

Chapter 9

Entertainment

The Clemons Community Park Association was incorporated on August 7, 1920 as a non-profit corporation. The officers were: President, A. W. Butts; Vice-President, G. F. Hughes; Sec./Treas., A. A. Arney; Directors, G. B. Davis and Conrad Schaper. The location of the park was northwest of the creamery in a scenic woods by the Minerva Creek which had been used as a park since early times. It is believed that most of the activities of the early settlement were in this area also. Years of fun and enjoyment took place here for many, especially in the 1920's through World War II. Many residents still reminisce of the picnics, ice skating, baseball games, school activities, band concerts, July 4th celebrations, family gatherings, church missions and Chautauquas.

One notable feature of the park was its location on the Minerva Creek. The swinging bridge was the entrance to the natural amphitheater and ball diamond. The land for the ball diamond was deeded to the Clemons Community Park Association from William and

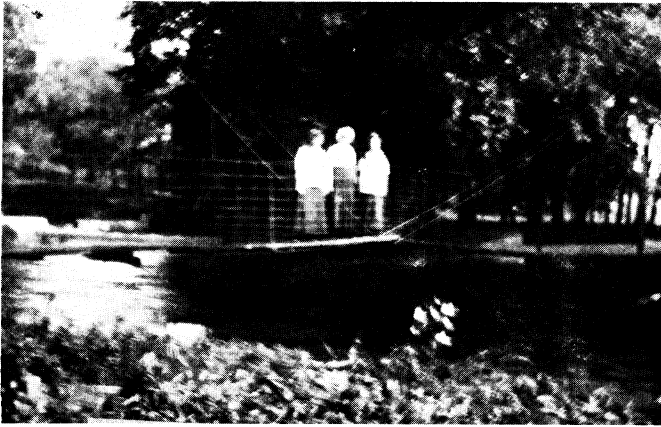
Emma Meier on August 17, 1920. The location follows: Beginning at a point 50 yards and 5 feet south of NE corner NE 1/4 3-84-20 then E 10 2/3 rods, then S 30 rods, then W 10 2/3 rods, then N 30 rods. There were 2 acres of land. Many school and town teams and a major league team played here. The St. Louis Cardinals played the Clemons Town Team in 1921 with the Cards winning 6-2. Vern Clemons was catcher for the Cards.

Everyone looked forward to the annual Fourth of July Celebration. It was the big event of the year. Along with the picnic, ball games, and socializing, there were also the merry-go-round rides, usually costing 5¢.

The park was enjoyed by many from the St. John's Lutheran Church, located in the south part of Minerva Township. For several years in the 1920's they celebrated with a Festival Mission every June. A picnic, services, and baptisms were the day's events. Richard Armbricht, the son of William and Elsie Armbricht was baptized in 1926 at the festival mission.



The Clemons Park entrance and gate. The "cook shack" is at the left where many picnics were served.



Swinging Bridge at the Clemons Park

L-R
Grace Brackney, Ruth Brackney, and Wanda Helmcke



Bench in the Clemons Park occupied by Carl Roseburrough, Neva Davis, Herbert Ambrecht, and Mabel Levick.



A picnic is served from the "cook shack" in the Clemons Park. It is now located in the town park.



**Clemons Park Picnic
Early 1900's**



The "merry-go-round" in the Clemons Park. 1925



A CLEMONS TOWN BASEBALL TEAM

L-R

Front: Coonie Spence, Vern Clemons, Pete Jackman

2nd: John Spence, Worth Lundin, Charlie Moore

Back: Carl Perry, Vern Shumaker, John Spence, Dave Hanson, Albert Christensen, Fred Clemons

**CLEMONS PARK**

Spectators on the bluff watching the ballgame

The Chautauqua was an exciting event for the young and old. It was a traveling group of actors performing plays in a large tent, in the 1920's and 1930's. The cost was usually five to six hundred dollars for the group. The Community Park Association sold tickets to individuals for \$1.00 per five nights of entertainment. The tickets were sold previous to the engagement. The Chautauqua was accompanied by a parade. It was the highlight of the year for the community and surrounding area families. This continued longer in Clemons than in most communities.

Later the park activities diminished. As records are unavailable, there is some speculation the Clemons Community Park Association evolved into the Clemons Community Club. It is believed many members were businessmen and continued with activities to promote the businesses in Clemons.

