

**MAP OF**  
**TOWNSHIP 151 N., RANGE 43 W**  
 of the 5th P. M.  
 Scale 1 1/4 inches to 1 mile

### GERVAIS TOWNSHIP



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Gervais Township was organized on March 15, 1885 and was a part of Polk County. Samuel Allard was the first town clerk and assessor. The three supervisors were Louis Perreault, chairman, Basil Emard and Moses Allard. Phillip Thayer was Justice of the Peace, and Frederic Emard was constable. The first meeting were held in School District #112. The town hall was built in 1910 between sections sixteen and twenty-one and is still in use today.

The first settler in Gervais was Isaiah Gervais who came from St. Paul in 1876 with Pierre Bottineau. He built a two-story log cabin on his new homestead and sent for his family who arrived in a horse-drawn covered wagon. Other early settlers were J. B. Fournier, Charles Richard, Joseph Patnode, Pierre Emard, Jerome Longtin, Dolphis Patnode, Louis Perrault, Phillip Thayer, Joseph Laurent, Sam Miller, and Ovilla Gervais. The township took its name, however, from Isaiah Gervais.

The early township boards were responsible for roads and ditches in their areas. Each landholder was assessed one dollar per one hundred dollars of evaluation on real estate and fifty cents per hundred on personal property. Apparently the assessed value of county properties was low. The money went into the road and bridge fund. Each landholder was also assessed a poll tax of one or two days of work each year, and those days were usually spent in ditch digging, brush cutting, road building or any work that needed to be done for the town. Records of births and deaths were kept by the town clerk.

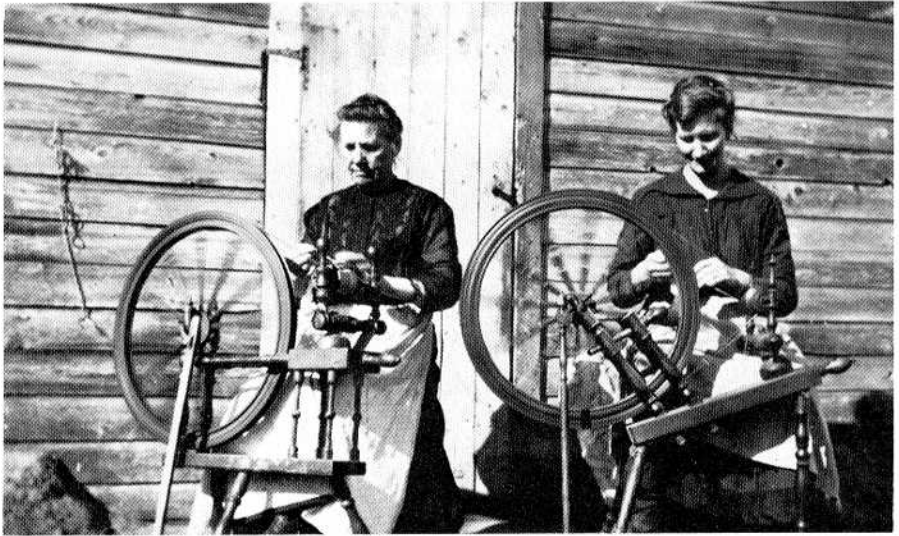
The townships also entertained petitions for the payment of medical bills of families in the township. This was practiced in Gervais up until fifteen years ago. The petitioner would place his request before the board and it would determine the degree of need among all petitioners and disperse the money according to need.

The treasury books of the township were in the Orr home for fifty years. George Orr, Sr., was elected to the board as treasurer in 1903. In 1917, George Orr, Jr., was elected to replace his father. He held that position until 1953, making the family record a total of fifty years.

At the present time, Leslie Flage is chairman, and other supervisors are Curtis Bernard and Russell Zimpel. George Reopelle is clerk and Harold Derosier is treasurer.



Steam threshing on Bisson farm 1915



Hannah Gustafson and daughter Mattie



Jos. Helm, Sr. drove this new car to the Charles Seeger, Sr. farm for a visit in 1908. Fred Seeger is at the wheel with Charles in the front seat. Maria is standing and Mrs. Charles Seeger and Mrs. Fred Seeger in the back seat. Charles Seeger built this house in 1901 in Gervais Township on the spot where the old log building once stood.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT 88

School District #88 was organized before 1883 in Gervais Township in the County of Polk. Early trustees were Basil Emard, Henry Helgeson, and Ulrich Plante. On April 23, 1883, at a special meeting, it was decided to build a school house in the middle of the district on land owned by Basil Emard. One acre of land was purchased at a price of \$20.00, the total cost of the school amounted to \$521.00.

