



Brandon

MINNESOTA

great today, greater tomorrow



Contents

Brandon History		2	Schools		20	Former Businesses		44
Mayors		6	Sports		26	Newspaper		60
O.F. Olson		7	Organizations		28	Elevator		61
Auditorium & Mural		8	Recreation		34	Gardonville		62
Post Office		10	Chippewa Park		36	Banks		64
Fire Department		12	Experimental City		39	Current Businesses		66
Railroad		15	War Veterans		40	City of Brandon 2006		79
Churches & Cemeteries		16	Politicians		42	Thank You		80

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Tara (Johnson) Bitzan, a Brandon High School graduate, for her direction and skill in text writing and the organizing of the information given to her in bits and pieces for this book. Her patience and the amount of time she spent was awesome.

A thank you to Melanie (Johnson) Greseth and Kara (Severson) Nielsen, also Brandon High School graduates, for their skills in graphic design and layout, which have made our book look beautiful.

Thank you to the many people who brought their stories in the form of pictures, newspaper clippings and memories for the purpose of recording the historical information of Brandon in this book. They were a considerable source of our information.

Thank you to Bud Greenquist for his dedication in researching and preserving Brandon's history through the years. His knowledge and information was an invaluable resource for this book.

Thanks to the Douglas County Historical Society for the research assistance and the pictures shared.

Many other people have been a great help by being available to answer questions about their memories of life in Brandon.

A sincere Thank You is extended to everyone.

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A Word to the Reader

There is much more information available on the history of life in Brandon which can be viewed at the Brandon Auditorium over the course of this Quasquicentennial Celebration. Due to the constraints of time and cost of publication, it could not all be used in this book. If you have any corrections, additional information or pictures that you would like to share for future publications be sure to contact us at:

*Brandon History Center,
Box 514, Brandon MN 56315*

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Brandon traces its beginnings back to 1858, when J.C. Burbank and Company of St. Cloud started a stagecoach line from St. Cloud to Fort Abercrombie on the North Dakota border.

The Burbank and Waite Stage Company persuaded Henry Gager to make a claim on some land overlooking Little Lake Chippewa to the northwest and to farm and operate a stage station and trading post for the line.

According to a surveyor's map dated 1879, Gager laid claim to land at the intersection between Woods Trail and Middle Trail Stage Road in 1861. Gager named the post "Chippewa" after two lakes with the same name, from which the



What remained of Chippewa Station ca. 1900

Chippewa River flows southward. He farmed the land and operated the station until 1862 when a Sioux uprising drove him and other settlers to Sauk Centre and St. Cloud.

Soon, government troops were sent to reopen the mail routes and a stockade was built at

Chippewa. It was in service from 1862 to 1866. At times, as many as 25 to 30 soldiers were stationed there.

In 1865, George A. Freudenreich purchased the stage station. In 1866 settlers began returning to the area. Some of the early settlers included Hans P. Hanson, Ole Thompson, Haagen Holing and John Thorkelson.

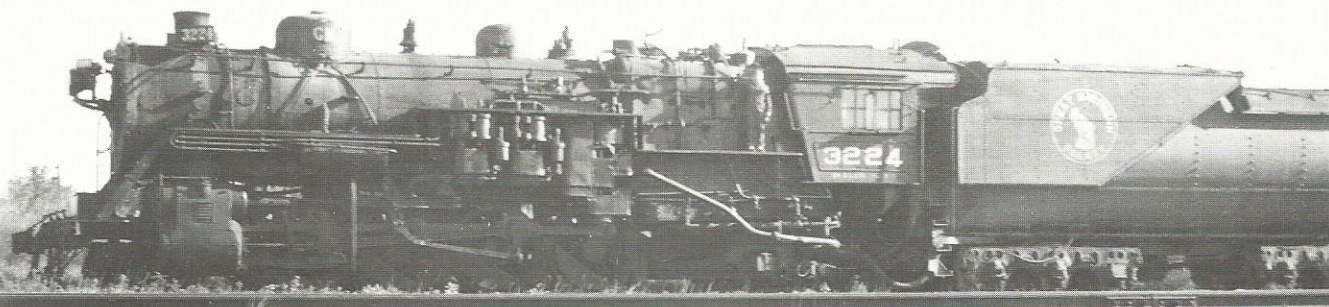
An 1867 flood slowed the influx of settlers, but by 1868 many began arriving and a township was organized under the name of Chippewa Lake.

Freudenreich built a hotel, and a general store was owned by Mr. Miller and Mr. Metz. Stores were also built by George Cowing and Metz and Cotois. Joseph Medbery put up a blacksmith shop and a post office was established. The land on which the buildings stood was later sold by Freudenreich to Richard Pfeiffer, who in turn sold it to Elias Lund. The property is still in the Lund family.

During its short history, the settlement was known by various names, including Chippewa, Chippewa Station, Fort Chippewa, Chippewa City and Chippewa Lake City.

The stage line was discontinued in 1874 when the railroad reached Melrose. In 1879, the railroad was laid out two miles south of Chippewa. Engineer Sewell laid out a town site at that location and the town resettled there.

Freudenreich renamed the settlement "Brandon" in 1868 for Brandon, Vermont, the birthplace of Stephen A. Douglas for whom



History of Brandon

Douglas County was named. The township was renamed Brandon Township.

Freudenreich had the village platted and surveyed. The proprietress of the site was Mary Griffin, whose business manager was J.W. Griffin of Minneapolis.

Martin Stowe built a store, Halvor Engemoen of Holmes City built a store, Emil Larson built a hotel, Pillsbury and Hulbert and David Dows & Company erected grain houses and the railroad company put up a depot.

On November 22, 1881, the state legislature passed a bill whereby villages of a certain population could incorporate, and Brandon did. Chippewa, which became known as "Old Brandon," quickly reverted to a quiet farm site.

By 1890, Brandon boasted four elevators, three saloons, three general stores, two hotels, two livery barns, two blacksmith shops, an implement shop and a flour mill. A town hall was built about that time at which to hold public meetings and to serve as headquarters for the Brandon Fire Department. The population at that time was 225.

The community grew and prospered. In 1915, Brandon had the record for having shipped more grain than any other depot in the country. In the

1916 History of Douglas and Grant Counties, Constant Larson, editor in chief, wrote the following about the village: "It is a recognized fact that Brandon ships more grain than any other station in the county. The village has a live commercial club composed of farmers and merchants. There are six

fine lakes within fifteen minutes' drive of town and the town is surrounded by fine farms."

The 1935 census showed Brandon's population at 400. Today, Brandon is alive and thriving. With a population of 450 (according to 2000 census records), the town enjoys many prospering businesses and has much to offer its residents and its visitors.

An early resident

One of the earliest homesteaders in the county was Haagen (or Haaken) Holing. He arrived south of

Brandon in 1865 or 1866, walking from St. Cloud. He selected 160 acres near Moon Lake on which to file a homestead.

Four years after the Sioux uprising, Holing was the only white man in the area. He went to St. Anthony for work and there met Anne Lillemoe, a Norwegian immigrant. They were married and returned to Brandon, along with her brother and sister, Hans P. Hanson and Mrs. John Thorkelson.

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surrounded by fine farms."**

from the 1916 History of Douglas
and Grant Counties

They were leading members of the community, charter members of Chippewa Lutheran Church, and staunch supporters of the temperance movement. Holing wouldn't sell one of two lots he purchased at the Brandon town site because a saloon was to be built there.



Temperance

The transporting of whiskey via the ox cart trails was a common practice in the early days of the settlement. Supposedly, Whiskey Lake north of Brandon got its name either because it was used as a place to cache kegs until the next cart came, or because at one time a load of whiskey went through the ice.

Due to the temperance movement, by the early 1900s many towns were "dry" and liquor was prohibited, including Brandon. Eventually Brandon ceased to be a dry town and at one time earned the reputation of being "the only spot to get a drink of liquor between here and the South Dakota border."

The town was forced to go dry again later when federal laws prohibited alcohol.

Murder in Brandon

Brandon is the only town in Douglas County in which a murder occurred that resulted in a hanging. On June 19, 1888 an altercation occurred between John Lee, Charles Chelin and Martin Moe, in which derogatory remarks were made by Chelin about Lee or about a woman friend of his. Lee went to the hardware store and purchased a gun. Later that evening, he was out with Moe and fired four bullets into Chelin, killing him on the street.

The men tried to escape but were caught and arrested and charged with first-degree murder. Both were found guilty and sentenced to hang. They were kept in solitary confinement for 90 days.

The hanging was scheduled for February 15, 1889. Relatives and friends of Moe got a petition to stay his sentence on the account that he was a bystander and did not aid and abet Lee. Just minutes before the execution, word came from the governor's office that the sentence was commuted and Moe was sentenced to imprisonment with hard labor in the state prison for the remainder of his life.

Lee was hanged. On December 31, 1892, the governor issued a full and complete pardon for Moe.



Early pioneers

An 1886 historical sketch of Brandon lists the following settlers and their business interests:

Halvor Engemoen, General Store
 Nils Holmgren, Blacksmith
 Johanes Hanson, Furniture Dealer
 L. Johnson, General Merchandise
 K. Knudson, Hotel
 P. Lier, Hardware
 Hugo Lundbohm, Drug Store
 Emil Larson & Christ Peterson,
 Dry Goods Boots/ Shoes
 Geo Myron, Town Clerk
 and Editor of Brandon Echo
 O.F. Olson, Hardware & Implement
 August Swenson, Sample Room Liquor
 Wigo Werner, Postmaster
 Pete Bjerken, Saloon
 P.J. Seidlinger, Harness Shop
 Ole Stenberg, Photographer
 Berndt Tronbol, Elevator
 Lew E. Williams,
 Agent for Great Northern Railroad
 Mr. Davidson, School Principal
 Lucy Foss, Grade Teacher
 Otto Johnson, Lumber Yard
 Mr. Andrew Rosengren, Blacksmith
 Mr. Berg, Tinsmith for O.F. Olson
 Mr. Gunberg, Policeman
 Chas Molden, Section Foreman
 Eric Snar, Doctor
 Mr. Olson, Shoemaker
 Dave West, Worked at Hotel
 Johnny Aldrich, Worked at Hotel
 Carl Ros, Carpenter
 Jacob Nelson, Carpenter

The 1886 information also lists the following farmers who settled in the area and the Section in which they owned land:

Name	Section
Jens. J. Angen	36
F.O. Augdal	16
P.J. Carlson	23
J.E. Cheak	24
Henry Diment	23
T.A. Emerson	10
Gust Guenther	3
Knud Gunderson	35
Elling Holgrimson	29
Halver Johnson	30
Garan Johnson	8
Lars P. Larson	22
Peder Larson	25
Jacob Mathison	15
J.W. Nelson	35
V.D. Nichols	18
Dr. C. Nootnagel	4
J.A. Olson	32
Peter Stuberg	22
Theo Thompson	35
John Thompson	31
Ole Thompson	28
Fred Wilm	6



Mayors

Following are the residents who served as Mayor of Brandon throughout the years:

1884	☛ P.O. Thompson, Acting President	1950	☛ Henry Handke
1885	☛ Lorentz Johnson, President	1951	☛ Leroy Wallin / Eldor Stene / John Korkowski
1886	☛ J.P. Hedberg, President Emil Larson, President J. P. Hedberg	1952-1961	☛ John Korkowski
1887	☛ Joseph Mathison	1962-1963	☛ Clinton Moe
1888-1889	☛ Emil Larson	1964-1965	☛ Robert Kloehn
1890	☛ O.F. Olson	1966-1967	☛ Ray Stich, Acting Mayor
1891	☛ Hugo Lundbohm	1968	☛ Otto Weinrich
1892	☛ Peter P. Bjerken	1969-1972	☛ Raymond Strom
1893-1894	☛ O.F. Olson	1973	☛ Raymond Strom Frank McFarlane, Acting Mayor Ray Lanners
1895-1896	☛ Hugo Lundbohm	1974	☛ Ray Lanners
1897-1899	☛ P.J. Seidlinger	1975	☛ Ray Lanners Jim Rolf, Acting Mayor Ray Stich, Acting Mayor
1900-1901	☛ T.G. Winkjer	1976	☛ Chuck Schmidt
1902-1903	☛ F.W. Ruppelius	1977	☛ Chuck Schmidt Jim Rolf, Acting Mayor
1904-1907	☛ A.C. Paulson	1978	☛ Tom Lindquist Myron Severson, Acting Mayor
1908-1909	☛ Jacob Tamble	1979	☛ Myron Severson Acting Mayor
1910-1911	☛ S. Dickenson	1980-1990	☛ Myron Severson
1912-1914	☛ Theo F. Damask	1991-1998	☛ Don Taylor
1915	☛ Albert Holmgren	1999	☛ Don Taylor Mike Randt, Acting Mayor
1916-1919	☛ B.T. Teigen	2000	☛ Mike Randt, Acting Mayor
1920-1925	☛ C. W. Ringdahl	2001-2002	☛ Mike Randt
1926-1934	☛ No information available	2003	☛ Mike Randt Doug Johnson, Acting Mayor
1935-1936	☛ W. F. Schulke	2004-2006	☛ Doug Johnson
1937-1939	☛ No information available		
1940	☛ C.J. Schelin/ Henry Handke		
1941-1948	☛ Henry Handke		
1949	☛ Henry Handke / Walter Hoving / Henry Handke again		

O.F. Olson

O.F. Olson

O.F. Olson was one of the most influential pioneers in the area during Brandon's early years. Olson was born in Sweden in 1840. He immigrated to America in 1867 at the age of 27 and settled in Solem Township in Douglas County.

He married Emma Evenson in 1873 and the couple had nine children. The family moved to Brandon in 1879 where Olson started the Olson Hardware and Implement Company, one of the most substantial and enterprising business establishments in the county at that time.

The family purchased a homestead in Moe Township from Emma's parents in 1892.

Olson served as mayor of Brandon in 1890 and again from 1893-94 and became a cattle and horse buyer and shipper in 1898.

He was known to have been a member of the school board, Brandon Fire Department, the International Order of Odd Fellows, the Farmers and Merchants Union board, the elevator company board and served as president of Brandon State Bank. He actually organized that bank, which later took out a national charter and

became known as the First National Bank of Brandon. He was a member of the Brandon Businessmen's Association board, treasurer of the Minnesota Implement Dealers Insurance Company board and member of the Minnesota Retail Implement Dealers Association board.

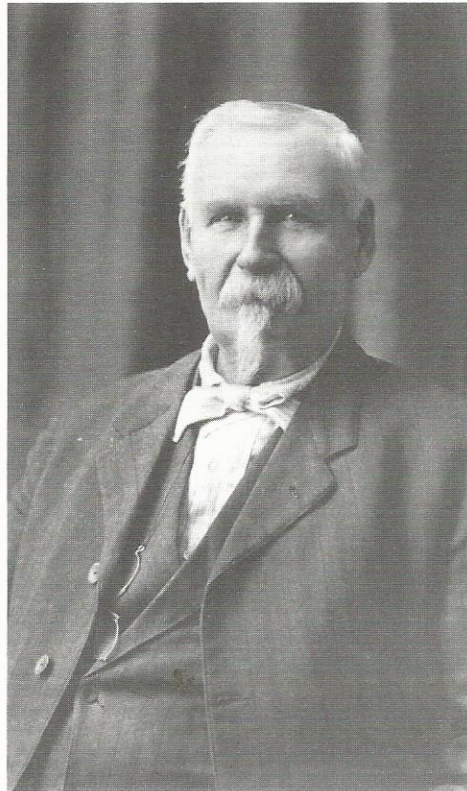
Olson also became involved in real estate in the late 1800s. He hired a manager to run that business in 1903 and turned his hardware implement business over to his son in 1905.

In 1907 he purchased controlling stock in the Evansville State Bank.

In 1908, he filed for Republican candidacy for Representative from the 58th Legislative District. At that time, he owned 1,800 acres of choice farmland in Douglas County.

He is remembered for donating land to the village where the present high school now stands. He also planted a row of trees in front of that school. Three of those trees are still growing, providing shade for today's students.

Olson remained active in business affairs until he was about 80 years of age. He died at age 86.



The original Brandon hall was built in 1890 for \$1,200. It was 24-feet wide by 60-feet long and had 22-foot-high walls. It had a large auditorium, a raised stage on the east end, two anterooms and a stairway on the west end, main floor storage for fire equipment, a small jail and a large council room. A bell tower was added for \$15. The bell rang for fires and every evening at 9 p.m., which was the village curfew.

In 1893, the building was extended with an eight-foot addition in the rear.

This structure served the community until February 13, 1934, when the decision was made to construct a new hall. The old hall was torn down to make room for a new hall on the same site.

Funds were applied for and granted under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in 1934. FERA was discontinued a year later, but additional funds were made available through the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Both were social welfare programs developed to give work to needy persons during the economic depression of the 1930s.

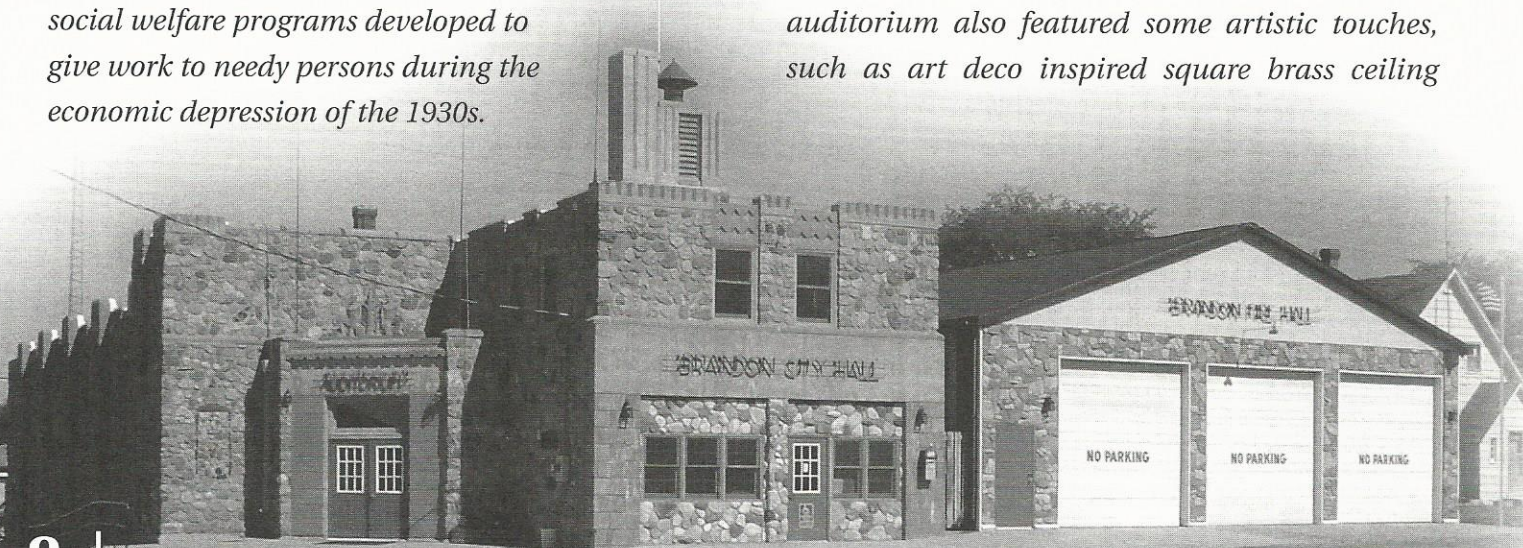
The village council provided the site and materials and the Civil Works Administration would fund and hire local unemployed workers.

The architect was F. Boes Pfeifer. The new structure featured a stone foundation with concrete and stone walls. It was 46.5 feet by 143 feet (outside

measurements) with a 20-foot-high ceiling and a partial basement. A lean-to was located on the west end. The project was estimated at \$37,791.60.

The structure housed an auditorium/gymnasium, a village council meeting room and clerk's office and a fire hall. There was a 24-foot stage, a balcony with a movie projection booth, a ticket booth, dressing rooms and a cloakroom. The exterior featured a rectangular smoke stack, a fire siren tower faced with fluted concrete, and a front entrance with double leafed wooden doors. The structure was built of native stone hauled in by farmers from the surrounding area.

Thanks to the WPA Federal Art Project, the auditorium also featured some artistic touches, such as art deco inspired square brass ceiling



Brandon Auditorium

lamps. Rising above the entrance is a cast concrete relief sculpture of a male athlete and a musician flanking



a stylized tree. There are two large wooden relief carvings flanking the stage, three wooden relief carvings in the council room, and a large mural that originally hung in the council room and is now on display in the auditorium. One of the carvings was done by Joseph Bergman, and the mural was created by Elsa Jemne (see related story).

The Brandon Auditorium was completed in 1936 and was formally dedicated on October 22 of that year with 5,000 people in attendance. A band concert featured the combined Brandon and Evansville bands, followed by music and dancing to Cec Hurst's Orchestra. Speeches were given and bingo was played.

Over the years, the auditorium housed dances, sporting events, political meetings, events of local 4-H clubs and Boy and Girl Scouts, plays, reunions, Legion and Auxiliary meetings, Christmas programs, art and craft shows, bazaars, bloodmobiles, and much more. Movies were shown there in the 1940s. Some of the advertising slides shown during the movies are still in existence.

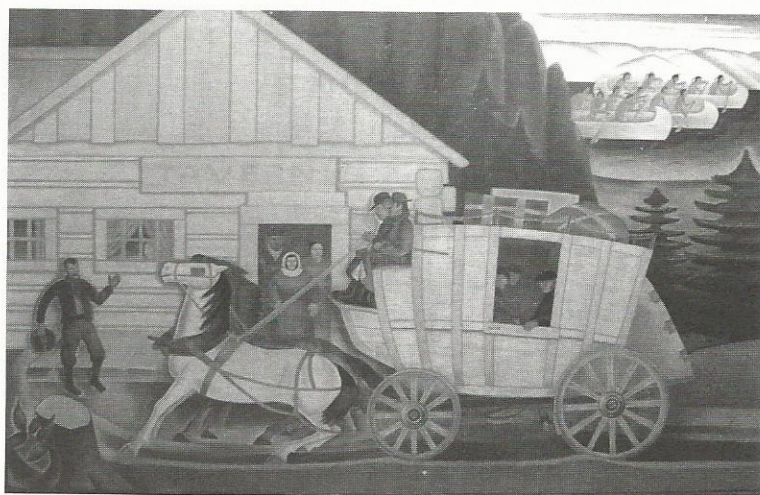
The Brandon Auditorium was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

In 1991, the Otto Bremer Foundation granted \$25,000 to support the restoration and remodeling of the hall, which is still used for many community events.

Auditorium Mural

The mural on display in the Brandon Auditorium was done by artist Elsa Jemne, who has three works in the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

She attended St. Paul Art Institute before attending the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in Philadelphia. Jemne traveled Europe through scholarships. While in Italy, she became interested in fresco painting techniques, which were influential to her artistic career.



She achieved recognition throughout Minnesota for many murals commissioned by New Deal art projects, which were displayed in places such as the Hutchinson Post Office, Stearns County Courthouse and Minneapolis Armory.

In 1921 she helped found the St. Paul Womens' City Club.

The Brandon Auditorium mural depicts a stagecoach way station established in the 1850s when the government built a road to Fort Abercrombie on the Red River Trail. The mural also depicts a stagecoach and Indians in canoes.

Henry Gager, the first settler in the area, handled the mail at the J.C. Burbank and Company stage station. He was officially appointed postmaster at what was called Chippewa Lake in February of 1861. The postal site was discontinued in October of 1863 when the area was evacuated due to an Indian uprising.

The post office reopened in February of 1867, with George A. Freudenreich serving as postmaster.

Brandon's mail was handled out of homes or businesses until the first post office building was constructed at 207 Front Street.

Several individuals served as postmaster through the years, until 1914 when Emily M. (Seidlinger) Drexler took over. Prior to serving as postmaster, Drexler had been a teacher in Brandon's first school, District #31. She held the job of postmaster for 37 years before retiring in 1951 and moving to Blue Earth.

She was followed by Walter H. Hoving, who served as postmaster for more than 10 years.

All of the mail coming in and going out of Brandon was handled by the railroad. Two trains each day delivered and picked up mail without stopping. The railroad agent would hang a heavy canvas mailbag on a tall pole alongside the track. When the train came rolling through town, a big steel arm would reach out of the train and snatch the mailbag from the pole.

To deliver mail, the

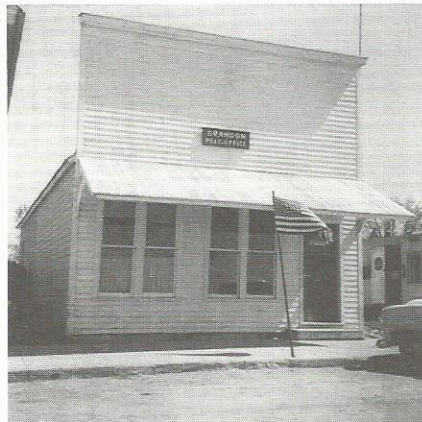
brakeman on the train would simply throw a similar mail sack out the window of the train. Most of the time this was successful, but when the train would run over this sack, mail would be cut into pieces and strewn on and near the tracks. The agent would then have to walk up and down the tracks trying to recover as much mail as he could.

The agent transported the mail the two and a half city blocks to the post office by a hand pushed cart.

In 1959, a new post office was built one block west of the original site at the corner of Front Street and Central Avenue. That is where it remains today. It opened for business at its new

site on September 17, 1959 and was dedicated on April 22, 1960.

Some of the area's long-time mail carriers were Clarence Johnson who served as a mail carrier for 40 years, Henry Johnson for 33 years and Ray Lanners for more than 31 years.



