

purchased otherwise. This kitchen must also have seen many jars of jams and jellies, crocks of sauerkraut, homemade butter, rings of homemade "wurst" and barrels of salted meat. I guess "Grampa" Abel used to salt the meat so intensely that at times you had to cook the "hell" out of it before it could be eaten! He maintained that an egg had to float on top of the brine or it wasn't salty enough. You may be sure the meat never spoiled! He also believed that the pork had to be fat; the fatter the better. I guess that's what helped keep them warm when the winds blew through the cracks in the walls each winter.

Uncle John and Uncle Mike recall many interesting happenings. It seems the woodpeckers were numerous. Early in the morning they used to come and peck at the roof of the log house. When finally they had pecked holes right through the roof, Pa Abel took his gun and made short order of the pests. Another incident told about Anna and Mike in their log house is as follows: A skunk had apparently dug its way under the house via the opening that had been used to carry potatoes into the cellar in the fall. Anna was nominated to go down into the cellar with the lantern. She was to try and chase the intruder out. The frightened animal made its way back up to where it had entered. As it crawled out through the hole, Mike hit it over the head with a club and killed it. He said it didn't even stink, but I really wonder what would have happened if he had missed! The incident created a lot of laughs. Afterwards, Anna was always a little cautious whenever she had to go down into the cellar for fear some of the skunk's relatives had perhaps ventured in.

Mike and Anna had four children. On April 27, 1908, a son, John, was born. He was followed by Mike on August 6, 1910. A daughter, Frances, arrived on December 10, 1913, and eight years later, on October 25, Joseph was born. All four were born at home with "Tante Hoffman" as midwife.

The children went to Taylor School which then was situated near the Herman Wesling farm. They next attended Stuckel School. For several years, Mike and Frances boarded in Lake Lenore and attended school there. Joe also went to Solo School.

In 1910, Michael added to his farm by purchasing the NW 13-40-21 which was crown land. In 1924, he bought his first tractor, a 1530 McCormick. Mike broke the tractor in well as it was in this same year that he purchased and opened all of the E 13-40-21. Although Mike always had a few cows, some pigs and some chickens, he was considered mainly a grain farmer.

In 1930 the old log house was torn down and replaced by a large new home built by Con Dahmer of St. Brieux.

Mike enjoyed music. He had played the trumpet in a family band in the States. In Canada, Mike became a member of a band under the direction of



Grandma Abel's 90th Birthday. (L to R): Florence (Joe) Abel, Lauren Zurburg, Mike Jr., John and Libby, Joe Abel.

John Gaetz, his father-in-law. They played for sheer enjoyment, for church picnics and for some dances. Later his sons, John and Mike, joined the band with John playing bass and Mike baritone. Mike Gaetz took over the leadership of the band.

Mike was also an ardent ballplayer. Other members for the neighborhood ball team were John Amble, Frank and Mike Gaetz, Dewey, Bill and Bob Walker, Bill Gerwing, Tom Rowe and Mort Harmeson. They played against neighboring district teams and once played a Saskatoon team. To the surprise of the opposition, the Lake Lenore team beat them quite handily.

The Abel pasture was the site of several Ladies' Aid picnics and softball tournaments in summer. In the winter it was the site of a well-used skating rink. A slough was home-ice for the "Rangers." John, Mike Jr. and their brother-in-law, Lauren Zurburg played on this team, as well as Joe and Matt Stuckel, Joe Vedress, Adolph Amble, Fred Lefebvre, Ed and Bill Prokosch and Alfred Mayner. Their opposition was from Daylesford, St. Brieux, Lake Lenore and Schuler School.

Mike spent a great deal of time fishing and hunting, even after his retirement. He also spent many hours in his fruit garden.

Mike Abel took sick with cancer in the late forties, and on June 30, 1952, he passed away in St. Elizabeth's Hospital at the age of 72 years. He was buried in the Lake Lenore cemetery.

Anna continued to live on the family farm with her son, Mike. In January of 1961 she moved to St. Mary's Villa and passed away on August 6, 1962. She had attained the grand age of 98 years, one month and 19 days. She lived to see the fifth generation of the Mike Abel family. She too was buried in Lake Lenore.

The farm was taken over by the three sons who