II. after three years with the United States Engineers in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. Then his outfit was sent through the Panama Canal to take part in the Pacific Theatre.

Otto Rasmussen, after the war, returned to Crookston and was employed at the Oyster Bay Cafe, corner of Main and Robert Streets. Later he became co-owner with Gilbert Bang (of pop factory fame) of the Grill, where my mother was employed.

On Monday, February 24, 1905, my parents were married in Crookston. Later the Nordhus home farm at Fosston became available and the couple moved there, where I was born January 18, 1909, and my brother, Kermit Edward, August 26, 1910.

My father, who was known as “Prince”, opened a cafe in Fosston, assisted by a younger brother, Anton, who followed him from Denmark. Later it was sold to another of my uncles, John Nordhus.

In 1913, our family took off for the adventuresome west - Harlem, Montana, shipping by rail a carload of horses, cattle and furniture. My bachelor uncle, Ingvid Nordhus, a carpenter, joined us; so we eventually had one of the nicest four-room bungalows on the so-called Big Flat, about forty miles north of Harlem, six miles south of the Canadian border with Turner, nine miles east, as our mailing address.

As small children we didn’t realize the struggles and hardships of a dryland farm for the next ten years. Our first barn burned down and the new one was destroyed by a tornado, together with animals. There were no means of transportation except by horses, no schools to speak of, the nearest six miles away and only in summer. Dad taught us in winter. Wood was scarce and we often picked dry “Cow Pies” for fuel. Coal was hauled from Harlem. Through the generosity of my mother’s older sister and husband, Oscar and Maud Anderson of Crookston, we lived with them while attending Franklin school here with their son, Walter Eugene. About 1923, my folks gave up their farm and moved to Harlem again, taking up the restaurant business and there my brother and I finished high school. My father died August 5, 1943, at 66 and my mother November 4, 1965 in Crookston at 79. Both are buried in Harlem, Montana.

Having many Crookston contacts, I returned here and for many years was on the Crookston Daily Times staff. I was married to A. Leonard Anderson at Detroit Lakes, August 11, 1940, and lived here since. Leonard, born February 12, 1898, at Glyndon, Minnesota, died December 12, 1970. He retired in 1964 as a conductor after 46 years with the Great Northern Railway.

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**Esther Township**

**KONGSVINGER CHURCH**

**CONGREGATION**

The history of the Kongsvinger congregation dates back to 1880, when pastor Bersvend Anderson led a small group of Norwegian and Swedish immigrants in worship in their sod and log homes. He traveled from Bardo, nine miles west of Crookston, Minnesota. On November 21, 1880, this group met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hendrickson, and with the help of Pastor Anderson organized the congregation. The following are the names of the first church members: Mr. and Mrs. Hendrik H. Grub, Mr. and Mrs. Ole Hendrickson and family, Mr. Hendrik Henderson, Miss Bretta Hendrickson, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hendrickson and family, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Sevein, Mr. and Mrs. Anders Skog and family, Miss Anna Skog, Mr. Ole Lundeen, Mr. and Mrs. Hendrik Flataas. Pastor Anderson served the congregation from 1880 to 1887.

In January 1882, a cemetery site was given to the congregation in the town of Esther in Polk County by Ole Hendrickson. In 1887, Ole Hendrickson gave land near the cemetery for a church site. That year the first church was built. This congregation was of the Hauge Synod. In 1907, a $300 bell was installed in the steeple. This was a joy to all! In August 1930, the church was destroyed by lightning. Only the furniture and the dishes in the basement were saved. In the fall of that same year the present church was built.


The following are the officers: Bennett Mathsen, President, Harvey Hanson, Vice President, Oliver Olson, Secretary, Menford Hendrickson, Treasurer, Rueben Kleven, envelope treasurer, Bloyd Hendrickson, Carl Nelson, Auditors; Clifford Aure, Bernard Egge, Menford Hendrickson, Budget Committee and Irving Nelson, cemetery fund.

The deacons are: Clifford Nelson, Bernard Egge and Almore Lind.

The trustees are: Richson Nelson, Marvin Hedlund and Carl Nelson. The sextons are: Donald Solem and Clarence Olson. The bell ringers are: Bernard Egge, Clarence Olson and Donald Solem.

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**GUNNAR ERICKSON**

Gunnar Carl Erickson and Selma (Sally) Ellen Amelia Johnson were married December 9, 1914, at her home in Esther township. On December 9, 1974, they celebrated their 60th anniversary at Bethany Lutheran Church, rural East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

Gunnar’s father, Matts H. Erickson, at 17 years of age came from Dalarna, Sweden, with about $75 in his pocket. He worked as a hired hand and was so energetic he could work behind two binders and consequently thought he could ask for double wages.

In 1890 he married Eugenia (Jennie) Louisa Johnson who had come from Vastmanland, Sweden, also in her teens. They settled in Northland Township where Matts had bought railroad land. At that time Northland, located ten miles north of East Grand Forks, had a post office, typical country store, creamery, blacksmith shop, feed mill, and dance hall. Many good times and wedding dances were held at Northland Hall.

Matts and Jennie were early members of the Bethesda Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church. They had three children: Esther, who married Julius Larson, Gunnar, and Adolph, who married Lilie Moberg. While the children were in their teens, Matts built a beautiful new house for which Gunnar remembers having lumber all summer long. It was one of the first houses in the country to have gas lights and a completely modern bathroom of that day. A tough job was pumping the hand pump in the basement to keep up the pressure for the bathroom facilities upstairs.

Many beautiful Christmas Eves in this lovely home are remembered by their children and grandchildren. Regardless of weather, they rode out to “Grandma and Grandpa’s” in a sleigh covered with horse blankets and robes with charcoal footwarmers to help keep them warm.

Selma’s parents, Swan Johnson and Martina Dag, both came from Smaland, Sweden, in their teens. Swan first worked on the railroad at Brainerd, Minnesota, and then came up to farm in East Grand Forks where Martina came to work for him. They were married and had five children: Ellen, Selma, Elmer, William and Walter. Swan helped cut down trees to saw into lumber to build the original Bethesda Lutheran Church. He was always asked to toll the church bells for funerals as everyone said he could do it so well. As a young girl, Selma was an organist for the church.

Gunnar and Selma settled in Grand Forks township where they lived until 1935 when they moved to the Matts Erickson...