Brandon Post Office at 207 Front Street

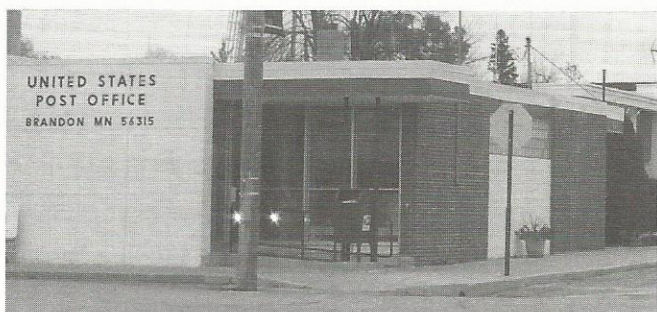


Emily Drexler

Post Office

Brandon Postmasters

Brandon's postmasters are listed below, with the year they were appointed (all were postmasters unless otherwise noted as acting postmaster or officer-in-charge):



Brandon Post Office 2006

- 1861 🐦 Henry Gager
- 1867 🐦 George A. Freudenreich
- 1868 🐦 George F. Cowing
- 1869 🐦 George F. Cowing
- 1872 🐦 Martin Stowe
- 1882 🐦 Lorentz Johnson
- 1884 🐦 O. F. Olson
- 1886 🐦 Knute F. Larson
- 1887 🐦 Wigo Werner
- 1894 🐦 Prosper J. Seidlinger
- 1897 🐦 Carl M. Borgen
- 1906 🐦 Charles W. Meckstroth
- 1914 🐦 Mrs. Emily M. Drexler
- 1951 🐦 Walter H. Hoving (acting postmaster)
- 1952 🐦 Walter H. Hoving
- 1962 🐦 Howard A. Vickerman
(acting postmaster)
- 1964 🐦 Lawrence J. Mahan

- 1970 🐦 Dolores E. Schwartz (officer-in-charge)
- 1971 🐦 Dolores E. Schwartz
- 1983 🐦 Rosamond L. Cuchna (officer-in-charge)
- 1984 🐦 Terence J. Schwab
- 1985 🐦 Joyce M. Sorenson (officer-in-charge)
- 1986 🐦 Michael L. Schmidt (officer-in-charge)
- 1986 🐦 Marnee L. Herd (officer-in-charge)
- 1986 🐦 Karl Glade Jr.
- 1989 🐦 Doris R. Nathe (officer-in-charge)
- 1989 🐦 Ramona D. Knudsvig (officer-in-charge)
- 1990 🐦 Lester E. Shafto
- 1999 🐦 Robin Holmquist (officer-in-charge)
- 2000-present 🐦 Brenda B. Kuklok



Marlys Klimp, Kelly Harris, Brenda Kuklok

Eight years after incorporation, the village of Brandon formally organized a fire company. Its purpose was "to protect life and property in the village of Brandon against fire." The first meeting of the Brandon Fire Company was held in 1889.

The first company had a man-drawn hose cart and stationary fire engine run by steam. It was filled at a hand-dug well located on Front Street. The equipment was housed in a small building on Front Street.

The fire department held dances to raise money for equipment.

The department reorganized in 1894 and became known as the Brandon Fire Department. Its two companies included Engine Company #1 and Hook and Ladder Company #1.

The first truck – an International – was purchased in 1928. That truck has been restored and is still owned by the department.

The Brandon Fireman's Relief Association sponsored Friday night dances and was the sponsor of the Silver Streaks Basketball Team (more information on that team can be found elsewhere in this

book). The Relief Association later began sponsoring Saturday night bingo and pull-tab charitable gambling operations.

In 1950, a new 1949 Ford truck equipped with a hose, ladders, chemical extinguishers, booster

pump and gas masks was purchased. This truck was sold in the early 1980s.

In 1968, the department purchased a new truck made by the John Bean Company from Indiana for \$15,000. It featured original high-pressure fog and operated on a limited amount of water.

In 1980, a 1956 Pirsch fire truck was purchased from the Brooklyn

Center Fire Department. It pumped 750 gallons a minute and was known as "Old Number 4."

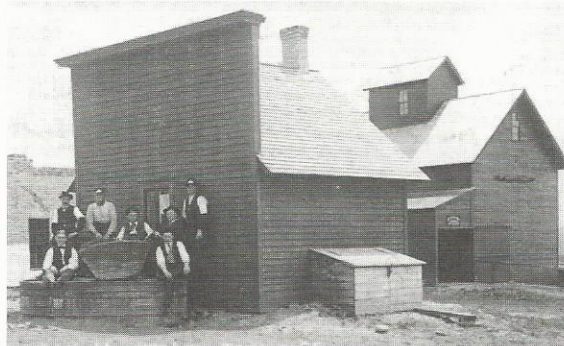
A new fire hall was built in 1980 and in 1982 the Alexandria Eagles Lodge named the Brandon Fire Department the "Best Fire Department in the County."

The department was cited for "outstanding community service in preservation of life and property through fire and rescue operations."

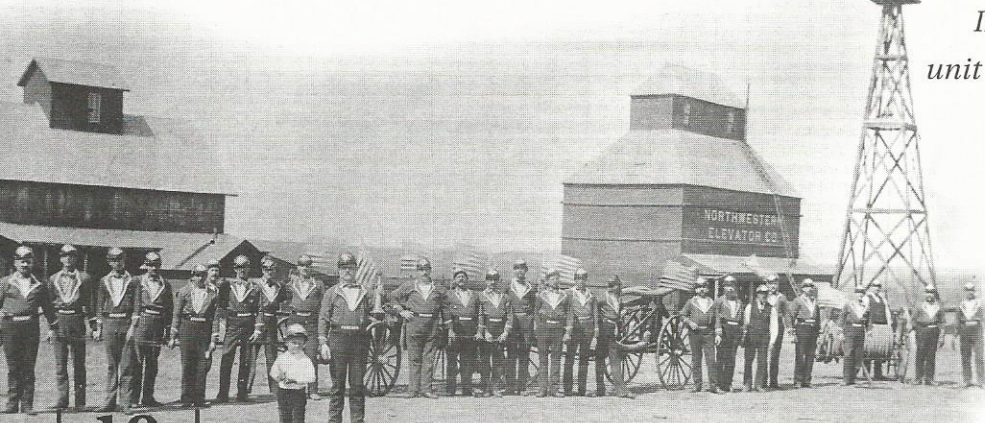
The department was instrumental in putting on a countywide drill for chemical spills.

In 1984, the Brandon First Responders unit was organized.

...in 1982 the Alexandria Eagles Lodge named the BRANDON Fire Department the "Best Fire Department in the County."



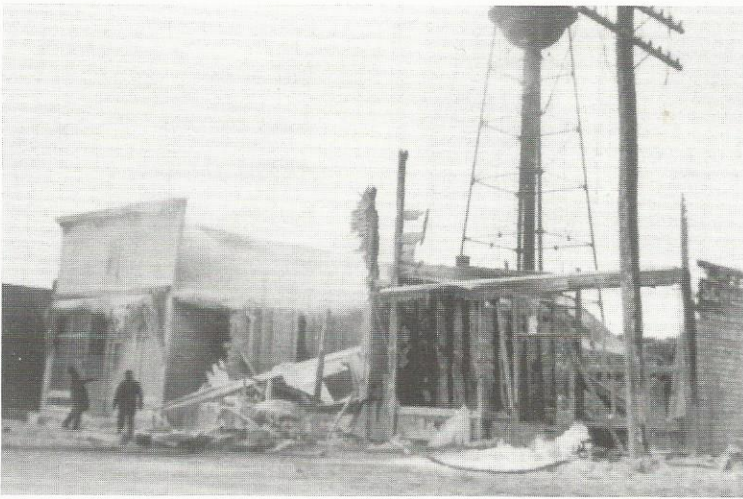
Its purpose was "to protect life and property in the village of BRANDON against fire."



Fire Department

Some of the community's notable fires through the years included the following:

- Charlie Schelin's Grocery Store located on the corner of Front Street and Holmes Avenue was destroyed by fire in January of 1943. George Courier's Restaurant was also burned.



- The Mark Kelly home was destroyed by fire in January of 1959, killing Mark, 38, and his five children ages 2 to 15.
- A building at 207 Front Street housing Hermanson Floor Covering burned on December 16, 1985. Formerly Schelin's Grocery, it was the location to which he moved when his first store burned in 1943.
- The Mark and Anita Roers home on Central Avenue was destroyed by fire on March 23, 1996.
- On December 29, 2000, fire destroyed the old Brandon State Bank building and Hermanson's Texaco Station – two of the oldest commercial buildings in the city.

Brandon Fire Department Chiefs

1889-1902	☛	Jacob Tamble
1903-1904	☛	A.H. Hanson
1905-1909	☛	Jacob Tamble
1910	☛	B.T. Teigen
1911-1913	☛	Jacob Tamble
1914	☛	John Hammergren
1915-1929	☛	Joseph Tamble
1930-1954	☛	Albert Holmgren
1955-1961	☛	Oscar Pladson
1962-1966	☛	Ray Lanners
1967	☛	Ralph Ostlund
1968-1970	☛	Winston Johnson
1971-1973	☛	Frank McFarlane
1974-1977	☛	Jerry Klein
1978-1979	☛	Dan Rusch
1980	☛	Jerry Klein
1981-1982	☛	Dave Thompson
1983-1989	☛	Frank McFarlane
1990-1991	☛	Lynn Thompson
1992-1994	☛	Tim Grabow
1995-1997	☛	Ernie Schmitt
1998-2000	☛	Jerry Challes
2001	☛	Jerry Bitzan
2002-2003	☛	Bill Koetter
2004-2006	☛	Richard Korkowski



Fire Department

Brandon Fire Department Honorary Members

(15 or more years of service)

Clarence Anderson
Gust Anderson
Richard Anderson
Clifford Augdahl
Dana Baker
Don Bakken
Donald Bitzan
Jerry Bitzan
P. Bjerken
Carl Brusegaard
Richard Dahl
Harry Falaas
Tim Grabow
Ted Haabala
John Hammer
Jno. Hammergren
Henry Handke
Albert Holmgren
Peter Hoplin
Walter Hoving
Winston Johnson
Otto Johnson
Louis Kapphahn
Vern Kaufman
Jerry Klein
Bill Koetter
Dennis Korkowski
Jack Korkowski



New Truck purchased in 2006

James Korkowski
John Korkowski
Richard Korkowski
Nels Kronberg
Henry Lanners
Ray Lanners
Robert Lanners
Jerry Lee
August Lehn
Frank McFarlane
C.W. Meckstroth
William Meissner
Bill Ness
Clarence Newhouse
Freeman Olson
Ralph Ostlund
Oscar Pladson

Ted Plaster
J.O. Renkes
Charles Rossum
Devin Rusch
Roger Sammons
Carl Scherrer
Cortland Scherrer
Scott Scherrer

Doug Schjei
Orvin Schjei
William Schulke
P.J. Seidlinger
Leroy Shea
Pat Shea
Tony Skrove
Anton Sletto
Leo Smedstad
Eldor Stene
Jacob Tamble
Joe Tamble
B.T. Teigen
David Thompson
Lynn Thompson
Ralph Toft
Warren Toft
Elphege Webskowski
Wigo Werner
Mike Wettstein



Railroad

The St. Paul & Pacific Railroad reached Brandon in the fall of 1879. The railroad soon became known as the Great Northern Railroad.

The railroad was the hub of the city in the early days of Brandon. Much of the early travel was done by rail. Brandon had two passenger trains in each direction each day, and four freight trains. The Galloping Goose, Oriental Limited, Western Star, Empire Builder and the North Coast Limited were some of the trains that passed through the town.

A "section boss" lived in a section house near the tracks and worked to maintain and repair the area tracks.

Jacob "Jake" Goering started his railroad career at his hometown of Cold Spring in 1917. He started employment in Brandon on September 23, 1923.

He spent more than 51 years as an agent/telegrapher for the Great Northern Railway, and in that time, reportedly, he never missed a day of work for any reason.

Many business transactions, death announcements, train schedules, Western Union messages, etc. were conducted over the railroad's telegraph system. Goering pounded out the clicks on a telegraph key and

copied incoming messages by deciphering the clicks. He had to personally hand deliver all of the telegrams.

All of the Brandon mail, coming in and going out, was transported two and a half city blocks between the depot and the post office. Goering hand pushed a two-wheel mail cart to get this job done.

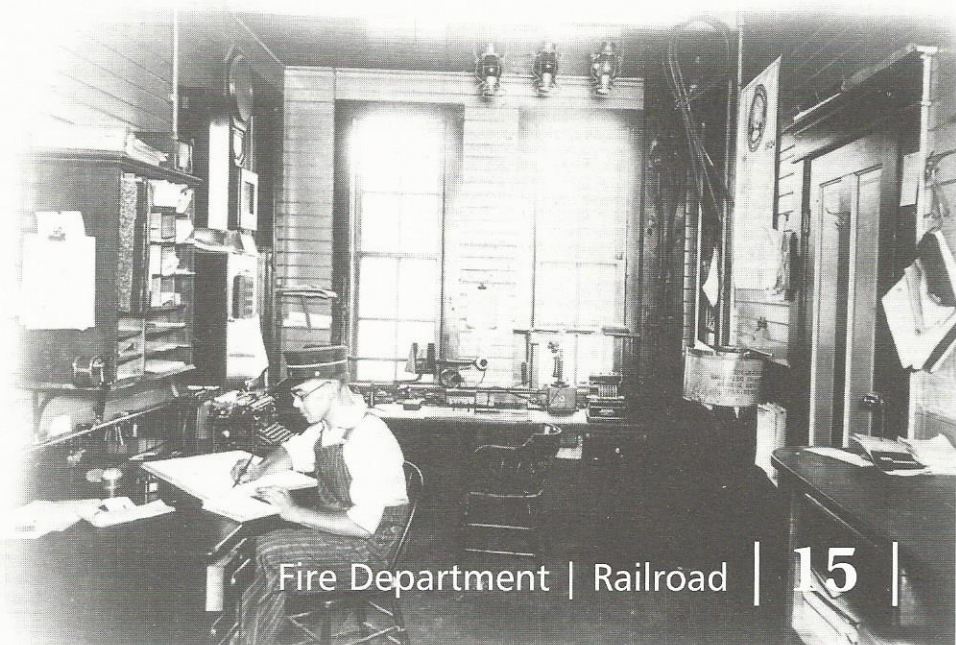
The freight trains were used to haul local freight, along with great amounts of lumber, coal

and grain. The last really big job that the railroad performed for the community was in 1966 when it hauled in gravel, cement and steel for the construction of Interstate 94.

Goering retired in 1969, and in the 1970s the depot was dismantled.



Jacob Goering



Depot interior 1923

Churches are a significant part of the history of many early settlements, and Brandon is no exception. Settlers would often gather in homes or school buildings to worship with a visiting pastor or missionary, until they were able to construct churches and obtain resident pastors. Many of the area's original church structures are still being used today.

Chippewa Lutheran Church

Chippewa Lutheran Church held its first service in 1871. It was founded by Norwegian immigrants who had developed a mistrust of the state-run church in Norway and were determined to be a free congregation.

In 1875, Ole Thompson offered land for a building site. It was decided to hold off construction, however, until the railroad passed through the area. Thompson's land was used for a cemetery, and other land was purchased in the new town site after the railroad route was determined. Therefore, the cemetery is located a few miles south of the church.

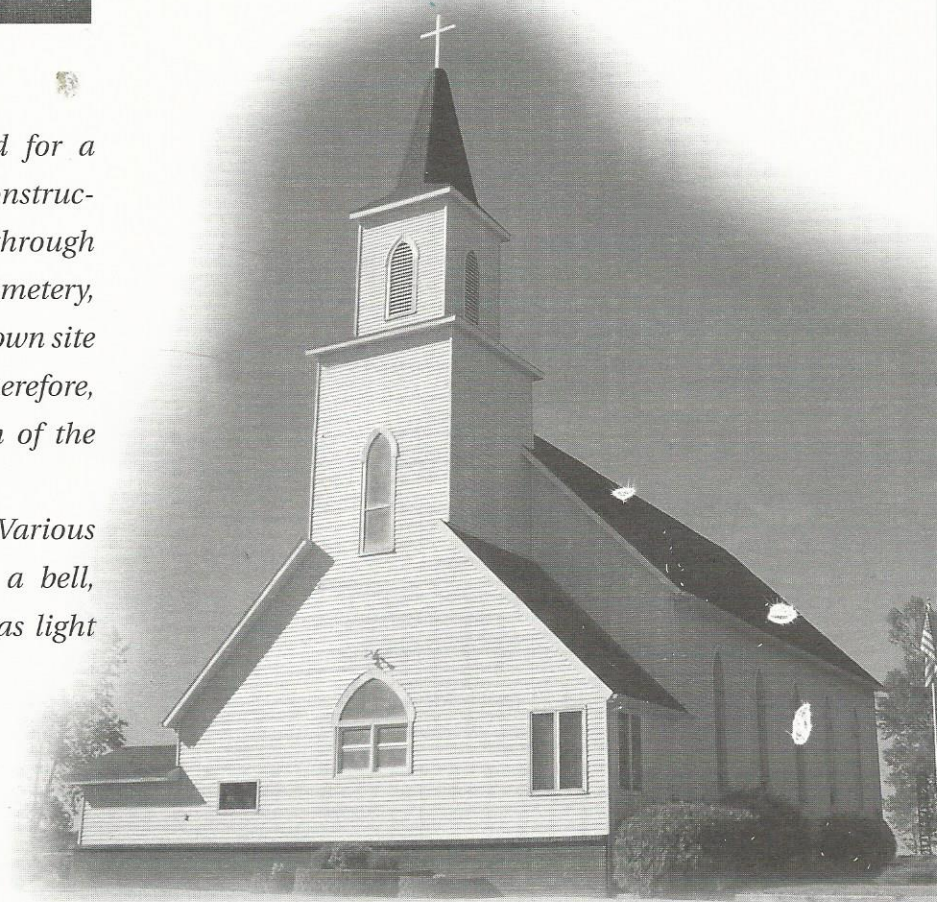
The structure was completed in 1885. Various improvements included the addition of a bell, refinishing the interior and installing a gas light



plant in 1906. New pews and electric lights were added in 1919 and a full basement was added in 1927.

Originally known as Chippewa Free Church, the church was joined with the Danish conference until 1887. In 1890, the church adopted the constitution of the United Lutheran Church. This was severed in 1897 and the church adopted the principles of the Lutheran Free Church in 1899. In 1963, the Lutheran Free Church merged with the American Lutheran Church. A new constitution was adopted in 1965, followed by the joining of Chippewa and Grace in 1966 as a joint parish. The pair split in 1978 when Chippewa again became associated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

In 1980, an office was built onto the church, the church was re-sided and new storm windows were purchased to protect the stained glass windows. Padded pews were added in 1996.



Churches & Cemeteries

Grace Lutheran Church

Grace Lutheran Church was originally founded as the Brandon Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod Church in 1881. Services were held in the Brandon school building.



In 1889, the congregation purchased the old school building – a two-story frame structure – for \$327. In 1904, a new building was completed at the church's current location. The new church was incorporated as the Brandon Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1910. The church formally incorporated with East Moe and West Moe churches to form the Brandon-Moe Lutheran Parish Corporation as members of the American Lutheran Church.

An addition was built on the rear of the church in 1911 to be used for a Sunday school room and as a Ladies Aid and social room. A sacristy was also added.

In 1950 a new basement was added and in 1957 the old structure was torn down and a new one built on the existing basement. It was dedicated in May, 1958.

In 1924, the church changed its name to Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1963, the word Evangelical was dropped from the name, and the church became Grace Lutheran Church. In 1964, Grace left its sisterhood with East and West Moe; in 1966 joined Chippewa Lutheran Church, which had joined the American Lutheran Church a year earlier. This was done because it was easier to secure pastors for two-point parishes than it was for a four-point parish.

This alliance continued until 1978. At that time, Grace became its own entity, and its current membership is with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

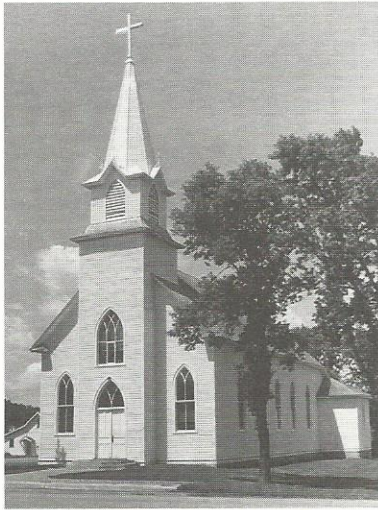
In 1980 a library and bell tower were added and a newsletter was started.

The church underwent a major addition and remodeling project in 2002. The addition includes an elevator, fellowship hall, offices, a new kitchen, rest facilities, library, storage and a new entrance. The bell tower was refurbished and a new sound system and new furnishings added.



St. Ann's Catholic Church

In the early days of Brandon, Catholic families attended services in Millerville. In 1902, about 23 families joined together to construct a wood-frame church in Brandon. The original structure was located across the street from the current church. A bell memorial stands at that site.



The Catholic Church of St. Ann's of Brandon incorporated in 1909. The building was enlarged and improved in 1915.

The parish was served as a mission until 1918 when it obtained its first resident pastor.

A home was purchased for use as a rectory in 1919. In 1967 a new church and rectory were constructed. The first mass in the new church was celebrated on Christmas Eve, 1969.

Reverend George H. Speltz, D.D., Bishop of the St. Cloud Diocese, presided at the laying of the cornerstone, blessing of the church, and consecration of the altar in September, 1968.

In 2000, the parish adopted the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Barbacoas, Venezuela,

as its sister parish. Members of the two congregations have visited each other, sharing gifts of faith, hope and charity.

The church's cemetery is located across the street at the site of the original church.

Brandon Cemetery

The Brandon Cemetery is located a half mile west of Brandon. The land was donated to the village by August Swanson in 1889 for a public cemetery.

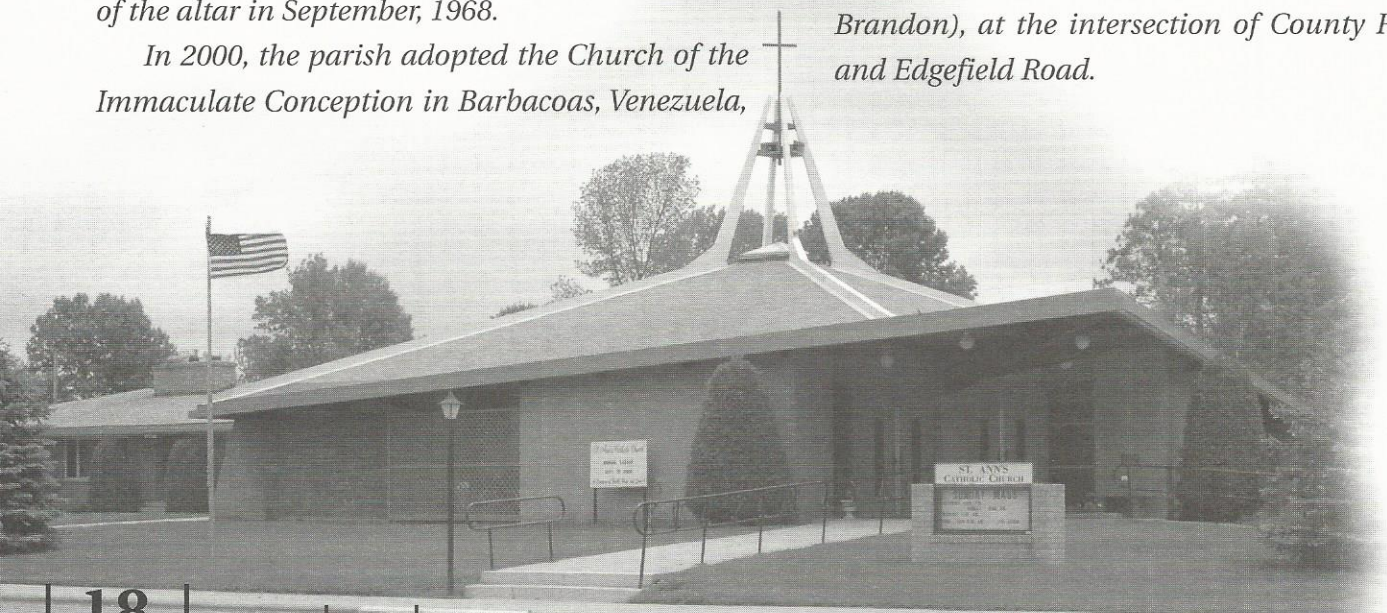
In 1912 the cemetery was incorporated and estab-



lished a board of directors. Today, a board of directors tends to the care and maintenance of the cemetery as intended.

Edgefield Cemetery

Edgefield Cemetery is located about three miles north of Brandon (one fourth mile north of Old Brandon), at the intersection of County Road 16 and Edgefield Road.



Churches & Cemeteries

It is not known when burials began at this site. It is speculated that in the community's early years, the deceased were buried at the edge of the village or on homesteads.

As rural churches were built, cemeteries were built up around them. There is no reference, however, to a church in the immediate vicinity of Old Brandon, just as no church burial records have been found referring to Edgefield.

It is speculated that an early resident named Freudenriech set aside two acres of his land for a cemetery some time after 1868 and sold family grave plots, but no records of deeds for these plots have ever been found.

After the railroad came in 1879, the village was moved and Freudenriech formally named the cemetery Edgefield. It was surveyed, platted and recorded on December 6, 1879.

It is believed that burials would have continued at Edgefield until at least 1889, when August Swanson donated land west of the new town site for the Brandon Cemetery.

Burials could have continued at Edgefield for some time after that due to the proximity of homesteaders and ownership of family plots. It has been estimated that there may be more than 60 pioneers buried at Edgefield.

In the summer of 1928, the remains of Chris J. (also referred to in various records as Christ or Christian) Blatt, a Civil War veteran who was shot

and killed in a land dispute in 1888, were exhumed from Edgefield and moved to Brandon so that Legion Post #278 could honor him each Memorial Day. Reports show that some other bod-

ies were moved to Kinkead Cemetery in Alexandria.

Several years ago, the Brandon Lions initiated clean-up efforts at the all-but-forgotten cemetery. A sign was erected, trees and brush were cut, and grass was seeded.

To date, only two stones have been found at Edgefield. Brandon resident Francis Brennon recollected seeing rows of white crosses at the cemetery when he was a boy.

These crosses, however, deteriorated and disappeared over the years.



The Gospel Messengers

In 1976, The Gospel Messengers started singing together. Members Duane Johnson, Jerry Klein, Diann and David Thompson, Marcia Bolin and David Klukken traveled in Thompsons' motorhome to perform at various locations.

The group sang gospel together for about 22 years, performing in churches throughout Minnesota and North and South Dakota.

Brandon Union Sunday School

In the early years, the Brandon Union Sunday School was composed of children and youth from all area churches in the community. They met at the Brandon schoolhouse.

The Brandon School District's original school was an old log house near a farm south of Brandon. It was known as District 31.

The first schoolhouse built in the village of Brandon was erected in 1880 at 207 Central Avenue. It was a large two-story frame structure and was located near the mill.

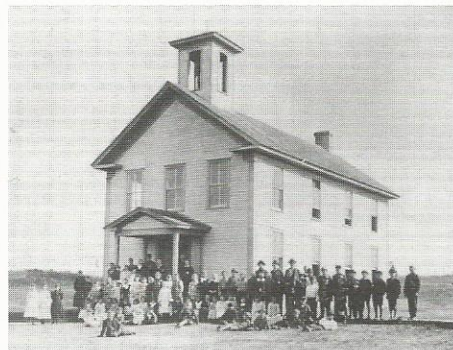
The building was used both by the school and as a church from 1881 to 1898, at which time the building was sold to the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod Church.

