

MOUNT PULASKI "HUB" PAST 125 YEARS IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA

By PAUL E. BEIDLER

Did you ever stop to think that Mount Pulaski has been a "hub" for the past 125 years. What is meant by that is that the city, rather the public square, is the highest point (over 700 feet above sea level) in central Illinois, and is located less than 20 miles northwest of the geographical center of Illinois.

When the city was founded in 1836, and after the seat of Logan county was located here from 1848 to 1854, it was thought that Mount Pulaski would become a good-sized city. It was a good location and was settled by sturdy and ambitious people, but the size of the city was never realized to the point of bigness.

Mount Pulaski started out at a good pace in those pioneer days, standing as a monument in the prairie. In those long ago days, and on no railroad, the city had to depend on the energetic men to make their own bricks for the building, own tile to drain the wonderful farm land that was here and had to be developed. Mount Pulaski had a steady growth, and was known as a city of hospitality and friendly people.

It was not until 1872 that the two railroads were built through here, and this made a more substantial condition, for added growth. There were always business enterprises that kept up with the times, such as flour mills, elevators, tile and brick factories, windmill factory, several cigar-making shops, also, several tailor shops, livery barns, harness shops, coal mine, several blacksmith and wagon making shops, carpenter shops, good schools and churches, and many other things but not enough to cause the city a big growth.

What was meant by the "hub" is that Mount Pulaski is surrounded by railroads, starting from Springfield on the Wabash to Decatur, Illinois Central to Clinton, and Bloomington, and G & MO from Bloomington to Lincoln and Springfield. Sitting here in the center of these cities, and on the railroads built long before Mount Pulaski had them, the very things we missed were the big industries that selected cities and river locations and caused them to grow into good-sized cities.

But in this wonderful agricultural section of Illinois, there are many small towns to help take care of the needs of the people. Besides the cities of Springfield, Decatur, Clinton, Bloomington, Lincoln, these smaller places number over 30 within the boundary of these railroads. It is interesting to know that Mount Pulaski is bigger in population than any of them, there being almost 1700 people here now. And, if you read the sales tax reports from month-to-month, you will find that Mount Pulaski pays more in this special tax than any of them.

Now, in this Sil-Tennial year of 1961, the people of Mount Pulaski are very glad to have some improvements ahead of part of these towns. Mount Pulaski has a good water system, electricity since about 1893, also 80 blocks of concrete paving, with the rest of the streets blacktopped, a sewerage system installed in recent years, and other improvements.

This is an interesting topic to write about, but it is getting time to finish the last copy for the big Sil-Tennial Edition of the Times-News, so must stop here.

BALLOON ASCENSION REVIVED IN 1952

(August 21, 1952)

A balloon ascension will be one of the features of the Fall Festival this year, according to an announcement by Everett Maxheimer, Commander of the local American Legion Post, which is again sponsoring the celebration on Sept. 4, 5, and 6th.

The ascension will take place on the opening night of the three-day celebration on the grounds of the Legion Home in the south part of the city at 6 o'clock, during the fried chicken supper.

SOFTBALL MORALE BUILDER DURING DEPRESSION PERIOD

One of the finest morale builders this area as well as countless other communities experienced during the depression period, was the game of Softball.

Folks who lived in this area at that time, well remember the exciting and fun-loving games played at Millard's Field, now the site of the Stahl Implement Co.

Leagues were formed with an almost complete week's schedule and the contests were attended by hundreds. The admission fee was only five cents if you could spare it — if not, you got to enjoy the games anyway.

Another novelty of that period was seeing many folks walking from distant parts of the city to attend those games. It cost money to buy gas in those days of financial distress.

One of the announcers at those games was Loren Harper, who called the plays over a makeshift system. Today, Loren is head of the Voice of America, broadcasting program in Washington, D.C. Quite a jump from "cow pasture" broadcasting.