In 1938 the town park was created with the land being deeded to the Town of Clemons. It was and is still today located on the northeast side of main street. Earlier in May, 1932 this part of main street was burned out by a fire destroying four buildings. The gazebo, a round roofed bandstand, was located in the middle of the park. Many concerts were played here by the high school band until 1955 when it was sold to Gerald Nolte for \$200 for a corn crib. The men of town then built a wood and cement bandstand attached to the Clemons Grain & Supply Co. mill.

**Clemons vs. State Center Baseball Game - 1915**

The late 40's through the early 60's found the bands playing Saturday night concerts accompanied by a supper served by various organizations in the community. The menu was usually beef and ground chicken sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans, pie and sometimes homemade ice cream. Many attended the meal and were entertained by the concert at 8:00 p.m. Residents came early for the supper to get a parking place for the band concert. The clubs serving the supper were Community Club, Little League, Ladies Aid, Child Study Club, Auxillary, Progress (Federated) Club, and probably more. During the evening, many women would do their grocery shopping at the two grocery stores in town.

As Clemons High School was moved to West Marshall, the concerts dwindled as did the suppers. The band concerts and suppers were enjoyed by the families of many communities. For the last several years a community picnic has been held in the park each summer.

**Dam at the Clemons Park**

L-R

Grace Brackney, Ruth Brackney and Wanda Helmcke

The top floor of the mill has been used for many community activities in the past. There were movies and roller skating. The school plays and basketball games were also performed here before the building of the gymnasium in 1927. The girls basketball team dates back to the early 1900's. The Cardinals were the town team in the early thirties and played here frequently. They even played the Globe Trotters in Clemons.

In the 40's, the movies were moved to the area behind the old locker building, just south of the bank building. There was a tarp around the audience. By 1955 the family movies were seen at the bandstand in the town park. A fee was charged in the later years. Movies



SOCIALIZING UPTOWN!

Wanda Helmcke, Ruth Brackney, Millie ———, Grace Brackney, Igerna Parsons wearing their big muffs and standing on Main Street between the telephone office and post office. Around 1916 or 1917.

were there only a few years. They were good Wednesday night entertainment. Drawings of cash prizes were given to encourage attendance.

Football games are remembered by some back in the early 1900's but it wasn't a competitive sport until West Marshall existed.

Tennis was played behind the bank on dirt courts in 1930. Many residents and teachers enjoyed the sport. Today there is a cement slab on the south side of 'Doris and Jerry's' where community members play tennis, basketball, and have dances.

The Sunny Brooke Golf Course was located two miles southwest of Clemons in the early 1930's. There was also the Clemons Gun Club in 1948 for gun enthusiasts.

SUNNYBROOK GOLF COURSE

In the 1871 Marshall County Atlas loaned to me by Mrs. Earl (Helen German) Riemenschneider, an 80 A. tract of land running North and South in Section 15 of Minerva Township was owned by a Logsdon family. This 80 A. is sandwiched between another 80 A. on the West owned by a G. M. Wells and 160 A. on the East owned by N. Helen. A South portion of the Logsdon 80 A. would eventually become the largest part of the future Sunnybrook Golf Course.

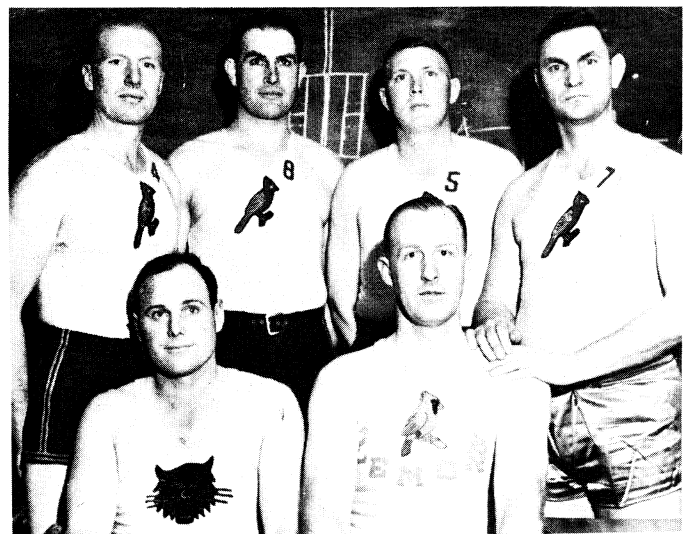
In the 1907 Marshall County Atlas loaned to me by Shirley and Ed Eckhardt, Florence Humbert now owned a tract of land comprised of exactly 49 A. It was now bordered on the West by property owned by George Wantz who had bought land from the heirs of the

George M. Wells estate in September 1871. East of the 49 A. was land now owned by Arthur Humbert. Doris Schaper told me Bob Wernsman had written an article on this particular golf course and when I went to the Enterprise Office, Roxanne Goecke brought the 1977-1979 volumes and found the article in a June 30, 1978 supplement for the grand opening of the Lincoln Valley Golf Course. On the same table I used to look through the Enterprise volumes was a 1925 Marshall County Atlas which shows this same 49 A. to be owned by Conrad Schaper.