Children from 16 sections of the township and from the village attended the school.

Eventually, a large portion of families from the northwest section branched off to form District 76, which was located on the west side of Lake Moses in Millerville Township, and families from the southwest section branched off to form District 82, which was located about one mile south of Brandon.

A new school was built in Brandon at the turn of the century at the current school's location. The land was donated by O.F. Olson, who also planted trees at the site. Three of those trees still stand in front of the school today.

The new school had four rooms and a full basement in which to house a steam heating plant



and fuel supply. Valued at \$8,000, the structure contained a library with more than 400 books, and a large amount of slate blackboards, maps and globes.

The school was a semi-graded school and offered one year of high school work. Eventually, more grades were offered until education was offered through 12th grade.

An addition was added in 1924, with other building projects taking place in 1928, 1938 and 1954.

By 1955, the area's rural schools had dissolved and consolidated with the Brandon School. Some of those schools included the following:

- **District 5:** Moe Township was formed in 1868. Records show that in 1884 Johannes



Hanson sold the township a site for a school at the intersection of what is now Highway 7 and Pioneer Trail. The school was closed in 1956 after consolidation with Brandon District 207.

At that time, Isaac and William Johnson, C.J. Pipo and Hjalmer Olson purchased the school, grounds and equipment with the hopes of preserving it. Everything was deeded

Brandon School

to the Minnesota Finnish Historical Society in Fergus Falls.

The building was eventually moved to the Runestone Museum's Fort Alexandria where it is still on display today. The grounds now serve as Pioneer Memorial Park.

- **District 37**, sometimes called the Hillsdale School, was located at Country Road 7 and Nursery Lane NW. It was later moved to 11959 Nursery Lane NW.

The structure still stands and is used as a storage building.

- **District 54** was located about two and a half miles south of Brandon on County Road 7.

- **District 25 and 56** were both located in Millerville Township.
- **District 72** school originated in 1887 and was located where the Pine Ridge Golf Course Clubhouse now stands. It was closed in 1955.

- **District 82** was located one mile south of Brandon. In 1902, a tornado hit this school, destroying it and killing the teacher, Miss Ida Hanson. The 9-year old daughter of Ole Thompson was injured and died the next night. Several



Brandon High School Class of 1911
Members of the class: (order unknown)
John Bjerken, Edna Olson, Myrtle Thompson,
Ellie DeWolf, Marcy Johnson and Julia Gunderson.

other students were injured as well, but survived. The school was later rebuilt.

By 1968, all of the area districts had joined together and the district was renamed District 207.

In 1957, a gymnasium and high school addition were added to the school building in Brandon.

The older portion of the school was torn down in 1969 and in 1970 a new elementary wing, library and small gymnasium was built, along with some additional high school classrooms.

A separate two-room classroom was built on the north side of the school in 1975 to alleviate overcrowding.

A renovation took place to a portion of the high school in 1980.

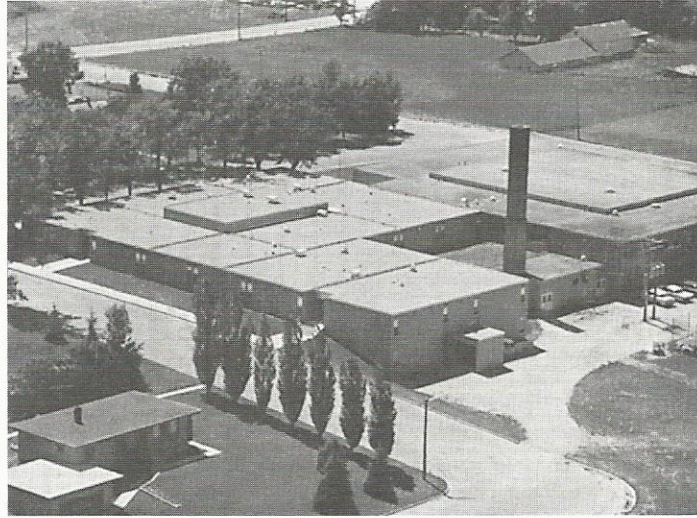
Brandon High School 1927



In the summer of 1996, new hallway lockers were installed in the high school, the gym floor was replaced, new bleachers and scoreboards were installed, a new sound system was installed in the gym, and a weight room was created.

In 2000 the Early Childhood Center and a playground were constructed.

In 2003, elevators were added in the high school and elementary area, and two entrances were remodeled for handi-cap accessibility.



Today's school

Schools have come a long way since the one-room schoolhouses that dotted the countryside during Brandon's early years. Technology has played the most significant role in those changes.

Following is just a brief glimpse at some of the things that have been added or implemented over the years at Brandon School:

- In 1977, an art program was added to the school. Keith Melville has served as Brandon's art teacher since the program's inception. In the beginning, he went to the individual classrooms for art, until an art*

room was eventually added. In 2005 a pottery class was added and is offered every other year.

- A Brandon Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program was started in*

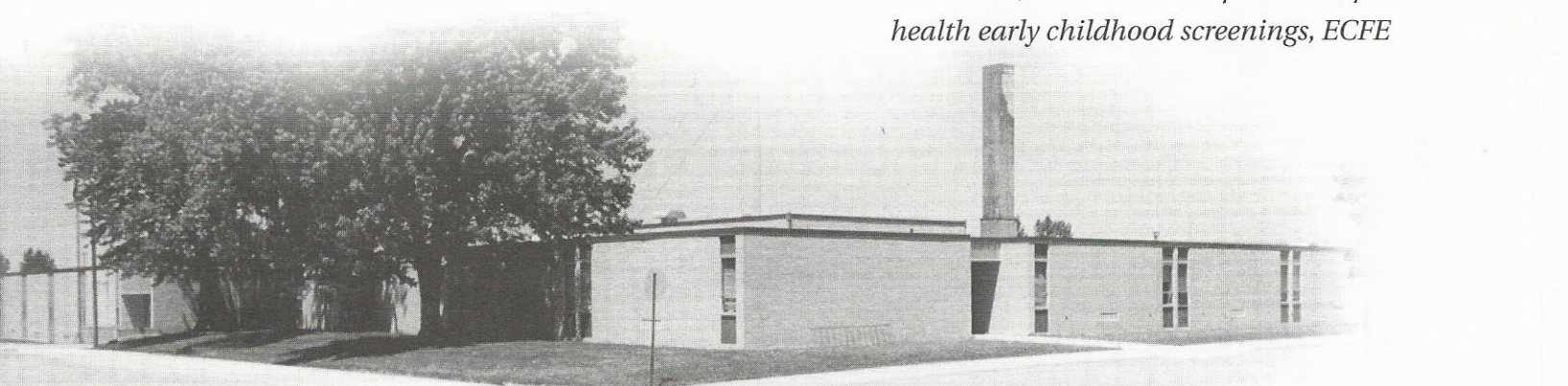
the early 1980s by Pam Schjei and Kim Dingwall. The program has grown and now encompasses a 30-week school year program, in addition to some summer events.

The Bremer Foundation, Head Start, West Central Initiative, Child Care Resource and Referral,

Gardonville Telephone and the school, under the leadership of Superintendent Mark Westby, all worked together to build the Early Childhood Center in the school's small gym. It opened in the fall of 2000.

The Millerville and Brandon Fire Departments, Gardonville Telephone, the Lions, West Central Initiative, Bremer Bank and United Way are all sponsors of Brandon's early childhood programs.

The center now hosts Head Start, School Readiness, Early Childhood Special Education, a collaborative preschool, public health early childhood screenings, ECFE



Brandon School

classes and the West Central Initiative Early Childhood Coalition.

- The Reading Recovery program was started at Brandon Elementary School in 1998. The program supports 1st grade students who need extra help to develop reading and writing skills. Each student receives an individual 30-minute daily lesson for about 20 weeks.



First Grade Halloween Parade 1973

Eight students were served each year from 1998 to 2003, six were served each year from 2003-2005, and in 2006, five students participated. Each student gains confidence in reading and writing and also learns strategies to help themselves read independently.

- In 2003, Kim Dingwall developed an Adapted Bowling League consisting of special education students from Brandon and Evansville schools. Last year, Osakis students joined the team, which consisted of 13 students this past year.
- Fast ForWord is a new program at Brandon School. Computer-based products accelerate learning by developing cognitive skills, memory, attention, processing, and sequencing. Through frequency, adaptivity, simultaneous development, and timely motivation, reading and learning improve. Results are apparent in only weeks instead of years.

- In computer applications classes, students make movies, take part in the "Technokids" program, create student posters and this past year completed the first-ever all color

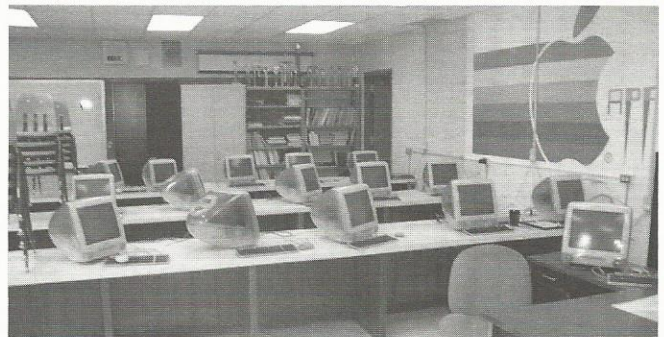
year book for the school.

- The science department is in the process of getting all new microscopes. A contest prize awarded to the school allowed for the purchase of a

scopecam, which is hooked to a microscope and to a TV to show students organisms and cells.

Some other changes brought to the Brandon School over the years include:

- All communication between teachers, parents and others is done via computer.
- A Student Information Portal allows parents to go online and view their child's grades, attendance, meal purchases, etc.
- A computerized lunch program features touch screen technology for meal purchases.
- Every room now features phones and computers.



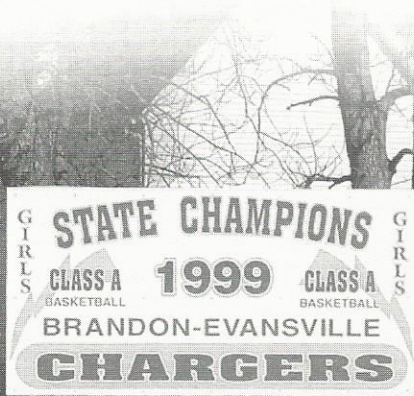
- The school now features two computer labs – one accommodates all class sizes so every student has his own machine. The other has newer machines to introduce OSX to students.
- The school has a new digital copy machine.
- The school is handicap accessible with the installation of elevators.
- The library card catalog is now computerized.
- Multimedia United Streaming was added in 2005.

- D.A.R.E. Program was added.
- A 1-Act Play opportunity is offered every year, with a musical opportunity offered every four years.
- The Accelerated Reader program started in 1996 for advanced readers.
- A reading buddy program was started for lower grades and ECFE participants.
- 4th graders do state presentations.
- The Brandon School Band performed in Florida for the first time in 1997. The band now performs in Florida every four years.
- A computer graphic arts class was added in 2003 and is offered every other year.
- For the past 12 years, seniors in the upper level art classes have created class murals. Upper level art students have also created sports murals in the school.
- Every day kindergarten was added.
- Smart boards were added to some rooms.
- The Math Masters program was added.



Charger Girls Softball 2006 Section 6A Sub-Section Champions
 Front: L-R Linsey Strom, Amanda Krueger, Lindsey Wagner, Kayla Boesl
 Middle: Jenna Meissner, Jessi Vosen, Carli Randt, Jackie Roers,
 Katrina Budke, Katie Boesl Back: Hanna Hintermeister, Nicki Olson,
 Sandee Olson Asst. Coach, Tiffany Lund, Melissa Johnson,
 Krista Plaster, Samantha Curwick, Shalyn Pohlmann,
 Pam Schjei Asst. Coach, Dana Jesnowski Head Coach

Front: Mandy Week, Jessica Hanson, Lori Becker, Rachel Shea
 Middle: Cameo Harper, Amy Becker, Debbie Thoennes, Amber Quinn,
 Karen Siira, Sara Foslien, Sherri Guetter
 Back: Tom Otte, Jim Rolf, Emily Week, Julie Thoennes, Debbie Slack,
 Stacy Roers, Kattie Arndt, Kami Jesnowski, Dick Simpson



1999 Chargers Girls Basketball Class A Champions

Brandon School



Brandon High School Band | 1973



1971 Homecoming Court

Seated: Jenell Severson, Elaine Strom, Dorothy Thoennes;
Back: Kathy Lanners, Ruth Johnson, Jody Ramsdell, Susan Koep



Brandon Baseball | 1904



Clarence "Satchel" Anderson

One of Brandon's most well-known sports figures was Clarence Anderson. Born in 1903, Anderson grew up on a farm in Moe Township and attended District 5 school. In 1923 he went into carpentry, working for Oscar Bergner, and later for Arthur Johnson.

In 1930, Anderson took over the carpentry group, which built mostly homes and barns. Some of the buildings that he and his crew built were the Christina Lake Church, many of the business buildings in Brandon, and quite a few of the homes in the area. In most projects he did the entire job – the planning, cement work, brick-work, carpentry, plumbing and heating.

Anderson attended Dunwoody Institute for six months in 1938 and learned bricklaying. Prior to that, his education included eight grades at District 5 and six months of high school. He also attended classes for adults at Alexandria Technical Institute to learn sheet metal work.

Anderson served as a scoutmaster and chair of the local Boy Scouts for 13 years, was a volunteer fireman for 27 years, served on the local school board and was an active member of Grace Lutheran Church.

But Anderson was best known for his contributions to the sport of baseball. He began playing in a cow pasture in Moe Township in 1920. He was an instrumental force in the Resorter's

League from its inception after World War II until his retirement in the late 1960s. He was a member of the Brandon Baseball Club, which won the 1951 Resorter's League title game.



He played all positions for the Brandon team, but could most often be found on the pitching mound.

Anderson could still be found on the field playing as a fill-in in 1972 at the age of 69. Anderson was involved with amateur baseball for more than 50 years, serving as a coach for 40 years. He was inducted into the Minnesota State Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame in 1967.

The Brandon baseball field was dedicated in his honor and became known as the

Clarence Anderson Field.

He died in 1987 at the age of 84.

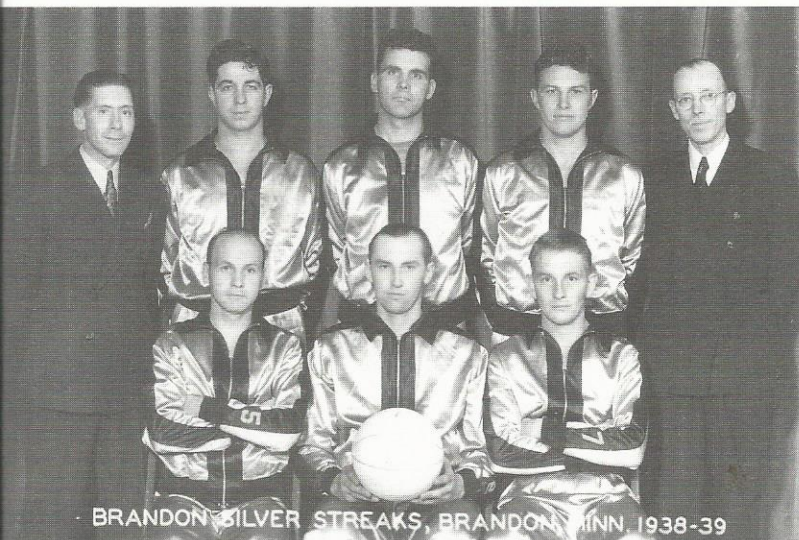


1951 Resorter League Champs: Back Row: Leroy Wallin, Clarence Lehn, Cortland Scherrer, Dick Johnson, Curtis Olson, Dale Walstad, Elphege Webskowski, Les Anderson, Eugene Stene, Wayne Bye and Oscar Pladson Front Row: Charles Erickson, Robert Lanners, Ray Johnson, Claud Harnett, Orvin Schjei, Clarence Anderson, Robert Olson

The Brandon Silver Streaks

The Brandon Silver Streaks basketball team was sponsored by the Brandon Firemen's Relief Association and played in the 1930s.

The team consisted mostly of coaches from Brandon and surrounding towns and played other amateur teams. Their uniforms were silver and blue with the face of a laughing fireman on the back.



Silver Streaks

Back: Oscar Pladson; Leslie Alden; George Roscoe; Bill Williams; Albert Holmgren Front: Marion Blaha; Russel Anderson; Robert Haried

The Silver Streaks were noted for winning the Minnesota Gold Medal Championship, beating the Minnesota Traveling Gophers in a game and beating the Rock Spring Sparklers, the Minnesota AAU Champions, in a playoff game at Brandon.

The team also played the Globetrotters and the Red Heads, a women's team.

Silver Streaks tickets were 10 cents during the team's first year and increased to 25 cents a game during the second season.

Brandon Softball Team

The first Brandon softball Team was organized in 1966 with Douglas County Co-Op as its sponsor.



1974 Brandon Softball Team

Back Row: Don Bakken, Dean Plaster, Pat Garrison, Jerry Klein, Tom Shea Front Row: Mike Benke, Bob Jamison, Gordon Doose, Jim Korkowski, Rich Kehoe, Pat Shea

Jerry Klein managed the team, which

played on a Wednesday night league in Alexandria. In 1968, the team got a new sponsor and became the First American Bank Team.

In 1975, Brandon hosted the first eight-team tournament using the baseball field and a small grass field west of the school.

In 1980, the softball complex was expanded to what it is today, through volunteer help and a donation from Bremer Corporation for fencing and lights.

The Brandon Community Club built the concession stand and some years later donated the building to the school.

Brandon now hosts a 32-team tournament every year, in conjunction with the Brandon Mid-Summerfest. Ball players park campers and pitch tents all over town in friends' yards and at Chippewa Park for this weekend.

It is one of the best tournaments in the state, with teams from all over the state participating. Some teams have returned every year for as many as 26 years.

Following are some of the organizations that have worked hard to make Brandon a strong community through the years.

The Brandon Community Club

The business and professional men of Brandon met at the Village Hall on January 8, 1934 for the purpose of starting a Commercial Club. There were 40 members in the club that first year. Its purpose was to promote business in the city.



Commercial Club Officers 1953
 Donald Hoplin, President;
 Walter Hoving, Secretary;
 Winston Johnson, Vice President
 and Eldor Stene, Treasurer

Through the years, the group has sponsored Christmas programs and drawings, Halloween parties, 4-H Achievement Days, Appreciation Nights, dances, games, lunches, an annual barbecue and Crazy Days. It also assisted with the new auditorium in 1936 and with the water system for the city.

The name Brandon Commercial Club was so called because it was originally intended for merchants, but the name was changed to Brandon Community Club to include a wider scope of members, and is now open to anyone interested in Brandon and its progress.

The Brandon Community Club has been the force that plans the Mid-Summerfest that takes place the first full weekend in August each year. Mid-Summerfest activities include a large parade, a Mid-Summerfest Queen pageant, the Lions Chicken Feed, a craft sale, softball games, a street



dance and many other activities. Many class reunions are also planned for this time.

These events are made possible by many dedicated workers.



Giggles the Clown and Judy Klein | 2005



Brandon Lions Club

The Brandon Lions Club was chartered in 1969 with the goal of recognizing community needs and developing means to meet those needs.



Lions Charter Members 1969

Back: Nick Bresson, Otto Wienrich, Eugene Griffen, Duane Johnson, J.O. Renkes, Les Anderson Front: Ralph Ziegleman, Reuben Myhr, Rev. Fred Bromhal, Myron Severson, Don Bakken

Organizations

The group has focused on agriculture, citizenship and patriotism, community betterment, education, health and welfare, international relations, safety, sight, conservation boys' and girls' programs and youth exchange programs.



2006 Lions officers

Back: Greg Slack, Mike Ranweiler, Jim Ondracek Front: Bob Reynolds, Rev. Dennis Preston, Leila Hanson, Harold Peterson

Some of the group's supported charities include Brandon School, student scholarships, Jingle Bells Telethon, Brandon Summer Recreation Project, Cub Scout Pack #445, Lions Leader Dog and Hearing Dog projects, Legion Baseball, Lions Club International Foundation, Melvin Jones Award and Brandon Senior Citizens.

Group projects include a youth fishing seminar, Lions auction, snowmobile radar run, Edgefield Cemetery, Douglas County Fair parking, community sign, road ditch cleanup, Brandon Lions Park, ice skating rink, tent and picnic table rental, Jingle Bells



distribution, Lions parade float and Mint sales, eyeglass recycling and diabetes detection clinic.

The group's annual chicken feed, held during the Mid-Summerfest, has become a popular event in the community.

Brandon Fin and Feather Sportsman's Club

The Brandon Fin and Feather Club was one of the first sportsman clubs in the country. Carp control, pheasant and duck raising programs, shelter-belt and tree planting, wildlife acres with corn plots, gun safety training courses and game fish rearing ponds have all been projects adopted through the years by this group.



The club's first project was a crow hunt. The event was begun to help control the large infestation of crows. The event consisted of a team competition with teams earning two points for each crow and one point for each crow egg. This became an annual event and continued for many years.

Later, jackrabbit hunts were started to control the jackrabbit population. The rabbit pelts were sold to raise money for the club.

During the dry years of the 1930s, members worked with the DNR to prevent lakes from drying up and causing damage to plants and wildlife due to lack of oxygen. Members also helped restock the lakes.

For a period of years, carp were excessively invading many of the lakes in the area, which led to declines in waterfowl and important native fish species. The club installed and maintained carp traps in several area lakes to help maintain a balance of fish species.

Members of the club also assisted with the poisoning of carp in Whiskey Lake and the restocking of the lake with game fish.

In recent years the club purchased land on Moon Lake and created a public boat landing. Without the support of the Fin and Feather Club, there would not have been a public access to that lake for area residents to enjoy. The club still owns and maintains this access.

The club has provided new docks on the public boat landings on Moon, Whiskey, Big Chippewa, Devils and Little Chippewa lakes, which the DNR now maintains.

One goal of the group is to provide for wildlife in an area with ever-decreasing natural habitat. The club sponsors 12 food plots for wildlife habitat; deer, pheasants, turkeys and other animals rely on these areas.



C.W. Cannon and M.O. Olson

The last several years the club has purchased and released 200 to 300 adult pheasants per year. Each spring, the club builds and distributes wood duck nesting boxes to help boost the local wood duck population.

A long-time favorite event sponsored by the club is the annual picnic. In the early years this was a smoked fish picnic for the men of the club.

The picnic evolved over time to include both smoked and fried fish and all of the fixings for the entire family.

With proceeds from fundraisers, the club has contributed to many community projects and organizations including junior prom, area baseball and softball programs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and other area events.

The Merry Tillers

The Merry Tillers, later named the Garden Club, began in March of 1969 with the purpose of



Merry Tillers Garden Club

Theresa Lehn, Evie Richards, Jean Johnson, Hazel Hermanson

Organizations

learning about flower and vegetable gardening and all aspects of yard beautification.

Members wanted a place to exchange ideas and to stimulate interest in yards and gardens, and to do their part to make the town of Brandon beautiful.

The group met once a month at members' homes. The Merry Tillers joined the Minnesota Horticultural Society and the District Horticultural Society. The club remained active until 2002.

The first year, some of the projects included planting, weeding and watering flowers in the city parks. At first the Great Northern Railroad furnished the flowers for the club to plant.

The club also held spring and fall plant sales, contests for students, and plants were potted for resale.

The club donated regularly to Jingle Bells and the Food Shelf. It also donated to Dollars for Scholars. Some other activities of the club were an annual flower show, Christmas lighting contest, tours to other gardens in the state, and keeping the flower planters in Brandon blooming and weeded all summer.



Merry Tillers Garden Club 1999

Front Row: Theresa Lehn, Lorraine Reynolds, Millie Peterson, Ella Schjei
Back Row: Hulda Rossum, Jean Johnson, Diane Korkowski, Evie Richards

Brandon Red Hatters

The Brandon Red Hatters organized in the spring of 2004. The only qualifications are that members must have a red hat and be over age 50.

Those over age 40 may join, but are required to wear pink hats. Hats must be worn to each event.

The object of the group is to have a good time. Each member suggests things they would like to do, such as day trips on a bus tour

potlucks, visiting flower gardens, parks, etc.

The group is responsible for flower planters in Brandon and has taken part in summer festival parades in Brandon and Garfield.





4-H Clubs

Area 4-H Clubs include the following:

- *Brandon Happy Knoll 4-H Club began as the Brandon 4-H Club in 1926. The first meetings were held at School District 82, which was known as the Happy Knoll School. In 1940, the club changed its name to Brandon Happy Knoll. A charter was awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to Happy Knoll 4-H Club in recognition of its organization as a Standard 4-H Club in 1945.*
- *Moe 4-H Club was organized July 11, 1928. It was one of the first clubs in the western part of the country. Membership included*

children from Moe, Holmes City, Brandon, Urness and Solem townships. In 1957, the club held a reunion for all members and on August 13, 1978, it celebrated its 50th anniversary at the Moe Town Hall.

- *Moses and Aaron 4-H Club came into existence on January 5, 1953. The club started through the efforts of the Millerville Farm Bureau.*



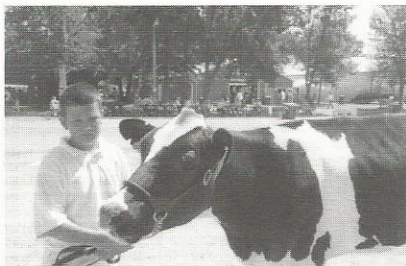
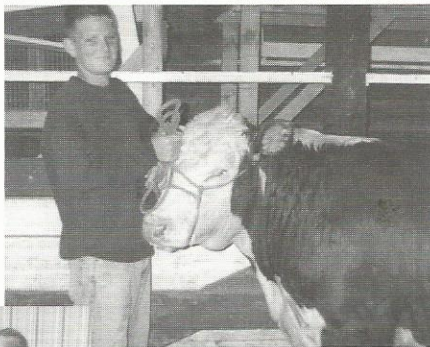
Boy Scouts

Boy Scout Troop #440, chartered to the Evansville Fire Department Relief Association, has been serving the youth of the western portions of Douglas County for 41 years.

