

Brunswick Yesterday & Today

For thirty-four years, Mr. Ludwig Kinkhorst served the people of Brunswick as mayor. He was first elected on April 7, 1914. Among the improvements made in the city during his administration were: the present sewer system; building of the present city hall; construction of the first "white way" on Broadway; putting into use a water filtering system; and the graveling of the side streets which later developed into the asphalt side streets we have today.

In 1914, *The Brunswicker* commented, "Active and progressive, he (Mr. Kinkhorst) is always ready to support anything that will help Brunswick and Chariton County." This spirit he retained throughout his life.

Other mayors have been instrumental in projects which have made Brunswick a desirable place to live; since 1948 the mayors have been: Dr. J. L. Fetzer, Raymond Reichert, Henry Manson, Sr., Victor Dankert, Granvil Goe, S. M. Johnson, Harold Ayres, Guy Spencer, Dale Grotjan, Ray Stark, Carl Shubert, Terry Smith, Rick DeRenzy, and the present mayor, Joe Moser.

After serving as captain in the Union army during the Civil War, Louis Benecke returned to Brunswick and began studying law. He was a school director and postmaster in Brunswick and served his district in the State Senate for four years.

During 1915-16 Sen. J. S. Wallace and Representative R. T. Morehead, both of Brunswick, were members of the Missouri General Assembly.

Louis Merrill, Brunswick attorney, for many years was a member of the Brunswick Board of Education, prosecuting attorney for Chariton County, and representative from this district, during the late 1940's.

In 1956 W. D. Hibler, Jr., (Bill) was elected state representative in the Missouri Legislature. He served in this position for 16 years, first from Chariton County, and later from the 93rd district of Chariton and Carroll Counties. He voluntarily retired from office at the end of the 1972 term.

In the Missouri House, Hibler served as chairman of several important committees, including the Education Committee in 1965-66 and the Agriculture Committee in 1969-72.

At the beginning of his first term in the legislature, Mr. Hibler began writing a weekly newspaper column, "From the House Floor," describing the activities of the legislature. In his final column, he said he lacked many of the qualifications of a successful politician. He wasn't much good at fence straddling and championed losing causes, because he believed rural Missouri needed a champion. When Mr. Hibler retired, the editor of *The Brunswicker* wrote, "There is no way to evaluate what the people of Brunswick owe this man. Regardless of your political affiliation or your opinions on the issues, you - as

a citizen - always had this man's ear, and you were always represented vigorously."

The Brunswick Club was formed when it became apparent that some type of civic club was needed to promote the interests of Brunswick. Chamber of Commerce organizations had come and gone over the years of Brunswick's history.

A meeting was held November 4, 1937, to form such a club. At that initial meeting, R. D. Cottingham was elected President; W. R. Cox, Vice-President; Harold Boucher, Secretary; Dr. P. O. Hayden, Treasurer; and 21 persons paid membership dues: E. J. Tschann, Dr. P. O. Hayden, Fritz Gottschalk, W. R. Cox, R. D. Strub, C. S. Bittiker, Tyson Nichols, J. J. McKinny, R. A. Kelliker, J. B. Gilbert, R. C. Kerby, L. W. Heisel, R. D. Cottingham, J. M. Perry, Ival Smith, L. E. Merrill, L. A. Kinkhorst, Harry E. Tatum, Harold Boucher, Chas. A. Straub, Wm. Knight. At the second meeting on November 18 the following persons paid dues and were also considered charter members: E. B. Johnson, Father Groetch, W. D. Herring, R. V. Bartow, A. J. Clayton. Other persons who joined during the first year were Vernon Rucker, A. V. Gardner, Chas. Early, Henry Osterman, H. H. Schaperkotter, Dr. J. L. Fetzer, Denton Grotjan, J. O. Bast.

Over the years the Brunswick Club sponsored many social and community activities. Among them were preparing the first brochure promoting Brunswick; establishing Brunswick as the Pecan Capitol of Missouri and putting up signs declaring that fact. In earlier years they promoted a

community fair, and with the advent of fertilizer, sponsored the first 100-bushel corn-growing contest in the area.

