the band didn't stop and wait for me to correct my mistakes; they all just kept going—panic! Where were they? I had no clue. I was so embarrassed; I couldn't figure out where they were. This was the moment I'd looked forward to for so long, and I'd totally blown it. Fortunately, Don was sitting right behind me (alto sax). Kindhearted older brother that he was, he noticed my awful plight, stood up, leaned over, and pointed to the exact spot where the band was still playing. This process was repeated several times during each song. I could literally only keep my place a few measures at a time. I was so thankful that he was there to help. However, after the excitement of that first band practice, it finally dawned on me (duh), that every time he stood up to be nice and help us, an unintended consequence occurred. Everyone in the band knew that I was lost. Oh, the humiliation of that realization. I would go home and practice really hard every night, so I wouldn't be embarrassed that me—this little kid—couldn't even keep my place in the music, let alone play the right notes. It was such a privilege to be in band, but I realized that to earn the respect of those high school kids, I had to get better very quickly. The impossible dream—to be as good as Rosalyn Green and others.

Fifth grade—Wonderful new purple and white uniforms—I can't even begin to describe the excitement of being one of the people that a new uniform was ordered to fit. However, I'm sure the older kids were not all that thrilled to have little fifth graders get uniforms. Mom used the fabric from our old living room drapes to make storage bags for a number of the new uniforms. Other moms did a similar thing.



Helene and Don in their new uniforms, 1956

Contests—Grade school solo contests and high school solo and ensemble contests—We would gather around as ratings were posted, cheer as we saw them, and “keep score” of all Rembrandt's “I” ratings. We'd talk loud enough about them so kids from other schools could hear—I'm afraid we were probably pretty obnoxious about it.

Challenges—We would go home and practice stuff over and over preparing for challenges. Another motivation was that I had to practice flute and piano before I could go out and shoot baskets.

Accompanying—Mr. Teague would come to our grade school classroom to teach singing, and he'd ask kids taking piano lessons to play the notes while people sang. Of course, it was probably only a one-note melody line, but it taught lots of us how to accompany. He gave us many opportunities to accompany all over northwest Iowa.

Sixth grade—Music camp at Gunnison, Colorado—I got to tag along with the high school kids because my folks (Bruce and Margene McKibben) drove Don and other scholarship winners out there. Big thrill—I had my first snare drum lessons there. My mom also went on many band trips as a “chaperone,” always with her little “emergency kit”—needle and thread, safety pins, band aids, etc.

Seventh grade—Mr. Teague had me play the bass drum in a drum ensemble with Eloise Mosbo, Betty Foval, Bev Hegna, and Sharon Hoover—what a privilege. We got a “I,” but I was embarrassed because the judge wrote that the bass drummer needed to play with more flair. Mr. Teague had me play *Carnival of Venice* on my flute for grade school solo contest.

Summer Band Concerts - Every summer we had band practice one night a week. Then, with only that one practice, we played a one-hour concert in the band shell. People sitting in their cars surrounding the park would honk after every song. If we had extra time (our concerts were always one hour long), Mr. Teague would sometimes have us literally sight-read a march from one of our “march books.” We didn't realize how good our band was—we were just playing what he told us to. If I remember correctly, we always received a “I” in both marching band and concert band contests; we also marched in many out-of-town parades.

Eighth grade—Mr. Teague picked out my flute solo for contest from an orange Rubank book. The piano part was so hard that I couldn't play it. I gave the book to one of the juniors way in advance so she'd have plenty of time to practice it, but when I rehearsed with her for the first time, she asked which song it was. My heart sank—I'm in trouble. However, she played it perfectly the first time through. I was so humbled—here she could sight-read something that I couldn't even play after I'd practiced it. That experience taught me that I had a lot to learn.

Tenth grade—Mr. Teague's last year at Rembrandt—He had me try out for the United States of America High School Band. As a result of his and my parents' encouragement (I wanted to stay home and play ball and watch baseball games), my flute became my ticket to Europe to play and march with that group.