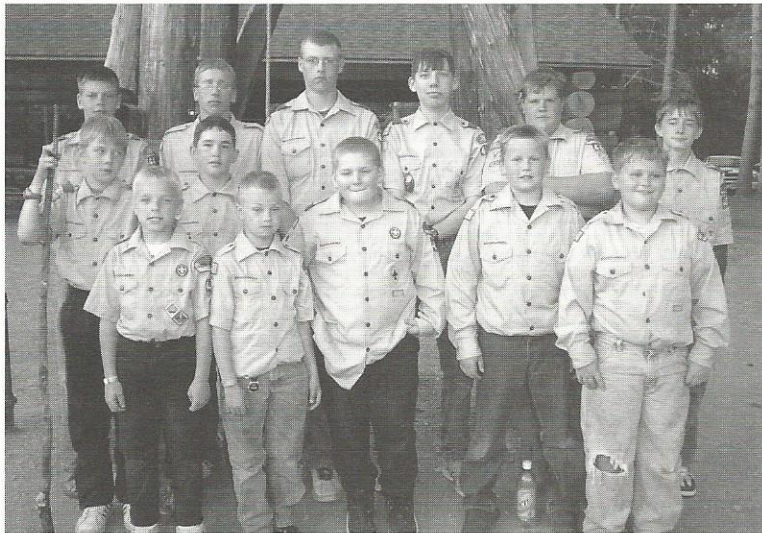
The program offers boys ages 11 to 17 the ability to learn outdoor and leadership skills they will use throughout their lives.

Several members have obtained the rank of Eagle, an accomplishment obtained by only about 2 percent of all boys who enter the scout program.

The troop is active in the community. This year alone, members have provided more than 100 hours of service.



Organizations



2005 Boy Scouts



Cub Scouts

Cub Scout Pack #445 is chartered to the Brandon Lions Club. Members are ages 6-10.

The organization helps to develop character and leadership. The leadership of this pack believes strongly in service to the community. The Scouts have provided well over 100 hours of service during the last year.

Over the last several years, nearly 100 percent of all boys turning age 11 have advanced into the Boy Scout Troop.



Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Troop #881 is made up of girls from the Brandon/Evansville area. Troop #881 is part of the Land of the Lakes Council located in Waite Park, and part of Service Unit #41.

Throughout the year, the scouts participate in activities and projects to earn patches and/or badges. Some outings have included a trip to the Science Museum, Arrowwood's Big Splash and Tastefully Simple. The girls have also put on a

*B r a n d o n
C o m m u n i t y
H a l l o w e e n p a r t y
a n d t a k e p a r t i n
t h e B r a n d o n a n d
E v a n s v i l l e
M e m o r i a l D a y
p a r a d e s .*



An early troop 1967



Residents of Brandon have enjoyed many different forms of recreation over the years. Picnics and get-togethers at Brandon City Park, Whiskey Lake, Moon Lake and Chippewa Park have always been favorite activities.

Swimming lessons were held at both Moon Lake and Chippewa Park. Summer fishing and winter ice fishing have always been popular.

In the early 1900s, people would gather at the George Skrove farm south of Brandon to watch daredevils ski from a 26-foot-high scaffold ski jump. Some accounts say that an additional 10 feet of scaffold was later added. Skiers would fly 65 feet into the air.

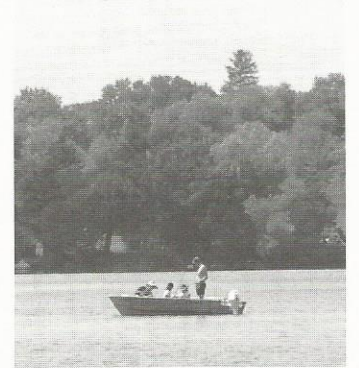
In 1913 there was an auto club that toured neighboring towns.



Brandon Auto Club at Leaf Valley 1913



Whiskey Lake



Ski Jump at George Skrove's Hill



Bergh family fishing



Recreation



Biels Family Orchestra

Music has also been an important part of the community. The Brandon Choral Club, the Brandon and Moe

Cornet bands, the Brandon Band, Biel's Family Orchestra, the Little German Band, the West and East Moe and Urness bands, The Jolly Dutchman Band and the Toot N' Gramps all filled the air with music through the years.



Toot N' Gramps

Ole's Old Timers, organized in the 1950s by Clint Moe, played for dances at the Brandon Auditorium, with money raised donated to buy playground equipment for Brandon's park.



Community Picnic at Moon Lake

The auditorium also served as a popular site for community dances and wedding dances, sporting events and roller skating.

On summer Saturday nights in the 1940s and 1950s after the shopping was done, there were free shows outside at the park near the elevator. Movies were shown, and the audience members brought their own blankets or chairs to sit on. People also brought their own popcorn. It was Brandon's version of a "drive-in" theatre!

The Brandon And Moe Cornet Bands 1912



The land on which Chippewa Park is now located, between Devils and Chippewa lakes, has been enjoyed for hundreds of years. Ojibwa Indians (also known as Chippewas) lived in the area between Little Chippewa and Devils Lake by at least 500 BC.



The land was originally homesteaded by Job Smith in 1866. Ownership progressed as follows:

- 1870 ☞ Robert White
- 1883 ☞ Lars E. Flyum
- 1883 ☞ Gilbert E. Gilbertson
- 1887 ☞ Lars E. Flyum
- 1919 ☞ Kari Flyum
- 1922 ☞ B.T. Teigen
- 1930 ☞ Thomas Hommedahl
- 1946 ☞ Hillard Nelson

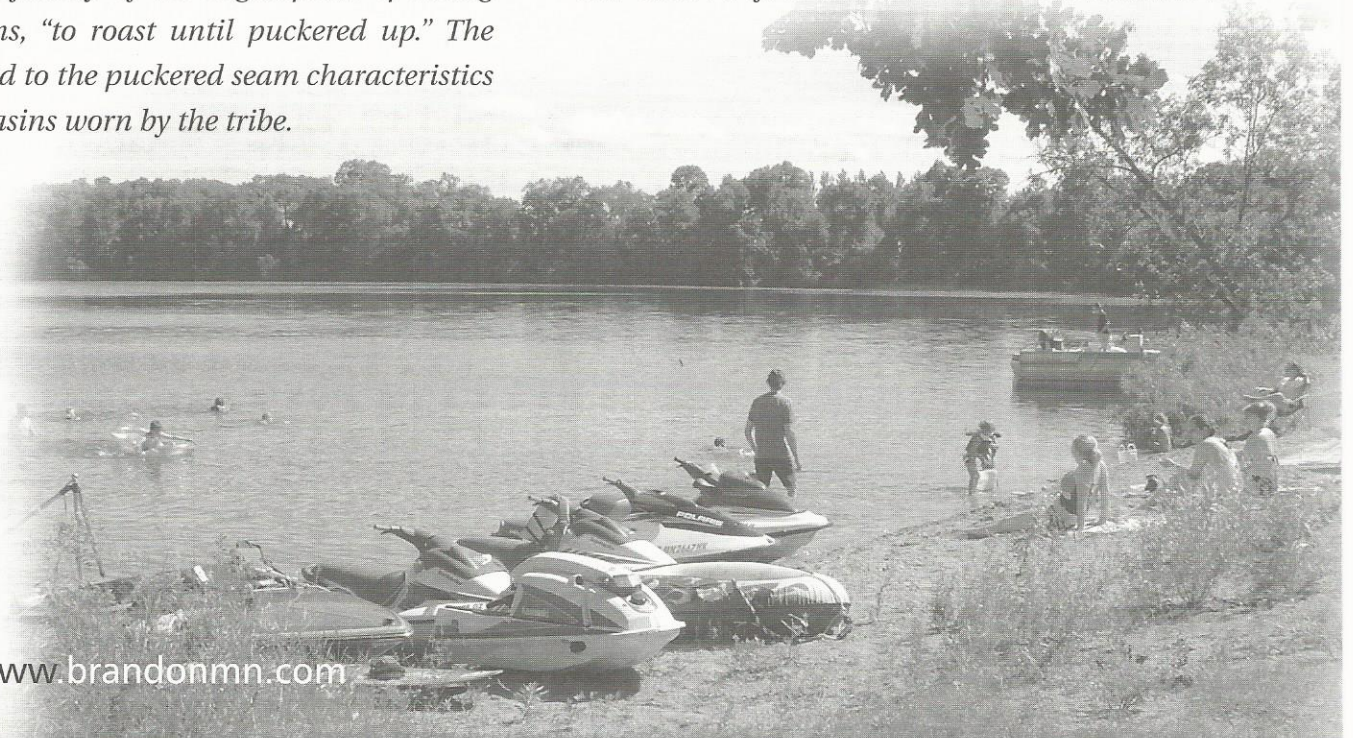
The Douglas County Community Fair was held at the site September 19-20, 1923. Former fairs, which had been held in Alexandria, had ended in 1915. In 1924, two county fairs were held – one at the Chippewa site and another in Alexandria.

In July of 1924, 3,000 people descended on the site to attend a Religious Pageant, *The Search for the Light*, given by the Luther Leagues of Brandon and Moe Norwegian Lutheran churches. The Land O' Lakes Band also performed at that event.

Through the years, the picturesque spot was the location of numerous church picnics and other organized events.

The last owners, Hillard and Delores Nelson, like others before them, allowed area residents to

The word Chippewa, a corruption of the name Ojibwe or Ojibway of the Algonquian speaking tribes, means, "to roast until puckered up." The word referred to the puckered seam characteristics of the moccasins worn by the tribe.



Chippewa Park

use and enjoy the area, which had become known as "Hillard's Park," at no charge.

The Nelsons desired to sell the 22-acre park to the public versus to a private party, allowing the acreage to be used for community and family events.

Their asking price was \$80,000. In 1985 a group organized as the West Douglas County Park and Historical Development



Association was formed. The group approached the Douglas County Board of Commissioners to ask for assistance in purchasing the park.

A state grant covered half of the purchase price. The association set out to raise the remaining funds necessary to purchase the park.

Many people donated \$100, which qualified them to be listed on a plaque that is displayed in the campground shelter. Numerous organizations also donated generously to help raise the 50 percent local share required to qualify for the grant.

Chippewa Park became the fifth park owned by Douglas County.

A Flag Day celebration was held at the park in 1987. More than 2,500 people attended the event, which raised \$8,500 toward the park's purchase. In December of 1988, the land was deeded to the county for use as a county park.

A visit to Chippewa Park will tell you why people have been drawn to the place through the

years. Two thousand feet of shoreline of Little Chippewa Lake and twice that on Devils Lake are probably reason enough.

Couple that with the unusual land form, a

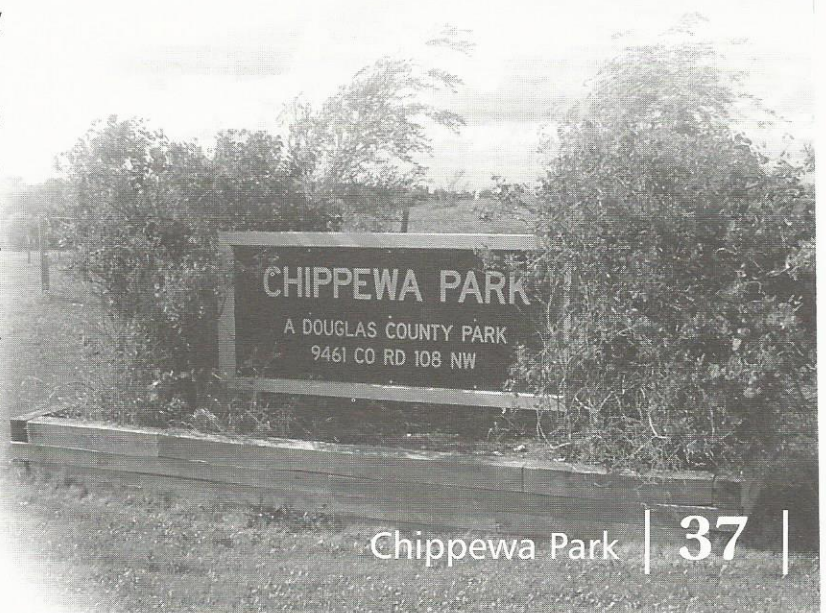
narrow isthmus 300 feet wide and about 2 feet above the lake level, and you have a perfect place to spend a hot summer day.

Chippewa Park is unique in that it is the only one of the county parks that

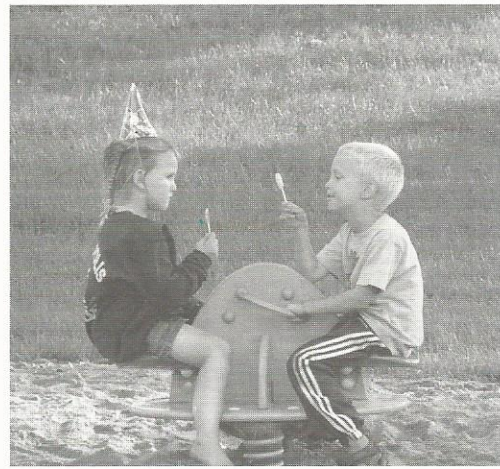
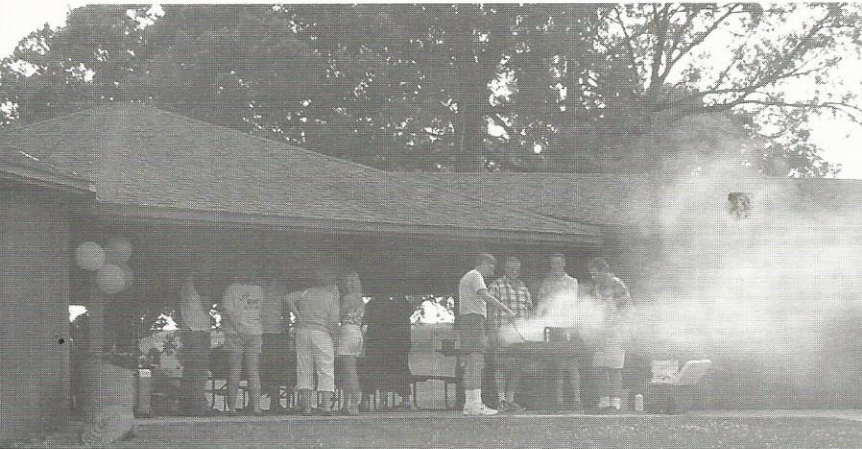
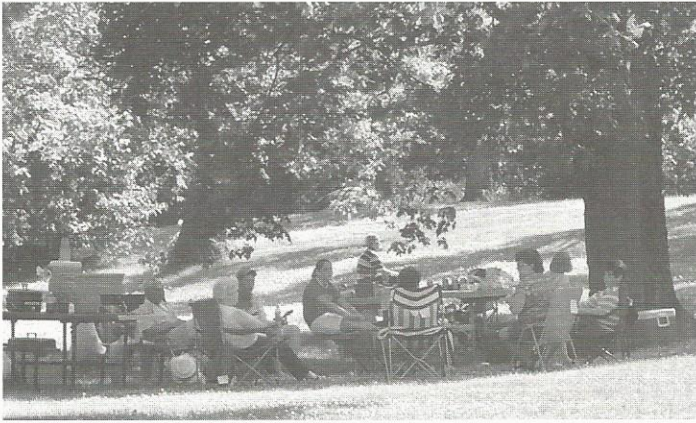
supports camping. There are eight developed tent sites and a shower building.

The park is 37.25 acres. It offers picnic facilities and is a popular swimming and fishing spot. And its history alone brings uniqueness to the park.

An archaeological study was done on the area in 1986, and in 1991 a new road was constructed. During this process, pottery and other artifacts were found, including fire-cracked rock, bison bone and body shards, dated from 500 BC to 1200 AD.



*Summer recreation
and gatherings at
Chippewa Park
2005*



Experimental City

Minnesota Experimental City

One of the most controversial topics to affect the Brandon area over the years was the proposal of a "Minnesota Experimental City" (MXC) – a joint project of the University of Minnesota and the federal government.

The idea, conceived in 1966, included planning, designing and building "an experimental new city... in which the human condition would be improved significantly and where, as a national proving ground, technological innovations could be demonstrated and evaluated."

The project was to embody innovative concepts and opportunities in social, technological, economic and physical areas.

A national steering committee was formed and a three-year study was performed, funded by public and private money. The project was estimated to cost \$8 to \$12 billion.

A total of 21 sites were originally considered, with that number quickly narrowed to six. Requirements stated the site must be at least one hour from a metro site, the weather must be suitable for an airport, and there must be proper drainage and a minimum risk of ecological damage.

Designed for 250,000 people, the city was to cover more than 60,000 acres. Only one-sixth of that area was to be paved, with the remaining acres to be open space, parks, wilderness and farms.

Partially enclosed by a geodesic dome, MCX would contain a branch of the University of Minnesota and of the 3M corporation.

MXC would be a vehicle-free zone, with cars parked at the entrance to the city and a "people mover" transporting people into the city to their

homes. An automated highway system would connect the town with the outside world. There would be no schools, as the city would foster life-long learning with everyone a student and a teacher.

According to the plans, work was to begin in 1974. It was estimated that the MXC would have 250,000 residents within 10 years. It was expected to be "one of the great research meccas of the world."

Eventually the site committee narrowed the search to two sites – one in Douglas County and the other in Aitkin County.

The Douglas County site was a 74,000-acre site in the northwestern portion of the county. About 96 percent of the land was privately owned, and bordered Pelican Lake east of Ashby and adjoined I-94, Evansville, Brandon and Millerville.

Many protested the idea. Some of the arguments against the project were that it would disrupt ecology, alter the lifestyles of everyone living near it, and that there was very little consultation with the people in the area who would be affected by it.

Aitkin County was eventually chosen because 69 percent of the land in question there was publicly owned, 80 percent was forest area, the surface transportation was less developed, it was stronger in regional development and the residents had a stronger interest.

While the project consumed a great deal of planning, time and money, it was never built.



The first recorded meeting of an American Legion Post in the western part of Douglas County was held in Evansville on December 18, 1919 under the charter of West Douglas County Post #188 of Evansville. This post was comprised of war veterans from Evansville, Erdahl, Melby, Brandon, Garfield and Millerville. Others from as far away as Parkers Prairie also attended.

During the 1920s, veterans in and around Brandon formed their own post as an extension of Post #188. They called themselves The Brandon Legion or The Argonne Forest Legion (the Argonne Forest was where several Brandon veterans fought during the last military offensives of World War I).

The organization eventually disbanded and some members established Fort Chippewa Post #936 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in March 1935. An auxiliary was also formed.

Post #936 was moved to Alexandria in 1940 and remains active there today.

Following the end of World War II in 1945, the Brandon Legion was started up again, and chartered as the American Legion Argonne Forest Post #278. A legion auxiliary was also formed.

The post was chartered to "honor all veterans of all wars and those who died in service for our country."

Post #278 and its auxiliary remain active in Brandon today. The legion and its auxiliary still do an annual Memorial Day program and have supported such activities as sponsoring a community baseball team and representatives to Boys and Girls State, supporting the Poppy Program, VA Hospital, Camp Courage, Gillette Children's Hospital, Minnesota Home School and Forgotten Children and other charitable programs.

Memorial services are held to honor local veterans every Memorial Day and take place at the

Earl C. Sletto Veterans' Memorial Park in Brandon.

World War II Veteran Roy Christenson came home from the service for his mother's funeral. When he returned to action he was killed on his first flight. These veterans came home to attend Roy's funeral. Francis Brennon, Howard Johnson, Walter Lorsung, Frank Goering and Gilferd Newhouse.



For many years, a flag depicting three gold stars was hung by the American Legion in front of the Brandon Auditorium in honor of the following three veterans:

- Machinist Mate First Class Earl C. Sletto, U.S. Navy, son of Emil and Sarah Lea Sletto, was stationed at Pearl Harbor on the battleship USS Arizona. He was entombed

with the ship in 1941 and posthumously awarded the Purple Heart.

- Seaman 1st Class Vernon D. Smedstad, U.S. Navy, was assigned to the destroyer USS Plunkett in 1942 on convoy duty in the North Atlantic Ocean. Following the Battle of Salerno in World War II, he developed food poisoning. He was hospitalized in Sicily and later transferred to the Veterans Hospital at Fort Snelling, Minnesota where he died in 1943.

- 2nd Lieutenant Roy H. Christenson, U.S. Air Force, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Christenson of Brandon, was killed at age 25 in a plane crash on a routine training flight at Kunming Air Base in Kunming, China in 1945. He was a fighter pilot flying P-51s in the China India Burma War Theater, World War II. He was awarded the Bronze Star.

Some of Brandon's veterans include the following:

- Winston Johnson, U.S. Air Force 2nd Lieutenant, served as a B29 Bombardier for three years in World War II.
- Clifford Lund served on USS Sterett.
- Cliff, Kenneth and Francis Strom all served in World War II. Cliff was in the Merchant

War Veterans

Marine from 1943 to the end of the war and brought supplies via ship to frontline troops in Casablanca, India, North Africa and Europe. Kenneth flew 50 missions over Europe and Francis flew 58 missions in the Pacific.

- Lt. Muriel (Olson) Kappler, 42nd Field Hospital – a mobile 400-bed organization – reported to Army Nurse Corps in 1943 in Missouri. She went to Normandy and was stationed near Worchester England.
- Theodore Christopher Plaster was a World War I veteran.



Memorial Day 2005

Robert Thue, Peter Johnson, Gustav Svee, Haaken Tiller, Oscar Botner, Ingvald Helgeson, Bernard Olson, Ole Therkelson, Hans Helgeson, Alfred Albertson, John Juntunen, Oscar Josephs, Peter Josephs, Herb Langhough, Victor Severson, Victor Ostlund, John Pluth,

Theodore R. Halverson, Walter Hoving, Fred H. Olson, Louis Lea, August Buse, Harvey L. Helgeson, Leo Smedstad, Axel Carlson, Henry Handke, Edwin Toft, Edwin Severson, Selmer Syverson, Helmer Gulson, Robert O. Botner, T.C. Plaster, Edwin

Peterson, Sam Myers, Imos Elness, Olaf Haglund, Harry Ruana, Olaus Johnson, Oscar Newhouse, Fred Foslien, Carl Halverson, William S. Johnson, Harold Gustav Johnson, Melvin Shadduck, George J. Casey, Palmer Foslien, Jack Kangas.

Deceased honored Veterans from the Brandon area honored on Memorial Day in Brandon

Civil War: Swen Olson, Peter Larson, Andrew Urness, Ames Johnson, John Nelson, C.J. Blatt, Ole Brandon, Charles Brown, Andrew Burkee, Wm. Hanson, John W. Hanson, Mils Halvorson, Thomas Holleque, Lars Lee.

World War I: George H. Hanson, John Knudson, Edwin Berg, Conrad Berg, Rudy Lee, Oscar Rose, Joel Angen, James L. Scherrer, Carl Linnard, Joe Ross, Harry Falaas, Richard Dahl, Emil Larson, George Courier, Nick Turchin, Victor Dorsch, George Casey, Edwin Evju, Levi Foslien, Clarence Newhouse, Harold Hanson, Henry Syverson, Oswald Olson, Thomas Julseth, Ole Johnson,

World War II:

Vernon Smedstad, Tony Skrove, Roy Christenson, Miller Falaas, Henry Pehan, Warren Toft, Lawrence Mahan, Andrew J. Gabriel, Walter Lorsung, Mark Kelly, Earl Sletto, Norman Landru, Sylvester Quam, Theo. Thorson, Earl Olson, Ansten Landru, Harvey Helgeson, Harold Hanna, Jack Olson, Edwin Landers, Oscar Logan, Theo. Lehto, George Mattila, Kenneth Olson, Francis Haabala, Ervin Lehto, Leo Elkie, Orrin Enberg, Marvin Hogan, Ray Hassler, Eugene Giffen, Newton Arntson, Everett Olson, Wilton Thompson, Phillip Brennon, Palmer



Peterson, Lloyd Sletto, Louis Kapphahn, Hilding Diment, James Scherrer, Arnold Josephson, Halver Orlando Newhouse, Leon Rollins, Stan Kaess, Paul Foslien, Theodore Lehto, Harvey Josephson, Edwin Thorson, Ralph Ness, Lawrence Thorson, Kenneth Strom, Elmer Juntunen, Reuben Olson, Gerald "Swede" Johnson, Lloyd Geisness, Phil Linder, Henry Helgeson, Axel Myrin, Lynn Fatland, Clinton Moe, Ray Haabala, Vernon Peterson, Erick Wallin, Francis Albertson, Art Larson, Leonard Schulte, Michael Q. Webb, Darwin Hartke, Richard Buse, Virgil Muecke, Lorne Newhouse, Clarence Olson, Les Anderson, Melvin Olson, Reuben Hogan, Herb Johnson, Othelia Luetgers, Dwayne Thoreson, Francis Brennon, Rudy Lander, Hans C. Hanson, Winston Peterson, Ford Thorton, Inga Larson, Elmer Luetgers, Aloys Wagner, Clifford Thorson, Wilford Korkowski, Norman Severson, Ervin Larson, Clinton Olson, Harold Smith, Emil Juntunen, Orvin Salto, Ralph C. Peterson, James P. Magnuson, Carl Haabala, Frank Goering, Clifford Lund, Donald G. Peterson, Kenneth Johnson, Orville Imes, Ralph Schreiner, Howard Lindquist, Edwin Knight, Agnes Doss, Eddie Josephson, Edwin Kemppainen, Frank Defrain, Herb Johnson, Eugene Myrin, Donald Syverson, Kenneth Johnson, Waldemar Swantz, Olga Howland.

Korean Conflict: Gerald Boever, Marvin Cichy, Norman Hogan, George Lund, Ervin Cichy, Donald Betterman, Keith L. Price, Sr, James Richards, Robert Lanners, Ralph Angen, Nathan Tolifson, Kenneth Cichy, Robert Olson, Jack Korkowski.

Cold War: David Thompson, Bob Schultz, Charlie Koep, Courtney Challey, Roger Alstead, Jim R. Anderson.

Vietnam Convlict: Mathias Charles Haabala, Clayton Jern, Donald Lee, John Blankenship, Ronald Fischer, David Fjoslien.

Gulf Wars: Roy W. Torguson, Darwin Klukken, Kory Severson

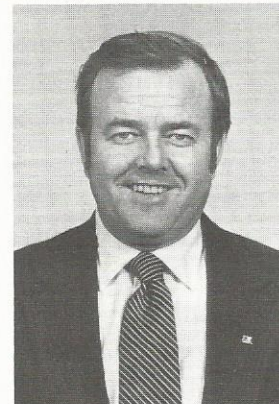
Honorary Member: Fran Fuller Who Was The Unit Bugler For Many Years.

Two of the area's most well-known politicians are Dave Fjoslien and Hilda Bettermann.

Dave Fjoslien

Dave Fjoslien served as a Minnesota State Representative as a Republican from 11B.

A graduate of the Brandon High School in 1954, he also attended the University of Minnesota Agricultural School.