Another project they were involved in was the purchase of a site on Grand River for a modern river marina with boat-launching facilities, rest rooms, etc. This was eventually donated to the Missouri Conservation Commission.

One of the social events promoted was the annual Brunswick Club banquet. Held in the early spring of each year, members brought their wives friends, neighbors and employees to enjoy dinner and professional entertainment.

Over the years, interest in the Brunswick Club, began to die. On March 28, 1972, it was decided to form a new Chamber of Commerce of Brunswick. An open meeting was held April 25, 1972, for the purpose of forming a Chamber of Commerce. At the inception of the new Chamber, the Brunswick Club ceased to exist.

Sol Smith Russell

Brunswick is proud of being the birthplace of Sol Smith Russell, a comedian of worldwide fame. He was born in Brunswick, June 15, 1848, in a small frame house on the corner of Vine and Adams Streets. In the 1870's he became famous and entertained large audiences in many American cities until he was paralyzed in 1900. An opera house was built in Brunswick in 1903 and named in his honor. At the Grand opening of the Russell Opera house November 11, the Whitney Opera Company presented the military Opera "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," with a cast numbering nearly 60 people.

Baccalaureate services, graduations, school plays, Lyceum courses, lectures, musical programs, and many home talent plays were held in the opera house in the following years. In 1917, because no church could house the large crowds that attended the "Hankins" revival meeting, the services were held in the opera house. For many years a "picture show" owned by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Owens was in this building.

Amusement In The Early Part Of The Century

Young people today sometimes wonder what the youth did in their leisure time "in the olden days," before radio, television, and moving pictures. One of the most exciting events of these early years was the coming of the showboat. At first, these boats offered only vaudeville or circus entertainment. However, the older people of the town remembered repertoire companies that performed in a different melodrama each night. Usually these showboats stayed from Monday until Saturday. The music of a steam calliope signaled the approach of a showboat. Many of the town people, adults as well as young people and children, gathered at the landing. The showboat would tie up at the wharf, banners flying; then members of the cast, a band, and sometimes the crew would parade through the town to advertise the play. Fourteen showboats were in operation on the Missouri and Grand Rivers as late as 1925.

In June 1913 *The Brunswicker* advertised that "the Wonderland Floating Theater was coming to Brunswick June 25 for a one night engagement at the river landing. The Wonderland had a seating capacity of 1200, two electric plants, hot and cold running water, and a private sitting room for women with fretting children." During the 1920's and 30's tent shows provided entertainment for our small town, playing principally to "family" audiences. There were music and comedy acts between acts of the

melodrama, and sometimes the audiences watched with awe and wonder the performance of a "magician".

Many older people cherish memories of the Chautauqua that visited Brunswick and other small communities throughout the Midwest from the late 1800's to 1924. It was considered progressive for a town to sponsor a Chautauqua. It was considered a civic duty to support the event, since hometown merchants, professional men, and prosperous farmers signed ironclad contracts to meet any deficit. One of the famous men who lectured in Brunswick was William Jennings Bryan. There were also concerts, choruses, magicians and morning programs for children. Chautauqua reached its peak in 1924 when it was estimated that 35,000,000 Americans flocked to the tents to see, hear and learn. This type of entertainment declined when radios, movies, and automobiles came into general use. In the winter there were "Lyceum Courses", which were similar to the Chautauqua programs.

Rural schools had pie and box suppers with spelling bees as entertainment, or programs by the students. Girls would prepare a supper for two in a decorated box; the young men bid for the boxes, and the young man who paid the highest price for a girl's box would be her partner for the evening. Ice cream and strawberry festivals were a popular way to make money, and for people to gather and visit.

The streets of Brunswick were so crowded on Saturday nights that it was sometimes difficult to walk down the streets. Farmers and their wives and children, who had

worked during the week, looked forward to the trip to town to buy groceries and other supplies and visit with neighbors and friends.

The Grand and Missouri Rivers and lakes in this area have furnished recreation in the form of hunting and fishing and water sports. Brunswick is the gateway to Swan Lake Wildlife Refuge, where thousands of geese migrate each fall. On cold winter mornings, during hunting season, goose hunters come many miles to eat hearty breakfasts served by Brunswick's fine restaurants.