Epilogue: Music

Music also became a ministry for the Lord. Through the years at church, I've played my flute, organized flute ensembles, and played piano and organ. Aimee (my daughter) and I have played many duets together—Mr. Teague's flute lessons have been passed down to another generation. When Rembrandt School was about to close, I got permission to get some of my favorite flute music. Aimee used those flute solos (including *Carnival of Venice*), duets, trios, and quartets for her school contests. Dan (my son) played alto sax, was drum major, band president, and received the John Philip Sousa Award. They were both in the Iowa State Marching Band, and Aimee was in ISU pep bands for both men's and women's basketball (her piccolo has been her ticket to travel in the U.S. and to London). Aimee, Dan, and I recorded several tapes together and played in the DSM Community Band—my chance to continue to play drums. (I also had the privilege of accompanying Simon Estes for a portion of two large concerts at our church). None of this would have happened without such great teaching in Rembrandt.

I'm thankful for Mr. Teague's patience, enthusiasm, expectations of excellence, inspiration, sense of humor, and work ethic. He always had us play our horns at events in Rembrandt and the surrounding area, and he taught us how to have fun with music. We're passing it on to the next generation—his influence continues all over the country.

Rolf Mosbo - Class of 1967

Quotations from *A Portrait of Rembrandt: The Early Years*

The Cultural Mix (1930s)

“A local school board rule at that time required that female teachers couldn't yet be married, and this would create a social symbiosis in Rembrandt: young, single, educated ladies being introduced into a community with an ample supply of hard-working young farm boys.

The results were predictable—a good number of these young women met their life-mates here and settled down on farms to raise their families. In the process, they created a new dynamic in Rembrandt's social fabric. Beyond the number of children that would be brought into this world by this phenomenon, which certainly impacted Rembrandt in the years ahead, it was also the attitudes of the parents toward their community and school system which would have lasting effects. It was like an injection of civility, and over the next several decades, the expectations and standards of behavior for young folks here were elevated in ways not universally seen in other parts of rural America. . . .the eventual product was a community increasingly devoted to its young people and driven to provide opportunities for them to succeed in an America bent on modernization at every turn.”

Rembrandt Booster

“In 1939 Bill and Opal Lyons moved here from Linn Grove and started up the *Rembrandt Booster*. Enthusiastic promoters of Rembrandt from the beginning, the Lyons had their finger on the pulse of this small-town culture during the most dynamic period since the 'teens. They printed the paper themselves in the building next to Doyle's Café—soon to be George's Place. The *Booster* covered local social events, businesses, and church and school activities each week for 25 years, bringing the Rembrandt community together in a way that nothing before it had, and probably nothing since has.”

Population

“With official censuses taken only every 10 years, it is impossible to know exactly when the population of Rembrandt reached its zenith, but the 1950 count showed 302 people living here. Education had achieved a position of priority in the hearts and minds of Rembrandt's parents. Extracurricular activities at school had taken on a heightened degree of importance, both to the overall curriculum, and to the town as a focal point.”

Summers

In town, summers were filled with baseball games by local teams of many age groups, under the coaching of George Engebretson, and regular movies at the theatre. Concerts by the community band in the bandstand in the park filled summer nights with sound and gave country folks another reason to come to town to do their weekly evening shopping. There was a predictable, idyllic flavor to life in Rembrandt during the '50s.”

Educated to Leave

“The young people had been educated to leave—to fit into the larger economy and society in non-agricultural ways, with those opportunities not existing close to home.”

Final Thoughts

“Rembrandt has enjoyed and endured a roller-coaster existence in its first century. Always able to adapt, it was initially just big enough that it didn't wilt away under the intense economic pressures which weighed on it periodically. As the economic cycles washed over Middle America in waves every thirty years or so, Rembrandt has seen a wide variety of residents inhabit its homes, but it has always been a good, safe, quiet place to live. May it continue thus for another hundred years.”



Conclusion - Betty Foval Hoskins

One of the pleasures of my life has been compiling the memories of those associated with Rembrandt. Thank you all for taking the time to write down your thoughts, to send them on to Helene, and to entrust them to us; thank you for remembering.