Teachers received \$30.00 per month, and the names of some of those hardworking persons found in the records were Ella Roark, Mrs. Mary Jeffers, Frank Deming, Mary Schusser, Felix Grandbois, Gertie Gierberg and Lydia Fletcher. Classes began each fall in October and were dismissed in April for a seven month school term.

In 1905 there were 29 children crowded

into the one-room school which contained grades one through eight. The Red Lake river cut the district in half so that students from families east of the river had to cross the water either by boat in the spring and fall, or on the ice during the cold winter months. This made attendance somewhat irregular, especially in the spring and fall. Some of the subjects taught were orthography, reading, writing, mental arithmetic, arithmetic, geography, language, grammar, United States history, physiology and civil government.

A list of students from grades one through eight in the early 1900's included: Lillie Just, Cora Just, Lydia Hinrichs, Annie Norman, Andrew Norman, Roy Gauthier, Frieda Gomoll, Gertrude Starcken, Herman Schmidt, Frank Schmidt, August Hinrichs, Annie Schmidt, Joseph Schmidt, Peter Starcken, Carl Gomoll, Mary Just, Leona Just, Willie Gomoll, Henry Gomoll, Rose Hinrichs, Sarah Hinrichs, John Schmidt, Tina Rawertz, Charles Seeger, Mary Seeger, Alice Gauthier and Hazel Kellogg.

About the year 1926, the school was moved one mile southwest where it stood in the southwest corner of Frank Schmidt's north quarter. Here it remained until the 1940's when the district was consolidated with the Red Lake Falls school. At the present time, the old school building is standing in Andrew Neilson's yard and is used as a granary.

## WILDWOOD SCHOOL

The old records of the Wildwood School date back to 1896. The teacher was a Mr. Fletcher and he had thirty-four pupils. School Board members were Alex Patnode, Sam Miller and Jerome Longtin. Miss Mamie Swanson was the teacher in the year 1897 and her wages are noted at \$35.00 for a seven-month school year. Other teachers were Alice Fellman, Mildred Helm, Carl Schusser, Irene Schusser, Leora Krueger, Marie and Marguerite Patnode, Bernice Orr, Joyce Surprenant, Elsie LaChance, Evelyn Longtin and Florence Keim.

Some of the board members in later years were Jos. St. Marie, William Eukel, Leo Longtin, George LeFaive, Clayton and Donald Walker, Frank Schafer and Hulda Zimpel.

Wildwood School, District 112 in Section 30 of Gervais Township, was the setting and scene for numerous social events of all sorts including 4-H meeting of the youth in the area. After the school closed, the building was used as the town hall until it was moved to Terrebonne and became the Beau Gerlot School.

## GERVAIS FARMERS ALERT CLUB

About 1915, a group of farmers from Gervais township, and some residents from the area east of Plummer, joined together to form a social club. Their meetings were held either in the Wildwood or the Hawthorne schools each month. During these meetings, they discussed the social events they were sponsoring at the time, and often had potluck lunches, members bringing their most special dishes. Among other events, they sponsored summer ball teams which competed with other teams around the county. Special summer activities included excursions to Maple Lake, Itasca Park, or to Red Lake, all topped off with a grand picnic. Home talent plays and all the rehearsals that go with them, seemed to be the big events of the



**School District 88 about 1906-07:** Carl Schusser was the teacher. Students identified are, *Back Row:* Henry Gommel, Frank Schmidt, Sarah Hinrichs, Tina Rewertz, Carl Gommel, Annie Rewertz, August Hinrichs and Lonie Just. *Front:* John Knott, Emman Hinrichs, Lillie Just, Freida Gommel, Anton Schmidt, Hubert Hinrichs, Henry Schmidt, Roy Gauthier, Lydia Hinrichs, Cora Just, Gust Knott, Clifford Gauthier, Anna Norman and Herman Just.

winter seasons.

Harry Anderson and Herbert Arlt were organizers and promoters of the club which operated into the 1930's. A few of the families who were members included the Andersons, Arlts, Crafts, Greenwalds, Flages, Halversons, Tillmans, Christian-

sons, Carlsons, Tillmans, Carlsons and Malwitzes. The organization was most active from the year 1915 into the 1930's, and provided an opportunity for people to join together for fun and relaxation with each other and their families.



Patnode School District 112



The Tillman, Arlt, Flage and Westerlund clan.



Gervais team is standing and Emardville baseball team in front.

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