Centennial Farms

Owners of Chariton County farms which have remained in one family for 100 years or more were honored at 7 P.M. June 11, 1976 at a banquet in the St. Joseph Catholic School gymnasium in Salisbury. The centennial farms project was started more than two years ago by the County Historical Society. The Society's president, Jordan Bentley of Salisbury and Dr. and Mrs. W. W. Leatherwood of Salisbury have been in charge of research and tabulation of eligible farms.

Counting a husband and wife as one person, the committee has listed 123 owners of 132 separate farms in the county. The largest farm consists of 536 acres and smallest has 40 acres. Total acreage of the farms is 13,100 acres.

Chariton Township, probably the first part of the county to be settled, has 24 farms and 3608 acres. Brunswick has nine farms with 1548 acres.

The following persons own centennial farms in the Brunswick area:

BRUNSWICK: Mrs. Reaka Bitter, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert T. Clavin, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie C. Clavin, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Elliott, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Grotjan, Mr. and Mrs. Hobart Dale Grotjan, Mrs. Geraldine Grotjan Cox, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Heisel, Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Hibler, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Meredith Manson, Vernon Munson, Frank Munson, Mrs.

Jean Foster Patrick, Mr. and Mrs. George Reichert, and Mrs. Jessie Schuchmann.

DALTON: Jerome Bucksath, Charles Bucksath, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Grotjan, John Henry Grotjan, Mr. and tjan, John Henry Grotjan, Mr. and Mrs. Romie Meyer, Allen Meyer, Mr. and Mrs. William G. Morris, Mr. and Mrs. Ransom Price, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Sasse, and Mr. and Mrs. Romeo Sasse.

MENDON: Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Chapman, Mr. and Mrs. James P. Cullen, T. J. and Duane Kahler, Cecil Littrell, and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Saylor.

SUMNER: Mr. and Mrs. Walter Daugherty, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Fredericksen, Mrs. J. 1. Kaye, Jr., Leslie and Ruth Kaye, A. W. McCormick and D. K. McCormick, Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Meyers, and Mr. and Mrs. Charley A. Robinson.

TRIPLETT: Mrs. Chant Robertson.

ROTHVILLE: Martha Stratton Twitchell.

M.F.A.

On a cold March night in the early 1900's, Aaron Bachtel called six of his neighbors together at the Newcomer Schoolhouse north of Brunswick and organized the first farm club out of which the Missouri Farmers Association (MFA) has evolved. From that small beginning, today's vast and influential organization began to take form.

When Aaron Bachtel, Thomas Penick, John Kohl, Earl Smutz, Will Armstrong, and George and Will Heisel met in the Newcomer School near Brunswick to hold the first Farm Club meeting, they had no idea that an organization such as the present MFA would develop. Today, the Newcomer School is the property of MFA. Residents of the community gave it to the organization so that it might be preserved as a memorial to the first MFA Farm Club.

The Grand Chariton Manor Convalescent Home

The Grand Chariton Manor Convalescent Home held open house on March 14, 1971, with approximately 1,000 persons attending. Members of the board were: President, Kenneth Finkle, Vic Dankert, Mrs. Eenneth Finkle, Vic Dankert, Mrs. Elberta Garrett, Mrs. Romie Drew, G. Goe, Vernon Meyer, Mrs. Marian Minks, Sam Elliott, and Henry Manson, Jr.

Employed as administrator was Mrs. Sarah Breshears; RN, Director of Nursing, Mrs. Jeanne Reichert. LPN, Mrs. Joy Henderson, and several nurses aides, two cooks and a housekeeper.

At the end of the first year, there were 35 residents in the home. By August 1972, the Home was filled to capacity. At this time, another LPN, Mrs. Vera Edson, had joined the staff.

The staff has grown each year and at the present time 37 people are employed by the nursing home.

Services For Older Adults

The Older Adult Transportation System (OATS) provides low cost transportation to persons 55 or older and to younger persons whose disabilities prohibit them from being licensed drivers. OATS was organized in Chariton, Carroll, and Saline Counties in June, 1973, under the Council on Aging, a federally subsidized agency. The Chariton County Chairman, when this service was organized, was The Rev. Mr. Wm. Wormsley of the Brunswick Baptist Church. Mrs. Council Stroemer was the local area contact. Claudean Jenkins, who had the first membership written in Chariton County, was the contact person.

