

23 Mrs. Frank Jost

This is Reminiscing in West Central MN a Sat. KMRS news feature. Today we're talking with Mrs. Frank Jost of Morris, Mrs. Jost may be you could sit down and tell us where you were born.

I was born in Clinton, Iowa.

Q: Is that on a farm or in the city?

That was down in the city, I'd never lived on a farm until later.

Q: O.K. you lived in a neighborhood that wasn't too far away from the fair grounds and there always seemed to be something going there?

There sure was. When ever the fair time was, they had a lot of horses over there and I seemed to play mostly with young neighbor boys and we would go over early in the morning and help water the horses and the boys would walk the horses, they'd have them blanketed and we'd go and the jockey's would let us tend to the horses in the morning and it was lots of fun.

Q: Do you remember some of the early hot air balloons going up. That used to be quite a thing.

And there also were many balloonist _____ during the spring and summer and often they would have a little trouble getting them started and then they'd go out over the Mississippi River and everybody'd be interested to see how far the balloons would go and once in a while they'd go up as far as Savanna, Illinois about 25 -30 miles up the river.

Q: Now, another things when you were a school girl, you saw one of the early planes of the Wright brothers.

In those days when there was anything interesting going on, the school would charter a street car and load us all in the street cars and take us down to Clinton and to the park and one time the Wright brothers flew from Chicago, Ill., which was not too far and we saw that land, it was a biplane and it landed on the Mississippi River near. We all saw it and were part excited.

Q: One of the things that happened when you were a young girl was at the fair. Today you talk about cereal and probably one of the most common cereals is corn flakes, but

back before the turn of the century, there wasn't such a thing, Tell us about that at the fair.

One fair, I think I must have been about 7, we got little boxes of a dry cereal and they called it "^{Eggos}Egose", I'll never forget it. It was a very thin, like a corn flake and I think it was made from corn. Anyway, it was real good and that was my first introduction to dry breakfast food.

Q: Now, of course living in a town as compared to the country, as a lot of people we've talked to, there's a lot of things that are different, but going to get water was something even in the city had to do.

Yes, we all had soft water, we had large sistrins and would save the soft water, but when it come meal time, we would take our buckets and walk about a block and get fresh water form the town, from the neighborhood well and often there'd be a half a dozen kids there and sometimes we'd be soaked to the skin in the summertime before we'd get thay pail of water home because we'd have water fights, ~~and~~ but we always knew that when we heard the church bell at 12:00, we'd better get a move on ourselves.

Q: Ofcourse, as you were ^wgrowing up, you had lots of jobs, but I think one of the mos interesting jobs you had was working in a candy factory.

Yes, and at that time there were no labor laws, I think I must have been 14, ~~I~~ it was in the summertime and the candy factory was in a basement and the floor was covered with saw dust and a couple of girls would cook the carmels and then they would ~~h~~ melt the chocolate in large baths and I was sort of what you called a flunky I guess, because I'd carry the chocolate and they ~~ask~~ mixed cocoa butter ~~in~~ with it and then when they got ^athat at a certain temperature, ~~a~~ another girl would put ~~it~~ it on a marble slab and dip the caramels in that, all by hand and spead them out on another marble ~~x~~ slab to get ~~a~~ cold.

Q: O.K. now could you have ^a little candy when you were working sometimes?

They told us the very first day to eat all the candy we want and we did with bad effects. The next day nobody could even look at the stuff and to th~~is~~ day I don't care about chocolate.

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Q: Well, back in those days you were talking about going on dates was a little bit different than ~~it~~ today. What are some of things, places that you went on dates? One of the highlights was talk a walk down to the river, we'd walk over the high bridge from Clinton, ~~to~~ Iowa to Folton, Illinois and in the summer we walked the bridge and often in the winter after the Mississippi was frozen over, we would walk over the ice and watch make ice. The railroads make ice in the Mississippi River near our town every year and hauled it to Chicago.

Q: O.K. you got married while you were in Iowa and I know there are a lot of things we'd like to talk about but I would like to talk about some of those early years you lived on a farm at Ortonville. For a city girl moving to the farm for the first time, that must have been kind of a hard thing. Tell us about some of your trials and ~~the~~ tribulations a first year as a farm wife.

Well, for one thing, I was used to a furnace heated house and I move out to a farm and we heated the kitchen with a cook stove and the other one we had a wood stove. and the wood wasn't very dry. We moved in the fall of the year and there was a wood pile but wood ~~we~~ had gotten wet with the snow and I would ~~be~~ forget to put wood in the stove and the first thing I knew, my fire was about out. ~~and~~ It was in wartime, I understand, it was in 1917 and you ~~we~~ couldn't get hard coal in those days and by the time the war was over we had a ~~fire~~ hard coal burner, after that, my troubles were ~~in~~ over in the way of heat, but

Q: Tell us about the cream separator.

I had never washed a cream separator so the very first time I had to wash the cream separator, I took some hot water and plenty of soap, homemade soap at that and I had a stringy mess and a little ~~a~~ neighbor girl, about 6, came over and I was crying and wondering what I could do. She said, "Well the first thing we'll do is ~~push~~ pour that dishwater out and throw ^w the ~~it~~ dishrag away and I'll ~~get~~ get a pail of water, cold water, and we'll rinse the milk off and from there we'll start all over." And we did.

Q: another was the ~~h~~ transportation. Horses were the only mode of transportation that most people used then, you didn't quite enjoy driving horses too much did you? No, the very first time we ever, I ever tried to go to town, I had company from Clinton, Iowa and we'd thought we'd go into Ortonville and it was only 3 miles and papa put a real gentle horse on for us and figured we'd get there all right. Well, that horse knew there were a couple green hons on the end of the line and it really didn't want to go for us. When it got going, we weren't very able to keep it slowed down at all and by the time I ~~got~~ got to town and ready to go home, I was scared stiff and I had a cousin living in Ortonville and we managed to get the horse ~~get~~ about a block up that hill and he took us home and that horse was just perfect going home for him, but it certainly didn't act that way for us ~~for~~ girls. Then he had to walk the 3 miles home alone.

Q: So you happen to know that horses are smarter than people, you might believe sometimes?

Indeed that horse was.

Q: Well, you farmed in Ortonville for 9 years and then you came to Stevens County and there's so much we can talk about from 1923 to '53 farming in Stevens County and then you moved to town and you became a city girl again. Did you like that when you moved ~~off~~ off the farm?

When I said good bye to that farm, I ~~at~~ said good bye to it. I ~~was~~ moved to town and I've never regretted getting back in town. I enjoyed the years we spent ~~there~~ there. We went fishing quite often, while my husband lived and we did a lot of traveling, good many states we've been in and have always enjoyed it and now I still enjoy traveling by myself.

Q: I think you just got back from a trip a few weeks ago?

Yes, I came back, I was to Shyanne, Wyoming for 2 weeks, then I visited several days in the Cities and then I came on home and I hardly got my grid unpacked and I went to Litchfield on Saturday for the weekend and didn't get back until Tues. of this week, so I'm always ready, in fact, I always keep certain things in my vanity case to just pick up and go whenever I want to.

Q: Well, Mrs. Jost, you sound that you're still having lots of fun and you're keeping busy and enjoying your traveling. One more question, How old are you?

I was 83 the 29th of March.

Q: Thank you very much. We've been talking with Mrs. Frank Jost of Morris on Reminiscing in West Central MN, a Sat. KMRS news Feature.