

# Dakota Datebook

## Doctor Herbert Wilson Written by Merry Helm

April 15, 2024 — Doctor Herbert Wilson was born in Bethel, Vermont, on this date in 1921. Wilson was a physician at Fort Berthold for 43 years.

Of his dedication, Dr. Wilson said he was a product of his times. His college education was interrupted by World War II, which turned his life in a new direction. "I was in the Air Force," he said, "on B24s as navigator, gunner, etc. After my tour of duty, I married a WAAF and had five years of GI bill that could be paying for my education. I decided on medical school as the most noble thing I might do after causing so much destruction with the heavy bombardment of the Eighth Air Force." Wilson said he felt constantly drawn to dedication and purpose because of the war. "How could someone forget all those appeals to loyalty after Pearl Harbor?"

Upon completing his "government-subsidized education," Wilson was ordered to serve one year on the Fort Berthold Reservation. Dr. Wilson remembers he and his family arriving in Elbowoods "on a hot August day in 1951. We were fresh out of training," he said, "after a year in Tampa, Florida, treating Merchant Marine sailors."

The people of Fort Berthold were undergoing a major upheaval with the pending loss of their homes and rich bottomlands to the Garrison Dam and its subsequent reservoir, Lake Sacagawea. The Elbowoods Hospital had been closed, and people were being urged to use an innovative "off-

reservation care program." But, many people had turned back to traditional medicine.

Babies were being born at home; lacerations were filled with sage rather than being sutured, and tuberculosis was a significant problem. "In my first year, two infants came down with tubercular meningitis," he said. "One survived; one succumbed."

Many of the people stayed in their homes beyond the time the Corps of Engineers had ordered them to get out. "It was so hard to leave!" Wilson said. "And where to? Some were moved family by family, or by small community, onto property up 'on top' — to lands most of them had never even visited before." Some moved to the nearest towns: Garrison, Parshall and New Town.

Some also had accepted the Corp's plan to go far, far away. It was all arranged for them. An anthropologist was sent from Chicago to plan transport, procurement of housing and even help with job-hunting in their new city. But, said Wilson, many of these eventually returned to the vicinity of their flooded reservation.

There was a lot of unrest in the early years; much of the doctor's practice consisted of setting broken bones and treating cuts and bruises. "Divorce was frequent," he said. "Drinking was unrestrained. Records point to about five suicides a year. There was no rebellion; most of their frustration was vented in carousing and internal violence."

When his year was up, Wilson realized his patients were more restless and troubled than ever. The Wilsons decided to stay and

also opened a part-time, private, practice for non-Indians who were experiencing the same problems.

Their second year led to a third, a third to a fourth, and finally, forty-three years after the move to the Missouri River bottomlands, the Wilsons retired in a more urban setting — Bismarck, Dakota

## A Family of Fifteen Written by Jill Whitcomb

April 16, 2024 — On this day in 1858, John Heid Sr. was born in Hoffenheim, Germany.

Like many homesteaders in the late 1800s, John and his wife Babetta came to America for a new life and a fresh beginning. After living for few years in Chicago, they came to North Dakota and settled in the New Salem area. Their first home consisted of a boxcar at the Blue Grass Railroad. By the time their first permanent home was built, a one room sod house, the family had grown to include two children.

However, they soon outgrew their tiny sod house. And the Heid family expanded to 13 children. It was extremely common in those days to have very large families, as more children meant more help with the everyday housework and farm chores.

In the Heid family, John farmed while Babetta sewed and knitted to keep them all clothed. John grew hundreds of cabbage plants from which gallons of sauerkraut was made—a Heid family favorite. They grew potatoes and onions as well, trading truckloads of extra cabbages, potatoes and onions for groceries at Wiegman's Store. The Heid family garden flourished with peas, beans, carrots, beets and turnips. Growing enough food was a necessity to feed the large family all winter. Gardening was not just a hobby in the late 1880s, it was survival.

The Heid family kept busy on their farm north of New Salem. They dug coal by hand to heat their home—a step upwards from the dried buffalo chips and dried grass they had previously used.

Hunting and fishing was a means of survival as well. With 13 children, there was always someone who needed their shoes repaired, someone who needed a haircut, and someone who needed

to help Babetta with the canning and pickling.

Neighbors were always welcome at the Heid home. Every summer, the Heids hosted a picnic for the entire town, cooking up such German specialties as summer sausage, kuchen and German potato salad. The Heids were known for their association with the Hermansohne Lodge, and their membership of the Friedens Gemeinde church of New Salem.

