

HISTORIC HOMES OF YANKTON

A Look At The Purdy House

Yankton's Territorial Homes, Revisited — A Sesquicentennial Series

"The sesquicentennial series titled "Historic Homes of Yankton" prepared by members of Yankton Questers Dakota Territory Chapter No. 794."

The Purdy House
407 Pine Street

The low profile of the one-story brick house at 407 Pine belies its spacious, high-ceilinged interior. The front door is capped by a very unusual cantilevered porch roof with carved brackets and decorative pendant knobs. According to present owner Tom Steinbach, during the 1970s, when the South Dakota State Historical Preservation Office brought a nationally recognized preservationist to view Yankton's historic district, the authority asked the tour to stop so he could photograph this unique porch roof. The 1800 square foot house has 11 foot ceilings throughout, except for the kitchen and pantry, which have nine and one-half foot ceilings. The windows are elaborately capped, there is a bay window on the south side and a transom above the front door to light the hall.

According to Dorothy Jenck's Historic Homes of Yankton, DT, the house was built in 1880; however, Tom, in studying documents, noticed a spike in the value of the lot about 1873, so assumes the house was built at that

time. The first owner, Leonidas M. Purdy, was born in 1847 and came to Yankton, DT, from New York in 1869. He was a pharmacist, and, together with a partner, established the Mills and Purdy Drugstore (also known as the Excelsior Drug and Book Store) in 1869. The store was located on Capitol street near where the Ice House now stands. Tom pointed out that in Yankton's early days, the primary business district was on Capitol, near the river. Later, when 3rd Street became the main focus of the business community, the frame building was moved to its present location at 209 West 3rd Street (now Monta's framing & Florals). The frame building is faced with pressed tin.

Mr. Purdy became addicted to his pharmaceuticals, and judging by his extremely modest gravestone and the alacrity with which his wife, Margaret, remarried following his death in 1891, his addiction must have made him a rather unpleasant character.

Though the Purdys had no children, a niece Margaret and her husband John Dilger, lived in the home from the early 1920s to the 1960s. Julius Goetz and his wife lived in the house following the Dilgers.

When Tom Steinbach purchased the house in 1978, it was practically unliveable, having been vacant for about 10 years. Tom described

the dangerous wiring, the antiquated plumbing, the non-functioning heating system and the leaking roof. His first tasks were to replace the roof, the wiring and the plumbing. He had the 1940s era furnace re-activated. He stripped all the woodwork and replaced or patched the plaster, giving long-time Yankton resident and craftsman Al Nadeau much credit for his plaster expertise. The house had no fine floors — carpeting being the floor covering of choice at the time of its building. Tom installed maple flooring (salvaged from the Armory on the USD campus — now the Al Neuharth Media Center) in his kitchen and pantry, but chose to use carpeting in the remainder of the house. With the help of Yankton's master mason and historian Bob Hanson, Tom rebuilt all six chimneys (which had disappeared) and uses three of them — one for a vent, one for the functioning fireplace and one for the old-fashioned kitchen cookstove which he uses several times a year. Bob also repaired all the exterior brickwork.

Tom related that at one time, demolition seemed the appropriate fate for this once-derelict house. Thanks to careful restoration and thoughtful preservation, a venerable and architecturally significant house still graces Yankton's historic district.

WEED PATCH

Weeds Are Winning The Battle Of The Garden

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

For all those who read my column and think what a great garden I have, I'm inviting you to see it. I am hosting a Weed Clinic on an upcoming Saturday here at my garden plot behind my house. Don't worry about there being a limited number for the seminar on weed identification. I'm fairly certain we won't run out of specimens to examine and pull for closer examination if necessary.

I hope you are getting a good chuckle about this but I am not. That hot, hot July we just sweated though kept me from my garden duties. Of course, there was that July Becker Reunion I was planning with 400 registrations that kept me kind of busy, too.

But the weeds got the better of me. Still, we are harvesting plenty of goodies like kohlrabi, cucumbers, carrots, cabbage, eggplant, beets, tomatoes, gladiolas, tomatoes, squash and pumpkin.

