

Gnadenfeld: Settled 1879-80

• by J. C. Fehr

A few miles southeast of Altona is the village of Gnadenfeld. It was first settled around 1879-80 when much of this area was taken up by an influx of settlers from the East Reserve. A village was established at that time which has remained somewhat intact up to the present time. In recent years a number of new residences have gone up to serve the work force of the nearby towns who prefer to live in the country.

This school district No. 1593 was established on June 6, 1911, and operated until July 1, 1967, when it became part of Consolidated Altona. The public school located on NW 27-1-1W began operating in 1919. Being one of the smaller districts in the municipality, a one-room school served this community for 48 years. At times though during the 1930s it was rather full, with up to 36 pupils. For the first 40 years of existence this village had a private school located on SW 34-1-1W. It operated until 1921.

The teachers in the early years of the public school included: A. Sobering, J. J. Neufeld, J. G. Siemens, C. H. Hiebert and J. J. Enns. Mr. Enns taught here for 13 years, beginning in 1932.

The soil in this area is ideally suited for farming, being of a medium texture and with no drainage problems.

Many of the residents' main occupation is other than farming, so this village is classified as residential. That means that there is no livestock being raised here.

There are, however, two business establishments. First there is a machine repair shop that does custom repair work for the farmers of the surrounding area. Second there is a hog slaughtering enterprise nearby by the name of Pioneer Meat. It has gained quite a reputation for producing "Farmer's Sausage".

The residents of this village have the advantages of being within easy driving distance on paved roads, of either Altona or Gretna, and still have the advantages of living in the country.



This school photo shows the pupils of teacher J. J. Enns 44 years ago on April 15, 1940. L. to R. Tina Kroeker, Aubry Sawatsky, Abe Kroeker, Henry Hiebert, Sarah Hiebert, Irene Sawatsky, Anita Friesen, Eva Gerbrandt, Margaret Gerbrandt, Ben Kehler, Lenora Sawatsky, Mary Sawatsky, Jacob Penner, Mary Friesen, Mary Sawatsky, Harold Sawatsky, Lena Kroeker, Leonard Sawatsky, Mary Penner, Henry Loewen, Died. Friesen, Died. Gerbrandt.



This photo was taken at a reunion of the pupils of Mr. Enns 40 years later, Aug. 1980, in the community centre in the neighboring village of Neuberghal. They had come from as far as B.C., Saskatchewan and from all over Manitoba.