

History of Goehner, Nebraska

Settlement began in 1869, when George Perkins, Andrew Perkins, Peter Oglevy and Abram Win dsør unloaded their prairie schooners and began building homes. In 1870 A. C. MilleC.C. Tunecliff K. B. A. Bonnam, Peter M. Johnson, Ed Jensen, Allison, Martin Madison Srr., and perhaps a few others came to help subdue the wilderness.

For some years the people had been looking for an opportunity to secure to the County a competing like of railroad. They had parlayed with the Union Pacific but could not get no definite answer from them. Finally in 1886, John F. Goehner, being a Senator, while at Lincoln formed the acquaintance of some of the officials. He secured a hearing which resulted in further negotiations and finally a proposition was submitted to build during 1887 the F. E. &M. V. Branch through our county. The road was completed in the fall of 1887 and regular trains were running.

John F. Goehner was born in Germany in 1850. He came to America in 1867. In 1873 he accompanied in the founding of Seward, Nebraska. Mr. Goehner was a promiuent merchant as well as a member of the legislature.

Goehner was originally called or at spelled "G-O-N-E-R-" until it was purchased from the railroad by John F. Goehner. Then the name was changed to "Goehner" in his honor. It was with the coming of the railroad that people really started to settle in Goehner and businesses began to develop. Pioneer Town sites plotted this town in 1887.

The first school was opened in 1873 in a sod house and was taught by Miss Lotta Hillary. In 1887, the District #27 Schoolhouse, better know as Mount Pairie, originally located one mile west of Goehner, was secretly moved into Goehner during the night by the town residents who objected to the schoolhouse being out in the country. Miss Edie Plumber was the teacher at the time. In about 1890, a two story frame schoolhouse was built across the street South from the Mount Prairie School Building. The present school house is a three story brick building and was built in 1919, across the street East of the two story building. The first class to graduate from the twelfth grade was in 1923. Members of the class were Dorothy Bradley Johann, Glen Bouchard, Elizabeth Roach Murray, Mary Bouchard Marble, Otis Kelly, William Temple, Frieda Kuhlman Goldsmith, Florence Mercer Bauer, Opal Gambler Brooks, and Eleanor Fuehring Ambrester; Superintendent Cullen. The last graduation class was in 1945. Members of this class were Leona Thonen, H. Lee Graff and Wayne Pederson; superintindent Ryan. District 27 consolidated into Seward District #9 in 1959. The Alumni classes still have an Alumni banquet once a year, usually the first Saturday in May.

The Post Office was established in 1888 with Chas Brockway as Postmaster. At this time it was political. When the U.S. Presidents changed so did the Postmasters. It was during the time Wussler had the position that they no longer changed with politics. Louis Wussler was Postmaster for 18 years. After his death, his daughter, Mrs. Carl (Anna) Hansen, became Postmaster. She held the position for 28 years until she died. After her death, her daughter Mrs. Harvey (Ileen) Walden was given the position and to date Ileen has the office over 20 years. In

the early days, the Postmaster met the train at the depot to pick up and dispatch the mail. During the summer of 1936 a Star Route was established and a mail truck, stopped at each post office on its route twice a day every day of the week. We are still serviced by the Star Route, but no longer have Sunday Service.

Ileen Walden retired September 30, 1983 after nearly 30 years of Postal Service. Sharon W. Rigby is now the Postmaster.

The Goehner State Bank was established in January 1903 with \$5,000 Capital. A.G. McGrew was President and J.D. Hamilton, Cashier. These gentlemen with W.F. Niehouse were the principal stockholders. In 1905 the officers were A.G. McGrew, President; W.F. Niehouse, Vice President; and A.E. Graff, Cashier. Other stock holder in the bank in the earlier days were Frank Weber, Thomas Wake Sr., and Martin Madison Sr., Frank Weber was then Cashier. He had five Tellers during his time in the bank, namely Opal Pederson Tempel, Joe Roberts, Leona Gambler Tyrrell, Anne Temple Schroader and Velma Madison Zillig.

Banks were ordered closed by the President on March 4, 1933. They re-opened again March 16th, 1933. The Goehner State Bank was among those able to reopen.

Upon Madison's retiring, the assets of the Goehner State Bank were transferred to the Jones National Bank in Seward. This was done after the last day of business on December 5, 1942.