John Heid passed away in 1915, and Babetta in 1927. From their 13 children, the Heid family produced over 300 descendants. That's one heck of a family reunion!

## Sakakawea Junior Club Written by Merry Helm

April 17, 2024 — On this date in 1930, Emma Zuger received a check for \$121.10 from the warden of the State Penitentiary. The money comprised donations from prisoners in appreciation of the many times the Sakakawea Junior Club had entertained them with operettas and cantatas.

The Sakakawea Junior Club was the only study club in the nation made up entirely of American Indian girls. These girls were from the Bismarck Indian School and represented nine different tribes and were known for their musical skills.

Lyric soprano Clara Peltier often landed the leading roles. Four years earlier, the club performed a two-act operetta called "Feast

of the Red Corn" in the Bismarck City Auditorium. Peltier played the role of Queen Weeda Wanta. A review published in the Bismarck Tribune reported: "Miss Peltier possesses a strong, clear voice, and her tones are beautiful and smooth. She sings with remarkable understanding and technique, and many of the audience were heard to say that she would be one of the outstanding singers of the country in a few years."

Indeed, a striking portrait of Clara, dressed in Native costume, appeared in papers as far away as Alaska just four years later — which brings us back to 1930 and that contribution of \$121.10.

The inmates at the penitentiary took up the collection to help the girls' club cover travel expenses to Denver, where they were slated to perform at the 20th Biennial convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, a 10-day gathering of up to 15,000 women.

Eighteen club members, with their director, Mrs. Hermann Scheffer, and other chaperones, left Bismarck by bus on June 5, arriving in Denver four days later. The Sakakawea Junior Club was the only Native American group in attendance, and according to newspaper reports, they attracted a lot of attention. Among other activities, they were invited to banquets and luncheons held in their honor, including one hosted by a New York woman, Mrs. Joseph Linden Smith, who had  
**(Continued on Page 9)**



### Happy 80th Birthday!

Bill is turning 80 on April 21st!

Help us celebrate with a card shower!  
Please send cards to:  
**Bill Barnick**  
P.O. Box 115  
Tappen, ND 58487



Did you used to ride Bill's bus?  
We would love to hear from you!

### Notice of Annual Meeting TAPPEN OIL & TIRE COMPANY MARLIN'S QUICK STOP Tappen, ND

The 99<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the members of Tappen Oil Company will be held in the Tappen City Hall on

**Friday, APRIL 26, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.**

Please join us for a roast beef supper with the meeting to follow. Dividend checks have been issued this year and will be available to pickup. Karyn Lembke from CHS will be here to talk about lubricants and answer any question you have.

**Please R.S.V.P. for the supper by Monday, April 22**

Phone: 327-4496 or e-mail: [toc@bektel.com](mailto:toc@bektel.com)

The terms of Kurtis Countess & Kip Haadem are up this year.

They are both eligible for re-election.

In case of cancellation of the meeting, listen to KSJB or KFJR for announcements.

Karen Dockter, Secretary

*Bridal Shower*  
honoring  
*Jenna Nicholson*  
Saturday, April 27th  
at 2:00 pm  
Dawson City Hall

### KIDDER COUNTY LAND FOR SALE ON BIDS GRAF TOWNSHIP

Written bids will be received for the sale of the following described land located in Graf Township, Kidder County, North Dakota, legal description:

**SE ¼ of Section 12-137-70 consisting of approximately 130 acres pasture/30 acres tillable.**

**INFORMATION:** Payment terms are: Cash with 10% down and balance due in 30 days. Written bids may be submitted until **April 25, 2024**, at the offices listed here. Bids should include name, address, phone number, and email address of bidder. Those submitting the three highest written bids will be notified and invited to participate in an oral bidding to be held **1:30pm, April 29, 2024**, or such other available date, at the office of Glen R. Nagel, attorney, listed below.

Copies of acres, FSA maps, zoning, restrictions, wildlife easements, if any, taxes, bid procedures and terms may be obtained by contacting **Kevin Ova**, co-guardian and conservator for Elta O. Schauer, 6899 Hwy 46 SE, Jud ND 58454; phone: 701-320-1418, email: [ovafarm@daktel.com](mailto:ovafarm@daktel.com); or **Glen R. Nagel**, attorney, Meidinger Square Bldg, 311 1st Ave. S, Suite 8, Jamestown ND 58401-4277, at 701-251-1486 or email: [nagelaw@daktel.com](mailto:nagelaw@daktel.com).

The seller reserves the right to reject any and all bids for any reason whatsoever and to waive any bid irregularities.