Bus (No. 40) is located in Brunswick, but it serves both Chariton and Carroll Counties. When the first driver, Ardith Henniger, moved from Brunswick, Emma Lee Hill became the driver. "Mrs. Hill," said Miss Jenkins, "is very thoughtful of her passengers." Chariton County has approximately 218 riding members.

In another program, called "Meals on Wheels", Brunswick volunteers deliver hot meals prepared by Eule's Cafe to persons handicapped by age, mental or physical health. The Missouri Valley Council on Aging initiated this program. Mrs. Frank Hedrick, the first president, and Mrs. Winston president, and Mrs. Winston Blanton, vice president of the program, assisted by Mrs. Cecil Sanders, were responsible for getting volunteers to deliver the meals. Miss Claudean Jenkins and Miss Marguerite Strub were the contact persons. The program was under the

general supervision of The Rev. Mr. Wm. Wormsley. Today Miss Jenkins is the coordinator, and Miss Julia Stroemer is responsible for getting the meals delivered.

Out of the Meals-on-Wheels program, came the "Friendship Wheel Club." Older adults and volunteers who have delivered "Meals-on-Wheels" meet the third Wednesday of each month at Eule's Cafe for lunch. There is some kind of program each month, maybe group singing, games, a film, or a talk, and there is always some time when members can enjoy visiting and reminiscing.

In 1971, a group of interested people met to ascertain the social needs of the elderly in our community. The end result of this meeting was the formation of The Happy Hour Club. All citizens aged 55 or over were invited to become members of the club. The group met twice monthly until 1976, when the members voted to meet just once a month. The members are entertained by many of the social organizations of the community. The meetings give some of our older citizens an opportunity to escape the loneliness they sometimes feel. Integration has been greatly enhanced by the black community's participation in the Happy Hour Club, since its inception. Among those instrumental in assuring the success of this club are: Mrs. Ross Jones, Mrs. Romie Drew and Mrs. Council Stroemer.

Community Betterment

Brunswick became a member of the Community Betterment Program in 1966, and has been instrumental in completing a number of successful projects, with the help and cooperation of capable leaders and interested citizens. The MCB committee became involved in the construction of a 50 bed nursing home, Grand Chariton Manor Convalescent Center. Some other projects endorsed by the MCB have been: promotion of a factory for Midwest Glove Co., which employs from 75 to 100 persons; formation of a rural water district; a new golf course; housing development for low income and elderly persons; building an airport; starting a "Yard of the Month" contest.

The Community Betterment Committee, of which Mrs. Waldo (Jessie) Schuchmann was chairman, made park improvement their primary project for 1973-74.

Contributions were solicited from various organizations for the work on the north side of the road. Steve Lukehart, one of the outstanding youth of the community, placed cans for contributions in business places. Walter Riffle was instrumental in getting Red-E-Mix Concrete, Salisbury and Green Quarries, Inc., Carrollton to donate some concrete, the city furnishing the rest. With these contributions and with the assistance of the Future Farmers of America Chapter, and other volunteers, they were able to construct a new shelter house, a new grill, terrace the south slope, repair park benches, level an area near the basketball court, and to build 6 new picnic tables and benches. The FFA boys were working under a project called Building Our

American Communities (BOAC). Some of the members who helped are: Rudolph Schuchmann, Keith Leimkuehler, Wayne DeWeese, Vernon Johnson, Robert Schuchmann, Duane Leimkuehler, Steven Arp, Rodney Meller, Rickey Winfrey, Kenny Reichert, and their advisor, Tom Davis.

Walter Wiese, of DeWitt, had started to build a large barbecue grill with spit, capable of barbecuing a whole hog, which he had planned to donate to the Herring Memorial Park. Mr. Wiese died before completing it, and his brother, Rudy Wiese, of DeWitt, completed it and donated it to the park in memory of Walter Wiese.

In the 1940's, the Lion's Club bought and gave to the city, the part south of the road that was later included in the Herring Memorial Park. This section of the park includes a basketball court, a baseball field with bleachers, a skating rink, barns for stock fairs, tennis courts, and extra grounds. Individuals have financed some of these things, and many have been built by the city, under the supervision of Councilman, Ray G. Stark.

