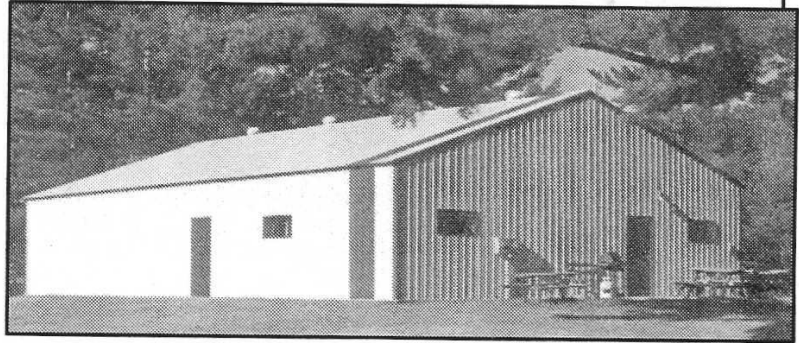
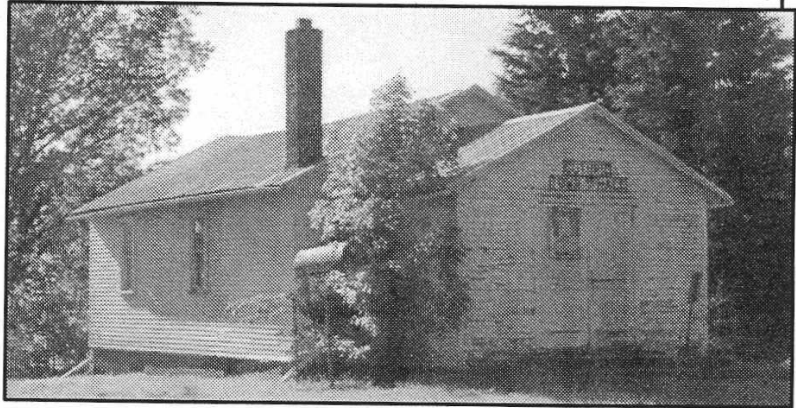
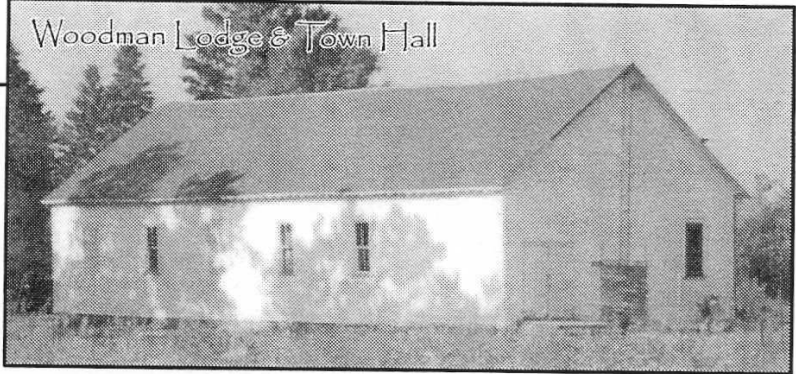


Guthrie TOWNSHIP

Guthrie Township was first identified as Township 144 Range 33. The name "Guthrie" was named after Archibald¹ Guthrie, a contract builder of the Minnesota & International Railway. The 1900 Census² may have been the first one for the north townships of Hubbard County. Railroads had reached most of the north so travel was probably by that method. The road which lies east of the Guthrie School Ground is on the township line between Hart Lake and Guthrie. The railroad did not follow township lines but cut across diagonally through the northeast corner of Guthrie Township crossing over into Hart Lake Township. At a point about three miles south of the present Guthrie Townsite, where Pokety Creek passes under the main railroad, a standard gauge logging road was built and extended from the mainline west through a portion of Hart Lake Township into Guthrie Township to a point about one mile west of Highway 71. The railroad had branch or feeder lines going out to bring in logs from the skidding camps. These were called Spur Lines. One was called "Spur 75" which intersected with the M&I Railroad. At this point, the original townsite of Guthrie was established. It was a loading station and logging camp. There were Saloons, a Store and many other buildings located here during the logging boom and lumberjack days³. This site was in Hart Lake Township. After the timber was cut and the tracks of Spur 75 were removed, the settlement died. The buildings were torn down and everything vanished in the dust of time. All that remains now is a large open field and traces of the railroad grade. What later became "Guthrie" probably started as a sawmill site. In 1898, H. D. Bower moved his sawmill from a little settlement called "Graceland" on Grace Lake and set up on the south end of the little lake south east of Guthrie. Mr. Bower built the Guthrie store in 1899. His three boarders probably worked for him at the mill and in the woods were Otto Smith, age 26 and single, was a teamster, John Steele and Henry Clappenfosh were lumbermen. There were 72 inhabitants listed on the 1900 Census. Mrs. Lillie Pettingill was the first postmaster⁴. Henry Warren, a bachelor from Canada, owned a quarter section of land, part of which became the townsite of Guthrie. It is believed that he was here before the railroad. In the years between 1900 and early 1904, there was another store built in Guthrie by Ulrickson with two partners, Mr. Moore & Mr. Fisher. This store burned down in 1904. There were families who lived in isolated homesteads that were not enumerated.

