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## Leaders recall successful Cass City Home-coming

Festivals have come and festivals have gone at Cass City but they seem to have one thing in common -- community involvement.

The Fourth of July Festival holds many similarities with an earlier event that took place during the 1950s called the Cass City Home-Coming.

It originally began as an expansion on the 4-H livestock judging festivities that chose winners for county and state fair competition, according to Dr. Harry Crandell who was involved with 4-H at the time.

"It was more or less the same thing they have today only on a smaller scale. It was a get-together for family and friends."

The livestock club was a big organization in those days and a good share of the contestants at the Caro Fair were from Cass City, according to Lloyd Severance, another active member of the club in those days.

Though the 4-H held judging previous to the Home-Coming, the new festivities gave Cass City "their own little fair built around the livestock club," Severance said.

Some of the names frequently awarded ribbons for prize animals in those days included Bill Zinnecker and Severance's sons for sheep and Dale Leslie for beef, he added.

The livestock judging was the kickoff for a day of festivities including a talent show, pie-eating contest, swimming competition and fireworks -- all for free.

The first Home-Coming, in August of 1950, drew an estimated 4,000 persons. Somewhat smaller than the estimated 16,000 that were in Cass City last year but the same spirit surrounded the 1950 festival, Severance said.

The early festival was coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce, as is the present one, but he pointed out many clubs pitched in to help make it a success.

And a success it was -- for 12 years.

But by the early 1960s the Home-Coming had taken on a more carnival atmosphere, with games and shows that were charging people for a good time rather than the free entertainment of years before, according to then-Chamber President Gerald Prieskorn.

Interest in the festival among organizations also began to wane, Prieskorn said, so it was halted.

The end is in sight for any festival once the organizations that kept it vibrant and alive in the past lose interest and the celebration begins to look the same year after year.

"You've got to have a person that wants to keep it going and see that everything gets done," Prieskorn explained.

He said the present celebration is still new enough to keep the interest of clubs alive.

Although some events have started charging admission this year, it is only so the festival can start to pay for itself in the future, he explained.

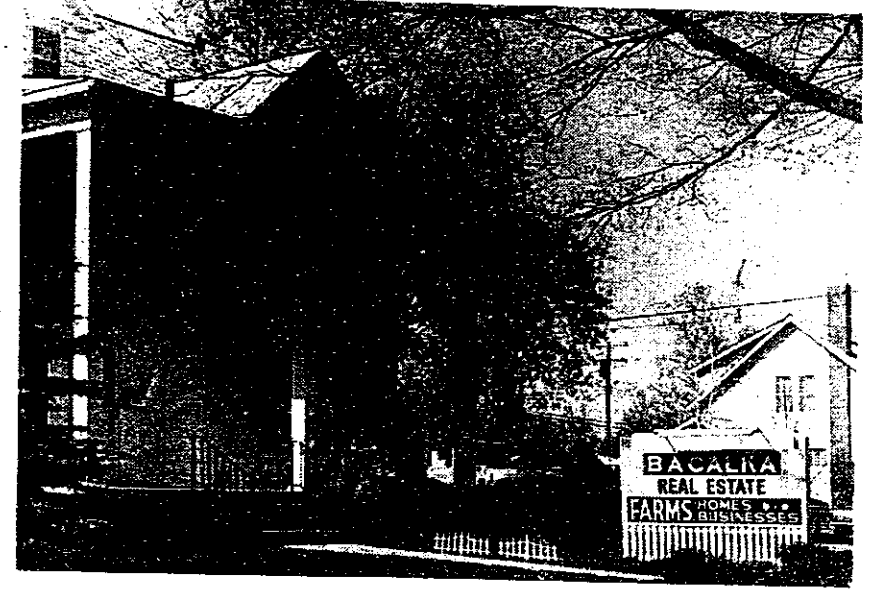
Last year the Chamber lost approximately \$4,000 on the first Fourth of July Festival. The price of keeping a large parade with good acts from all over is costly, parade chairman Mike Weaver said.

The focus of all the festivals Cass City has had centers around the need for fun, inexpensive activity to break up the monotonies of every day life.

And as long as the interest is held by the community those goals can be reached, Severance said.

"But in all celebrations somebody who does the work gets tired," he said.

