



PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2017

Fall

Old Fashioned Christmas

On Saturday, December 9th from 2-5 pm, the Plymouth Historical Society and the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department are co-sponsoring the 31st Annual “OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH”. The purpose of the event is to provide some old fashioned holiday spirit and activities for families in Plymouth. Children can visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus will be right there to help the Elves hand out candy canes. The children can also see Santa’s reindeer and go for a hay ride pulled by Belgian horses with bells jingling. The rides are free, hot cider and cookies will be provided; carolers and making Christmas decorations are other activities for the children.

This year we again have our great story teller back. Bob Gasch will be telling holiday stories in the Carriage House, something you don’t want to miss! Also the Armstrong Chamber Singers will be singing holiday songs and delighting the children young and old.

Bring your friends, relatives, neighbors and kids ages 1 month to 100 years young. The annual event has attracted large crowds with some families having a perfect attendance record with their children since it started in 1987. We had a great time last year as we do every year

Activities include:

Visit with Santa

Live Reindeer

Old Fashioned Hay Ride

Hot Cider and Cookies

Old Fashioned Xmas Decorations



Old Toy Train Display

Crafts

Story Telling by Bob Gasch

Music Groups

Armstrong Chamber Singers

Messiah Recorder Ensemble

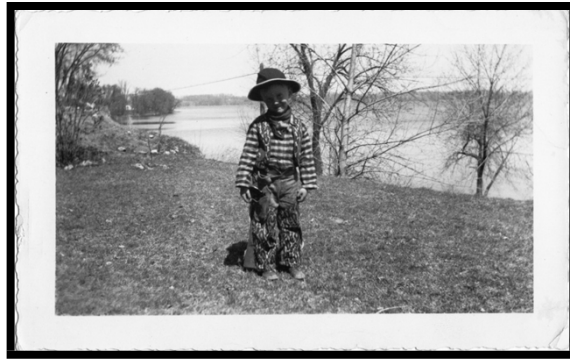
The Bertrands of Medicine Lake

Victor O. Bertrand 1900-1979 Businessman, Outdoorsman, Medicine Lake Enthusiast

This is the third in a series of articles about The Bertrand Family-- early settlers of Medicine Lake. You have met two of the Bertrand men, father and son who each built homes on the west side of Medicine Lake and worked in the family business--H. Bertrand Manufacturing Company. The story starts with Henry L. founder (see PHS Winter2017newsletter), continues with his son Victor (PHS Spring 2017 newsletter) and now grandson, Henry Richard (Dick) Bertrand.



The third generation Bertrand to work in the family business--H Bertrand Manufacturing was the oldest son of Victor, named for his grandfather and founder, Henry L. Henry Richard, nicknamed "Dick" started coming to the factory as a young boy, often accompanying his father to the Minneapolis Farmer's Market to get dill each day when the pickle production was at its peak in July and August. He knew the factory inside and out, watched his father, uncles and grandfather maintain the bottling and sorting equipment, source cucumbers, mix batches of brine, pack pickles, seal boxes, ship them off to market in railroad cars and deliver them in the company truck--a job he would inherit at the factory when he was able to get a Class C License at the age of 18. Everyone had their specialty whether it was the book keeping, making sales calls and visiting customers or coopering the oak barrels to store the bulk product. Being part of the family business was natural, whether you were woman or child, you were expected to help out especially when the cucumbers were ready for pickling. Seeing his father, aunts and uncles and grandfather rolling up their sleeves to pitch in was as natural as their attendance at family gatherings out at the Lake where there was always something to do in any season. Dick, born in 1935 grew up on fishing, swimming, skating, boating, hunting, trapping and exploring the natural areas around Medicine Lake. He attended Beacon Heights School until the eighth grade and Wayzata High School, graduating in 1953. Beyond his grade school education he got a well-rounded education about the way things worked.



Dick at age 4 at 2355 West Medicine Lake Drive. The view of the Lake is to the north side.



Diving off the dock in front of his house



Dick with family dog Prince

Dick could draw designs for car designs with modern shapes, could take apart machinery and put it together again, and became very good at troubleshooting and diagnosing a problem with any engine. He also fell in love with cars. He briefly owned a Vespa moped, but had his first car by the age of 16 and knew how everything worked under the hood. Throughout his life he paid attention to all makes and models of cars and maintained and repaired his own. Later in life he owned a 1950 Pontiac Silver Streak that he restored to its original condition and showed at classic cars shows and proudly drove in parades.



Kay and Dick 1954

Dick met his future wife Kay Sharratt at Wayzata High School when she moved from Minneapolis as a junior. They married in 1954 and made their home next door to Kay's parents, a seasonal cabin they "fixed up" just up the lane from Victor and Marie's, Dick's family home. Dick continued working at the Pickle Factory after a semester at the University of Minnesota to study engineering. He decided college was not for him and in a few short years he was a father to two little girls, deciding the young family needed space of their own. He started work on building his own place, a sturdy three bedroom rambler on a lot his Father had just up the road at 2655 West Medicine Lake Drive. The house took shape over a year and had the classic layout of a three bedroom rambler with casual open rooms, a bank of picture windows that let you catch a glimpse of Medicine Lake with amenities of the times--wall to wall carpet, turquoise exterior and a back yard with a swing set and charcoal grill.



Rambler at 2655 West Medicine Lake Drive

Dad did the building himself. He did it with the help of "how to" books from the library, free labor from friends in the trades who laid block and dug the basement, and the gifts of babysitting and "extras" from my grandparents. But mostly, it was my Dad alone who hammered nails, wired and plumbed the house into being. He would come home from his day job at the Factory, eat a quick supper, change clothes and head up the hill to work on the house. Often our mother would help too, if not more than being Dad's go-for. We moved in October of 1958, another daughter was born in 1961 and it was our family's home for 40 years.