On Feb. 16, 1967 the City Council voted 4-2 to create a Federal Housing Authority in Brunswick. The action authorized Mayor Vic Dankert to appoint a Housing Commission of five men, with the approval of the Council. The Council action was initiated by a petition signed by a required 50 taxpayers, requesting formation of a Housing Authority. Bob Hoskins acting as chairman of the Community Betterment committee circulated the petition. The federal housing program here, if enacted by the Housing Authority would create housing for the elderly and

low-income residents under a federally assisted program. The project was completed in 1971.

Gleanings From The Brunswicker

July 2, 1898: Grand River will be illuminated with 2000 burning floats on the 4th of July night, and there will be representations of war scenes by the Brunswick Fire Department. The celebration will be a grand one, and a large crowd is expected from all parts of this county.

March 13, 1908: The big new steel bridge across Grand River at the foot of Jackson Street, is rapidly taking on the appearance of a bridge.

August 26, 1908: The big river steamer, Chester, bound from St. Louis to Kansas City, tied-up at the mouth of Grand River Sunday.

April 22, 1904: John Myers Jr., was building a line from Brunswick to DeWitt to connect with the Home Telephone Company line from Kansas City.

Sept. 23, 1910: Advertisement: This is to certify that I have been cured of kidney, bladder, and rheumatism by the use of Hall's Texas Wonder after years of suffering. Sold at all Drug stores.

June 20, 1913: The citizens of Brunswick are blessed with an enterprise of which only a few towns the size of Brunswick can boast, and that is a good street Sprinkler.

April 24, 1914: The first ice had been frozen at Kinkhorst's new artificial ice plant.

Feb. 5, 1915: We heard a man say the other morning it took him an hour to drive from the depot up town. Still we don't need paved streets.

June 12, 1915: The proposition voted on Wednesday to issue bonds to the amount of \$12,000 for the purpose of paving the street intersections between the Wabash station and the western city limits on Broadway passed 189 to 84. The cost of paving in front of the individual pieces of property would be taxed against the property owners.

Feb. 12, 1915: A man can't sell his house or lot without his wife's consent; he must pay her bills, whatever they are. If he deserts her, she can jug him if she deserts him, he has to take his medicine; if she dies he pays the funeral expenses; if she hits him with a skillet, the world concludes he deserves it. And women still want their rights.

May 7, 1917: Contractor George W. Barkwell started a force of twenty men to work on the digging of a ditch from the foot of Adams Street (street that runs north and south past the Florence Hotel) to the edge of the water in Grand River. This would be the main outlet of the new sewer system.

Dec. 21, 1917: Missourians would be limited to an ordinary wagon load of coal for each 21 days after Dec. 22, according to the state fuel administration.

Sept. 29, 1922: From 15 to 20 automobiles loaded with 50 or more loyal enthusiastic Brunswick Boosters left Thursday morning to advertise Brunswick's fair in Carroll County. They were headed by several "Band Boys" including Mayor L. A. Kinkhorst, Bob Kelliker, Raymond Strub, Ben Kinkhorst and others.

October, 1922: Knight and Rucker were advertising women's fleeced union suits at \$1.25.

Dec. 24, 1926: H. C. Atterbury advertised a 200 acre farm within seven miles of a good Chariton County town for \$65 per acre, also a 60 acre farm 2 1/2 miles from Brunswick at \$11 per acre.

Dec. 14, 1928: Broadway Chevrolet advertised a car heater as a real Christmas gift "an item car owners will seldom buy for themselves."

Oct. 7, 1932: There were ten land foreclosure sales listed in this issue of The Brunswicker.

May 19, 1933: The rest room maintained by the city of Brunswick in the city hall had been closed as an economy measure.

Sept. 7, 1934: Mrs. Ruby Benecke, Miss Abbie Magruder, Ernest Teut, and Wilbur Bachtel went to Jefferson City Wednesday to present a petition to gravel the road from Brunswick to Indian Grove. It was the intention to have the work done by WPA labor.

