"old times" as well as the present day pleasures and problems.

The pioneer couple were members of the Keystone Presbyterian Church at Key West, Minnesota, from their childhood until the church was dissolved in 1969. They joined the Mendenhall Presbyterian Church in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. The parents of both were instrumental in organizing the Keystone Church of which William was treasurer for many years and Mrs. Rutherford an active member of the Ladies Aid.

William, born August 23, 1889, attended the Agricultural College at Crookston, but since farming was his main interest, he returned home to care for the livestock. Every winter the horses were sent to the woods where they earned their keep by working in the logging camp. When cattle were sold they were put on the train at Buffalo, a loading station located along the Northern Pacific Railroad, a mile north of the farm on which the Rutherfords lived.

William’s father came to Fisher’s Landing in 1879 and from there walked north to the Robert Nesbit farm where he stayed while he was setting up his own claim. He walked northeast to Fanny Township, which was established in 1880, and there built a sod shanty on Section 6 next to the John Love farm which is now occupied by a grandson, Allan Love. Later in 1880, he returned to eastern Canada to marry Margaret Abernethy Armstrong, whom he had known when Gunness in Perth, Ontario. She was a sister of Mrs. John Love. They came back to Euclid, Minnesota, by train and then to his homestead. In a few years they built a frame house on the farm now owned by Robert Rutherford, their youngest son, who now lives in East Grand Forks.

Medical help was not easily available and their first baby girl died shortly after birth and was buried in an old cemetery just north of Fisher. Other members of the family were Della, now deceased, who married George A. Lee and lived near Mallory, Minnesota; Fred, killed at 25 years of age by a falling tree at his homestead in Baudette, Minnesota; Howard, who died at 19 and Mary at 13, both of pneumonia; Nethy, who married Leo M. Burns and operated the Crookston Dress Club for many years until they retired and moved to their present home in Tucson, Arizona; and Jennie who married Elmore Dangerfield and lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, until her death in 1957.

Mrs. Rutherford’s father came to Fisher’s Landing from eastern Canada in 1879, but chose East Grand Forks as his destination. He homesteaded land in Section 30 of Keystone Township in 1879, near friends and relatives. He worked on the railroad, and as an extra job, chopped wood to earn money to buy seed for the first planting on his newly acquired claim, nine miles east of East Grand Forks. He married Tena McDougall, and on August 21, 1893, their first child, Mae, was born. She had two brothers, Lloyd, who died when a young man, and Harold who is living in Oregon, Mrs. Gunness died shortly after Harold was born, and unable to care for a tiny baby, Mr. Gunness let his brother and sister-in-law in Barnesville raise Harold. Later he married Emma Woodall and they had five children. Margaret married Robert Will and lived in the Key West community until her death in 1966. Other children were Dorothy, Mrs. Harold Holmes; Charlotte, Mrs. Darryl McElroy; and Vernard, all living in California; and Jean who died in 1957 in California. Mrs. Gunness died in 1910. When Mr. Gunness retired, he moved to East Grand Forks where he made his home until his death in 1944.

WILHELM SENSKER

Wilhelm Senske was born in 1844 near Posen, Germany. His parents were poor share crop farmers. Seeing no future in this or the compulsory military service for eighteen year olds, he left for America just before age eighteen.

His first years in the United States were spent in Wisconsin where he worked on farms and in logging camps. In 1873 he married Henrietta Nesveber, also from Germany, and they bought a farm near Augusta, Wisconsin. A son, Gustav and a daughter Mary, were born there. Wanting more land that was easier to clear for farming, he sold his farm to his younger brother, August, who had followed him to the United States.

In 1881 he brought his family to Fisher, Minnesota, and settled on 160 acres of prairie in Nesbit Township. Here they built a sod shanty and the change from the comfortable two story frame house in Wisconsin was almost unbearable. In winter Wilhelm helped cut oak logs to build the log house which soon replaced the sod shanty. Some years later the log house was enlarged to a two story frame house. In 1887 he helped build the Trinity Lutheran Church in Lowell Township.

As sons, Gust and Will, grew up, three more quarters of land were added to the farm. Their daughter Mary died at age nineteen. Wilhelm and Henrietta farmed until 1912 when they retired and moved to Crookston for their remaining years.

In 1902 Gust was married to Mary Tiedemann and later moved onto his own place in Fanny Township. William married Minnie Tiedemann and lived on the home place. Mary and Minnie Tiedemann were sisters whose parents were early settlers near Euclid, Minnesota. In 1908 Gust purchased his first auto or “Gas Buggy” which had high wheels and hard tires with a chain drive and air cooled motor. This made the thirty-mile round trip to Crookston for groceries and business more endurable. The winter trips still had to be made with horses. The first telephone came about 1910, and the electric power in the early twenties (1920). William and Minnie Senske had no children. They sold their farm in the late thirties and lived in Crookston the rest of their lives.

Gust and Mary Senske raised a family of eight: Arthur, Albert, Alice, Bernice, Arnold, Walter, Edwin and Orville. Besides farming, Gust served the community as school clerk and township clerk for many years. He also served many years as an officer of the Trinity Lutheran Church until he moved to Crookston, Minnesota. Gust was very active in organizing farmers cooperatives including the Farmers Union Oil Company and Crookston Farmers Cooperative Elevator of Crookston. He served as president of each for many years. In 1947 Gust and Mary Senske retired to Crookston for the rest of their years.

Arthur Senske operated the farm until it was sold in 1970. Surviving members of the Senske family live in Crookston, East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and Saginaw, Michigan.

SAM VEEENDRA

The Veenstra family originated in Westergeest, Holland. Sam (Sitzie Libby) was born in 1866. His parents were farmers.

Sam served in the army in Holland before coming to the United States in 1893 at the age of 25. He went to Iowa to live with cousins. While there, he met and married Nellie O’Neill.

Nellie was an orphan child, having lost her parents at the age of four. When she was still a child, she was adopted by some people in Iowa, but the day before she was to arrive, a tornado injured the foster mother, tearing off her arm. Because of the injury, she could not adopt the child, so a neighbor took Nellie.

The Real Estate men in Iowa were pushing the “low priced” land propaganda in northern Minnesota area, and our father, Samuel Veenstra, who was a true pioneer, decided that northern Minnesota was his destiny. He went first in a boxcar with his farm animals, wagon, and some machinery as far as Crookston. From there he loaded his property onto the wagon, hitched up the horses and drove to his new farm about 10 or 12