A man named Hershberg owned 40 acres south of the Guthrie townsite. Oliver Rice & Ed Hess were logging across Highway 71 when Oliver was accidentally killed. Rice's brother made arrangements for his funeral and asked if a cemetery could be established to bury his brother in. Mr. Hershberg⁵ donated two acres of his land for the cemetery which is now the Guthrie Township Cemetery. In 1903⁶, the Guthrie Methodist Church was built and served as a school until the new school was built in 1912.

Woodman Lodge & Town Hall



In 1917, The Farmers State Bank⁷ was built on the corner lot where Farrel's Saloon stood. It was the only brick structure built in Guthrie. The Farmers State Bank was one of the first banks in Hubbard County to open its doors for business after the bank holiday in 1933. Elmer Benson, the Bank Commissioner, in 1935 used his influence to get the bank moved from Guthrie to Pine River. The brick building is still standing today.

In the 1920's Guthrie was booming⁸. The Modern Woodman of America, an Insurance Company, built their lodge around 1922. They sold insurance to the local residents. This Lodge was active until the depression hit and nobody could pay for insurance and the Lodge was abandoned. Later a Guthrie Hall Board was formed and the building became the Community Center. Many activities such as basketball, roller skating, dances, school Christmas parties/programs, family gatherings and even funerals were held here. The Townboard rented the building for their meeting and elections after the school was sold in 1962. The Odd Fellows Organization had a building which later became St. Paul's Lutheran Church. In 1968, the church closed and the Townboard

Guthrie TOWNSHIP

C O N T I N U E D

purchased the building for their meeting place. This is the current townhall.

When the Woodman Hall became the Community Center, the dances brought in enough money to keep the hall going. Local musicians furnished the music.

During this period, Guthrie had two potato warehouses, a lumber yard, a pickle factory, a stock yard, two black smiths, railroad depot, a bank, and several churches, a Post Office, two grocery stores, a hardware store with gas pumps, the Woodman Hall and Cream Station. There was an abundance of wild plums, high and low bush cranberries, blueberries, raspberries and other natural foods for the early settlers. The land produced an abundance of potatoes for years until the soil wore out. The farmers sold cream for money, cut pulp in the winter to subsidize the farm. The railroad played an important part in the economy by transporting the livestock and produce. The depression in the 1930's was hard on the nation as a whole, and Guthrie was no exception.

John Steinbrenner was on the townboard for 30 years, Bob Hess was Clerk for 14 years and Elmer Johnson was on the board for 15 years and all retired in 1976⁹. The township roads were a grass track in the center with wheel tracks. The people used to walk or use teams in the winter. Now the township has to provide year-around all weather roads. The responsibility for the townboard has grown so there are monthly meetings held on the second Wednesday of each month. Before this, the board met only if there was a little business. The Townboard in rural areas like this is the¹⁰ animal control officer, health officer, weed inspector, fire warden, you name it!

After the school closed, the town started to slowly die. The Post Office closed and our address became Laporte. In some ways those living in the North half of the County are not much better off than the early settlers. Laporte is the only town to have survived and is still serving its community after 98 years. Guthrie, Farris, Nary, Becida and Benedict are still recognized as hamlets and have a place on most road maps.

On December 7, 1976, the first board meeting was held for the organization which is called "Ye Olde School Grounds, Inc."¹¹ We had permission to have volleyball games on this site after the land had been sold and the school torn down. The Ye Olde School Grounds organization purchased the land for \$2500.00. Bazaar-bake sales, bingo parties, rummage sales and pulp cutting bees brought in enough money to pay off the debt. The Flying Eagles 4-H, The Guthrie Homemakers and the Sportsmen Club were involved besides the many volunteers with cash donations and workers on the cutting bee. Improvements have been made and today there is a new 40 x 60 building setting by the tall pines. The Sportsmen's Christmas Party, and Guthrie Fair and picnics are being held there each year.

In 1998, the old Woodman Hall was sold to be used as an Archery Shooting Gallery. The township roads have been re-built and maintained for year around travel. Many of our Guthrie residents work in the Bemidji area, work in the woods, and farm. It is a pretty nice place to live!

1. How Area Places Got Their Names by Bill Burnson.
2. Gunder J. Haugen, was the official enumerator for six townships in the Northeast part of Hubbard County-1900 Census.
3. Guthrie Odds & Ends, pages 18-20 in Book I. Article by Dorothy Marks Ogg.
4. According to the early postal records. The Post Office was established February 13, 1900, which was operated from her home just south of the Bower Store.
5. Bulldog Siding by Lenora Ryan Haug.
6. Tales of Guthrie by Bob Hess
7. Those Early Years by Dorothy Marks Ogg
8. Memories by Elmer "Doonie" Johnson
9. Heyday of Guthrie Community by Dave Benard-Bemidji Pioneer
10. Bob Hess on retiring members on the townboard
11. "Ye Olde School Grounds, Inc." by Ivy Knoshaug