He was in the Minnesota House from 1972 until 1986. Fjoslien was instrumental in establishing the Little Falls Veterans Cemetery and preserving the U.S. Senator Knute Nelson's historical house in Alexandria.

In 1973 he helped defeat a proposal to build MXC, the Minnesota Experimental City in his district. (See separate story on MXC in the book.)

In the early 1980's, Fjoslien introduced a bill to make the Kensington Runestone Park a Minnesota historic site, changing the classification of the park from publicly owned to a state historical site owned by the county. The bill never passed.

Fjoslien was on the legislative committee and special taskforce that worked to resolve a controversy involving the 400-plus kilovolt DC powerline, and was instrumental in having state laws rewritten concerning the powerline siting process to ensure such situations do not reoccur.

He was a supporter of the fuel-alcohol (ethanol) production as a means of using farmer's commodity.

He helped to establish the Earl C. Sletto Memorial Park in Brandon. A granite monument was erected commemorating three Brandon servicemen lost in war.

Politicians

He was a member of the Army National Guard from 1953 until his military retirement in 1996. He was a paratrooper with the US Army 101st Airborne Division, and was an Army aviator.

He enjoyed flying all his life and enjoyed piloting many types of aircraft. He also worked as a commercial crop sprayer.

In 1985, Fjoslien was named Minnesota State Representative of the Year by the Minnesota Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.

Dave Fjoslien was an active member of the Brandon area community, serving on many local boards and committees, including: Selective TV , Midwest Air Society and Project New Hope. He was a member of the Minnesota Livestock Feeders Association, Lions Club, Eagles Club, the Farm Bureau and NFO.

He died December 14, 2004 at age 68.

Hilda Bettermann

Hilda Bettermann, a resident of Brandon Township, was elected as Minnesota State Representative for District 11B in 1990. After the 1990 census, new legislative district boundaries were drawn for the 1992 election. The District is now 10B.

When she first sought office, Bettermann was an instructor at the Alexandria Technical College, and had been a legal secretary/legal assistant.



Bettermann served on the House Labor Management, Education, Higher Education Policy and Finance, Trade and Economic Development, Agriculture, Rules, Ways and Means, and Capital Bonding committees.

While in the legislature, Bettermann was a member of the "Gang of Eight" (so nicknamed by Twin Cities newspapers) who spearheaded workers compensation reform.

She was the original House author of the Conceal/Carry handgun legislation.

She was a proponent of reinstating the death penalty in Minnesota for first-degree murder and authored such legislation.

Bettermann was an Assistant Minority leader in the Republican House Caucus her last five years in the legislature and chaired the caucus personnel committee.

Governor Carlson appointed her as a legislative member to the Workers Compensation Advisory Council, the Minnesota State College and University Trustee Advisory Council, and the Rural Health Advisory Council.

After serving Minnesota for eight years in the House, Bettermann retired from public office prior to the 1998 election and returned to a full time position at the Alexandria Technical College.

Upon her retirement, Governor Carlson appointed Bettermann to the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice, and she served on that board as a public member from 1998 to 2006.

She currently serves on the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, having been appointed by Governor Tim Pawlenty. She and her husband still reside in the Brandon community.

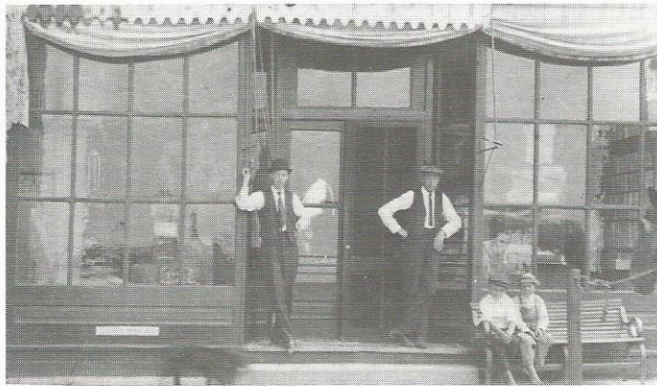
Numerous businesses have served the residents of Brandon for the past 125 years. Following is just a glimpse at some of them...

☛ Halvor Engemoen of Holmes City built one of the town's first stores. It was later owned by Leizinger and Ruppelius, and then sold to Albert Holmgren and Henry Christenson.

When Holmgren died, his interest was purchased by Elda and Roy Christenson and the store became known as Christenson's

Store or Corner Store. A side room was built at one time that housed a banking business and barber-shop.

The store was in operation until 1945 when Roy Christenson died. The contents were sold to R.H. Dahl and moved to Dahl's Store and the building was sold to Hoplin Hardware and dismantled. New buildings were constructed which now house Ostlund Hardware and the Brandon Post Office.



Ruppelius & Leitzinger | later Holmgren & Christenson

☛ The proprietor of the harness shop was Prosper Siedlinger, who once had a dry cleaning shop and then a small newspaper.

☛ The Wold Brothers General Merchandise Store was built in 1898 with living quarters upstairs. Carl A. Wold and his brother were engaged in a

general merchandise business here for seven years. Carl later published the Brandon Echo and his wife, Eva Emerson Wold, was the county school superintendent.

The building was later converted to a feed and

seed store managed by Albert Haber. It was sold to John (J.O.) Renkes in 1920 and operated until 1977.

☛ Brandon's light plant kept the town lit with generators. It was run by Peter



J.O. Renkes Feed Store

Larson. When Ottertail Power Company started, that building was converted to a car repair garage.

☛ The Handke Garage was operated by Robert Handke and his son, Henry. They did mechanical work and Henry also drove the first Brandon school bus.



Dahl's Store 1938
Clara Dahl, Lillian Bergh, Anton Strom,
Richard Dahl, girl in front is Laverle Bergh

Former Businesses

☛ One early Brandon building housed a rooming house on the second floor and a cream and egg buying station on the first floor. It was operated by James Scherrer, Sr.

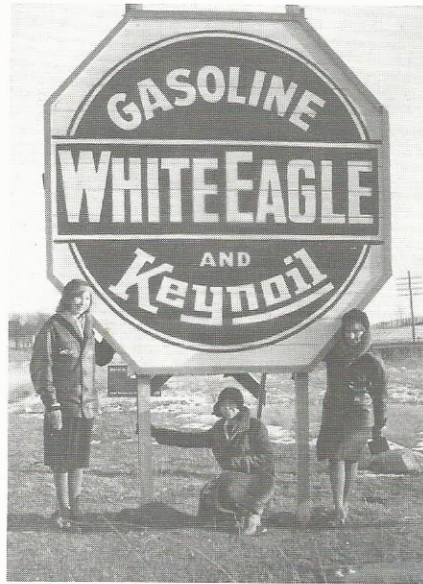
The space was later rented by Charlie Schelin, who moved his grocery store there after fire destroyed his other site in 1943. Schelin was in the grocery business for 42 years.

After his death, the building was sold to Meadow Lane Enterprises. For a time it housed Charlie's Place, a teen center; Hermanson Carpeting; then Shea Carpeting.

☛ A hardware store owned by Hoplin and Nelson had living quarters in the front half of the second floor and a funeral home in the back half. It was located on the site of the present Municipal Liquor Store.

Other businesses from Brandon's past include:

- ☛ A shoemaker's shop.
- ☛ The White Eagle gas station, run by Theodore Landru.
- ☛ O.F. Olson's Hardware Store.
- ☛ A hotel operated by two Foslien sisters.
- ☛ The Peter Larson garage, owned by Theodore Jacobson.
- ☛ A beauty parlor owned by Mrs. Schulke, wife of Brandon's barber.
- ☛ A blacksmith shop operated by Ed Norgren.
- ☛ A photography studio, Thompson Studio.
- ☛ A cattle buying station and



School teachers in 1929

loading shed was located next to the railroad tracks.

☛ A dray wagon was operated by Ray Arndt and his father. They also hauled gravel.



Hoplin-Nelson Funeral Coach
Rueben Hermanson & Ole Hoplin

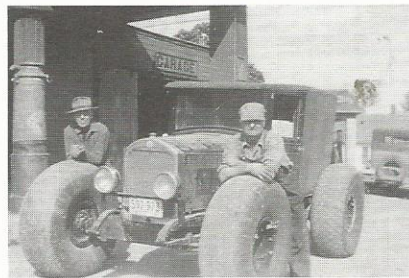


Schelin's Store | Charlie Schelin & Carol Rossum



Jacob Tamble family | 1900
James, Johanna, Elsie, Joe, Louise, Susan, Jacob Tamble

- ☛ A furniture store owned by Jacob Tamble.
- ☛ A livery barn was located behind City Hall. In the late 1920s it was moved to a farm site.
- ☛ A hotel was owned by William F. Meissner. The lower level later housed a real estate business and insurance business.
- ☛ A drug store had a doctor's office in the back. It later became Schelin's Grocery Store.
- ☛ Videen's Restaurant also housed a small jewelry business and a barbershop.
- ☛ Meissner's garage.
- ☛ Carl Scherrer's oil and gas business.



Meissner Garage
Clarence Johnson & Albert Meissner



Scherrer Oil | Carl Scherrer

☛ Brandon had a number of blacksmiths over the years, including Ed Norgen, Harry Ruana, Art Larson, Jim Larson, George Herring and John Smith.

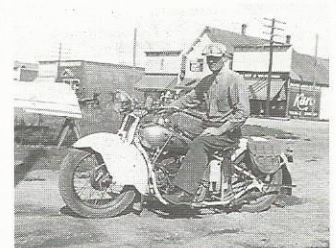
☛ Cooty's Station was located on the corner of Front Street and Nelson Avenue.



1938 Dave Myers standing in front of Cooty's Station

☛ From 1931 to 1940, Harvey Bolin sold Oldsmobiles, GMC trucks and Case farm machinery in the "old potato warehouse." Bolin also operated an airplane repair service and owned the Two Havens Resort on Lake Chippewa.

Harvey owned many vintage airplanes such as his first airplane in 1931, "The Swallow OX5." The plane pictured is the "Losley Scout Biplane."



Harvey Bolin

Both of these have an open cockpit. Another plane that he loved was a "Piper J-3 Cub." He had a hanger and air strip north of Brandon in a farmer's field. In the winter his ski planes could be seen parked on the ice near his home on Big Chippewa Lake.



Former Businesses

The Brandon Lumber Company

The Brandon Lumber Company was first owned by Minneapolis lumber baron C.A. Smith. Charles Rosengren began working for Smith in Minneapolis upon emigrating from Sweden, and was later sent to run the business in Brandon. Charles reportedly owned the first automobile in Brandon.

Charles married O.F. Olson's daughter, Emily, and eventually moved to Fergus Falls to run a lumber business.

Charles' brother, Oscar Rosengren, took over management from 1909 until he retired in 1932. Otto Johnson then took over the business. He was married to O.F. Olson's daughter, Agnes.

Otto, along with his son, Winston, ran the business until Otto's death in 1941. In 1942 Winston was drafted into the Army Air Corps, so Rosengren returned to run the company. Winston was discharged from the service in 1945 and took over running the business full-time.

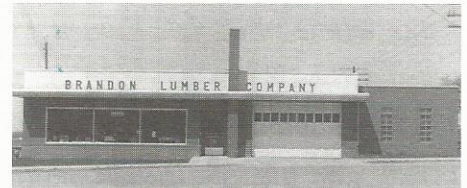
Many remember Winston's Golden Retriever named Lad who accompanied him to the post office and carried the newspaper back to the lumberyard.



Charles Rosengren

Winston would design and draw up house plans with a complete list of lumber needed. Dimensions for any project were brought to the lumberyard and boards would be custom sawed. Hilltop Lumber of Alexandria eventually purchased the saw.

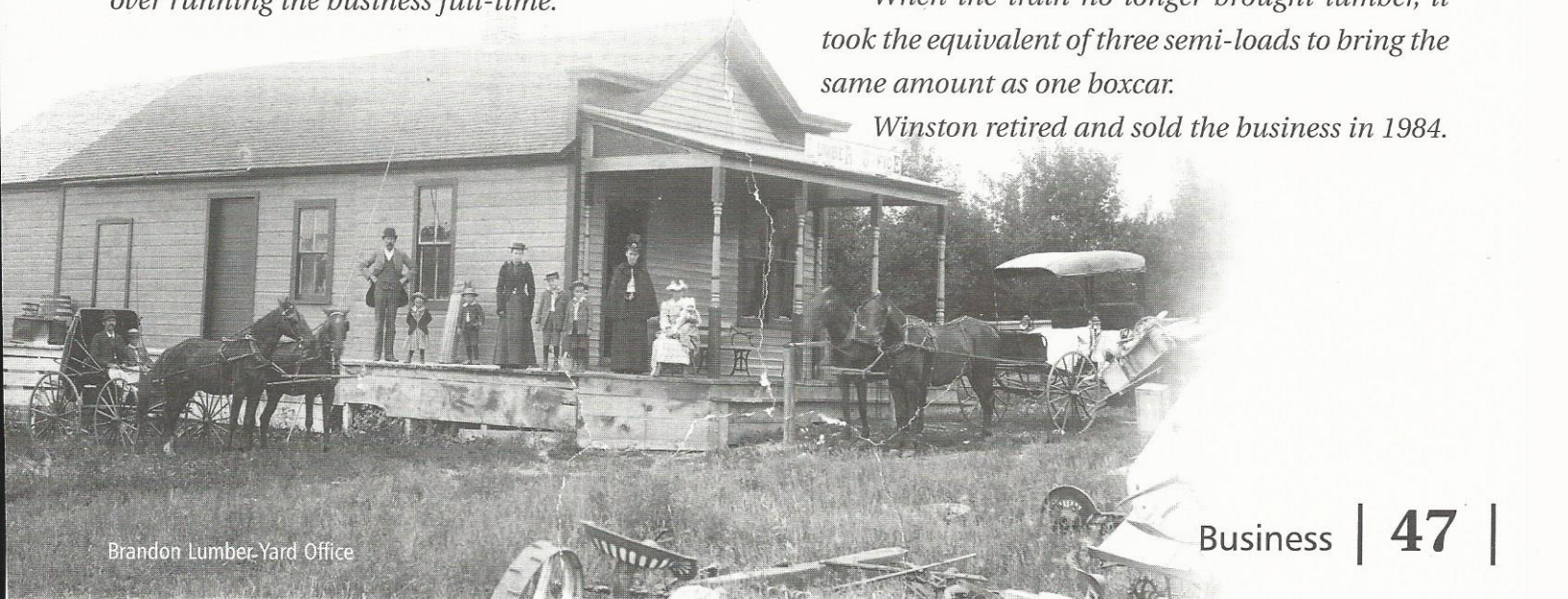
Winston constructed a new lumberyard building on the same site in 1950. The office section was built first, and later a warehouse was added.



Lumber arrived by train. It was unloaded with the aid of a conveyor into the warehouse, where it was sorted by grade and stored for sale.

When the train no longer brought lumber, it took the equivalent of three semi-loads to bring the same amount as one boxcar.

Winston retired and sold the business in 1984.



Brandon Lumber Yard Office

Brandon Creamery

The Brandon Creamery originated in 1911 around 413 Front Street E. The new creamery, on the corner of Central Avenue and 2nd Street, was built in 1929.

Between 1929 and the early 1940s, the creamery accepted only cream, so farmers did their own separating.

In the early 1940s, because of the war, the government needed whole milk, so farmers were no longer required to separate it. Some did, however, so the creamery could continue to make butter.

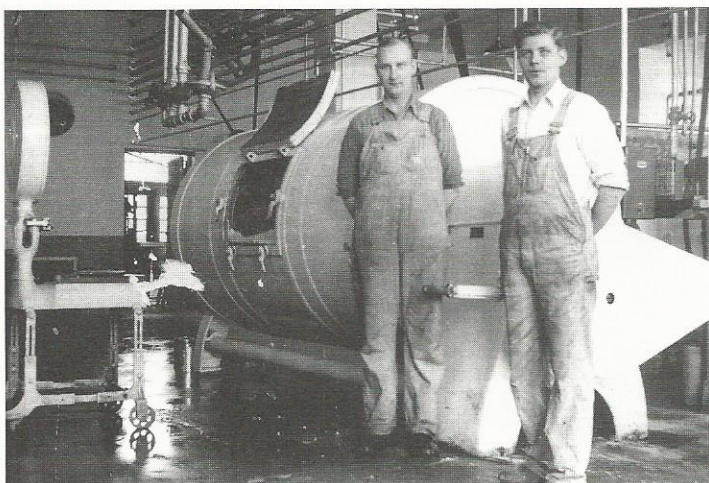
Some whole milk was hauled to a place where powdered milk was made for servicemen.

Ed Augdahl served as a buttermaker. T.C. Plaster and his son, Darold, hauled the butter to Alexandria to be shipped around the country via refrigerated rail car. They hauled about 400 pounds of butter at a time to the depot in a one-and-a-half-ton truck.

Other businesses operated from the creamery building as well. On the second level there were dental offices run by Dr. Nordine and later Dr. Walter Porter, and a salon owned by Mrs. Haber. There were also apartments, and at one time a

turkey processing plant. When processed, the turkeys were frozen, hauled to Alexandria and shipped by rail around the country.

Downstairs there was a locker plant where people could rent cubbyholes to store frozen meat before most homes had freezers.



Ed Augdahl & Howard Pederson

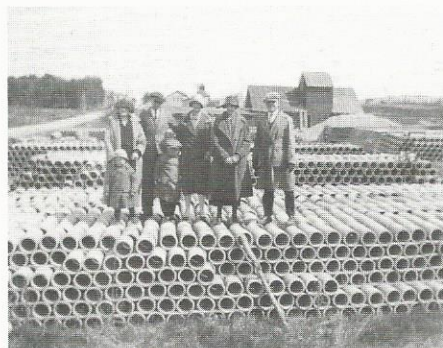
As a boy, Darold Plaster made egg crates at the creamery. Farmers brought in eggs, which were candled and crated.

Ralph Toft was manager, Ted Haabala was the buttermaker and Evangeline Erickson was the bookkeeper.

In 1973, Mrs. Leroy Larson and Mrs. Donald McHenry purchased the building and converted it into 11 apartments.

Brandon Tile Manufacturing Company

The Brandon Tile Manufacturing Company, also known as the Brandon Tile Factory, was built in 1914 by Theo. Knutson of Garfield near the railroad tracks. It was owned and operated by brothers Oscar and Clarence Newhouse. The two also farmed and did surveying work.



Former Businesses

The factory was powered by a 20-horsepower Mogul engine and featured a continuous cement mixer. Cement was delivered by the railroad and sand was hauled from a gravel pit at Moon Lake. A Monarch tile machine made six tile per minute from six to 16 inches in diameter.

Tiles were cured in steam rooms, with the steam boiler fired by wood or coal. Tile were steamed overnight and then unloaded in the yard, where at times 60,000 tile were stored.

Clarence Newhouse passed away in 1944 at age 47. His brother operated the company for another year before it was disbanded and the machinery was sold.

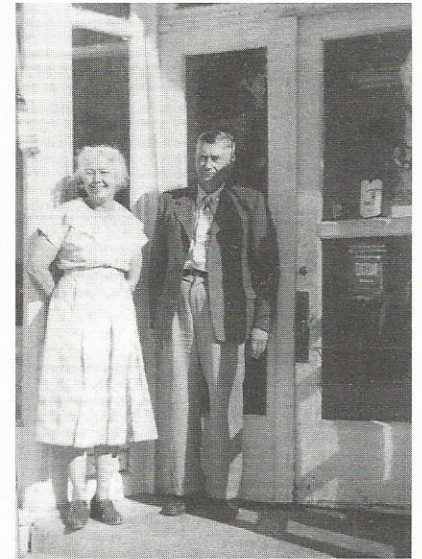
B.T. Teigen Store | Dahl's Store

The B.T. Teigen Store was a general store owned by Bottol and Bertina Teigen. It had groceries, shoes, clothing, hats, jewelry, gift items and other things.

For a time, plates with the Teigen Store name printed on them were given as premiums. Each

time customers shopped in the store, they got a card punched, and when it was all punched, they could select a premium.

Richard Dahl, an employee, and his wife, Clara, later purchased the store and changed its name to Dahl's Store. The Dahls were in business until 1955, at which time Bob Kloehn purchased the property, removed the building and built his second store on the site.



Clara & Richard Dahl

Rogney's Café

Rogney's Café got its start in 1928, when Theodore and Tina Rogney moved to Brandon from Wisconsin, having purchased a restaurant from Martin Olson.



Tina, Lorraine, and Theodore Rogney and Dewey the dog



They brought along their own crew – Willard, James, Richard, Glenn, Lorraine, and pet dog, Dewey.

A daughter, Ann, came later, as she was teaching school. When Highway 52 came through the area, crews worked 24 hours a day and the café was open to feed them 24 hours a day.

The family moved from the area in 1939 due to Tina's illness.

Other owners over the years included the Pehans, Louis Kapphahn, Martin Olson and George Courier. Courier owned the café when it burned in 1943.

This café was located on Front Street where the Brandon Communications building now stands.

Roy Strom and other trucking operations



The Brandon Shipping Association began under the management of Mike Bitzan in the late 1920s. Livestock was shipped by rail to South St. Paul.

In 1929, Frank Lehn started a second shipping association, which shipped by truck. Later, Roy Strom and the Lund Brothers, Willie and Walter, also began independent trucking systems.

The two shipping associations dissolved, and in 1943 Roy Strom bought the Lund's operation. Some of Strom's drivers were Cliff Augdahl, Tony

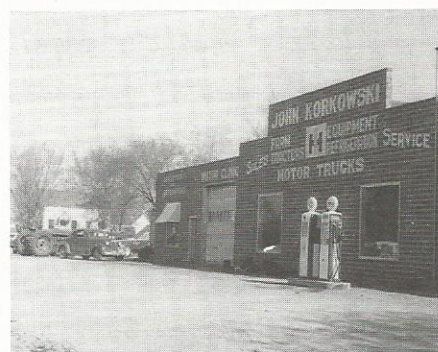
Skrove, Ray Stich, Dorlan Ranstead, Kenneth Schjei, Dayton and Les Hermanson, Vernon and Cliff Strom, Ralph Angen, Dean Christopherson and Ervin Grubb.

In 1959, Strom was hired as manager of the Garfield Shipping Association.

In 1968, he sold his operation to Kenneth Schjei. In 1979 Schjei Trucking was sold to Lowry Transfer under the management of Bruce Wagner.

John Korkowski, Implement Dealer

John Korkowski purchased the McCormick Deering implement business from Nels Kronberg in



1928 (Nels Kronberg's Implement Shop).

It was located at the present site of Douglas County Repair. The building was approximately 50 feet by 75 feet. The front corner was heated space for repair parts, with a small office to the rear. The rest of the building was for storage.

The "shop" was a meeting place for farmers during the off-season – sitting around the pot-bellied stove, playing cards and solving the world's problems.



Former Businesses

Fond to the memories of many are the peanut machine and pop machine. His pop machine took only a nickel – he didn't think the kids who patronized this part of his "business" could afford more.

Two pumps in front of the building dispensed Sinclair gasoline. During World War II, gasoline was rationed, but John didn't think servicemen home on leave should be denied driving, so he would fill their vehicles even if they didn't have gas stamps.

In 1935, John and his wife, Alice (Roers), whom he married in 1928, purchased a farm from Mrs. Farrell. There he tried new products – he was one of the first in the area to raise soybeans.

McCormick Deering became International Harvester – and with that came trucks, refrigerators and freezers.

Dealers and farmers would come from miles because John had even seldom-needed repair parts in stock. The blacksmith shop next door was a good partner to fix parts quicker and cheaper than replacing them.

In 1980, the building was sold to Roger Roers, who continued the tradition of being a small town, big-hearted farmer's friend.

Frank's Standard Station

In 1931, at age 18, Frank Goering began to manage a gas station for his brother at the intersection of County Rd. 7 and Highway 82.

He later purchased the station, which, for many years was affiliated with Standard Oil.

Red Crown pumps appear on old pictures of the station.

Customer satisfaction and service was an important part of the business. A sign nailed to a tree about a mile west on Highway 52 read: Free Gas if we fail to wash your windshield.

Frank was also a tire wholesaler, selling tires to other dealers.

Ted Olson and Don Bitzan, independent operators who owned their trucks and delivered bulk Standard Oil products out of Brandon, worked with Frank.

From 1920 to the mid-1970s, the station was a Greyhound bus depot, with full service ticketing to anywhere in the U.S.

Originally the station provided service, but had no inside service bay. In the winter, Frank had to shovel snow out of the outside pit before cars could be serviced from the underside. Later an enclosed service bay was added with a pit, and eventually more bays and also hydraulic hoists replaced the pits.

Over the years Frank employed many high school students. He was a good friend to the young people of the community and in the evenings his station was a place for the teenagers to gather.

Even though Frank only completed 6th grade, his hard work and dedication led to a successful career that spanned more than six decades.

In 1978, he sold the station to Bob Thoennes and LeRoy Shea. After the sale, Frank continued to work at the station until age 83.



Brandon Meat Market

Leo Smedstad and Oscar Pladson bought the Brandon Meat Market in 1928 from former owner, Chris Therkildson.

They drove a truck from Lowry, along with Leo's wife Blanche (Hagstrom) and the two Smedstad children, across the frozen lake in Holmes City to take over the store that January.



The following summer, Oscar married Hazel Hagstrom, Blanche's youngest sister.

The two men were volunteer firemen. When the siren blew, one of them would dash over to the city hall to help fight fires.

It was about -20° the night a disastrous fire burned down the adjacent Courier's Café and Schelin's Store. Smedstad and Pladson each stood at a door and refused offers to save the contents of their store. Luck was with them, and there was only some damage to one wall.

They sold the market in 1951 when Leo retired and Oscar took a job with Douglas County.



Douglas County Cooperative

The Douglas County Cooperative was organized on April 19, 1934.

The first board of directors was Hilding Anderson, Aldrich Carlson, Alfred Guenther, Theodore Winkjer, Olaf Smith, John A. Roers and Theodore Foslien.

At that time, Mr. Chuck Ehlenfeldt was the manager. The original station was located in the block building between the tanks near the park on Front Street.



After moving to Central Ave., many changes occurred at the new location. The large old storage shed that went all the way to the alley was torn down and the gas pumps were moved to the area north of the building. A new steel building was built in later years.

The Douglas County Coop, later Midland Cooperative, sold gas, fuel oil, did vehicle repair, and sold milking machines and supplies. Some of the drivers of the fuel trucks were: Les Hermanson, Clair Christenson, Raymond Stich, Freeman Olson, Sid Burros and Gordon Julseth.

Douglas County Cooperative | 1930
Elroy Olson, Harold Anderson, Osmer Miller

Former Businesses

Some past managers were Emil Hierl, Milton Gray, Reuben Myhr, Richard Knutson, Clair Christenson, Ed Hanson and Roger Butler.