Oh, oops, we don't eat the glads much to my husband's chagrin but I still love to grow them. The heat sapped many of the bulbs because I plant them in the part of the garden which doesn't traditionally get watered if watering is needed. But I didn't water very much this year. We had many plentiful rainfalls until the calendar turned to July.

Flowers add just the right amount of color to liven the green vegetables up. As I drive down the road, I always notice flowers in others gardens like the deep burgundy zinnias in a garden along Hwy 12 when I go to Crofton. Where did she get that lovely color? Or how could I swipe some in the dead of night? There's one problem with that; you can't see the color in the dead of night. It's like raiding a watermelon patch and find you picked green pumpkins.

So now I am, you got it, canning tomatoes. I won't have the bountiful crop I had last year. I

hope to get enough so my daughters will all have some fresh sauce on their basement shelves but it is looking a little weak out in the garden. That hot

July sun really fried the blossoms on the plants. And plants, if I could can the plants, I would fill all my jars. I have tomato plants vining everywhere in the garden but that's all they're doing. Is that what they mean by going to tops? Is that when you are supposed to pick off those little growths from the junctures in the plant? If I would have had to pick all those suckers off my 60 tomato plants, I would still be doing it.

It's a great aroma in the house when I'm canning tomatoes. As I head in and out to talk to someone about a story or work on a survey for the city of Crofton, it's the first thing I notice when I come home; that lovely fresh smell of canned vegetables. Vegetable soup is another great aroma and that is next on my canning agenda.

It's too bad the summer season can't last longer or maybe we could have two summers and one winter. I like that idea. I have had people tell me that is why they come back to Nebraska, because they miss the changes of the four seasons. I think I would need several summer seasons running together before I would miss winter.

Soon we will be chopping silage in our neighborhood and the tall corn stalks in the field in front of my house will be gone. Yep, my garden will be exposed for the weedy monster it is. It was easy to let the trimming and mowing go an extra day or two or week or two when it was hidden behind the lovely green crop. Thank heavens there won't be much growing anymore and I can ignore my garden and all the weeds which have made it home. But it also means fall is here and winter is just around the corner.

And this leads me to the discussion I have been having with Bob lately. Next year, we need to cut down on the garden. I'm not sure he is hearing me though.



Wuebben

Recognizing The Time To Pass On Future Hunting Trips; This Is It

BY VERNE HULL
Reader Submission

I once read about the final words of an ace British fighter pilot during World War II when he had been shot down in flames during the Battle of Britain: "This is it, Chaps," he radioed back to his home base. I guess I've always had a penchant for the dramatic, but that's how I felt on May 1st of this year at Wood River, Neb., when Hunting Retriever Club (HRC) hunt test judge, Paul Bishop, told me I'd have to leave the test grounds because I'd just violated the most grievous fault in hunting — gun safety. And to think, I'd been one of the original hunter safety instructors in Nebraska and had once been proclaimed by the Game & Parks Commission as one of their premier hunter safety instructors; furthermore, at home I had a plaque they had given me to prove it. But Michael's Athena, my black Labrador retriever, got sticky mouthed at Wood River, and at first would not release the duck which she had a firm grip upon. In the parlance of the hunt test people, the duck was a "diversion" bird shot close to where I was standing. I had not

had the time to put the gun on safety and open the breach of the shotgun (I guess). Anyway, that's what Paul said was the case when I wrestled with my dog and inadvertently swung my gun barrel toward the spectators. He said he was sorry but he had to drop me from any further testing and that I had to leave these hunt test grounds pronto. "Bull," I thought. He had to be wrong. Didn't he know I was a number one hunter safety instructor? But, at 88 years of age, I don't much argue with any one anymore. I obeyed his injunctions, but not without a lot of (swear words.) which I wanted him to hear. Only later did I notice that Michael's Athena was the 13th dog to run. Before being kicked out, I didn't think I was superstitious.