We well remember one incident when the going was getting pretty rough and the games close enough to cause arguments, that Billy Leimbach was going to whip the publisher and his brother, Don, because he thought his country team had been "gyped" out of a score that would have given them the game. He didn't get the job done for we took off in a broken-down car and by the time he caught up with us, he had cooled off.

Softball continued to be a community passtime for a number of years afterwards, moving to the Tomlinson Recreation Center in 1946 where regular league games were played under the lights for a few years, until the times got better and folks didn't need this homely entertainment to keep them from jumping off high buildings.

CHAS. EY POPULAR EARLY DAY BAKER

One of the most popular thriving businesses in the early days was the bakery of the late Charles A. Ey.

Mr. Ey was born Aug. 18, 1876, in Hunfeld, Germany, coming to this country in his young man-

hood. Having learned the bakery trade in Janesville, Wisconsin, he came to Mount Pulaski in 1904, purchasing a bakery on South Washington St.

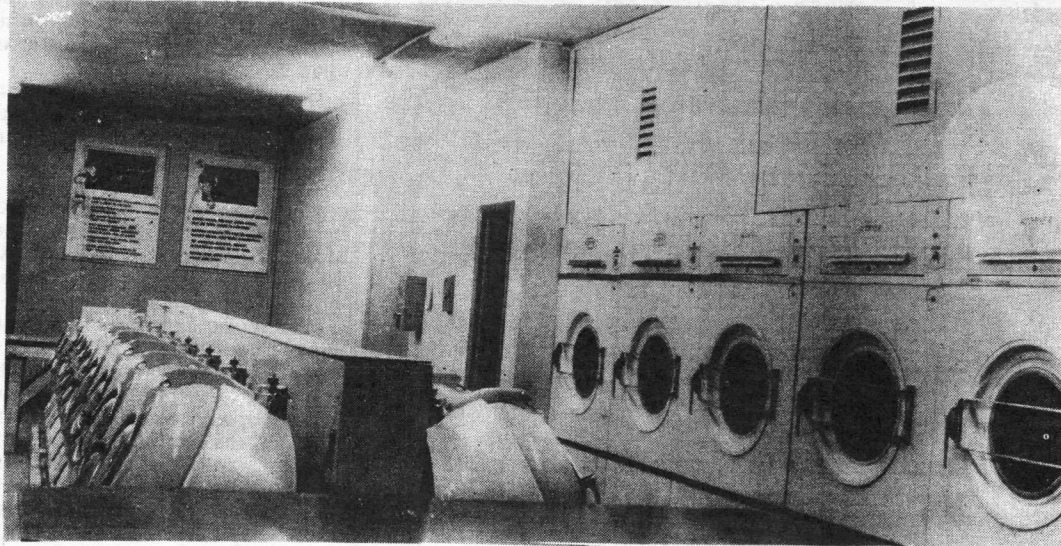
In recent years he moved the bakery to the present location of the Walter Bayer bakery on the south side of the square. He retired after having been in the bakery business 60 years.

HILLTOP BOWL WAS OPENED AUGUST 1958

(Aug. 7, 1958)

The Hilltop Bowl's 10 lanes were more than taxed to capacity on Sunday afternoon and evening when the new Bowling pavilion on the east side of the public square was opened for free play.

THE MODERN WAY . . .



It wasn't so many years ago that grandma still used the old scrub board to do the weekly washing. It was hard work and a long tedious job.

But today's Mount Pulaski residents can enjoy the convenience of modern automatic washing machines and dryers. Just put the clothes in, pop in a coin, and the work is done effortlessly and efficiently. You can start your wash anytime of day or night.

