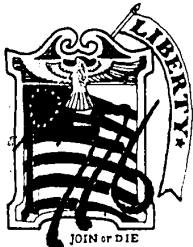


Chronicles history

A proud heritage for the 'Enterprise'

By STEVE BARNADY



It was Nov. 2, 1888, and Edgar Bloomer proudly sat back in his desk chair looking at the first edition of the Farmington Enterprise. He skimmed the page looking at articles and advertisements, alike. It had been a struggle, but the first edition was out.

It has been 87 years since Farmington's own paper hit the streets. Ever since then it has been chronicling the history of a proud community.

Sitting in front of this electric typewriter, surrounded by 20th century technology, the modern journalist wonders how Bloomer would feel about today's newspaper. Although the name has changed and format reworked to meet the needs of modern day readers, the Farmington Observer & Eccentric is proud to identify its lineage to the Enterprise.

AS A MATTER OF fact, the Enterprise name had such an impact that many persons today still refer to the Observer & Eccentric as the Enterprise.

Bloomer was 33 years old at the time he rushed his first edition off the press and into the streets. He re-

mained with the paper until 1898 when he moved to Sparta and consolidated the Sentinel and Leader newspapers. He died in 1909.

But Bloomer began a tradition of community journalism which still exists today. He believed in producing a newspaper which would serve the interests of the Farmington area while informing residents of matters in which they would be interested.

Much of what he wrote in that first edition is pertinent now.

"Appreciating readers must be found, no publication can be sustained by money and writers merely. There must be readers."

It is fair to judge of the intelligence of a community by the character of the paper it supports. What we wish then is that each one, when anything new or interesting comes to his knowledge, should report it to the editor. We will seek to make this paper a permanent journal of progress."

Reading through that first edition reveals both the tenor and humor of the time.

A BLANK SPACE reserved for an advertisement by Fred Warner is explained away when Bloomer says Warner was too busy to make up the copy.

The mind wanders. Was Warner even then out campaigning. His political efforts eventually took him to the governor's chair in Lansing. He was the only Farmington resident to ever achieve such high political office.

"Politics," indeed, was a topic of the day as revealed in another short article.



Edgar Bloomer relaxed at this desk after putting in a hard day's work as editor of the Enterprise.

"The Farmington Democratic Club, headed by the Redford Band, attended the great Democratic meeting at Pontiac," it says.

Obviously, objectivity wasn't what it could be in those days.

For those who wanted to spend time in a more leisurely fashion, they could participate in a singing convention at Bell Branch being conducted by C.H. Smith. A concert would wrap up the event.

It also revealed that William Maiden sold his 109 acre farm in Southfield to Carl Hossow for \$4,000.

Activities for young persons were in full bloom. The Young Peoples Circle was organized in the M.E. Church.

Although the world ran at a different pace, tragedy was still part of the scene.

Mrs. Amos Dewaters found the world situation to be untenable enough to put a .38 caliber revolver to her chest and pull the trigger. At press time she was in critical condition.

W.R. Anderson broke his neck while pitching cornstalks and James Clark, "while maddened by drink," cut his mother's throat. It took two officers to arrest him.

It reported that Dewaters was "a quiet man" when sober.

At the beginning of the century Walter Richards took over as Enterprise editor. But the competition was stiff. He explains in his own words:

"It ended for me when I broke down from overwork and was so sick that I had to throw in the towel and call in my competitor to buy the Enterprise at his own price."

Today, shadows of the old Enterprise still exist. On Farmington Road, south of Grand River stands the Enterprise building, now occupied by a bookstore.

But better than that, the readers on

which Bloomer put so much value are still here. He put it best:

"No one man can know everything,

nor is it desirable, for a paper should reflect the views of the community, not of one man."

They're concerned about nutrition

A program on nutrition and supermarket foods will be held at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College, Friday, Nov. 14, at 1 p.m.

Sponsored by a new organization, Nutritionally Concerned Consumers, it will be in J. Building, room 191. This

introductory lecture is entitled, "You May Never Shop at a Supermarket Again."

The group wants to encourage local supermarkets to offer more of a variety of healthful foods.

The public is invited. There is no charge. Refreshments will be served.

NICK BOSS FLORIST

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