A few of the mechanics were Ruben Henke, Austin Lehn, Everett Olson and Paul Christenson. The bookkeepers were Eunice Linnard Peterson, JoAnn Briss, Irene VanSickle, Kathy Burgess, Adeline Bitzan and Harlan Sweet.

In 1978, the Coop was dissolved and an auction was held to liquidate the building and equipment.

The last board of directors consisted of Dennis Johnson, Eldred Lund, Cliff Guenther, Lester Bettermann, Sid Satterlie, Jr. and Dennis Jacobson.

The old, original building was sold to ProAg, and the co-op complex on Central Avenue was sold to Jim Richards in 1978.

The Diner | Starlite Café

The Starlite Cafe, first named The Diner, was originally a Great Northern railroad car diner, brought to Brandon in 1935 by the

Mrs. Carrie and Mrs. Jacob Goering



Goerings and placed east of the Standard Oil Station.

A house was added to the back in 1944 by the

Dorschs and in its hey-day, patrons could order three meals a day; Friday specials were turtle and fish.

The Diner stayed open late and people could go there to eat after the dances.

Some of the owners/operators included the Carries, Vic and Pauline Dorsch, the Debilzens, Earl and Ardis Olson, Gil Evju, Louie Kapphahn, Bob Lund and Jim and Lola Hirtler.

In later years, the train car was removed and a front section was added to the house. At some point the name was the Brandon Inn. The name was changed to The Starlite Bar and Grill by the Hirtlers.



Les and Peggy Okerlund purchased the building in 1984 and it stood vacant until March of 1989 when Bob Thoennes, owner of the neighboring Bob's Standard, purchased it and tore it down.

Glen Nylander Trucking

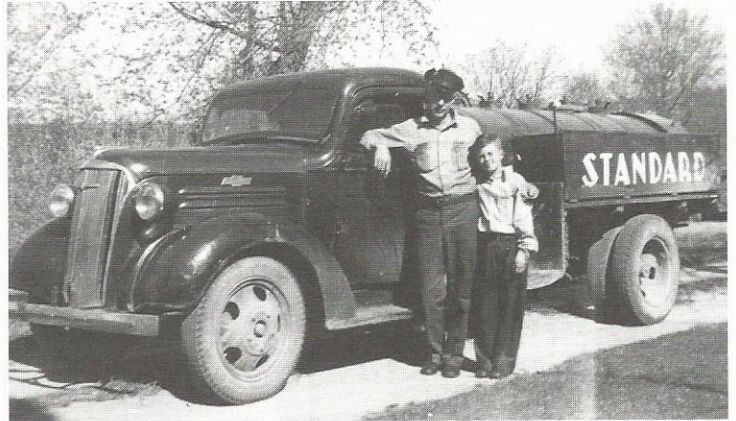
Glen Nylander bought his first truck from Victor Lund at the age of 17. He operated his trucking business and farmed.

Beginning in 1935, he made daily trips to Minneapolis. Later, he expanded his hauling to Duluth. In 1941 he began making hauls to New York and Philadelphia, specializing in the transportation of eggs and other farm products.

Eventually, he covered the entire continental U.S. and employed numerous drivers over the years. In later years, he cut his operation back to Minnesota points and spent more time on his farm.

Glen drove for 50 years and enjoyed every minute of it, according to family members.

Olson was known to go out in blizzard conditions and travel where even snowplows couldn't go. He was able to do this because of the weight of his truck. When people forgot to order fuel oil, he would go whenever they called.



Ted Olson and son Robert Olson

Olson worked closely with Frank Goering of Frank's Standard Station and traveled to Evansville to load his truck.

Bob recalls the day his dad was able to install a hose on the back of the truck as a happy time for the entire family because he would no longer have to carry heavy cans over snow banks. Instead, he could pull a hose over them to fill people's tanks.

Ted and Ella Olson moved to Henning in about 1956. The business and their home was sold to Don Bitzan.

Olson opened Ted's Oil Company in Henning, operating a station and bulk truck.

Bitzan Oil Company

When Don and Millie Bitzan were married, they farmed for about seven years. Don was a member of the Archie Viering Band, which played all over Minnesota, and North and South Dakota. He was also a sub carrier for the U.S. Mail.



Ted's Standard Oil Bulk Service

Ted Olson took over the oil bulk service business in about 1942. He delivered gas and oil to local residents and farmers, carrying 10-gallon containers from his truck to the customers' tanks. Often, this was done over snow banks or through muddy roads.

Olson would take phone calls any time of the day or night. His son, Bob, recalls his dad occasionally going out at 2 a.m. to fix someone's furnace in the middle of the winter.

Former Businesses

In 1956, the Bitzan family moved off the farm and Don took over the business from Ted Olson as a jobber for the Standard Oil Company. In 1975, he became owner and operator of Bitzan Oil Company.

Millie was kept busy taking orders for fuel oil and gas by phone and also did the book-work. The couple had 13 children and when the boys got old enough they helped Don deliver fuel and gas to farmers and to Frank's Standard Oil Station.

Larry, John, Greg, Jerry and Bob Bitzan all worked at the Standard Station for Frank Goering.

Don also owned the gas station in Evansville. The bulk tanks were located in Evansville beside the railroad tracks.

When Don retired from Bitzan Oil Company in 1983, he began selling Electrolux Cleaners, and is still doing sales and service. He also worked at St. Ann's Church in Brandon as janitor and yard keeper from 1981 until 2001.

Don still enjoys his music and plays at nursing homes and birthday and other parties with band members Helen Viering and Wilbur Hopfner.

He purchased the shop from George Ziegelman, who had purchased it from Bill Schulke who operated it as Bill's Barber Shop. Schulke was the mayor of Brandon in the mid-1930s.

Hopfner lived with his wife, Leona, in the apartment in the back of the shop before building a home in 1957.

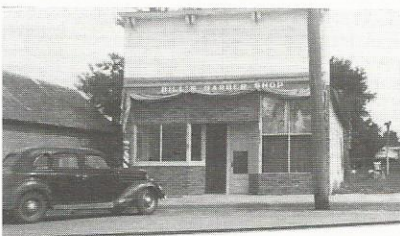
He later built a new building next to the bank. When the bank needed to expand in 1974, however, he returned to his original site at 109 Front Street and

built a new building. The business was sold to Jim Augdahl in 1994.

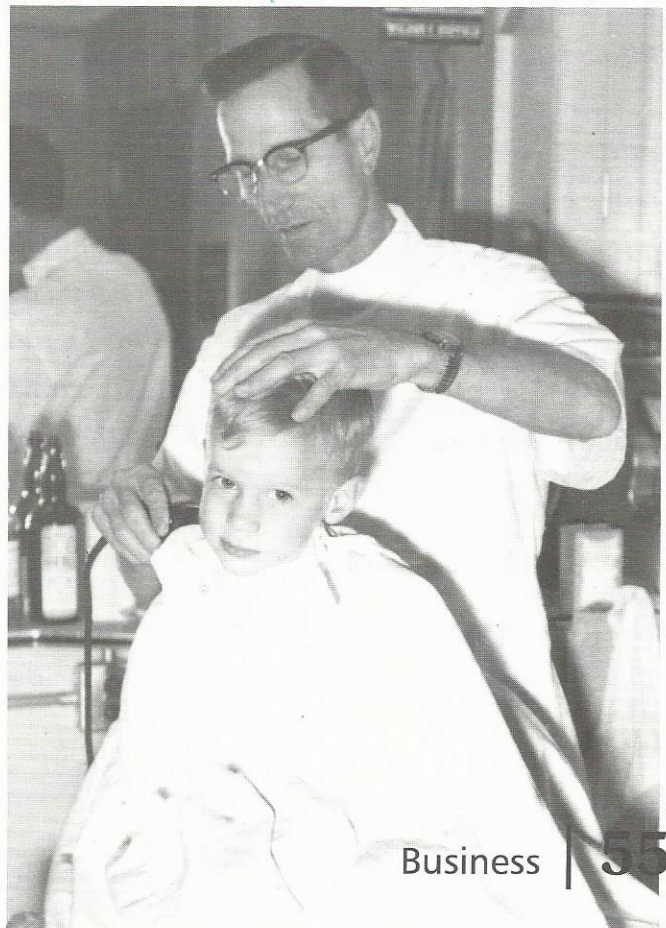


Don Bitzan, Helen Viering, Wilbur Hopfner

Hopfner's Barbershop



Hopfner's Barbershop was owned and operated by Wilbur Hopfner from 1946 to 1994.



McFarlane's Brandon Super Market

Frank and Jeanene McFarlane and Earle "Shorty" and Ann Licht bought the Brandon Meat Market building in September of 1961. They did butchering at the market.



In January of 1962 they purchased the business and building that housed the Brandon Super Market from Bob and Audrey Kloehn. The Kloehns had built it in the late 1950s. The new owners continued to do butchering at the super market and also expanded the grocery store.

They generally employed eight to 10 people throughout the time they were in business.

The McFarlanes eventually became sole proprietors. Their son joined the business and the name was changed to Town and Country Foods.



Jackie, Jeanine and Dan McFarlane

For Brandon's Centennial Celebration in 1981, Frank catered the meal out of the Brandon Fire Barn. Frank

For Brandon's Centennial Celebration in 1981, Frank catered the meal out of the Brandon Fire Barn. Frank

Bar-B-Q-Beef. This was Frank's first try at making the Bar-B-Q-Beef on a large scale.

The McFarlanes served 800 people and had only one half of an ice cream pail left over.

The super market was the hub of activity for many years until September 1990 when they closed the doors.

The original meat market building was sold to Dayton Hermanson and housed Hermanson's Floor Covering. When Citizen's State Bank expanded, the building was torn down to make room for the bank.

Myron's 66 Station & Carole's Lunch Room



Ted Plaster in front of Carole's Lunch Room

The Seversons started in the gas business in Brandon in the fall of 1962 in the Log Cabin Station where the Schiele

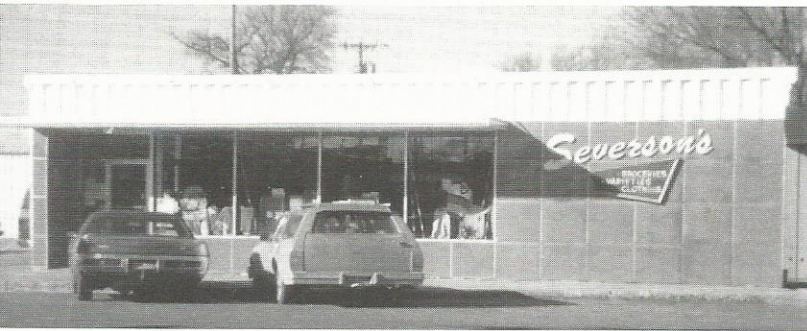
Auction Center is now located. Gas prices averaged 29 cents a gallon and a cup of coffee was 10 cents. They operated the business for five years.

Severson's V-Store

In 1965, Myron and Carole Severson bought the V-Store from Lil Schultz. It was then in the west half of the building where Brandon Communications is now located on Front Street.

Former Businesses

The Seversons ran the V-Store business at the original location until 1967, when they built a new building on Central Avenue and moved the V-Store there, where they added an L.B. Hartz grocery store to the business.



From then on it was called Severson's Grocery, Clothing and Variety. The Seversons operated the store until March of 1981, when it was sold to Hilda and Will Bettermann and operated as Bettermann's Village III.

Now the building, still owned by the Seversons, is the home of Lakes Area Insurance and Korkowski Signs.

Brandon TV and Electronics

Dennis Korkowski moved to Brandon in 1965 and worked at Ostlund Hardware. A year later, he and his wife, Christella, purchased the radio/television business from Ostlund Hardware.

They purchased a building from Robert Kloehn, which contained the King Koin Laundromat, and moved the business there.

In the beginning, the business handled radio, television and antenna sales and service. In about

1967, CB radios made their debut. They were soon replaced by business band radios.

The Korkowskis built the King Koin Car Wash on Hwy. 7 and in 1982 sold it to Frank Starke.

In 1989 the laundromat was sold to Don and Chris Taylor and moved out of the building. Two additions were added over time. Brandon TV and Electronics, later called Brandon TV and Communications, was changed to Brandon Communications after the television part of the business was sold to Jim Borgrud in 1992.

Brandon Communications sold and serviced business band radios and later started installing towers and repeater systems to serve customers over a 10-county area.

Later the paging and mobile phone system owned by United Telephone of Alexandria was purchased and made the Brandon business the only provider of local mobile phone service in the area. 800 MHZ mobile phones became popular, until the advent of local cellular service in 1989.



Brandon TV & Electronics 1984:

Back: Dennis Korkowski, Dan Hagen, Richard Korkowski, Brad Deican
Front: Chris Korkowski, Hazel Hermanson, Steve Johnson, Jim Borgrud

Today Brandon Communications sells and services communications products to farmers, businesses and government agencies, including two-way radios, repeater and antenna systems, towers, pagers, dispatch consoles, GPS tracking systems, etc.

In 1984, the Korkowskis' son, Richard, joined the business as a two-way service technician.

In June of 2004, Brandon Communications was sold to Gardonville Telephone Company. Richard became the new manager of Brandon Communications.

A & R Welding

Art Eisner was a blacksmith for 40 years, 22 of which were spent in Brandon. A native of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Eisner had been a cowboy, road worker and a lumberjack before he came to Brandon in 1967.

The people of Brandon always considered him to be the best welder and blacksmith around. He had the skill to manufacture a new part for a piece of farm equipment when the parts were no longer available anywhere else.



Eisner credited the Brandon banker, LeRoy Larson, and local businessman, John Korkowski with helping him to get a start in Brandon.

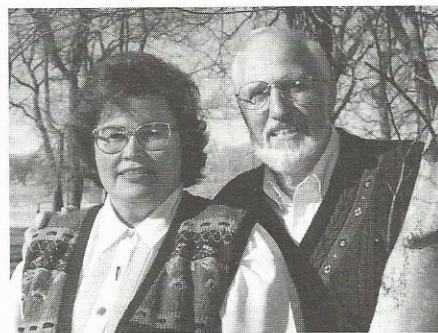
He built a shop on the west side of Brandon, and later added an addition when more room was needed.

Eisner also served as Brandon constable for a short time in the early 1970s.

In 1989 he retired and moved to Fergus Falls, where he still resides.

Bettermann's Village III

Will and Hilda Bettermann purchased Severson's V-Store in Brandon from Myron and Carol Severson in March of 1981.



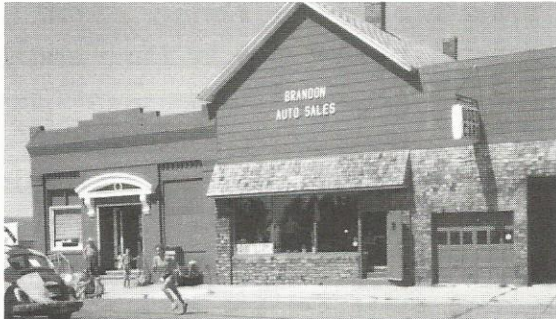
They remodeled the storefront and re-named it Bettermann's Village III.

They continued Seversons' tradition of selling grocery, gift and clothing items, with Variety Stores of Clara City, L. B. Hartz of Thief River Falls and Ludke Foods of Alexandria as their chief suppliers. The store was a meeting place for kids while they waited to be picked up by their parents after their school activities.

The Bettermanns provided employment for approximately eight local residents, including their two children, Randy and Cindy. They remained in business until March of 1984.

Former Businesses

Brandon Auto Sales/Jim's Gas

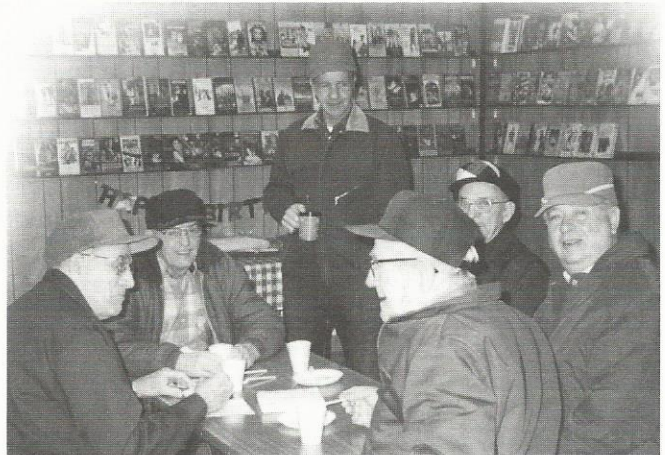


Jim Richards operated Brandon Auto Sales and Jim's Gas on Central Avenue. He purchased the building in 1978. The business featured a discount center with common household goods.

The building also housed the Brandon Video Center, complete with an arcade, owned and operated by Russ and Candy Esterberg.

Cathy Olson also operated CJ's Styles from the building.

Jim Richards and Delores Schwartz were Co-chairmen of the Brandon's Centennial Celebration 25 years ago. His place of business served as Centennial Headquarters.



Stopping by Brandon Auto Sales for coffee and conversation Reuben Myhr, Francis Brennon, Jim Richards, Cliff Lund, Gene Scott and Ole Langos.

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Jim Richards | Centennial Parade | 1981

Newspapers

Early newspapers

The first newspaper in the area was the *Douglas County Sentinel*, published by A. C. Lawrence. The *Brandon Blue Bells* newspaper was founded in 1891 by a man named Clark. It was sold a year later to Hans Peterson and Fred Andrews. Lawrence, former *Sentinel* publisher, soon took it over and changed its name to *Brandon Echo*. The paper was later sold to George S. Myron, who moved the operation to his home.



Upon Myron's death in 1895, the paper was taken over by Carl Borgen, editor of the *Echo's* rival newspaper, the *Evansville Enterprise*. It was later taken over by the Brandon State Bank and Carl A. Wold was hired to manage it.

Wold eventually purchased the paper. A strong temperance advocate, he cut all liquor ads from the paper. Wold moved the publication to Alexandria in 1908 and its name was changed to *Park Region Echo*. The paper underwent various name changes and ownership through the years and today operates as the *Echo Press*.

Brandon was without a newspaper for two years, until the *Brandon Forum* was founded by Albert B. Johnson in 1910. The paper was sold to W.J.B. Moses in 1915 and resold to Jas. J. Scott in 1918.

The Brandon Commercial Club began publishing a small community paper, the *Brandon News*, in 1968. Another publication was the *Brandon Bargains*, a local advertising sheet.

Brandon Bargains

WORLD RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Alexandria, Minn.
Permit No. 13

Published by
Brandon Commercial Club

West Douglas County Record

The *West Douglas County Record* was founded in August of 1979 by Dana and Jon Schroeder, who also published the *Grant County Herald* in Elbow Lake and the *Ashby Dalton Post*.

The paper was later owned by Dave Simpkins, and then by Nancy Meyer, who operated it until 1995 when she sold it to Dave and Cathy Bedore.

The *Record* is the official newspaper of the cities of Brandon, Evansville and Millerville, as well as the Evansville and Brandon schools and also several area townships. Because *The Record* has been around since 1979, the area has an historical record of the news and events that have occurred concerning the area communities.

The West Douglas County Record

Douglas County's only locally owned newspaper

"At The Record we're working harder, just so you know!"

Volume 26, No. 16 Serving Brandon, Evansville and the West Douglas County Thursday, April 2

The success of *The Record* has included the hard work of local columnists such as John DeLance, Gwenny Olson, Ed Borchardt, Lucille Anderson and Sarah Tweeter. Bud Greenquist has worked hard to supply the paper with a weekly retelling of the area's history.

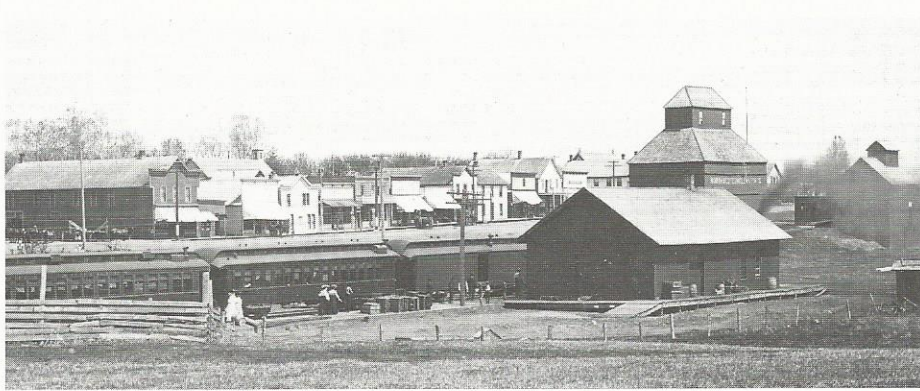
The Record launched the weekly shopper, *The Advertiser*, in March of 2006. This publication gives businesses an affordable vehicle for getting their advertising to everyone in the area.

Technology has played a big part in the newspaper industry. The paper is e-mailed to Quinco Press in Lowry where it is printed.

Brandon Elevator

The railroad was built through the area in 1879 and began the history of Brandon's grain and feed industry. There were four elevators and a flour mill located in the area in the early days. Only one elevator survived the changing times.

The Farmers Grain Company built what was the



largest elevator in the area in 1879. It was torn down in 1952 to make room for the current elevator, which was built at the same site.

Constructed by a Minneapolis contractor, the building was 103 feet tall with a capacity of 40,000 bushels. It was built using a wood crib design and included a feed mill, seed plant and warehouse. Total construction cost was \$100,000.

The building was equipped to do custom feed grinding and mixing, custom seed cleaning and treating, buying and selling grain, and to handle retail lines of merchandise.

To provide more storage, an annex was added to the west of the build-

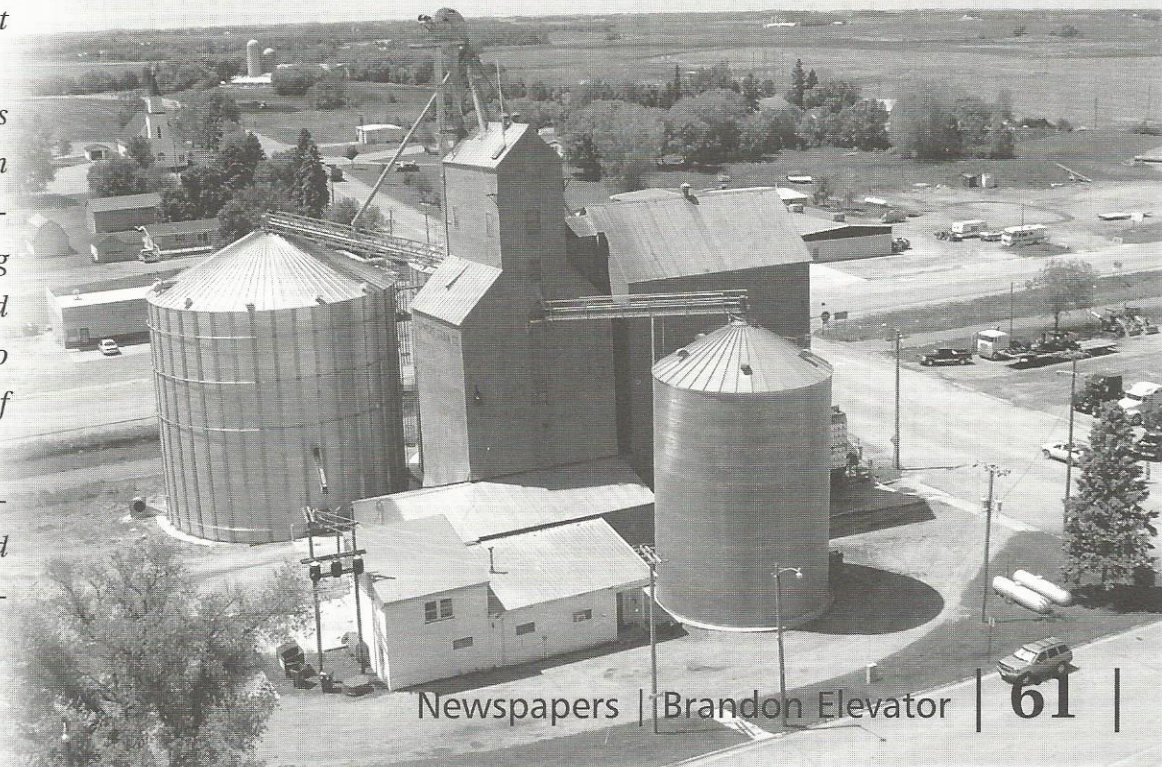
ing in 1957. This is also of wood crib design and has a capacity of 64,000 bushels.

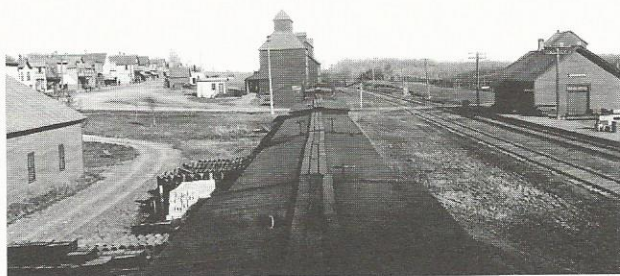
A flat storage shed was built in 1959 and was located just across the street from Brandon Communications. This building, along with the feed mill, was torn down in 2002.

The railroad tracks were removed in 1988 due to insufficient business to

maintain the line. This meant that the elevator had to rely only on truck freight to move grain to market.

In 1991, a 40,000-bushel grain bin was erected on the north side of the elevator.





Twelve years later, in 2003, a new 70-foot truck scale, dump pit, receiving leg and two 156,000 bushel steel grain bins were erected on the old railbed.

Finally, in 2005, a new tower dryer and grain leg were erected.

The Farmers Grain Company, originally owned by Otto Weinrich, Clem Belsky, Morley Segrin and Lynn Tompt and managed by Weinrich, was sold to Land O Lakes in the 1970s. The company was again sold in 1983 to Urbank Coop Creamery. In 1998, Urbank Coop Creamery merged with Miltona Coop Creamery to become Pro Ag Farmers Coop, which remains the current owner of the Brandon elevator.

Today, Pro Ag employs eight full-time individuals at its Brandon site, which includes a fertilizer plant west of the elevator. Tim Lauthen serves as the location manager.

Pro Ag also has five other locations in west central Minnesota, including two fertilizer plants, a propane plant, feed mill, two elevators and two feed stores.

From single party lines to new fiber optics cable that allows digital communications that enhance telephones with features like three way calling, speed dial, high speed Internet, Cable television and Inter-active TV for schools – the local “telephone company” has come a long way.