We're open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

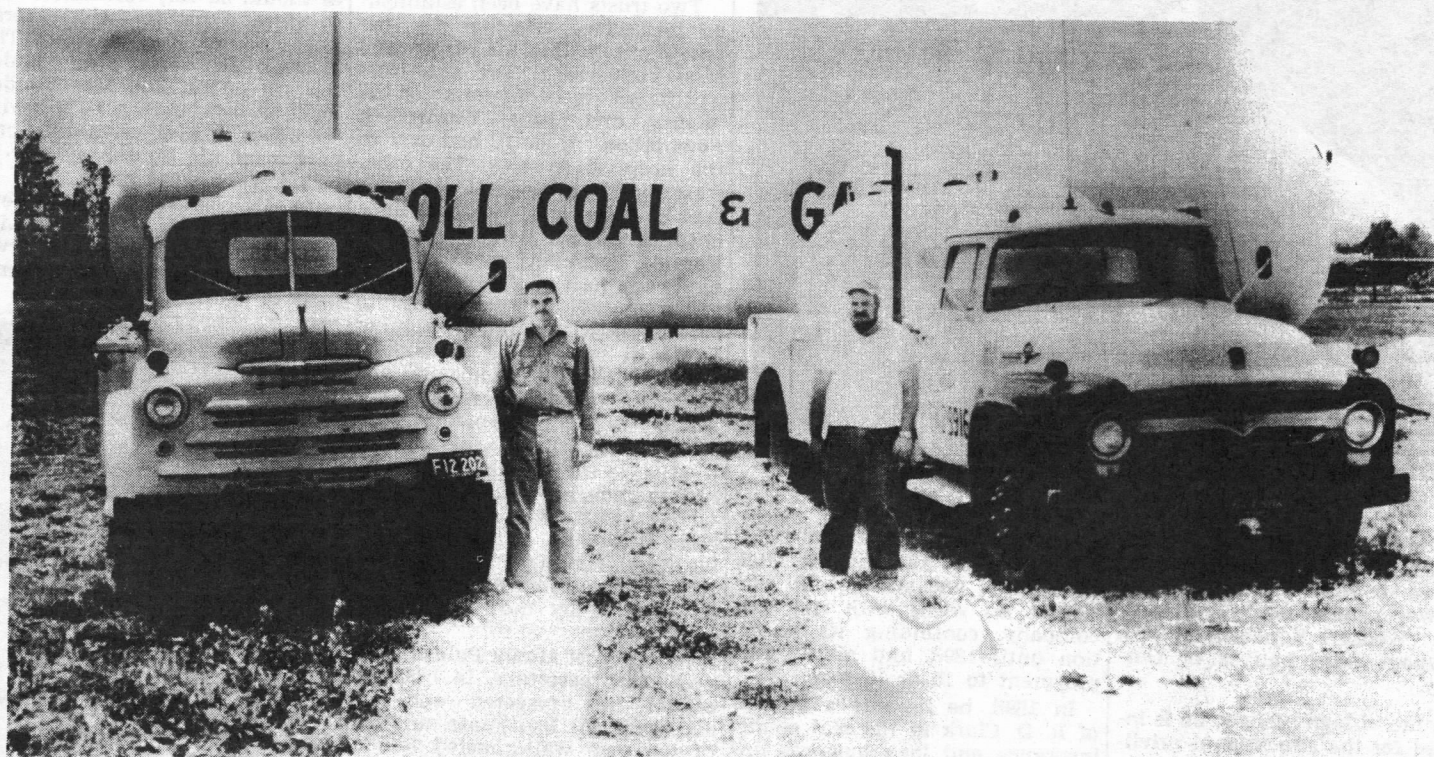
We take this opportunity to THANK the residents of Mount Pulaski for making our business a success.

MOUNT PULASKI LAUNDROMAT

JOHN W. MARTIN

—Owners—

HERBERT AYERS



PICTURED above is our large supply tank and trucks with which we serve our customers with bulk L. P. gas. It is always our aim to give you

quick, reliable service. Our drivers are: (left) Sheldon Goodman; (right) John Bender.

125 YEARS

Of steady progress and growth make the Mount Pulaski of today a City to be proud of. We are happy to be a part of this fine community, and as we celebrate this Sil-Tennial Year, we would like to congratulate all of Mount Pulaski's citizens—past and present—for their part in helping develop our City.

STOLL COAL and GAS

Phone SW 2-5317

Mount Pulaski