He was my father's uncle -- he and my grandmother, Mrs. George (Emma) Davis, were brothers and sisters and to me, he was always "Uncle Cooney". My Aunt Mildred Davis told me how she used to work in the concession stand on Sunday afternoons. Everyone went to church in the morning and no golfing on Sunday mornings. They made sandwiches and sold pop, and she would go over to play golf on Mondays. That's when she would find "Uncle Cooney" and a Father Frein from St. Anthony having their game of golf.

The part that I remember is warm, sunny afternoons getting this delicious cold pop out of a green bottle. I don't know what the name of it was, but to this day -- all I can remember is asking for "grapefruit drink".

Elsie Armbrecht told me how her sons, Hugo, Joe and Richard found lost golf balls in the ditch when they used to walk to parochial school at St. John's Lutheran Church. Rufus Conkin now uses the 49 A. as pasture land.



CARDINALS - CLEMONS TOWN TEAM - 1932

L-R

Front: Don Bartine, Sherb Noble

Back: Harold Everist, Clio Nichols, Hub Christensen, Ray Plants

MINIATURE GOLF COURSE

In the 1920's or early 30's Clemons had a miniature golf course. W. A. (Bill) Von Spreckelsen built and operated it on the lot next to his home on the corner of Minerva Avenue and Bevins Street. Mr. Von Spreckelsen was very talented in such projects and his lawn had many ornamental structures he had built. He also constructed the Honor Roll located in the park of World War II veterans.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS VS. CLEMONS

The Clemons town baseball team challenged the St. Louis Cardinals on October 19, 1921 in the scenic Clemons Park. Vern Clemons, son of Bill J. Clemons and grandson of William M. Clemons was the catcher for the St. Louis Cardinals. He was said to be one of the best major league catchers. Hank Severidt of Story City was the former catcher for the old St. Louis Browns and made his appearance for Clemons. Members of the team were Earl Bryant, Clifford Magee, Art Humbert, Harold Buchwald, M. Morgan, Herbert Armbricht, Lyle Perry, Carl Buchwald, Buford Morgan, Jack Clemons, and Bob Clemons. Freeman Perry was business manager and Ed Adams team manager. The Cards triumphed over Clemons 6-2.



VERN CLEMONS
Catcher for the St. Louis Cardinals



CLEMONS vs. ST. LOUIS CARDINALS - OCT. 19, 1921
6-2 TRIUMPH FOR CARDS

L-R

First - Earl Bryant, Clifford Magee, Art Humbert, Harold Buchwald

2nd - M. Morgan, Herbert Armbricht, Lyle Perry, Carl Buchwald, Buford Morgan

3rd - Business Manager-Freeman Perry, Jack Clemons, Bob Clemons, and team manager Ed Adams

CLEMONS GUN CLUB

In the late 1940's a group of local sportsmen and hunters formed a gun club. On April 7, 1948, the Articles of Incorporation of the Clemons Gun Club of Clemons, Iowa were filed. Listed as directors and officers of the initial organization were:

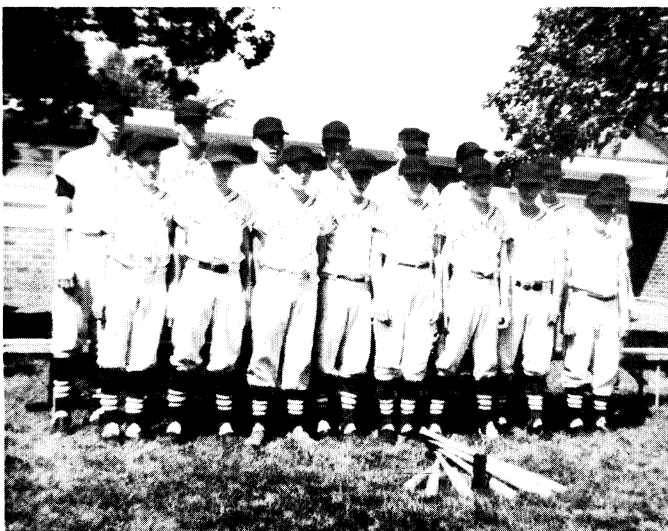
Howard Rogers	President
Marvin Hodson	Vice President
Charles Bartine	Secretary - Treasurer
Harold Christensen	Director
Chloe Shipley	Director