Goehner has two churches at this time of this writing. The first being built in 1902. It was a frame church costing around \$2,500 to build and had a seating capacity of about 400. Early officers were George Bauer Jr., Secretary F. Schulz, Treasurer H. Bluhm, Wm. Vogt, F. Imig and Chas Gembler Trustees. This church was first named the Freiden's Evangelical Church, later named Freiden's Evangelical and Reformed Church, and is now called United Church of Christ. Rev. A. Woth was the first minister. His Sunday Services were all in German, August 4, 1918 was the first Sunday he preached in English. There have been two additions to the original Church Building. A small room was built on in 1952. The lumber for this part came from the Methodist Church which was no longer being used and so taken down. Later a larger Sunday School room and Fellowship hall including kitchen and rest rooms were built on. This addition was dedicated in 1962.

In the spring of 1933 a number of Lutherans residing in and around Goehner felt a church was needed nearby. Permission was granted by President H.E. Meyer and the neighboring Pastor to see what could be done. The first services were held in the Welcome Society Building of the Evangelical Church of Goehner. A table served as the Altar and a flower stand was the pulpit. The attendance at these services were very encouraging. In November of that year the congregation known as Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod was organized and the constitution was adopted a month later. Charter members were E.A. Pieper, Ben Beckman, Henry Pankoke, George Petri, Emil Staehr, Alex Guenther, Walter Rolfsmeier, George Martens, Victor Jung, Lester Pieper, Laurie Hansen, Carl Guenther, and Carl Bender. Rev. Victor Jung was the first minister.

The congregation soon felt need of a place of worship of their own. The deed to the lots on

which and old Lutheran Church stood were turned over by Carl Luebbe, On February 13, 1934 they broke ground for erecting the building was done by the members. The building valued at \$2,500. was dedicated April 22, 1935.

There was also a Methodist Church in Goehner many years, built by a Dane Peter Martin Jensen. It was town down and on this site the Grange Hall now stands.

Goehner Grange #341 was organized in 1933 and re-organized in 1940. They won the top place in a National Community Service Project in 1951 which netted them \$15,000. This money along with special top honors in previous years, was used to build the new Grange Hall in 1952, which presently serves the whole community.

At the time Goehner was served by three elevators. The oldest which is no longer in town, was Wrest of the old epot. This was owned by the Updike Elevator company with Stephen Graff as Manager. Years later, it was sold, torn down piece at a time and shipped to it's new home on the Chicago Northwestern Railroad. Second was the Farmer's Elevator, managed by Charles Gembler and the third was the Nye, Jenks Elevator managed by Lewis Dey, Nye, Jenks, had both the elevator and a lumber yard. This company sold the elevator to Wenciker, Newton. Walter Newton became manager and the lumber yard was torn down. Later the elevator was purchased by Edward Luethje and he was the manager until his retirement, at which time his son-in-law D.D. Hodgin, became manager. In 1924 Fred Stein heider bought the Farmer's Elevator and it was then known as Steinheider's Elevator. In 1948 Fred Steinheider and his sons, Frederick and Robert, went into business together. From then on it was re-named Fred Steinheider & Sons and as such it remained. On June 29, 1966 the Luethje Elevator was purchased by Steinheider & Sons, making one independent elevator in town. Had it not been for the fire January 2, 1974 they would have celebrated their 50th year in 1974 in the elevator. In June 1975, Beaver Crossing's farmer's Cooperative company bought out Steinheider and Sons and began operation July 1st, Paul Schmidt is the present manager. In 1983, the Goehner Cooperative closed, merging with Tamora. In 1985 Goehner, and Tamora merged with Beaver Crossing farmer's Cooperative becomeing one with the main offices in Tamora.

