

Chapter 21

History of Hartland Friends Meeting

1858 - 1958
Centennial Celebration

Hartland Preparative Meeting (first spelled Heartland) was set up by Bangor Monthly Meeting. The earliest record of the Hartland Meeting is found in Western Plains Minutes of 1867. In 1867 Hartland became an independent monthly meeting. Earliest records date from that time.

In 1871 the present meeting house was built and the old meeting house, three-quarters of a mile north, was disposed of. The old meeting house was made of logs, sawed in slabs and stood on end with cracks batted. The interior was arranged with a stove in the middle of the room and benches of slabs (without backs) were arranged around it. The floor was also of slabs and was so open that in winter it was covered with sawdust to make it warmer. Early friends worshiped here for seven or eight years.

In 1875 the old building site and burial grounds were sold to James Tabor for \$100, the graves having been moved to the present location.



Hartland Church

Between 1880 and 1885 the meeting house was remodeled. The long platform across the north side was removed; also the partition through the center which had divided the worshipers, men and women on the east and west sides. A small square platform was placed at the west end, is still there under the present one which was built over 40 years ago.

In 1887 the northeast corner of the church property was leased to the Hartland Education Society

for the purpose of establishing the Hartland Friends Academy, which building was the Township Hall.

Although the school operated only twelve to thirteen years, it fulfilled the desire of those who built it, supplying high school and college preparatory courses for their children. W.R. Moninger was the first principal.

In 1948, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Whealen presented the meeting with a bell. A bell tower was built and the gift dedicated on Memorial Sunday. It still hangs in the belfry.

From the years 1951 to 1954, the meeting house was again remodeled and modernized with a full basement and entry as it stands today. The remodeled building was dedicated March 21, 1954.

This is taken from the booklet given out for their church centennial celebration in 1958. Today the church is the nucleus of the Hartland area. Regular church services are held and attended by a group of faithful families. Reverend L. T. Proctor of Clemons served the church for several years. The present pastor is Rev. Richard Martens of New Providence, Iowa.

I REMEMBER

by Jim Sparks

What do I remember from the days of the Old Liberty Church? Those people who made up the church community. The families of Williams and Stull and Norman. Our family came to the Liberty community in the spring of 1929.

There were Stackhouse and Lancaster and Veren.

Ice Cream Socials on the Parsonage lawn on a summer evening.

A nickel or a dime never bought any more than it would at a Liberty Ice Cream Social.

Winter Sports was a home made sled hooked to the bumper of a Chevrolet - - that left most of its participants when it turned a corner or crossed a bridge.

Mortimers were pastors at Liberty when our family moved into the community followed by Lawrence and Bertha Sams and their family.

After the Sam's there was the Harvey Moon's and their son Eldon followed by the Guy Harveys.

Other families that were a part of the Liberty family - Whites, Jessups, Yantis' and Bacons' and Blattels'.

Our home in those days was in the fringe area of the Church community. We used to say we were sort of between the tar heels and the Irish.

Mark Brindle was before me and I knew him only by name, but I know he was instrumental in establishing the Old Liberty Church.

There were the families of Clark and Howard's and Smith and Bulfer.

And there was Faris Winslow and Ridgeway and Propst, Brook-locker.

There were good times and than there were the not so good times.

When World War II was imminent and my brother had an early number in the draft lottery of 1940. After Christian Endeavor on Sunday evening the group had a fare well for him.

During the next few years there were many who served in the Armed Forces' and I'm sure there were many prayers for them. They all came home.

Other families that made up the Old Community were McDonalds and Speas and Brace. Names like Reece, Cooling and Hall.

In those later years of the Old Liberty Church, the country was in the depths of what is commonly referred to as the "Great Depression".

There was an "Energy Crisis" one of those winters that All Day Missionary was in our home. The men came and spent all day cutting wood out of the timber along Minerva Creek to heat the Church.

There may have been an occasional team and bob sled tied up out by the willow grove on Sunday Morning in the winter time, when the roads were bad; a reminder of earlier years. But for the most part the Model T and the Model A were giving way to the sleek and speedy V8's and the cracker box Chevy's to the stream lined, free wheeling "sixe's".

Other families I remember from those times were Jelsma, Denbow and Pevehouse. And there was also Shipley, Hendrick and Martin and Hensley.

We didn't have crime and violence on the television. We had rackateers, gangland wars, hi jackings and massacres in our larger cities across the nation - the tentacles of which reached out into our smaller cities and towns - all of which finally led to the controversial repeal of the eighteenth Constitutional Amendment.

Physical fitness was no big thing, we lived by physical fitness. Any one here who can remember Liberty and Bangor getting

together for a young peoples Sunday School Party - a softball game while the daylight hours lasted - after that it was on big chase.

An unprogramed wrestling match or two, (any reference to specific incidents is purely coincidental).

There were the Annual Marshall County Church Day Parades that were usually held in June. Later on there was the Marshall County Church Choir that held their practices and programs at Franklin Field in Marshalltown.

The twelve Church Sunday School Rallys at which a baner was won by the Church having the most Young People in attendance.

The Shivarree was an established institution. Usually organized by a secret group of traitorous individuals who had inside information as to the wereabouts of the newly weds. At dusk cars came from all directions to meet at some pre-arranged sight to prepare for their noisy entrance.

Even with the depressed economy and the fact that the Heartland of nation was plagued by two years of severe drouth the farm scene was changing. Horse power was rapidly giving way to the tractor.

Where ever people gathered together conversation eventually got around to the relative merit of the U. C. Allis Chalmers over the A John Deere or the Farmall or vice versa. Little did any one dream of the diesel powered monsters of today.

A few years later came the combine which soon replaced the threshing machine.

Stanford was still a Church Community in its self, as was Illinois Grove and Chester. There was always a good relation and exchange between the four Churches. They shared pastors and supported each other during special meetings and other Church related activities.

I feel I would be leaving out the most important part if I didn't give my parents credit for our family being a part of Liberty, as we knew it then. They wanted their kids brought up in a church. And Liberty was there. They were our kind of people and we felt at home.

It would be a little dramatic to say that with the passing of the Old Liberty Church "It was the end of an era".

But if it was the end of an era, it was also the beginning.

I'll leave the telling of that to some one else.