Other members at various times were Harry Butler, Bob Jay, Arnold Funke and Fred Davis. The organization was quite active having about 20 members and they met and shot once or twice a month. The club lasted 2 or 3 years and completely disbanded in the early 1950's.

The club had a green hut just south of Minerva Creek south of Clemons. At that time the area was bluegrass pasture and clay pigeons were thrown towards the creek. The hut was located about 100 yards south of the creek and the firing stations were 25 or 30 yards behind the hut. The small green hut was still visible in the early 1960's.

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

Little League Baseball has been a summer event for the youth of the area. Local residents remember the program beginning in 1958 with Wendell Price and Harold Law as the coaches. Records are unavailable from this time. Games were played with neighboring communities. First records show in 1969 the interest in acquiring a concession stand. This has been a very good



BABE RUTH BASEBALL TEAM
1959

L-R

Front: Dick Veren, Bob Otto, Allen Bartine, _____, Howard Hennis, Allen Price, Gary Harding, Dick Jones

Back: Jim Knoll, David Smith, Harold Hennis, Gayle Eggers, Steve Shives, Jerry Funke, Rick Waters, Tom Nichols

fund raiser for purchasing supplies over the years.

The structure of the organization has been three teams for the different age levels. The Pee Wees are to be 7-10 years of age before December 31, the Minors 10-13 years and Babe Ruth 13-16 years. The girls team were added to the League in 1975. The Pee Wees are in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades and the Minors are 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. The boys play baseball and the girls play softball. The games begin in May and end in June with a tournament.

The officers, coaches, and workers for 1981 were as follows:

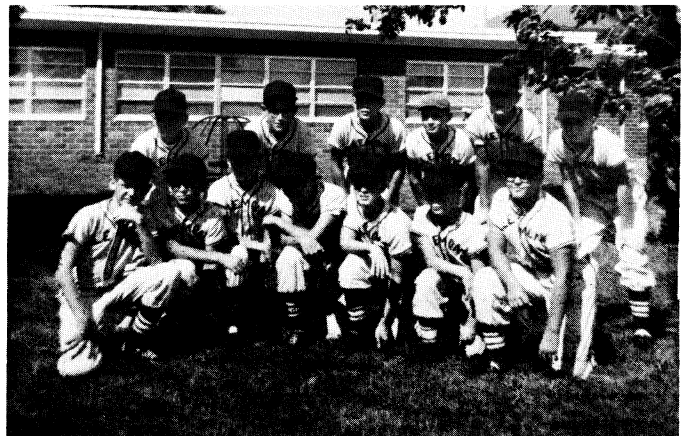
President	- Dick Jones
Sec./Treas.	- Cammie Voss
Coaches	- John Nizzi (Pee Wees) Jeff Cowan (Minors) No Babe Ruth due to lack of boys
Concession	- Mary Jo Nizzi Diana Castell

Over the years various organizations in the community have contributed to the Little League.

"JAM SESSION"

In the early 1960's, Warren Reisinger purchased the Jay Hardware building where he organized a musical "Jam Session" group on Tuesday nights. Musicians came from Missouri, Belgium, St. Anthony, Liscomb, Union, Eldora, Hubbard, Cedar Falls, Waterloo, Parkersburg, Albion, Marshalltown, Conrad, Colo, Boone, Des Moines, and Winterset.

A move came in 1970 when Warren purchased the building to the east owned by the Clemons Legion Auxillary. It was named "Warren's Place" and still is very active today. The building is used for family "get-togethers" and other organizations, but is primarily the site of the weekly "Jam Session". Musicians from all over make the building rock with their musical rhythms, and definitely enjoyed by many.



LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL
1959

L-R

Front: Gary Law, Raymond Hennis, Don Smith, Clifford Schuler, Bob Smith, Jack Clemons, Denny Funke

Back: Bruce Reisinger, Maurice Dunn, Rick Knoll, Bill Armbricht, Dennis Dunn, Joel Cagwin