

# Yankton: A Great Place To Call Home

## Wood: We Have Enjoyed Our Role In Telling The Town's Story

BY GARY WOOD  
The Press & Dakotan

It's been nearly eight years since we moved to Yankton. Our move here has been a life-changing experience and I have the community — our readers, our advertisers and especially the great employees of our company — to thank for that.

I moved to Yankton in September of 2003 to take the reins of the newspaper as publisher when it was owned by Morris Communications. They were a good company to work for but it was always difficult to participate and donate back to the community for all the support we see.

As I've said before, the paper was corporately owned for nearly 30 years and now that we are once again locally owned and operated we've been able to give back more than ever before. We were afforded the opportunity to become local owners of the oldest newspaper in the Dakotas back in March of 2008; we couldn't have done it without the help of First Dakota National Bank. Many thanks to Larry Ness and his crew for working with us to make it a reality. We feel fortunate to be one of two lo-



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cally-owned and operated newspapers serving the Yankton market.

Well, on to what this is all about — celebrating 150 years as a business and the opportunity we've had to support the "Mother City of the Dakotas" as the community celebrates the same 150 year time frame. We've had great support from the business community to provide this historical piece to our readers. I hope you enjoy the stories, the historical front pages and the ads. The front pages you see have local, regional, national or international significance and some will be remembered by many in the community. The stories of our newspaper, the city of Yankton and the region are some of the most newsworthy of their day and many had great impact on how this community has changed and developed over the years.

You'll notice that most of the ads are a little bit of history themselves. Many of our advertisers/business partners have taken this opportunity to tell the community more about who they are, how they got started in Yankton and where they are today. All have had an impact on the growth and development of our community. They are what keep us here and pro-



The offices of the Press & Dakotan, circa the 1930s. The Press & Dakotan has been published continuously for 150 years, more than 100 of which have been at its current location. It is the oldest newspaper in the Dakotas and is once again locally-owned.

P&D ARCHIVE PHOTO

vide for the financial well being of our families and friends.

The most important message I can convey here is THANK YOU! Thanks to our readers and advertisers for trusting us to be the best source of local news and sports, the best vehicle to convey your message to the community. Thank you to

the people of Yankton and the region for the welcome my family and I received when we moved here. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of the family of Yankton and thank you for reading.

Enjoy learning the history of Yankton and the many businesses that have participated in our celebration of 150 years. This

truly is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and we're honored and humbled by that. As we look forward to the next 150 years and the changes it will bring in how we deliver the best local news and sports to our readers and the best advertising vehicle to our businesses I'm just disappointed I won't be here to see that day!



ABOVE — From Leona Sparks: A photo of the Meloin and Leona Sparks family taken in June 1961 around the time of the Dakota Territory centennial celebration in Yankton. Pictured are, from left: Leona, Meloin, Nancy, Ray and Vicki Sparks. BELOW — From Amberlee Willcuts: This photo of the Yankton County Courthouse was taken shortly before it was torn down in 2003 and replaced by the Yankton County Government Center.



From Carol Shuff Winter: "This picture was taken after the Arickara Homecoming parade in September of 1956. I am on the left in the official Drill Team uniform. Next to me are Ruth Huber Highland and Dee Cook Roach; they are wearing Native American costumes, as many students did because a lot of us walked in the parade. Next to them is Donna Mikkelsen DeJean who was a member of the YHS band. Next to her is Janet Magorien Shuff, wearing the real '50s scarf, plaid shirt and rolled up jeans! In front is Barbara Harris with our pets. The picture was taken in front of my house at 500 Mulberry."

## Reflection

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pened and we all listened to the radio for the rest of the afternoon while we pulled and ate the taffy.

It was fun growing up in the small town. Mostly we inherited our clothes from cousins, neighbors, or older siblings or else they were handmade after we got to 4H. Being the oldest did not mean I got all the new clothes. The first new purchase I can remember getting especially for me was a green "car coat" with off-white leather collars and cuff accents from Fantes. My dad called it my dog coat because of the collar. I also had to get a size larger than normal because my arms were so long they stuck out of the sleeves funny. To me it was a regular dress coat.

**CENTENNIAL:** In 1961, I was 11 years old when the Centennial came to Yankton. Five of my family got the measles in April and mom and I had to keep running to keep everyone pacified. All of them were sleeping in my parents' bedroom because that was the only big bed downstairs. I don't recall where my parents slept at that time. Anyway, once



everyone was back up and around, I got the measles. (No that didn't mean everyone waited on me. They went out to play and I was left in the house alone!)

To get back to my story, my mom never went to medical doctors, she used a chiropractor. As normal, when everyone was well again we all came to Yankton for a checkup. The day was Wednesday of Centennial week and we got to town in time to watch the parade which was HUGE. My aunt had made each of the girls a long yellow dress with tiny flowers on it (yellow was never my fa-

vorite color) so that we all matched. I don't remember what the boys wore. Once everyone had been checked over we got to go to the midway area where all the rides were. My job was to watch the others while they took their rides.

Finally about 3:30, mom said it was time to go. I was upset that we had to leave because I had not been able to take an older kids ride. Mom gave in so I could have "one" ride. I chose the Spider (you know the one with 8 legs with seating attached). I was the only one in my car. In the middle of the ride, my mom

made the operator stop to let me off. Talk about disappointed! It seemed that my oldest brother was regressing back to his babyhood. We rushed over to the chiropractor's home where he worked with my brother and brought him back to his normal self. I sure felt bad about missing my ride but I later found out that my cousin wasn't so lucky after his bout with the measles. He ended up being mentally handicapped. Looking back we were lucky.

**HIGH SCHOOL:** I don't know how my parents managed it, but I was lucky enough to go to Mount Marty High School. My class had about 45 students. I thought this was wonderful. We wore uniforms so being smartly dressed was not a problem for this very short, extremely shy girl. When I went to enroll on the third floor of Bede Hall, the principal's desk was so high, the principal couldn't see me until my mom brought me around the desk. I guess I was only about 4'6" at the time. For

the first two years all classes were held on the third floor with only physical education held elsewhere. It was in the basement! Can you imagine 10 minutes to shower, dress and get up four flights of stairs in time for the next class?

In my sophomore year, I surprised my Latin teacher by being one of three students to pass the National Latin Test with a score high enough to get recognized

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# Four Seasons Fabric

909 Broadway, Yankton, SD • 665-3406



Call or e-mail to enter the Four Seasons Fabric Riverboat Days Quilt Show and win a new BERNINA!

Jon and Misty Nockels have owned the fabric store for 14 years. They are an authorized BERNINA dealer offering sales and service on BERNINA machines. They also offer fabric for quilts and crafts, patterns, books, notions and more.

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