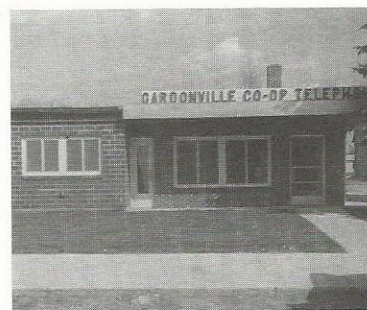
Brandon first installed and began maintaining a telephone system in 1902. Rural areas were added in 1905, and the Farmers and Merchants Cooperative Telephone Company was formed to assist with and control its development.

In the next two and a half years, 160 miles of line and 400 phones were installed.

By 1938, the cooperative had 295 subscribers, with 12 or more on one line.

Brandon, Millerville, Evansville and Garfield subscribers were owned by the Pioneer Telephone Company and the Douglas County Telephone Company until 1943.

At that time, a newly formed cooperative, the Cooperative Service Telephone Association, purchased the assets



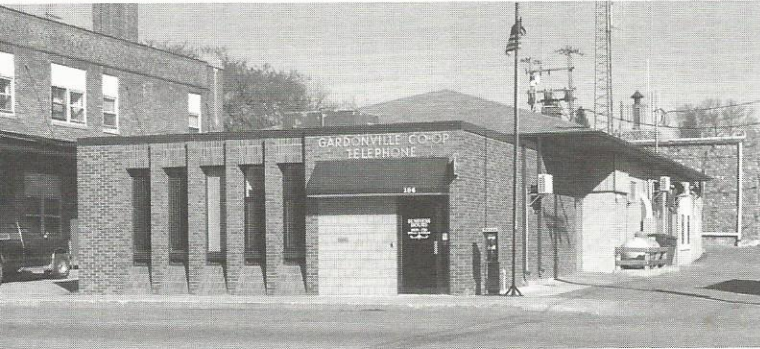
and subscribers from these two companies for \$18,000 and \$21,000 respectively.

The system was renamed “Gardonville,” which was derived from taking portions of the area towns – “Gar” from Garfield, “don” from Brandon, and “ville” from the communities of Millerville and Evansville.

In December of 1944, the coop had 564 subscribers. By 1952, the company grew to include 820 telephone lines.

Gardonville

In 1951, Gardonville purchased a lot from the Brandon Creamery and began construction of a new building.



Gardonville building 2006

In the early 1950s, the Rural Electrification Association provided funds to build modern telephone facilities. It was an era of converting manual switchboards and 20 party lines into a four- and eight-party dial system.

A digital switchboard was installed in 1983 – one of the first systems of its kind in the area. Not long after, the coop began using its first in-house computer system and began placing fiber optic cable routes.



Gardonville Telephone Company Board of Directors 2006
L to R: Richard Wagner, Debra Martin, Richard A. Anderson, Lois Larson, Jerald Morical, Lloyd Froemming and Charles Bolin

Television was added to Gardonville's services in the mid 1990s; Gardonville rural TV offered 150 channels via an 18-inch satellite.

In 2001, the company obtained a loan to upgrade its entire plant to a fiber optic and all digital system, capable of delivering voice, video and high speed data services to its rural members.

Gardonville purchased Brandon Communications in 2004 and diversified into cell phones and wireless communication services and products, such as two-way radios and auto starters.



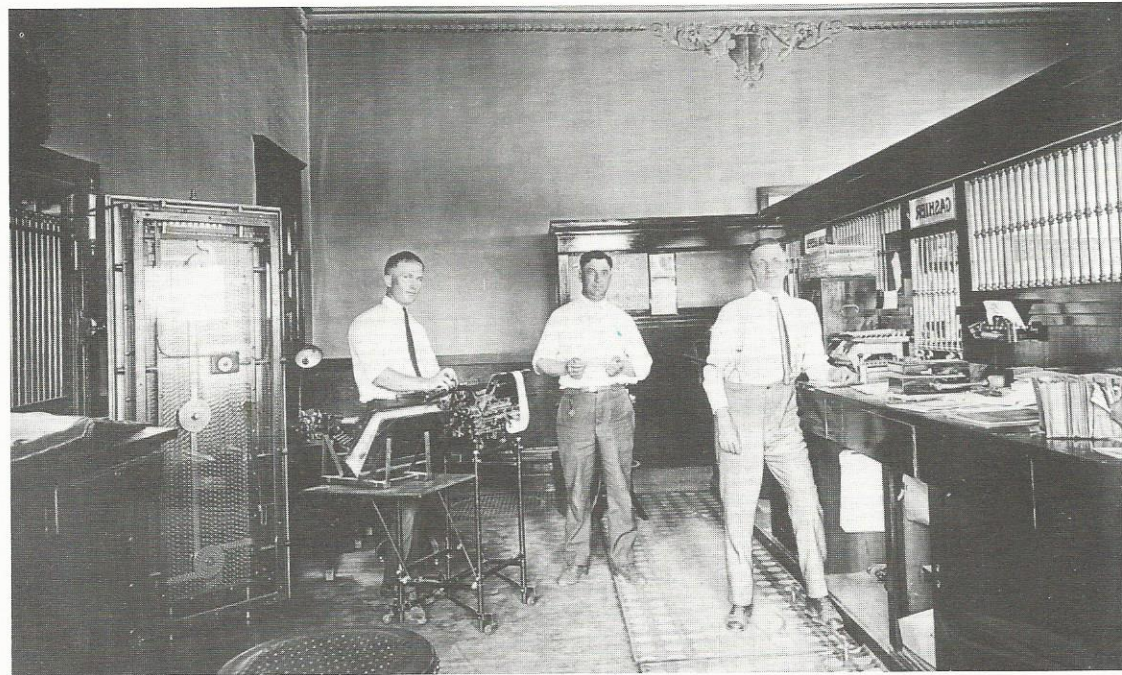
Dave Wolf, Manager of Gardonville and Rick Korkowski, Manager of Brandon Communications

In 2006, Gardonville continues to expand its voice and data networks into neighboring portions of Douglas County with both fiber optic cable and wireless systems. A new headquarters building is being constructed and the cooperative continues to enjoy a long cycle of growth.

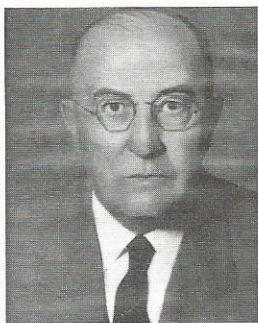


Brandon State Bank
O.F. Olson on left,
Theo Olson and unknown

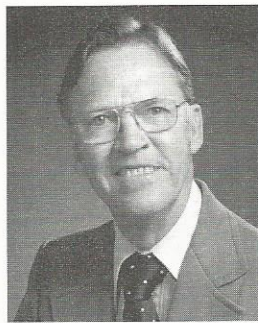
Farmer's State Bank
Joe Tamble, Fred Swenson,
and unknown



Bank Presidents



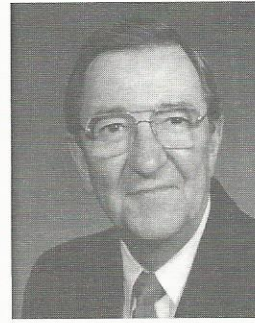
O.W. Harrison
1927 – 1949



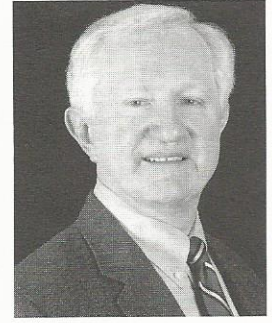
Leroy O. Wallin
1949 – 1953



C. Leroy Larson
1953 – 1975



Warren D. Gibson
1975 – 1989



John Rolf
1989 – Present

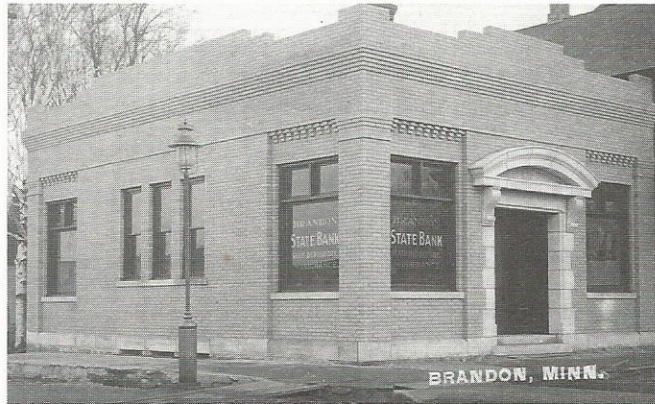
The Brandon State Bank was organized in 1902. O.F. Olson served as its first president. In 1916 it was converted to the First National Bank of Brandon and was located at 102 Central Avenue. It closed in the 1920s.

Farmers State Bank of Brandon was organized in 1910 and was located at 113 East Front Street, where Bremer is now located. P.O. Unumb served as its first president. This bank also closed in the 1920s.

The bank was purchased by Otto Bremer and opened under the name Citizens State Bank in 1927.

Citizens State Bank underwent various name changes throughout its history, but has served as a "Bremer" bank continuously since 1927.

A 1981 letter from the Bremer Service Company corporate office stated, "Brandon is probably Bremer's healthiest Minnesota Bank."



Brandon State Bank

Bremer Bank in Brandon and the Otto Bremer Foundation have made a difference in the Brandon community and beyond by being exemplary corporate citizens, always returning a por-

tion of local profits to the community through donations and contributions.

Projects ranging from high school scoreboards, athletic field lights, band trips, Chippewa Park, Brandon Auditorium remodeling and the

Early Childhood Family Education/Headstart remodeling to annual Dollars for Scholars donations are examples of the company's corporate generosity.

*"Brandon is probably
Bremer's healthiest
Minnesota Bank."*

1981 | Bremer Service Company



Anderson Excavating, Plumbing and Heating



Anderson Excavating, Plumbing and Heating, 108 Anderson St., Brandon, is owned and operated by Jim

Anderson. Anderson bought his first backhoe in 1962 to work with his father, Clarence, who was in the building, plumbing and heating business. He took over the plumbing and heating business after his father passed away. He mainly does residential basements, sewers, water lines and septic systems.

Austin's Auto Repair

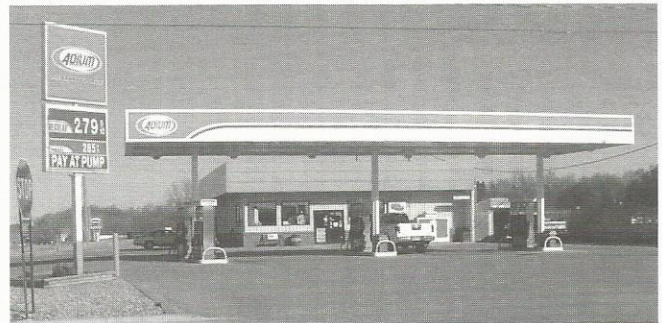


Austin's Auto Repair, owned by Austin and Lori Lehn, started in October of 1993 in the back of Bruce Nelson's bus garage. Austin hired Rusch Construction to build a new building in 1997 at 209 Front Street, Brandon. This was the first steel building Rusch had built. The auto repair shop offers general repairs, oil changes, diagnostic

analysis and some electrical repair. Austin services approximately 12 vehicles each day and sells about 1,000 tires each year.

Bob's Adium

Bob's Adium, 201 Central Ave. S., Brandon, was established in 1979 by Bob and Karen Thoennes. Bob began working for Frank Goering in 1969. In 1979, he purchased the Standard Station from Frank. Bob later purchased the Starlite Bar and Grill for future expansion. In 1996, he and Karen constructed the new convenience



store and operated under the name Bob's Conoco. The station building sits on the Starlite property, and the pump islands sit on the Amoco property. Recently, the name was changed to Bob's Adium, to provide more competitive pricing. The company employs eight people.

Bob's Backhoe

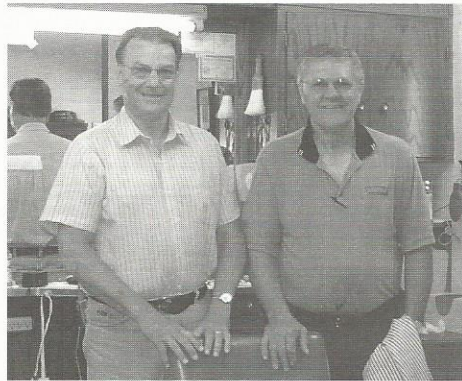
Bob's Backhoe, 13492 Devil's Lake Rd. NW, Brandon, is owned by Bob and Jackie Wagner. Bob has been in business for 21 years. He does excavating, tiling, land-scaping, rock removal, delivers black dirt and much more.



Current Businesses

Brandon Barber Shop

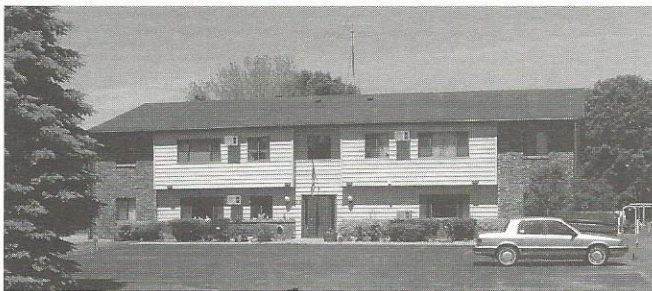
The Brandon Barber Shop, 109 Front St., Brandon, is managed by Jim Augdahl. Augdahl purchased the business from Wilbur Hopfner, who had cut hair in Brandon for more than 50 years. He is now semi-retired, and shares the business with Myron Thompson.



Brandon Manor Homes, Inc.

Brandon Manor Homes is a non-profit corporation with the goal of providing low-cost housing to the area. Its board members are volunteers who serve without pay. It was incorporated in June 1968 with Lawrence Mahan serving as president. He served until 1971, when Nathan Tolifson was elected president. The next president, Orv Schjei, was elected in 1972 and served until Dennis Korkowski became president in 1975. Korkowski remains president today. Brandon Manor Homes, Inc. owns two apartment buildings in Brandon.

These 12 units also offer rental assistance to



tenants with low incomes through Rural Housing, a federal agency. The first unit, a four-plex, was completed in 1969. As the need for more units

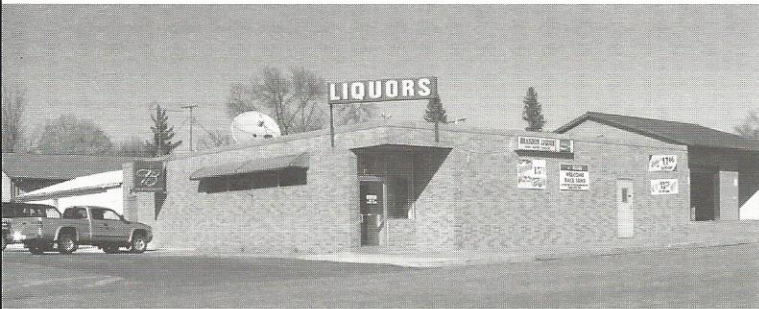
became apparent, an eight-plex was built in 1978. Both units are located on 4th St. E. The property is currently managed by Van Binsbergen and Associates, Inc.

Brandon Mobil Home Park

The Brandon Mobil Home Park was started by Jim and Dorothy Anderson in the 1970s. In the beginning, the Andersons had 10 trailer spots and rented lots for \$35 per month. In 1977 they sold the park to Arnold and Irmagene Melling. It was sold to Roylie and Brenda Fischer in



1985 and to Gordon and Joyce Wibstad in 1990. On May 1, 2004, it was sold to its current owners, Rich and Stephanie Bullick. Five more lots were added in the summer of 2004.



Brandon Municipal Liquor Store

The Brandon Municipal Liquor Store, 201 Front St., Brandon, was established on December 8, 1948. The liquor store offers on and off sale and employs three full-time and three part-time employees. The liquor store is managed by Lynn Ellertson.

Brethorst Excavating, Inc.

Brethorst Excavating, Inc., 101 County Rd. 82 NW, Brandon, was established in 1997. The full-service excavating



and dump truck business is owned by Mitch Brethorst. The company also installs sewer and water systems, delivers Class 5, black dirt, rock, sand, and prepares sites for construction, demolition projects and much more. The company employs 10 people and also owns Miles Tiling, a farm drainage company.

Cheryl's Beauty Shop

Cheryl's Beauty Shop, 410 5th St. E., Brandon, is owned by Cheryl Augdahl. Cheryl began working at Carol's Cut 'N Curl in uptown Brandon in 1964. In July of 1976, she started her own salon in her home at 408 Hayes Avenue. In October of 2005 she moved her salon to her new home, also in Brandon. She cuts and styles hair for women and men.



Creamery Apartments

Kay Larson and Connie McHenry owned the Creamery Apartments in 1973. The building was sold to Don Johnson and Associates of Alexandria in 1978 and to John and Joyce Simler in 1989. Joseph and Terry Stallman of Alexandria purchased the property in 2006 and currently operate the business. The building features 11 apartments.



Dorothy's Day Care

Dorothy's Day Care, 108 Anderson St., Brandon, started in September 1970 and was licensed in 1981. Owned and operated by Dorothy Anderson, the business provides day care for infants through age 12. Anderson was named Douglas County Day Care Provider of the Year in 1996.



Current Businesses

Douglas County Repair

Douglas County Repair was founded in 1981 when Roger and Darlene Roers bought the Korkowski Implement property from John Korkowski. John had run the business for more than 50 years, selling and repairing International Harvester farm equipment. Roger and Darlene carried on the tradition of repairing I-H farm tractors. Over the past 25 years, I-H was sold and became Case-IH. Douglas County Repair adapted to these changes by updating tools and service manuals as needed.

Darlene has supplied the secretarial skills, while Roger prefers the mechanical end of the business. Operating their own business has allowed Roger and Darlene the flexibility to adjust work schedules to accommodate the many activities their three children have been involved in throughout the years. The biggest assets of Douglas County Repair have been the loyalty and friendship of its customers.

ExCel Plumbing/Infloor Heating

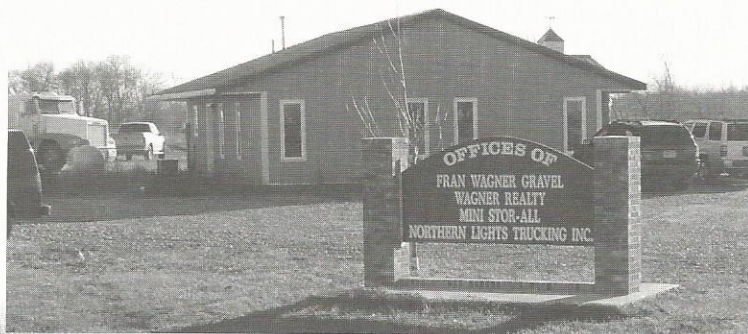
ExCel Plumbing/Infloor Heating, 6361 Utopia Drive, Brandon, is owned by Ron Wagner, a lifelong



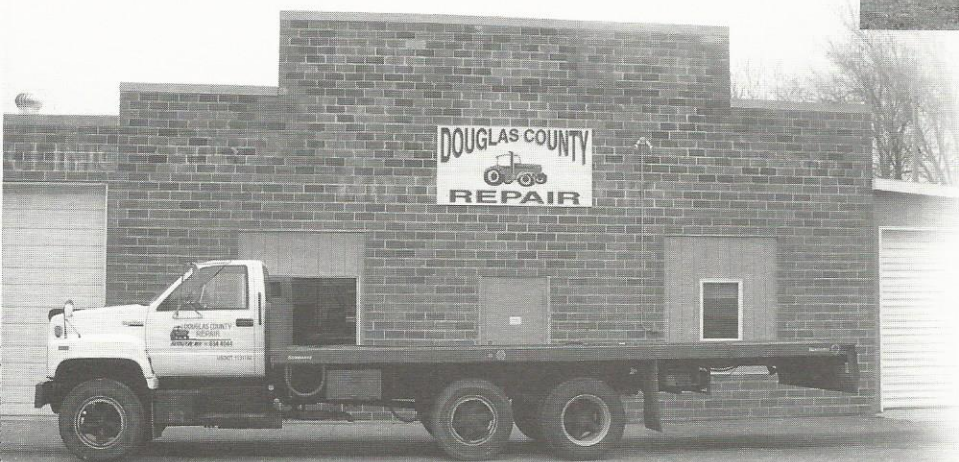
resident of Brandon and graduate of Brandon School. Wagner has been serving the Brandon community and surrounding area for more than seven years, doing service work and repairs and also plumbing and infloor heating in new construction. Wagner is licensed, bonded and insured.

He and his wife, Penny, have two children.

Fran Wagner Gravel



Fran Wagner Gravel, 804 Central Ave., Brandon, is owned and managed by Fran Wagner. The company employs six people and deals in gravel, excavating and rock products.



Honey Tree Antiques

Honey Tree Antiques, 409 Front St., Brandon, was started in 1983 near West Lake Mary. For the



first eight years, the business included stripping items for the public and also stripping and repairing items for resale. There was also a full line of antiques and collectibles. In 1995 the business was moved to Brandon and on Memorial Day of 1996, they opened this shop. The “mom and pop” business carries “most everything,” from advertisings; glassware; stoneware; hunting, fishing and trapping items; farming items, etc.

J & J Furniture Stripping

J & J Furniture Stripping began stripping and refinishing furniture as a business in the basement of the Brandon Bus Garage in 1970. The furniture



stripping is a tank system and furniture is stripped and sanded before being returned to the customer. When Corky Slack built the steel Brandon mini-mall on the corner of State Highway 82 and County Road 7, J & J moved there. John Pennie still owns the business and continues to strip furniture at the shop located at the Schiele Auction Center building.

Jerry Klein Trucking



Jerry Klein Trucking of Brandon was established in 1967. The company hauled freight for Ludke & Company of Alexandria and for Henry's Foods of Alexandria. Owner Jerry Klein, who has owned nine different trucks over the years, hauled for 35 years and now dispatches for six owner/operators that haul for Henry's Foods.

Current Businesses

Karin' 4 Kids Daycare

Karin' 4 Kids Daycare, 107 3rd St., Brandon, was established in March of 2002. It is a licensed family daycare caring for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Karen and Tim Wibstad are the owners. Karen has extensive childcare experience, including working as a nanny in Kansas City for several years, being an assistant teacher at Young People's Place, and a camp counselor at a camp for mentally handicapped children. Tim is a lifetime resident of Brandon and Karen grew up in the Spruce Hill/Miltona area. They have been married 10 years and have two boys – Devin age 8 and Darrin age 6.



Korkowski Signs

Korkowski Signs, owned by Linus and Rose Korkowski, opened in 1994 as Korkowski Plastics. It was located at their farm, 10751 White Oak Rd. NW, Brandon. It started from a newspaper ad seeking someone to start a plastic/sign business.

Equipment was purchased – from a computer and plastic forming machine to molds and vinyl. In 1996, the business moved to 105 Central Ave., Brandon. An embroidery machine was purchased in order to add clothing products. The company now has two computerized embroidery

machines for caps, jackets, shirts and specialty items; two vinyl cutters with computers and a thermal decal printer; and Gemini letters (formed plastic, flat cut metal, changeable, and etched metal letters).



Korkowski Signs offers banners, decals, magnetic signs, vehicle lettering, embroidery services and cad cut or screen-printed designs for clothing. The Korkowskis also sell unlettered clothing, half price greeting cards and helium balloons.

Knotty Pine Bait 'N Gas

Knotty Pine Bait 'N Gas, 103 Central Ave., Brandon, was established in 2001 as D 'n R. It is located on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Front Streets. It was purchased in August of 2004 by Paul Reiland, the present owner. Knotty Pine Bait 'N Gas has six employees and sells gas, bait, tackle, convenience items, hunting ammo and all kinds of fishing gear.



Lake Country Motel

The Lake Country Motel, 305 Central Ave. S., Brandon, was established in 2003. The 16-unit motel is owned by Dennis and Colleen Lund and

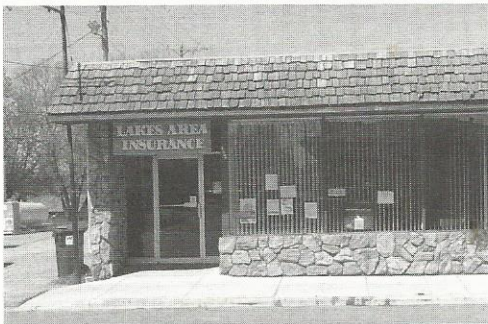


employs two part-time housekeepers. All rooms have high speed Internet access and some feature Jacuzzi tubs.

Lakes Area Insurance

Lakes Area Insurance was established in 1990 and is managed by co-owner Kathy Ranweiler.

Lakes Area Insurance is proud of its local foundation, with the added strength

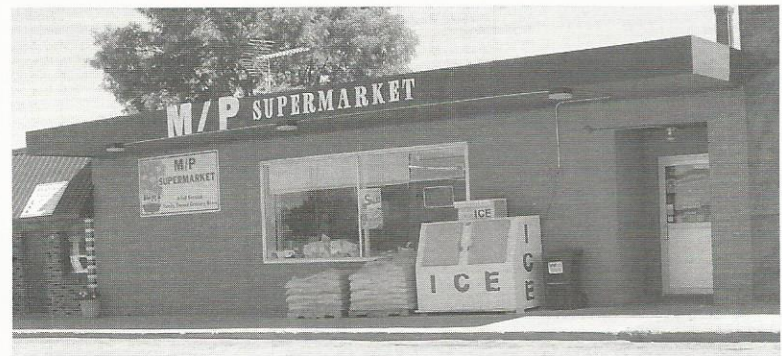


and support from its affiliate, Billmark's Lakes Area Insurance, Inc. in Alexandria. The office offers a broad array of insurance products, customized to provide complete and competitive insurance packages for personal or commercial needs – home, auto, farm, recreational vehicles, health, life, contractors, workers compensation and other commercial exposures. Some of the companies include AIG, Allstate, Austin Mutual, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Cincinnati, Grinnell Mutual, Holmes City, Moe-Urness-Lund, North Star, Progressive, RAM and Western Mutual. Ken Erlandson was a writing

agent for many years until retiring in 2003. At that time, Randy Buker joined the staff as a writing agent.