Goehner's early fire department consisted of hand drawn pumper and a bell on a tower to sound the alarm. The towns men were the volunteer firemen. They got their first siren May 2, 1935a. This was replaced by Volunteer Fire Department was organized with 19 members. Officers were Frederick Steinheider, President; Harold Graff, Chief; Frank Smetter, Assistant Chief; and Paul McDonald, Secretary-Treasurer. In 1960 a new fire barn was built. In December of 1974, the department celebrated their 25th Anniversary. Three of the Charter members, Alvin Luebbe, Elmer Spahr, and Robert Steinheider, were reconized for their 25 years of service. The Department now consists of 40 members. They have 3 trucks; A #1 pumper,, a tanker, and a new 4 wheel drive pickup for grass fires. The present officers are: Stephen Eberspacher, President, Raymone (Butch) Walden, Chief, Frank Smetter, Ass't Chief, George Schluckebier, Secretary and Marvin (Pee-Wee) Schulz, Treasurer. One of their biggest events each year is their Spaghetti Feed which is the first Sunday in March. They have done this for the past 18 years. Four hundred pounds of beef and sausage and about that much spaghetti are bought into the Grange Hall. The fireman and their wives spend more than half of the Saturday getting everything ready—meat

balls made, the secret sauce mixed and the vegetables cleaned for the relish plates. On Sunday morning the electric roasters, filled with meat balls and covered with sauce, are turned back on and by noon all is under control. They usually serve aroundf 1500 people between noon and 8:00 P.M..

Four of the biggest fires Goehner has had were the Hugh Currah Hardware Store on November 4, 1930. G.L. Geis Grocery and Dry Goods Store on March 27th, 1931; The schoolhouse on May 16, 1935, (this happened graduation night just as everyone got nearly home); and the Steinheider Elevator on January 2, 1974.

A new sewer lagoon system was completed in 1962. City water was added in 1968 and a second well was put down in August of 1969.

For a long time there was a bandstand located in the middle of the street where band concerts were held every Saturday night. They were one of the best small town bands around. It was a 30 piece band and Carl Seidell of Seward was the director.

At one time Goehner had a dance hall, a movie house, a roller-skating rink and they even had free outdoor movies in the 30's. At one time there were stockyards by the railroad tracks where cattle and h ogs were corraled and then shipped by rail to the Omaha stockyards. When the passanger trains became available it was possible to catch the train in the morning in Goehner, go to Seward and come back again that night. The round trip fee was 17 cents.

Baseball and softball have always played an important part in the entertainment of the town. They have had girl softball teams as well as boys teams.

Some of the earlier businesses and owners bought up to date are as follows:

Ernest Kruhm	Hardware Store
Hugh Currah	Hardware Store
William Lessemier	Grocery Store and Dry Goods
Ollie Eager	Grocery Store and Dry Goods
Paul McDonald	Grocery Store and Hardware
Henry Pederson	Grocery

This was bought out by a Farmers organization and named the farmers store. It was first run by a Mr. Bertram and later by William shaw. Frank Geis was the next owner and on his retiring his son Gerald Geis took over. After the fire in March of 1931, Gerald Geis bult back the Grocery Store. Carl Rosenlof was next owner, then Henry Pederson, and at the present time, Paul McDonald is owner. March 10, 1986, Ron and Marie Gillespie bought the store. These stores were all on the East side of main street. For a few years there was also a grocery store on the west side of the street. Their owners were Louis Wussler, Joe Kehler, George Blankenship, Ward Welch, and Orville Haack.

One of the first saloons was owned and run by Bill Miller. Paul "Slits" Hartwig was next. Mankin taage was the last saloon owner before probation in 1916. Later, the pool hall, tavern and barber shop were together. The barber shop was enclosed little room in one corner.

Some of the earlier owners were as follows:

Pool Hall & Tavern

Louie Graff

Al Alman

("Punk Alman was the owner & his brother Al ran the pool hall")

John Brumbaugh

Charley Roach

Barber Shop

Alvin Hall

"Punk Alman

John Brumbaugh

Charley Roach

For awhile Charlie Roach and Guy Cooper had the Barber shop, then Guy Cooper took it over and ran it for a number of years.

Henry Schroeder

Henry Brinkmeyer

James Sweeney

Ray Ward

George Tabler

James Sweeney

After these owners, Goehner no longer had a barber shop and the pool tables also disappeared. The next traven owner was Elmer Ohlscheager followed by Victor Bartlett Se., and later his son Victor Bartlett Jr., who operated it for 28 years. It was bough upon Vic's retirement by Bill and Pam Morse Jr., they operated it for a couple years and the presdnt owner is Bill and Ruth Schmeidts.

Depot Agents Included: Thomas Currah, Ed Coulter, H.A. Shuler and Rudy Krtaska.

Blacksmiths were: A little German fellow named August Balitz, Nekuda, Hugo Wagantall, Fred Schneck, and Carl Hansen.

