

Summary of interview with Frances Van Zomeren on may 19, 1995 at 200 S Montana Ave Morris
by Rob Doohen and Mike Nelson

Frances Van Zomeren was born Oct. 1916 in Stevens County. At the time of the purchase of her first television she was married to a farmer. They lived on a farm near Morris and had three children.

First time saw television

She saw a television for the first time at the Chicago world's fair in 1933.

Reasons for purchasing a television

She and her husband decided to buy a television to keep the children occupied while her husband was out of town on a trip. She didn't remember any television advertisements prior to their purchase of a television.

First television

Their first television was purchased from a friend who farmed and sold televisions near Herman, MN. It was a small table-top Zenith. She thought that it had cost under \$200. They placed the television in the living room, but it could also be moved so that it was visible from the kitchen. Even though they had an antennae on top of their house, they still had very poor reception. The stations she remembered receiving were: Fargo, Alexandria, and Garden City, SD. They did have some mechanical problems with their television, but they took it back to the person they bought it from to get it repaired.

Second television

They purchased their second television about 10 years later, in the mid to late 60's. It was also a black and white television.

Radio and television

The radio was in the kitchen and it was usually used for news updates. The amount of radio listening did not significantly change because radio and television served different purposes at different times of the day.

Children and television

Since she and her husband did not watch much television, it was mostly for the kids. The kids sometimes would eat lunch and watch television, since the television could be seen from the kitchen. The kids usually watched television in the morning, and as they grew up they also watched television in the early afternoons. The kids knew they had to finish their chores before they could watch television. She noticed a lack of good children's programs, but her children did enjoy Captain Kangaroo and Bugs Bunny. She did not feel a need to censor the television programs at that time.

Favorite programs and types of shows

She watched news programs, Lawrence Welk, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, and circuses. She didn't like Elvis Presley because she didn't like his singing.

Special event

She remembered the assassination of John Kennedy

Movies and television

They only went to the movies about once a month, and the purchase of a television did not effect this.

Television habits

She and her husband did not watch much television, but when they did it was usually the evening and late news. They watched more television in the winter months. The shows they watched were dictated by what channel came in the best. When they were done watching television it was turned off. It was not left on in the background. Before they purchased their own television they sometimes went to their relatives to watch television. She remembered that her husband would always read the paper in the evening before the television was turned on.