

BACON, JOSEPH "JOE"

Blacksmith, Judge, Deputy Sheriff, Justice of Peace

JOSEPH "JOE" BACON 1870 -- 1972

Blacksmith, Judge, Supervisor, Deputy Sheriff, Justice of Peace

Petoskey News-Review, page 1

Friday, September 29, 1972

Joe Bacon, Emmet Resident For 94 Years Dies at 102

Services for Joseph Bacon, 102, will be held at the Stone Funeral Home on Saturday, September 30, at 1:30 p.m. Rev. Homer Yutzy of the Petoskey Memorial Church will officiate and burial will be in Maple Lawn Cemetery in Boyne City. Mr. Bacon died Thursday, at Little Traverse Hospital.

He was born in Walkerton, Ontario, Canada on March 31, 1870. He moved to this area when he was eight in 1878 with his parents, and they homesteaded in Resort Township. Part of this land was sold to the Hemingway family. He has been a resident of this area ever since.

He married the former Sarah Ann Brown on October 22, 1894 at Petoskey. The couple made their home in this area. Sarah preceded him in death on January 2, 1936.

He married the former Sarah Nelson on January 27, 1952 at Drayton Plains, and the couple made their home in Petoskey. She preceded him in death on January 4, 1972.

Mr. Bacon worked as a blacksmith for 32 years, both here and in Boyne City.

He was a member of the Boyne City Lodge No. 391 F. & A.M. He also served a Past master of this lodge.

Survivors include three sons, Carl of Lavering, Earl of Williamsburg and John of Petoskey. Two daughters, Mrs. Oscar (Ruth) Bajcs of Grand Rapids and Mrs. E. W. (Nina) Eudy of New London, North Carolina. He is also survived by 12 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren and 15 great-great grandchildren. Also surviving is one sister, Mrs. Emma Pagel, of Petoskey.

The body is at the Stone Funeral Home in Petoskey where friends may call.

Mr. Bacon, known as "Joe" to his many friends throughout the area, retained a sharp memory of the pioneer days of Emmet and Charlevoix counties.

He came here just five years after the first railroad train reached Petoskey and saw the changes, knew the people and the area. His family sold property on Walloon Lake to the Hemingway family and he knew Pulitzer Prize Winner Ernest and used to say he held him in his arms when he was a child.

Joe and his father cleared brush and helped build the first county fairgrounds in 1886 and he exhibited and was a top blue ribbon winner for many years. He and his father, who lived to be 98, exhibited the first purebred cattle, sheep and swine here. After he quit exhibiting, he served for years as a judge and supervisor and even this past month attended the fair. It is believed he never missed a single one of Emmet's 86 fairs.

Joe recalled the days when the ferris wheel and merry-go-round were operated by teams of horses walking in circles. He recalled the pitchmen for medicine shows and the quacks and fakes who once followed the fair circuits.

He was a guide for hunters, a deputy sheriff, a justice of the peace, a Resort School Board member and practiced veterinary medicine. He held the state blacksmith record for shoeing horses, doing 137 shoes in a single day. For some 14 years he operated a steam threshing engine.

"I don't drink, smoke or say any cuss words—and I never carried a chip on my shoulder," he told the News-Review when he celebrated his 100th birthday. That sort of summed up his philosophy and even when he could no longer work or prepare

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exhibits for the county fair he enjoyed talking to his many friends and the legion of writers and would-be-writers who interviewed him in recent years on his experiences with the Hemingway family.

Some years ago Raymond Kalbfleisch wrote that he claimed a relationship with Benjamin Franklin, his English grandmother, Susanna Franklin Bacon, "disdainfully referred to Benjamin Franklin as a 'rebel cousin and traitor to the crown', Joe was quoted as saying. Through his mother, Elizabeth Couch Bacon, he was related to Sir Edward Blake of England, his mother's cousin.



Joseph Bacon

JOSEPH "JOE" BACON

Petoskey News-Review
Thursday, March 31, 1960

Joe Bacon is 90 Today -- Has Yet To Miss Attending County Fair

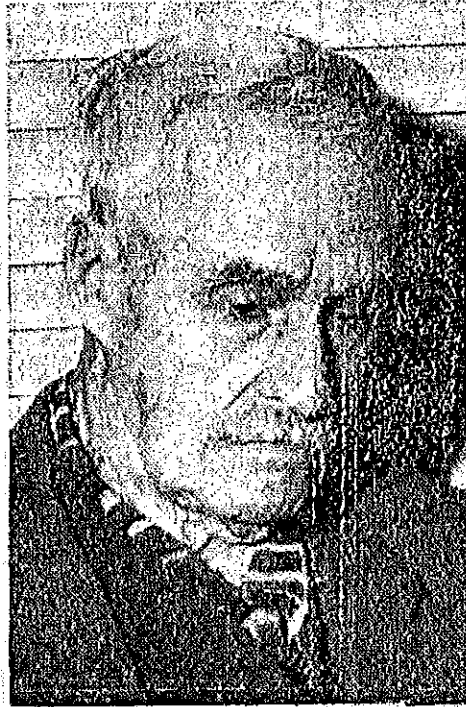
Joe Bacon, pioneer Petoskey farmer and former county officer in many different capacities, became 90 years old today and is looking forward to seeing many more.

The retired Resort township farmer was born in Walherta, Ontario, Canada on March 31, 1870 and came to Emmet county when he was nine years old and established an outstanding record during his 81 years in the area.

Joe has attended every county fair held in Petoskey and was the largest single exhibitor for 10 years in a row. He was 16 when the first fair was held.

His entries consisted of horses, cattle, sheep and hogs and he was the first to display registered sheep and hogs in the county. When he gave up active farm work he continued on in fair activities by becoming superintendent of the sheep and poultry exhibits.

"The fairs today are a far cry from the old ones where the competition in the farm field was high



Joe Bacon

Today the fair is not much more than an entertainment week for kids and city people but it's still a good place to meet your old friends

and neighbors," Bacon said.

Joe lives in an apartment on Sheridan-st. in Petoskey but spent the biggest share of his life in Resort. He was a deputy sheriff for several years, a justice of the peace, held offices on the township school board and practiced veterinarian medicine for 10 years.

HIS BIGGEST enjoyment today is watching his children and their children grow. He has three boys, Carl of Levering, Earl of Williamsburg and Traverse City and John in Bay City and two daughters, Ruth in Grand Rapids and Nina in Haverloch, North Carolina plus several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Spry at 90 and able to read without glasses, he still recalls his early days in Canada.

He said the late James A. Reid whose son, James M. Reid, runs the Reid Furniture Company, was born in the same city as he was and he attended school there with former Petoskey residents Dr. Walter Seibert, Mrs. Ed Owens and Mrs. Arnos Henika.