Harness Shop:

When Ernest Kruhm had the hardware store, Mr. Cloupek had the harness shop. Earlier harness repair was done in the back of Hugh Currah Hardware store. Later Herbert Dargel came to town and set up a shop of his own.

Restaurant and Soda Fountain Owners:

S.E. Hauder

Bill Behrens-----1st Alumnis Banquet was held here.

Carpenters:

Ben Whitaker

George Roth

William Gassman

Raymond(Butch) Walden

Well Drilling

William Watts

Ed Pieper & Sons

Bill Bolte

Ed Gard

Service Stations with other repairs:

S.E. Hauer	Sinclair
Steve Graff	Skelly
Harold Graff	Skelly
Carl Hansen	White Rose and later Mobil
Guy Gardner	Skelly
Marvin Bauer	Skelly
Keith Welch	Skelly

Business establishments in town on the East side of the main street from South to North at the time were: Ed Gard , Garage; Farm Implements (he also sold Nyberg Automobiles). Town Hall, Lumberyard (which later moved to Nye, Synder, Jenks elevator), Ben Whitaker garage, and farm implements (he sold Ford Cars). Steven Graff ran a service station, garage and sold Studebakers when he was associated here. Next , was the grocery store, a cream station, run by Oliver Roack and across the street was the Bank. Next to the bank was a small building where Dr. Vanderhoof was located and where later a man by the name of Brown ran a Barber shop. The last building was the Meyer General Store and Post Office run at this time by Charles Matzke, father of the late State Senator Stanley Matzke.

Starting from the south again on the west side of the street were Fred schnebeck's Blacksmith shop; Bill Watts; the well driller; and a hotel built by Woardby and which later housed the Post office and a cream station both being run by Louis Wussler. Next two large brick building A bank was established in the firwst one and from 1897 to 1905 and was run by August Graff. This bank, however, was robbed and did no business after that. Later this building was used for a grocery store, barber shop and pool hall together, bowling alley, roller skating rink and presently by the County for storing maintainers, etc. The second brick building had a grocery store and dry goods run by Louis Wussler. This building was sold to a Mr. Kock. The post office was also located in this second brick building and when Mr. Wussler sold it, he moved the post office to the old hotel building as was stated before. The upper story of this brick building was used for dances, school plays, etc. There was an iron stairway and railing going up along the side and a walkway across the back. To the rear of this building across the alley was the livery barn where the doctor, dray wagons and traveling salesmen kept their horses. This was run by Ted Bezine. At one time, there were two dray wagons that would haul supplies from the depot to business places around town. Now, back to main street, still going North there was a hardware store run by Ernest Kruhm and a harness shop run by Mr. Cloupek. Later this business was bought by Hugh Currah and his father, Thomas Currah, who was depot agent at this time. After the hardware store burnt on November 4th, 1930 , Carl hansen rebuilt his blacksmith shop in this bui8lding. Next there was a drug store which was later used for a café, harness shop and the post office.

At present the town of Goehner consists of the post office, one elevator, traven and café, antique wood-working, carpenter shop, two churches, Grange Hall, Fire barn and grade school.

Goehner is located in Seward County in Nebraska. Just 25 miles west of Lincoln and only 1/3 mile North of the interstate 80. It is the closest to the Interstate in the State of Nebraska. Several new homes have been built in the past few years and to date the population is 161.!

I have been told that Goehner also had a brick yard and made their own bricks from the clay in the field west of Steinheider's. The bricks were used in building which housed Wm. Watts well-drilling machinery. I've also been told in the East part of town Ben Whitaker made culverts for the roads, and the state department. Ben had his business from 1917 until he moved to Milford with his car dealership in 1920, after several years in Milford he and his family moved to California. I have also been told that Goehner had a creamery and made butter right here but I have not been able to find anything written about either of these things. Also in the last house on the West side of the main street, on the South end was a butter made for a time, but no dates available.

When the history of Seward county Nebraska's 2nd addition was published in 1980 it stated that K precinct had about 7 miles of railroad and one village, Goehner, which was a good shipping point, containing three elevators, three good well supplied merchantile houses, and one hardware, several substantial brick two story business houses, a splendid school in modern two story structure, three church edifices and a town hall, a good bank, depot etc. together with a goodly number of cozy residences.

This was written for the Centennial by Christy Kennel Now Mrs. Christy Wineland.