Retirement brings end of an era

Eisenbeis retires from Bank of Beulah

BY KATHY TANDERG

In 1955, friends Fred K. Flemmer and Bob Kegough, along with Fred's son-in-law, Doug Dettman, looked into the future and invested in Mercer County by becoming partners in a new business venture—they bought the Bank of Beulah.

Since that time a member of Fred's family has been involved in the bank.

Fred's daughter, Gertie Buscher, became a partner in the bank in 1966 when she brought Kegough's shares. Gertie began working at the bank in 1968 after she became a partner. She stayed on at the bank, even after it was sold in 1994 to the Amundson banking group and officially became First Security Bank-West, Beulah.

Fred retired in 1985 and died in 1993. Doug retired when the bank was sold in 1990.

At the time of the sale, there were eight family members who were the owners of the bank. Fred and his daughters, Tilla Dettmann (Doug's wife) and Gertie, Doug, and Fred's four grandchildren, Lindaarsie, Mike Dettmann, Kathleen Dettmann, and Mary Kay Weinberger.

Fred's granddaughter, Lindaarsie Eisenbeis, will bring the 50 years of the Flemmer and Dettmann banking families to an end with her retirement Nov. 30. As the end of a memorable era for the family and Mercer County history:

Lindaarsie has worked for the bank nearly 40 years in all part-time and full-time capacities. She has become a friend to many of the customers she has served over the years.

Some, like her, are descendents of the bank's original customers and part of the bank's history.

"I think it's something I inherited when my mom retired, a lot of her customers. Now I have a lot of those customers, I mean because their parents would tell them to come see me," Lindaarsie said.

In fact, she became administra tors for a few customers who didn't have family to assist them.

Over the years, several Flemmer and Dettmann family members were involved in the Bank of Beulah either as a board member or a bank employee. This included Fred K. Flemmer, front, and back, from left, Fred's family members, Doug Dettmann (son-in-law), Mike Dettmann (grandson), Gertie Buscher (daughter), Lindaarsie Eisenbeis (granddaughter) and Brian Bjorklund (great-grandson).


In touch with. Some of them go back way back when she was a single woman, another single like Fran Link, Bonna Galster and Ed Kitter.

"If there was a wedding dance, we had a deal that Ed wouldn't take us all Ed loved to dance and he took turns dancing with us. Half way through the dance he would get out and change shirts because he would be wet from all the dancing," Lindaarsie added.

Lindaarsie has many memories of the big energy construction boom of the mid-1970s. She said for the first six months of the boom, every Friday she sat at a desk and all she did was open new accounts.

"We were the only bank in Beulah during the initial boom. On Fridays after the men got off work, we needed five tellers and the lobby was full. The drive-up line went around the block and then some," she said.

She explained that the drive-up line began on the first block of First Street North, west of the senior citizen building, then wrapped around the block, into and down the alley. The lobby was also full and the lines went out the door and down the sidewalk.

The lobby got three rushes. The first rush began mid-afternoon and then there was a short break. The second rush began at 4:15 with the workers who had gone to the bars first. The last rush began at 5:30 and lasted until they closed the doors at 6 p.m.

"Grandpa would sit in his living room on First Street and watch the cars in the street waiting for the drive-up. He'd call us and tell us how long the line was. Like we didn't know," she said with a smile.

Bank examiners were there one week and Lindaarsie said they told them they needed to stay one Friday night and see the commotion.

"They couldn't believe it," she said.

Lindaarsie said that even though it was a madhouse, the men of the boom waiting in the lobby amazed her. She said there was never any trouble because they policed themselves.

"If anyone gave us any trouble, they were out the doors, put out by the others," she said.

Lindaarsie also remembers the many changes in technology over the years. She was there with the bank for all of it, from the change from manual bank records to everything being computerized and digitized.

Another big change has been in the federal banking regulations.

"I remember my Mom showing people the two federal compliance books that were 2 inches thick. By the time she quit working there were four books, 6 or 7 inches thick. Now everything is online and we have no books," Lindaarsie explained.

The demanding increase in federal regulations and banking laws has created more stress for bankers today. This played a small part in Lindaarsie's decision to retire.

"None of my decision has anything to do with the local people. The people I work with are great. It's just time," she said.

Except for the two new officers at the bank, Lindaarsie has worked with everyone else there for 30 years or more.

"They're a family. Half the time you spend more time there than you do with your own family," she added.

As she prepares to move on, Lindaarsie has been writing a list of her duties and the length of the list has surprised her.

"You don't even realize all the jobs you do until you write them down," Lindaarsie said.

Lindaarsie doesn't have any specific plans for retirement at the moment. But because she'll miss working with people, when she's ready she might look for something part time to keep her busy and around people. But she's in no hurry to find anything right away. A new granddaughter was added to the three grandchildren she already has, just this past weekend. Retirement will give her a little more time to spend with them.

Lindaarsie has three sons living not far from home. Troy lives in Bismarck, Corey in Mandan, and Aaron is away at school in Willieton. Troy and Corey each have two children. They will have her attention for a while.