M/P Supermarket

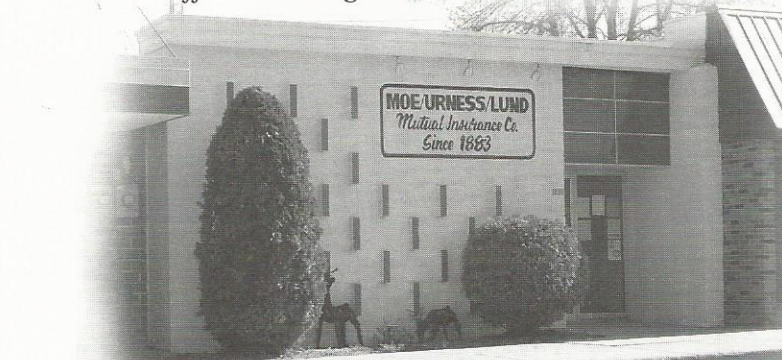
The M/P Supermarket, 111 Front St., Brandon, was established in 2003. Paul and Margaret Roers purchased the store to continue a local tradition of a full-service grocery in the community. To do this,



they offer a complete line of dairy products, produce and fresh cut meats. Bakery items come from Roers Bakery in Alexandria twice a week to ensure freshness and delivery of special orders. Another feature of M/P is its weekly sales program, along with many in-store specials. Paul and Margaret also handle party needs – baked beans, meat and cheese trays, etc. They employ five people

Moe Urness Lund Mutual Insurance Company

The Moe Urness Lund Mutual Insurance Company incorporated in 1883. It provides coverage for homes, household personal property, farms and all farm personal property. Moe Urness Lund built a new office building in 1964 in Brandon.



Current Businesses

There are two full-time and one part-time employee. The company has five directors. The directors' meetings are held the first Monday of every month. Directors are responsible for making decisions on the operation of the company. Manager Ruth Plaster is in charge of the daily operation of the company office. Eleven insurance agencies write insurance for the company. Total insurance coverage December 31, 2005 was \$129,313,118. Total admitted assets of the company was \$1,364,558. The biggest share of company assets are deposited in local banks.



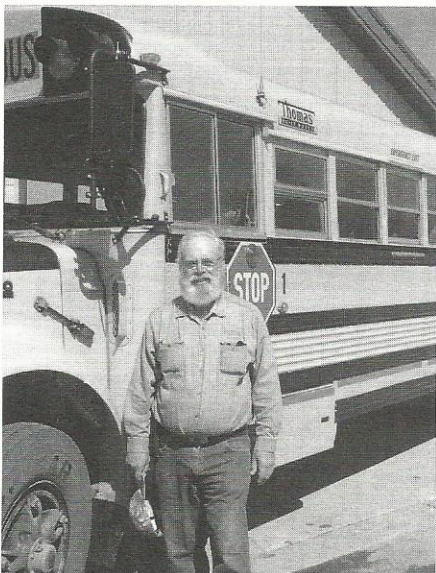
the Brandon Public School and currently runs four local routes as well as one regular route to Alexandria schools. Nelson employs eight drivers.

Ostlund Hardware

Ralph Ostlund has been a businessman in Brandon for 48 years. He has owned and operated Ostlund Hardware, 104 Central Ave. N. in Brandon, since 1958 and is one of the only "old time" businessmen still in

business in the community. Ralph and MaryAnn have watched the business district really build up in the small town.

Nelson Bus Company

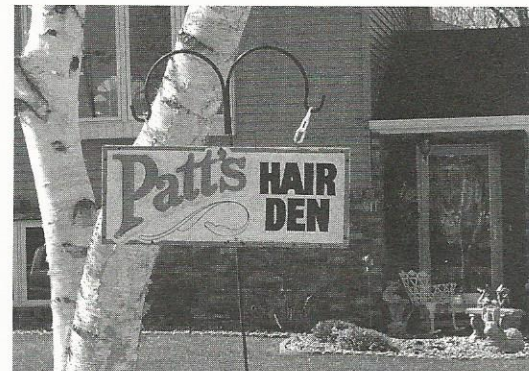


The Nelson Bus Company is located at 201 Central Ave., Brandon, in the former Handke Garage building. Owned by Bruce Nelson, the company was established in 1968

when Nelson purchased the buses and the business from Ray Strom. The company contracts services to

Patt's Hair Den

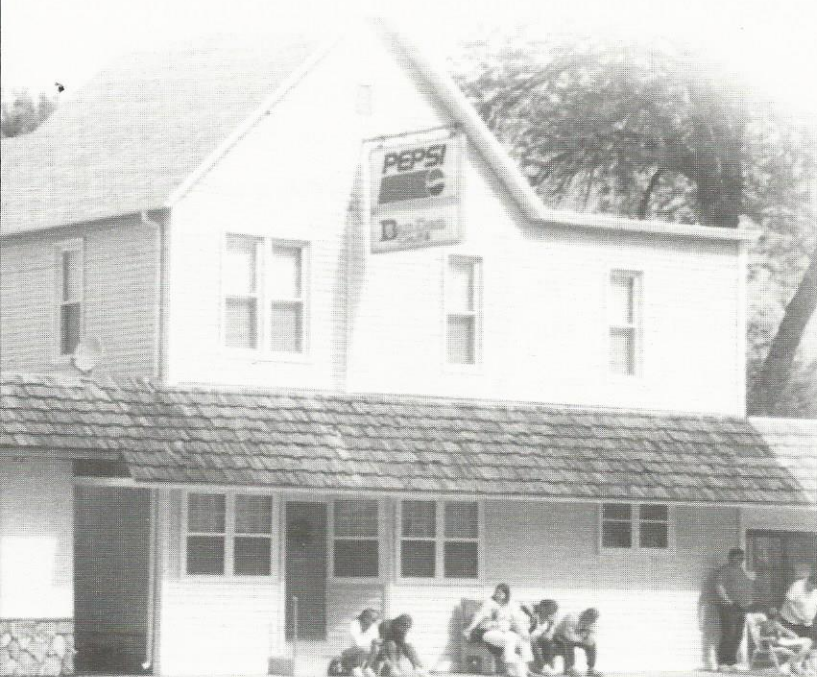
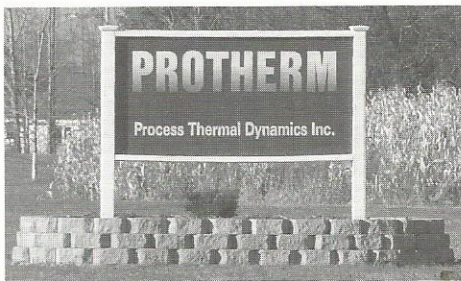
Patt's Hair Den, 311 3rd St. SW, Brandon, was established by Patt Johnson in 1987. The family hair salon is located in her home. Johnson worked at Carol's Cut 'N Curl for two and a half years before opening her own business. She had also operated a salon in Wabasso, Minnesota for 12 years prior to her move to Brandon. She and her husband, Doug, relocated to Brandon due to his employment at the elevator.



Process Thermal Dynamics (Protherm)

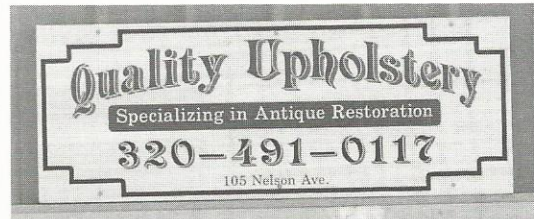


Process Thermal Dynamics, also commonly known as Protherm, is owned by Bob Beattie. After years spent in the Twin Cities area, Beattie relocated his business to Alexandria in 1991 and then to Brandon in 1996. Protherm manufactures electric, infrared heating equipment for industrial applications. It was actually the initiative of the Brandon community that brought the business to town. Beattie participated in a tax increment financing option and leased a building constructed by the community to meet his needs. He has since purchased the building.



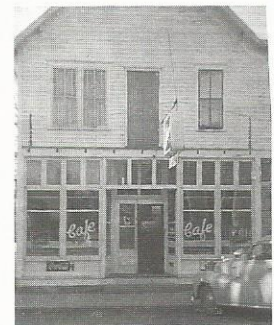
Quality Upholstery

Quality Upholstery, 105 Nelson Ave., Brandon, was established in 2002. The furniture reupholstery business is owned by Al Retka.



Ran Den Café

RanDen Café, located at 107 Central Ave., Brandon, is the oldest business building in Brandon; it has housed a café since 1898. Dennis and Randi Hulkonen are the current owners of the family restaurant, which features home-style cooking. They have owned the business since 2004.



Following is a list of owners for the café since 1898 (also listed are the property owners who held the property prior to the first restaurant being established at the site):

- 1867 ♡ Loren Fletcher, property owner
- 1878 ♡ Mary Griffin, property owner
- 1879 ♡ James Griffin, property owner
- 1884 ♡ Halvor Engemoen, property owner
- 1898 ♡ O.L. Stenberg (built café building)
- 1900 ♡ George Videen (George Videen Restaurant)
- 1928 ♡ R.C. Videen and Albert Holmgren
- 1928 ♡ Math and Michelina Stariha
(Stariha's Café)
- 1953 ♡ Adelaide Stariha and Julitta Bigelow
(Stariha's Café)

Current Businesses

- 1953-54 ☛ rented by *George and Mathilda Wetsch*
- 1955 ☛ rented by *Phil Hopfner*
- 1956 ☛ *Reuben and Ruth Volkenant*
- 1956 ☛ rented by *Gus and Sal Versluis*
- 1956 ☛ *Edward and Gertrude Loeffler*
(Sportsman's Café)
- 1957 ☛ *Al and Esther Schultz*
- 1958 ☛ *Edward and Gertrude Loeffler*
- 1959 ☛ *Ernest and Mary Tolifson*
- 1959 ☛ *Earl Olson*
- 1960 ☛ *Russell and Delores Madsen*
(Madsen's Café)
- 1967 ☛ *Ernest and Mary Tolifson*
- 1967 ☛ *Milton and Lila Mohagen* (Milt's Café)
- 1969 ☛ *Ernest and Mary Tolifson*
- 1969 ☛ *Phillip Brennon* (Phil's Café)
- 1970 ☛ *Cutis and Leonne Olson* (Curt's Café)
- 1972 ☛ *Wallace and Diane Morin* (Morin's Café)
- 1974 ☛ *Ernest and Mary Tolifson*
- 1975 ☛ *Michael and Linda Fish* (Fish's Café)
- 1976 ☛ *George James and David Gagne*
(Blue Gill Inn)
- 1976 ☛ *Richard and Patricia Pahl* (Blue Gill Inn)
- 1983 ☛ *Douglas and Kristine Cipra*
(Blue Gill Inn)
- 1991 ☛ *Larry and Darlene Deason*
(Mom's Pizza and Café)
- 1998 ☛ *Evelyn and Fred Zbacnik*
(Mom's Pizza and Café)
- 2001 ☛ *Neil and Nancy Fischer*
(Fischer's Café)
- 2004 ☛ *Dennis and Randi Hulkonen*
(RanDen Café)

Rusch Construction

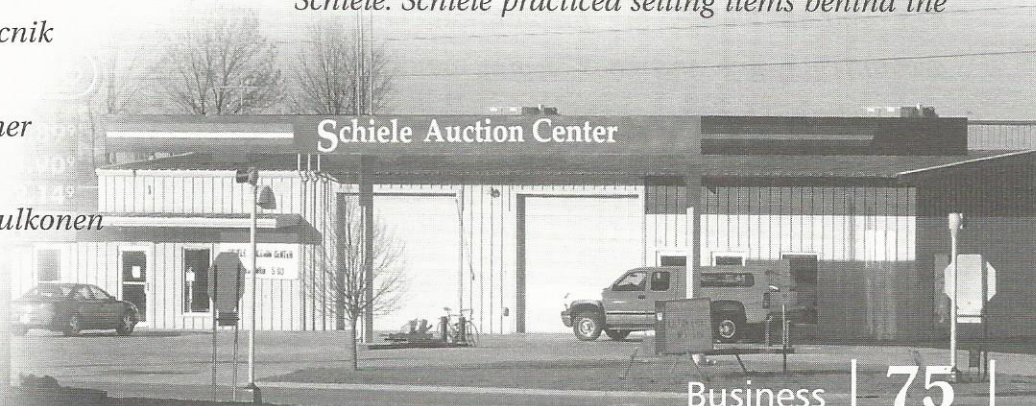
Rusch Construction of Brandon specializes in residential and commercial construction. Owned



by Devin Rusch, the company offers general contracting, new home construction, remodeling and commercial construction. Rusch carries a contractor's license and is also bonded and insured. Rusch has 35 years of experience in the construction industry. The company has three full-time employees and additional seasonal help. Devin's son, Ben, the third generation of Rusch Construction, has worked with the company since he was in high school.

Schiele Auction Service, Inc.

Schiele Auction Service, Inc., 202 Central Ave. S., Brandon, is owned and operated by Wally Schiele. Schiele practiced selling items behind the



barn before attending the World Wide College of Auctioneering in 1976. Schiele Auction Service was started in 1976 and conducted auctions for antiques, household estates, real estate, livestock barn sales, horse sales, coins, farm and auto, and specialty items. The company includes Sandi's Concessions, consisting of two portable lunch wagons and a lunchroom at the Auction Center.

The Schiele Auction Center opened in August 2002 on the corner of Highways 82 and 7 in Brandon, and is owned by Wally and Trever Schiele. They have three to 15 employees as needed, and conduct about 150 auctions per year. The Auction Center building also houses J & J Furniture Stripping, an apartment, service area and six rental storage units.

Silbernick Accounting, Inc.

Silbernick Accounting, Inc. has two offices. The main office is at 1417 Broadway, Suite 1 in Alexandria and a second office is located at Bremer Bank in Brandon.



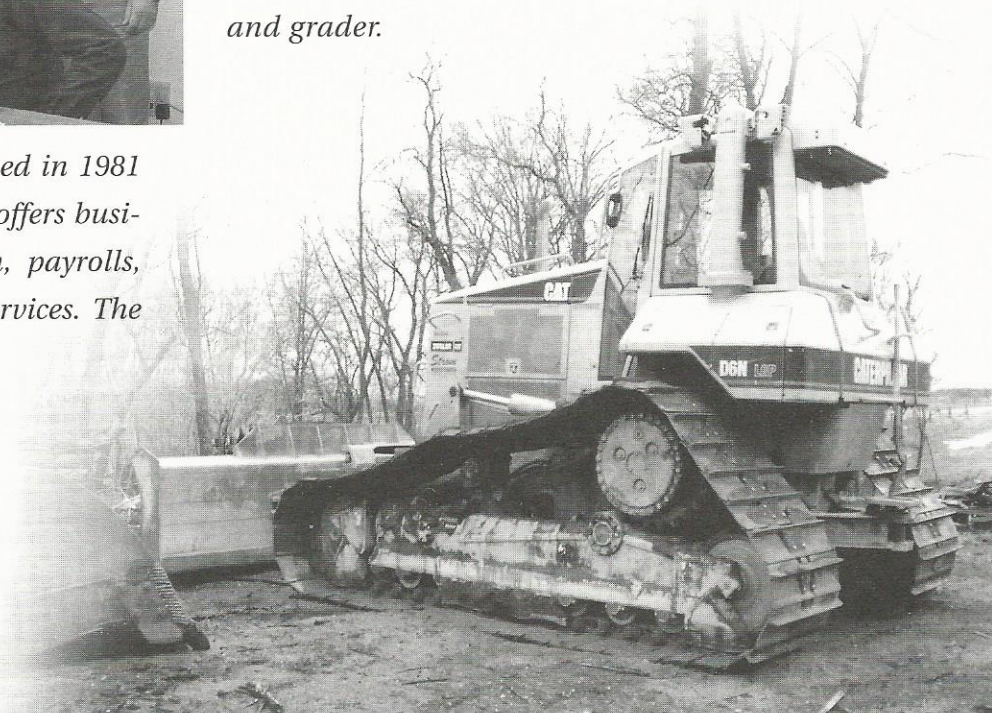
The accounting business was established in 1981 by Edwin W. Silbernick. The company offers business and individual tax preparation, payrolls, accounts payable and bookkeeping services. The business employs three people.

Strom Construction of Brandon, Inc.



Strom Construction, 411 2nd St., Brandon, was started by Clifford Strom in 1946. He had one T D 6 Dozer and removed rocks and stumps. The business grew significantly over the years to include road construction, developments and agricultural work. In 1976 Paul Strom started working in the business with his father and in 1981 the business was incorporated into Strom Construction of Brandon.

Today there are eight employees and the company continues to do much of the same type of work, although the way things are done has changed dramatically. They now do design build projects using lasers and GPS systems to layout grades. The equipment used today is also very different from the equipment of the 1940s. They use Challengers with scrapers, dozers, excavator and grader.



Current Businesses

Uncle Moe Manufacturing

Uncle Moe Manufacturing of Brandon was established in 1977. The business started as a result of a patent received by Jim Korkowski on a Pig Holder.

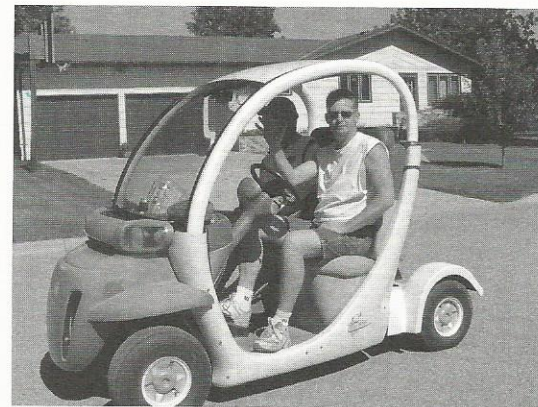


Boat docks were the next product manufactured and then a number of other items were designed and added to the line of products. The Pig Holder business was sold to a company in Gresham, Oregon in 2002. Two other products that were patented by Jim Korkowski are cemetery flower holders with the trademark Monumate patented in 1995 and Kork's Golf Boundary Markers, which were patented in 2005. The Boundary Markers are being manufactured and marketed by RR Products in Tucson, Arizona. The company is owned by Jim and Judi Korkowski.

Voyager Supply and Fabrication

Voyager Supply and Fabrication, 803 Central Ave. N., Brandon, was established in 1997. The company specializes in aluminum extrusions,

sheets and fabrication, aluminum docks and plastic decking. The company, owned by Gary Suckow and Jon Boutain, employs 54 people. Their goal is to provide the finest aluminum extrusions and fabricated solutions at the best possible quality and price. This is achieved by developing and researching new ways to meet needs. Voyager stores aluminum products in its warehouse, including bars, angles, tubes, rods and pipe. The company also carries aluminum sheet, expanded, painted sheet and Diamond Tread Brite and can get non-stock sheet and tread plate within a few days. Voyager also provides a full line of fabrication services including product design, development and prototyping. Manufacturing processes include welding, cutting, drilling, punching, crimping, bending, shearing, plasma cutting and parts assembly and packaging.



2005

Wagner Country Club

Wagner Country Club, 7451 County Rd. 7, Brandon, was established in 2005. The business is owned and managed by Stephanie Wagner. It offers a simulated golf experience, where the golfer is able to choose from more than 50 famous courses. The company is open year-round.

Wagner's Pitstop Car Wash and Laundromat

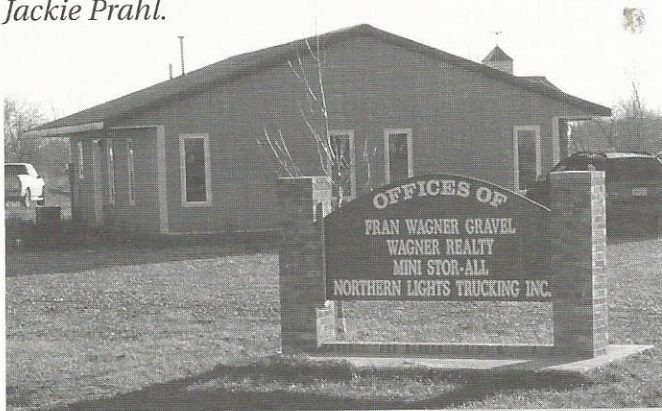
Wagner's Pitstop Car Wash and Laundromat is located at 207 Front St. E., Brandon. The car wash



and laundromat was built in 1996 by Ray and Diane Wood. They operated the business until April 2001 when they sold it to the present owners, Jim and Jill Wagner. The business has two employees – Dave Brede and Jared Wagner.

Wagner Realty

Wagner Realty, 804 Central Ave., Brandon, was established in 1996. The real estate business employs three people and is owned and managed by Jackie Prahl.



Wagner Trucking

Brothers Ken and Fran Wagner began a trucking business in Brandon 35 years ago. They started with two trucks delivering hay/sod to the Twin Cities. Later they also hauled grain for farmers, gravel for townships and did backhoe work. In the late 1970s, they got one over-the-road truck, soon increasing to three trucks working five states and eventually 48 states. In 1985 they purchased Nylander Transit from Glen Nylander, including his intra-state authority. In 1991 Wagner Trucking incorporated and moved to the former Brandon Lumber building. In 1998 Ken and Audrey bought Fran's share of the business. Sons Jeremy and Scott worked for the company, which ran 13 to 15 trucks at that time. Today they run and dispatch 70-plus trucks that operate nationwide. Many truck loads of tractors and other equipment are delivered to seaside ports where the cargo is loaded onto ships and transported to many foreign countries. Back haul loads can consist of merchandise imported from other countries. There are now eight office employees.



City of Brandon 2006

Brandon is proud to celebrate 125 years of making history. The community features a heritage rich with agriculture, recreation, tourism, business and culture.



2006 Brandon City Council members: (l to r) Mike Ranweiler, Jerry Bitzan, Mary Lee Korkowski; Debbie Grommesh, City Clerk; Doug Johnson, Mayor; Absent, Skip Brethorst

With a current population of 450 (from the 2000 census records), the community is thriving.

Many new businesses have opened their doors in the past several years.

New housing developments, a strong school system and friendly neighbors have brought many new families to the community.

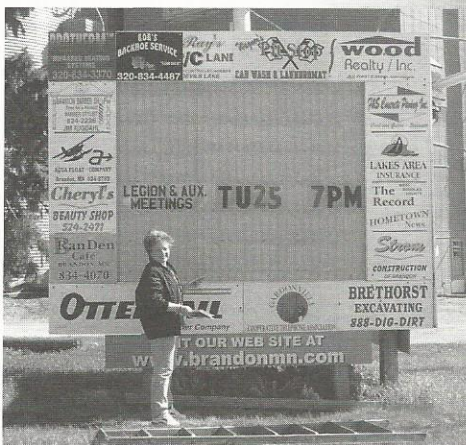
Many others have been residents of Brandon their entire lives, with their ancestors settling the area five or six generations ago.

All of Brandon's residents know first-hand the many benefits of small town living.

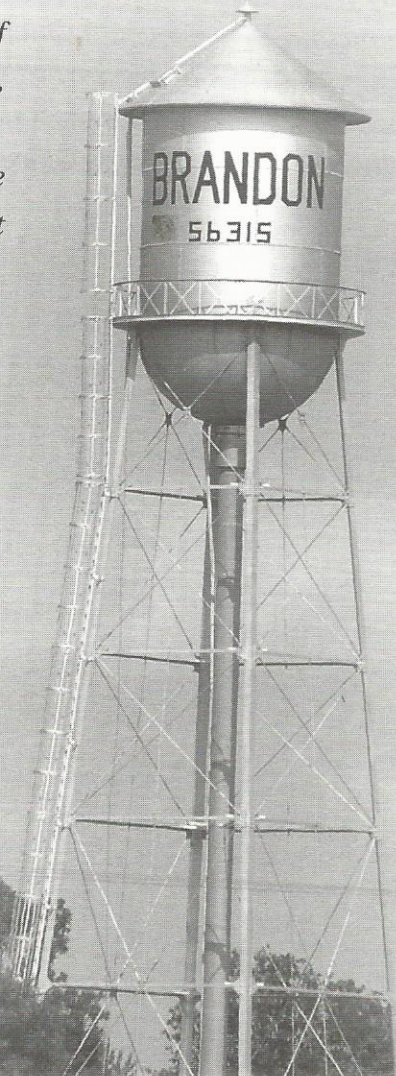
And of course the community extends far beyond the city limits, with the area's plentiful lakes and the numerous acres of area farmland contributing to the community's economy.

Brandon boasts great fishing for walleye, northern, bass and panfish, as well as hunting for deer, pheasant, water fowl and small game.

As a place to raise a family, enjoy recreational opportunities, do business, or just visit with neighbors, Brandon has it all.



Karen Severson | City Maintenance



John Lund | City Maintenance

Thank You!

The Brandon Community club thanks the Brandon Fire Department Relief Association for its generous contribution towards the publication of this book.

In 2005, the Brandon Fire Department....

☛ responded to a total of 51 calls. They were comprised of 9 fire calls, 29 medical calls, 4 weather watches and 9 service, good intent or hazardous condition calls.

☛ members committed more than 3,000 hours for training, meetings, maintenance and responding to emergencies.

☛ added four additional members, while one member retired.

☛ took delivery of a new pumper – a Sterling truck featuring an enclosed cab, 1,250 gallons-per-minute pump, hydraulic generator, Class A foam system and much more. It allows the department to work more safely and efficiently at fire scenes and will serve the department well for many years.

☛ received a \$2,500 grant from the Minnesota DNR to install a dry hydrant in Moe Township. The hydrant will be used to extract water from a lake or pond year around for fighting rural fires. This will improve the ability to sustain water supplies at rural fire scenes in the hydrants proximity. The hydrant will be installed by mid 2006.

☛ The department received a \$1,000 grant from Runestone Electric's Operation Roundup to purchase radio headsets and communications equipment.

Brandon Fire Department Auxiliary

The Brandon Fire Department women's auxiliary is always on hand to prepare sandwiches and provide beverages to sustain the firemen during large fires and emergencies.

The auxiliary also assist when the fire department holds luncheon meetings, and helps annually with the department's Brandon Mid-Summerfest fundraiser.

Current officers

Chief: Richard Korkowski

Assistant Chief/EMS coordinator: Wayne Stephens

Secretary: Brian Fuchs

Treasurer: Shaun Carlson

Training Officer: Scott Schaefer

Chief of Trucks: Kevin Ellertson



Front Row:
Chad Carlson, Mike Wagner, Jerry Challes, Devin Rusch, Tom Skarka, Ernie Schmitt, Rick Korkowski

Second Row:
Kevin Ellertson, Eric England, Bill Koetter, Roger Sammons, Bonnie Melville, Tim Grabow, Ben Rusch, Chris Gillespie, Wayne Stephens, Jeremy Peterson

Third Row:
Tom Trisko, Steve Pohlmann, Scott Schaefer, Scott Scherrer

Fourth Row:
Brian Fuchs, Shaun Carlson

Not pictured:
Jeron Buchholz, Vern Kaufman (serving in Iraq) New members not pictured: John Dingwall, Josh Buboltz



If you have corrections, additional information or pictures that you would like to share for future publications be sure to contact us at:

Brandon History Center | Box 514, Brandon MN 56315

Publication | June 2006



BRANDON, MINN, FROM SCHOOL HOUSE TOWER.