Like having cold cereal and toast every morning before school, at a very young age shotguns and bird hunting had become a way of life with me, soon to be seared into my psyche. You see, I grew up in Mitchell, during the drought and grasshopper years. My dad was a timekeeper on the WPA. Yeah, we were poor. But Mitchell was in the heart of the pheasant belt; and, other than high

school sporting events, dad, granddad and I lived for the long pheasant seasons of the dirty thirties. In those days, I thought we had it all. However, time passed and during World War II, I had to abandon pheasant hunting for less pleasant activities. But finally I came home and went to college and then to teaching jobs, eventually landing one down in Nebraska. Yet, wherever I went, I bird hunted and soon got into the dog game, as well. Not only did I teach school, but I soon established a hunting dog training kennel. To be sure, even in these last eight years, after I came to Yankton to ring down the curtain on my life, I remained an avid pheasant hunter and dog trainer. Friends, even, have told me the two are so entwined in my blood that they would be with me until the day I died.

So it was with grim determination that I drove home from Wood River this past spring. Yes, I was getting old. Still, I'd held my own last fall on the firing line. Nevertheless, I remembered that I'd been asked by the parents of my step-nephew, Michael Wilcox, and a close friend's kid, Calvin LaBrie, to have the boys help me with my dogs. The boys agreed and soon were

learning to handle my dogs under judgment. In fact, not long ago, they both did well for me at a dog show at Hoffman, Minn. (Calvin is in college and Michael is one year of high school remaining.)

Well, I still had one hunt test to go to this year on the Wood Duck Wildlife Management area near Norfolk, Neb. But the date for the hunt tests fell on Yankton's biggest holiday of the year: "Riverboat Days." Everyone then bombed out on me to go to Riverboat Days with the exception of Michael. Imagine, though, my chagrin to learn that Paul Bishop, my nemesis, no less, would be judging Michael and Athena at Norfolk.

I told Michael to do the best he could, but I knew Paul would screw us when he realized Michael was running one of my dogs. To make a long story short, just the opposite unfolded. Not only did Paul pass Athena, but he signaled out Michael for praise as a promising young dog handler. Quickly, following the award ceremonies, I approached Paul with my proffered hand. I said, "Paul, at Wood River I thought you had it in for me, but now I thank you. Also, I see that what you did to me at Wood River may, as they say,

have been a blessing in disguise. It led to my getting Michael to handle my dogs at hunt tests. Maybe that's a good deal for both Michael and me. I sure hope so."

On the way home, as Michael drove my Traverse and listened to his kind of music, I thought long and hard. I don't know if I suddenly saw the light, but gradually a firm conviction set in: I will never again pick up a shotgun to hunt birds, nor will I acquire lands to hunt for my friends, or even accompany them on their hunting excursions. Why the "all or nothing at all" break? Well, I learned when I stopped smoking three times that I had to go all the way to succeed. Cold Turkey — I guess that's the way I am. I don't ever want to be lured back into killing anyone on a hunting trip.

(A note to Paul Bishop.) Yes, Paul, what you did to me at Wood River may well have been a blessing in disguise not only for me but, likewise, for someone else. And that's what scares the hell out of me now. So thanks again, Paul. May your professorship at the University of Nebraska at Kearney be long and fruitful, and the same goes for judging of HRC hunt tests.

August Gardens Of The Month

ROXANN & BRIAN HUNHOFF

1308 W. 17TH STREET

As you approach the yard, you will see it's a young but immaculately maintained garden. Pots of colorful petunias sit on both sides of the garage door entrance. The sides of the house are lined with weed-free beds of bright orange lilies while the west edge of the property is lined with well-groomed pine trees to protect against the fierce NW winds. The back serves double duty with a cedar swing set and sand box for the children plus a quaint rock garden lined with pavers and filled with beautiful plants along with a wildflower patch to feed the birds. After working in the garden the Hunhoffs can enjoy a cool one on the privacy patio. Congratulations, Brian & Roxann, for a job well done!

DARCIE & MIKE BRIGGS

608 APPLEWOOD DRIVE

As you drive by the Briggs' home an American flag waves in the breeze. Splashes of color from zinnias, marigolds and purple petunias line the sidewalk. A large basket filled with sweet potato vine, petunias and verberna

hang from the porch. On the west side of the well-groomed yard they have planted a clump birch; a perfect background for a circular row of gaillardia, Russian Sage adds interest and texture. Congratulations, Mike and Darcie, you have created a yard to be proud of!