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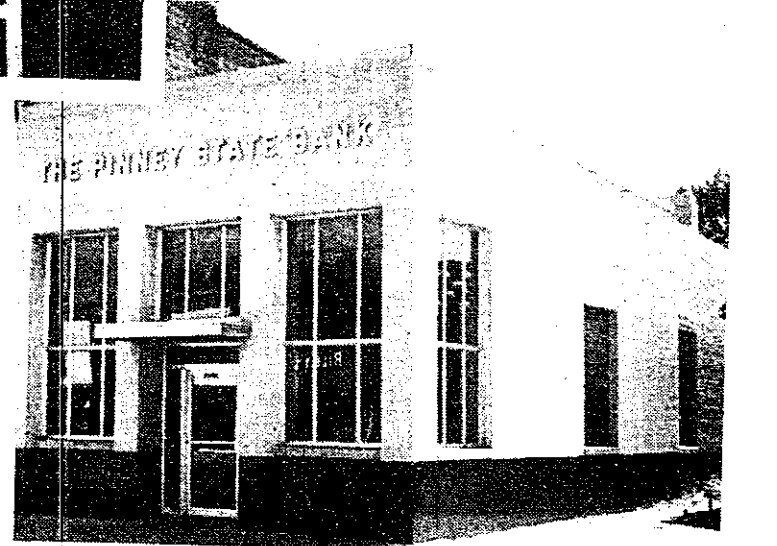
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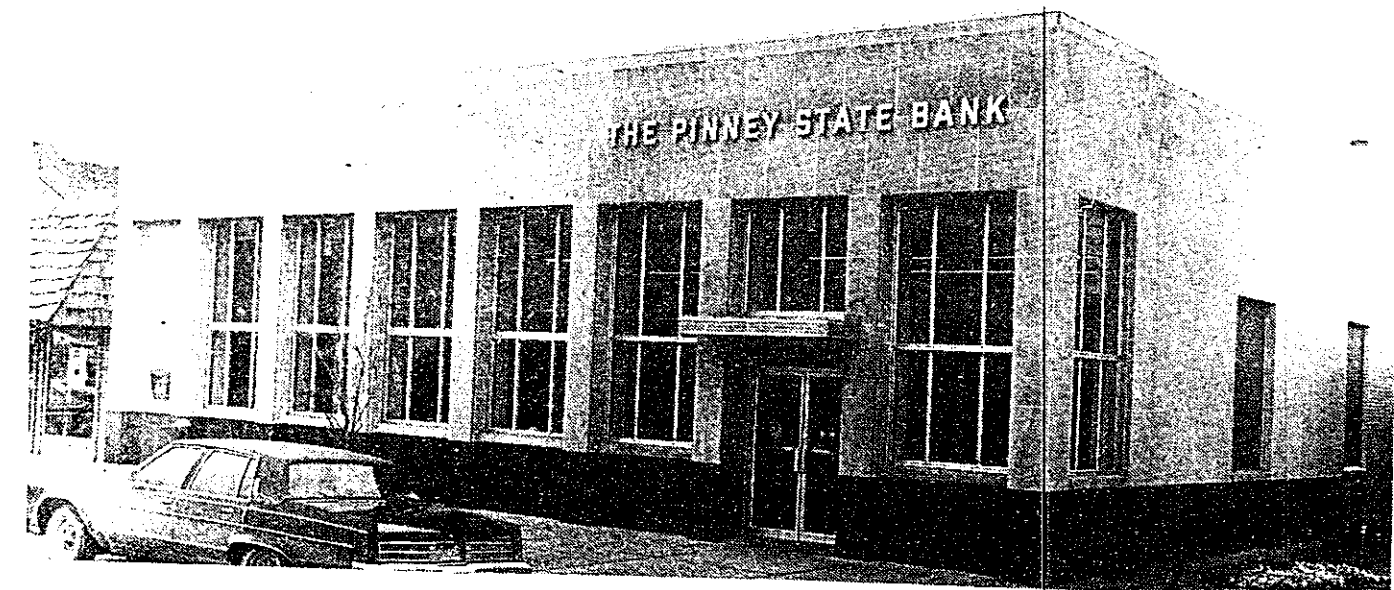


1922 Inside Photo Of Bank Mr. Frederick Pinney, Fourth From Left



1950 Photo Of Remodernization

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