During those years, from the late 1950s through 1968, after Henry L's death and the retirements of the uncles, it was pretty much just Dick and his father Victor who worked full-time at the factory. There were seasonal workers who were added to the payroll and worked the production line. Grandpa Vic did the sales, and Dad did the delivery route as well as maintained the equipment. He became an expert at finding any street in Minneapolis or Saint Paul and diagnosing machinery problems that might halt the production stream.



Dick in the delivery truck undated

The product line didn't change much over the years, concentrating largely on bottled vinegar and ammonia, and of course all sorts of pickles. The order sheet included pure apple cider vinegar, white distilled vinegar and corn sugar vinegar in barrels, gallons, quarts and pints. The glass was sourced in Shakopee, and the barrels were coopered by the Bertrand's and were recycled. The empties were

returned from customers and stored in the yard. The pickles were either dill spears or whole, cross cut or Kosher and sold by the caseload or truck load.

Competition became fiercer in the industry and larger food companies began to acquire smaller ones. Grandpa and Dad entertained offers of buy-outs and eventually in 1968, they accepted an offer from Home Brands to buy the business. Dad would run Home Brand's production line as manager (they were producers of peanut butter and preserves) and would add vinegar to their product line with the acquisition of H Bertrand Manufacturing. Pickles would no longer be produced. Grandpa Vic would stay on as an advisor and stepped down at the age of 70. Dad stayed at Home Brands until it too was going to be sold and the production stopped in Northeast Minneapolis. He worked his way as Transportation Manager and got more involved in the shipping and supply chain part of the business. Plymouth was growing and changing too. The west side's cabins, taverns, and seasonal spots were transformed into modern suburban homes. The Plymouth Shopping Center, the commercial hub on Highway 55 that housed the IGA, Ben Franklin, drug store and cafe, was overshadowed by regional shopping centers that sprang up in the late 1960s and 70s. The West Medicine Lake Community Club, a social hub for neighbors in the lake area and the club house was a venue for weddings, themed dances, kid's movies and baseball games. The annual carnival drew people from all around the area with rides, games of chance, food concessions, cake walk and bazaar and bingo. Vic and Marie Bertrand, Dick's parents were charter members of the club and Dick and Kay took part in committees to plan events and attend them with friends and neighbors on the west side. Dad sat on a planning committee when Plymouth created West Medicine Lake Park in the early 1990s and saw to it that there would be a swimming beach and skating rink, to ensure the activities he grew up enjoying on the lake would continue for all. West Medicine Lake Drive was rerouted to allow for more green space adjacent to the lakeshore and a recreational trail hugged the lakeshore making access available around Medicine Lake. Dick worked at Home Brands until the early 1980s when the business had already been acquired twice--first by Peavey, and then ConAgra. He chose retirement instead of a move with the business unit that would continue the peanut butter business in Kentucky. He sold the house he built in 1996 and moved to another neighborhood in Plymouth where he lived until his death in 2014.

H Bertrand Manufacturing was a source of family pride over four generations. It was a thriving family business that created livelihood for more than 70 years. And the Bertrand's put down deep roots in the community, and have called Plymouth home over five generations.



Dick Bertrand in his 1950 Pontiac Silver Streak

Article written by Debra Bertrand Palmquist who is a native of Plymouth, Minnesota. Growing up on the shores of Medicine Lake at a time when community meant coming together for carnivals, doll buggy parades and beauty pageants--at the West Medicine Lake Community Club--a center for baseball, movies, corn roasts and rummage sales. Her family saw it grow from a rural township to a sprawling suburb in five generations. She still lives in Plymouth, with her husband Phil. Henry Richard (Dick) is her father.

School Tours of PHS

Plymouth Historical Society again this fall hosted 2nd grade classes from Oakwood School.



Website

The Plymouth Historical Society website is:

www.plymouthmnhistoricalsociety.com

Check us out!

Note: All past newsletters dating back to 1986 are available on-line in PDF format for viewing or printing.

Donations

Donated by: Anne & Michael Jewison

- \$25.00 for Kay Bertrand's Memorial

Donated by: Elaine & Jim Loaney

- \$20.00 for Kay Bertrand's Memorial

Donated by: Paula & Gary Chambers

- \$50.00 for Kay Bertrand's Memorial

Donated by: Judy & Gary Fretheim

- \$25.00 for Kay Bertrand's Memorial

Donated by: Sonja & James Jacobson

- \$20.00 for Kay Bertrand's Memorial



Meetings

The Museum is also open the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month in the afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 PM during the Spring, Summer and Fall.

The monthly business meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Plymouth Historical Society Building, located at 3605 Fernbrook Lane North, Plymouth, MN.

Open by special appointment in January, February & March.

Current Officers

The following are the present officers:

President	Dennis Jacobson	763-972-0988
Vice President	Vacant	
Secretary	Betty Jacobson	763-972-0988
Treasurer	Gary Schiebe	763-473-4889



Mailing and Membership List

If you are not a member and want to sign up or if you have any questions, please call any officer above:

The 2017 annual dues are:

Individual	\$10.00
Family	\$15.00
Individual Lifetime	\$100.00
Family Lifetime	\$150.00

If you would like the newsletter delivered via E-mail please notify Kay Bertrand or send an e-mail to: info@plymouthmnhistoricalsociety.com

If you do, it is a plus for both of us. When you receive via e-mail it will be in color. When sent by mail it is in black and white and costs PHS about \$2.00 per copy to print and mail