LORIE & TIM MULHAIR

802 EAST 21ST STREET

A "God Bless America" sign greets you at the Mulhair's front door. Rustic charm fills this well-groomed yard. An old wash tub filled with sweet potato vines and petunias sits by the garage door. The shrubs add interest to the front of the house. To the side, there are two rusty cream cans with pink petunias flowing over the top. All the rustic treasures are from Lorie's grandparent's ranch. On the opposite side sits a little red wagon filled to the brim with deep purple petunias. An old bench made from an iron bed gives a nice place to rest on a hot afternoon. You can tell the Mulhairs take pride in their yard, Lorie takes care of the flowers and Tim gives her a hand in watering. Congratulations, your yard looks great!

MEETING MINUTES

TOASTMASTERS CLUB 6217

Melissa Bader led the invocation and Kary Beltz was Toastmaster at Club 6217 on August 11 for the noon meeting in the Benedictine Center.

The first speaker was MJ Rogers. He explained the life time advantages of using the opposite hand to keep the whole brain alert in his "My Left Mind" speech. Rogers was evaluated by Eileen O'Connor. She enjoyed hearing Rogers use attention getting words like "abracadabra".

The second speaker was Jennifer Wubben. Wubben discussed "Balancing" life, work and family to increase achievements and enjoyment. Wubben's evaluator was David Fiebelkorn. He appreciated Wubben's use of audience participation to maintain interest.

General Evaluator Jeff May named his evaluation team: Sheryl Schwartz timed the speakers; Stan Sudbeck tracked the unneeded pauses; and Taylor O'Bryan noted word variety and introduced the word of the day, "amok".

Table Topics Master Greg Stach renewed the Toastmaster's goals with his prayer of supporting other speakers while they achieved their goals. Muriel Stach was voted the Best Respondent with her advice to "smile first; then look for a reason later".

Beltz awarded trophies to Best Speakers Rogers and Wubben and to Best Evaluators Fiebelkorn and O'Connor.

The business portion of the meeting was conducted by Club President Schwartz. She reviewed the "to do" list: raising dues, clubs and members' goals, new banners, membership pins, educational materials, and future Speech Crafts. The meeting was adjourned.

YANKTON REGIONAL AVIATION ASSOCIATION

Twenty members and guests of the Yankton Regional Aviation Association met on August 21 at 6:00pm in the terminal at the Chan Gurney Airport for a potluck supper meeting. Participants

were from Menno, Springfield, Yankton, Crofton, Dixon, Hartington, and Randolph. President John Lillevold called the meeting to order. The YRAA discussed plans for the Chan Gurney Airport breakfast set for September 18. Photos were displayed from the Young Eagles event on June 11 at the Chan Gurney Airport. Another display showed members photographed with the YRAA tribute brick at AirVenture 2011 in Oshkosh, WI. Recent aviation events were recapped including the Two Rivers Ultra-Light Fly-in at Vermillion on July 15-17, Vermillion Airport breakfast on Aug 7, AirVenture 2011 at Oshkosh, Third Wednesday Gathering at Vermillion on August 17, Lincoln County Airport Open House on August 20, Hartington Airport breakfast on August 21, and the recent passing away of aviator John Meidinger of Avon. For more information about the YRAA, call 665-8448.

INTERCHANGE

Interchange met at noon on August 22 at Minerva's. The meeting was called to order by President, Kathy Jacobs, and

the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Hostess Laura Schmidt introduced Allison Spack, Executive Director of the Yankton Children's Theatre. Allison talked about the not-for-profit Children's Theatre. The Children's Theatre puts on a total of four productions a year. Cast members are made up of children from the ages of 4-18. The three concepts the Children's Theatre is based on are building leadership skills, self-esteem, and responsibility. Children are involved in numerous aspects of productions including back stage production, technical aspects, assistant director positions and other various community activities such as Art Fest, parades, and serving at the Banquet. Allison reiterated the great aspect of the Yankton Children's Theatre is the fact that every child who auditions is cast in a role in the production — every child is always involved!

The next meeting will be at noon on August 29 at Minerva's. Hostess Jane Ruppier will have guest speaker Patty Vigg on Reflexology and Detoxification.

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