When Helene suggested this project, I had no idea where it would lead. But I have learned about Rembrandt in a way that I never thought possible. When I lived in town, I was in my own small world of family and friends. It was a pleasant world, one that revolved around school and church activities; it was a comfortable world with a strong sense of community, a wonderful sense of caring. I knew all of this in some sense but not in the way that I know it now.

What I have learned is that Rembrandt was settled by like-minded people who took hard work for granted, that they often went off to college and returned to farm, that they were civic-minded, that they were not worried about class, race, or financial distinctions because essentially there were none. I learned from alumni and teachers alike that Rembrandt was a wonderful place to be educated. I knew that myself, but I was unaware that everybody we would hear from felt the same way. I learned that certain people, businesses, and events would show up again and again in these stories. In some sense, the people of Rembrandt still form that community in spite of vast differences in

occupations and locations. We have moved all over the country and traveled all over the world. We have experienced sadness and joy. But we have in common the tie to our hometown and, therefore, to one another.

Our common roots are uncommon in the world in which I now live. Constant contact with ever-young college students has given me a perspective from which to view my own experiences in Rembrandt. In a university of 15,000, students challenge my values and assumptions every day. I often find my religious, political, and social views at odds with those of both my students and my colleagues. I am challenged to take sides on serious issues and often think, but do not say, “But that wasn’t the way it was in Rembrandt.” When students confide in me about their problems, I listen and I grieve for them, and I wish they could have had the experience of a supportive family and community—of a hometown that “fits on a postcard” (as my colleague from New York City says with amusement.)

The Rembrandt we knew represents something all of us have lost to a greater or lesser degree—security in our everyday lives, a strong sense of community, and shared values and beliefs. These stories reaffirm the importance of honesty, integrity, and respect for others. What we have lost is not only a place but also a time. We live in a world vastly different from the one we left on our graduation day. In fact, several contributors referred to Rembrandt as “idyllic,” a “treasure,” a “utopia,” a world no longer accessible. Our stories reflect both the old world and the new.

Our stories also reflect a changing way of life in a rural community, a move from intensive farm labor (picking corn by hand, for example) to almost complete mechanization (spraying, not cutting, corn in the bean fields). Life was not necessarily better, but it was certainly different. In spite of the changes, however, the value of education never faded. Whether these stories are about attending a one-room school house, moving to Rembrandt Consolidated School, or facing reorganization, the message was clear—the small school and education were important. Our education included not only what we learned in the classroom but also what we learned through extracurricular activities, particularly sports and music. We learned to be a part of a team, to recognize the worth of all the participants, and to work hard and well together. Many stayed on the family farm preserving the very values we still hold dear, but far more left to become teachers, lawyers, professors, engineers, and professionals in a wide variety of fields.

William Faulkner said in his Nobel Prize speech that he was optimistic about the future which he saw in the moral authority of what southern essayist Hal Crowther identifies as “the small-town matrix of history and family and the reliable moral leadership that is inseparable from the fabric of the community—which first means there has to be a fabric.” As evidenced by the contributions to this book, Rembrandt has had a moral fabric from the beginning of its existence, and those values have touched all of us. Thank you again for remembering.

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E. N. & Eloise Anderson Arthur R. Lindlief Rudolph C. Kraemer	Clarence & Emma E. Peterson H. C. Lindlief Anders G. Anderson	Vernley L. Pedersen et al Jessi Hobbs Minnie Lindlief C. E. Lindlief	A.R. Lindlief H.C. Lindlief Nils Swanson Thomas Hansen O.N. Anderson C. D. Anderson	Jens C. Hansen C. Peterson J. D. Anderson	Edward G. Peterson	Emma K. Leininger Flores Emma Leibin Nins Brick	Frank & Joseph Baie	Liebsch Schaller	John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company Harry W. Schaller	William Mo Cabe Anna Mo Cabe G. E. Thompson	Oscar J. Grau Elmer G. Pewsey
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