Jan. 18, 1935: A party of men under the direction of the U.S. Biological Survey was using Brunswick as headquarters while making observation of lakes and swampy places in search of prospective places for migratory bird refuges. Among the places investigated was Swan Lake, long a haunt of migratory waterfowl.

Jan. 18, 1935: Since the first of the year free soup furnished by the federal government had been served to the grade school children. Girls from the Home EC. class prepared the soup and the teachers and eighth grade girls served it. If pupils were able to pay, they were charged 2cents a dish.

Nov. 6, 1936: The Brunswick Bottling Ice & Fuel Co., was installing 90 new lockers in its refrigerating plant.

Sept. 1938: Part of the Farm-to-Market road from No. 24 to Indian Grove had been completed.

Dec. 3, 1942: All consumers were required to register before Dec. 15, in order to obtain their sugar and coffee ration books.

March 18, 1943: War Book No. 2 would be used to buy meats and fats beginning March to buy meats and fats beginning March 29, according to Rev. W. J. Boehne, county chairman.

June, 1943: Thousands of acres of crops were lost by flooding in the lowlands around Brunswick for the fourth time in three years. The Sasse levee near Dalton broke this morning, and the 150 soldiers who were helping in the

area moved out to assist in work on the levee west of Brunswick.

Nov. 11, 1943: Everyone who had not received 15 lbs. of sugar allowed in 1943 for canning was notified that application must be made before Nov. 20, for same or if additional sugar was needed.

Jan. 24, 1946: The Worthwhile Club, assisted by the Triplett and Brunswick school children, collected 2,286 cans of fruit and vegetables to send to needy children in Europe.

Oct. 16, 1947: Dr. H. P. Fowler, Forest Kendell, and Carl Holmes were in Montana this week hunting deer and big game.

April 8, 1948: In the election the previous week, Mrs. John H. Myers (Louise) was elected and would be the first woman elected and would be the first woman to serve on the Board of Education.

July 15, 1948: Fifty farm veterans were enrolled in the institutional on-the-farm training program conducted by BHS VO-AG department, according to Berl Cohoon, instructor. Assistant instructors were Henry Manson Jr., and Milton Daily.

Sept. 2, 1948: Postmaster A. J. Clayton had announced that air mail parcel post rates go into effect on Sept. 1, and make it possible to send parcels by air to any place in the United States. A package weighing one pound could be sent to Los Angeles for 75C.

August 25, 1949: Iglehart's was practically the first to put in use a television set in Brunswick. The aerial was constructed several days ago and the machine put into operation one day the forepart of last week. However, reception was not all that could be desired for the broadcast was coming from St. Louis, the nearest station to Brunswick, and the distance is acknowledged to be a handicap at this state of the enterprise. Saturday evening the machine received the greatest part of the action and sound of the baseball game between the Cardinals and the opposing team at St. Louis.

July 3, 1952: Citizens of Brunswick were urged to vote for a Gas Franchise Tuesday.

July 8: it would be decided whether or not a twenty-year franchise would be granted to the Missouri Service Company to furnish a supply of natural gas for Brunswick.

Sept. 11, 1958: Mrs. Louise Hanna, Brunswick Horse Show secretary, said she had approximately 40 entries for the show next weekend and had collected \$1,250. from local businessmen and individuals.

Oct. 15, 1959: Brunswick's 67-year old grade school was sold at public auction Saturday to John Conrad, a Brunswick carpenter, who made the high bid of \$1,175. Dr. J. L. Fetzer was the only other bidder.

July 11, 1957: Miss Elfa Rucker told of her business career, "Rucker Sisters," now 62 years in Brunswick. In 1895 she and her sister, Mae, helped their father in the post office and ran a news stand business, selling paper,

pen points, penny pencils, etc. (She sold out in Sept. 29, 1960)

Jan. 31, 1963: An estimated 225 persons attended dedication services for the new Brunswick post office Sunday at the Legion Hall. R-II Superintendent, L. W. Hobson, was master of ceremonies. Among those who spoke were Postmaster Robert Greenwood, Mayor Raymond Reichert, former postmaster A. J. Clayton, and Representative W. D. Hibler.

August 20, 1964: Brunswick's new L. W. Heisel Memorial Tennis Court could be ready by early September, reported Arthur Summers, if promised work went according to schedule.