

Wagner Labor Day---1900-2000

The following information was taken from old newspapers on file at The Wagner Post and was researched by Linda Soukup, Jean Pirner and Carol Harrell. Newspapers included The Wagner Eagle, The Charles Mix New Era, and The Wagner Post. Information and pictures from The Epic of the Realm of Ree by Adeline Gnirk are also included.

There was a fire in 1979 at The Wagner Post that destroyed the wooden portion of the building. There were some years that were destroyed, as you will see. Our recording started with the year 1907. We discovered that the years 1905 and 1906 were on microfilm at the State Historical Society in Pierre. We obtained the microfilm but were unable to find a projector to view the film.

In her Wagner Chamber of Commerce Memories and Highlights, Secretary Ann R. Nylander wrote that many of the Chamber records and minutes had been lost over the years; but she wrote from memory "that the first year, 1900, the new town of Wagner celebrated on July 4th but soon changed it to Labor Day"

The Labor Day Celebration seems to have been firmly established and the town never wavered from having it except for the year 1946 when it was cancelled due to the polio epidemic that was sweeping the country.

Therefore, The Wagner Centennial Committee feels confident in proclaiming that the title to the longest and continuous annual citywide celebration in the State of South Dakota proudly belongs to the City of Wagner. We salute and thank the city founders and fathers who had the courage, the imagination and the dedication to begin and continue to entertain the area population with this annual Labor Day Celebration. May the tradition live long and well!

Some of the old newspapers were in very fragile condition, disintegrating as we touched them. We have included pictures and Labor Day ads along the way to give you a better idea of Labor Day development over the years. If we found items of interest that year we included those details also.

1905 & 1906 -- On 35 MM film at Pierre, S.D.

"At two o'clock a parade was formed which wended its way to the ball park where Armour and Wagner nines played a good game of ball, the former winning by a score of 7 to 4."



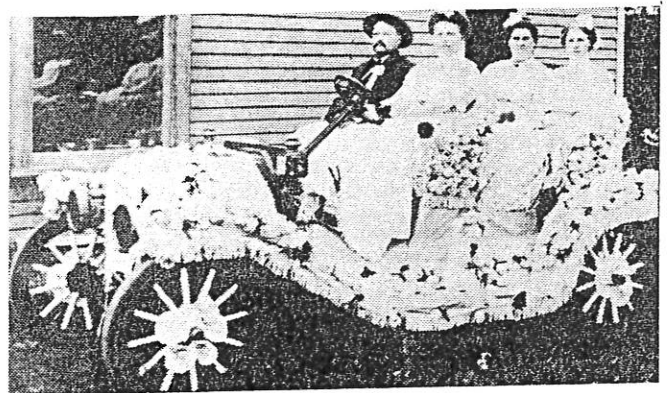
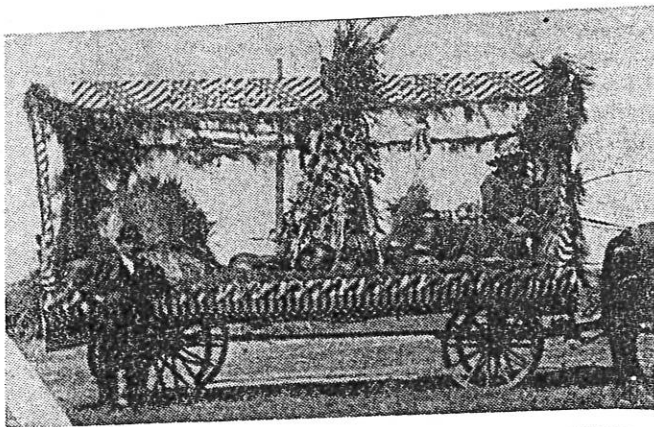
1906 - Wagner Baseball Club: Jerald Knight, four year old mascot, John Kaberna, Ed Petrik, Joe Peshek, R. Wildermoth, Harry B. Thompson, Malon Cristie, Walter Frei, Ed Schriber, and Cliff Knight.

1907 --The Charles Mix New Era -- September 2 & 3 -- Wagner was known as The Gate City in its beginnings meaning that it was the gateway to the west and the rest of Charles Mix County. There were horse races, foot races, sack races; a street parade with Sioux Indians in War paint and feathers--(The Native Americans were always involved in the parade and later in the day performed native dances for the public). There was one or two trainloads of people brought in from the towns to the east starting at Yankton. The band would meet the trains with music as they pulled into town. Politicians came in and gave speeches with Senator A.B. Kittridge and Congressman Philo Hall coming to town in 1907. They also had a Fat Man's Race for those who were 200 lbs. and over. There were 5,000 people present. July 26, 1907, a new High School Building opened in Wagner.

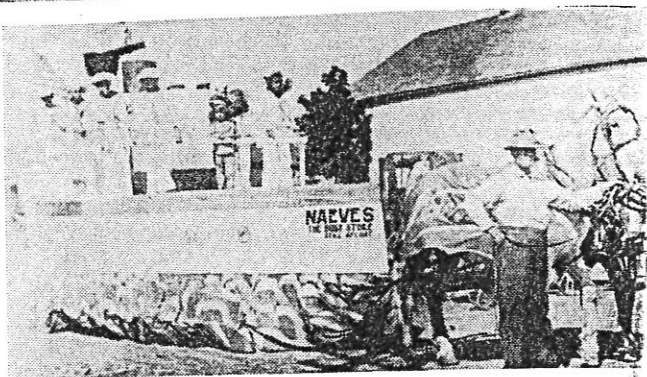
1908 -- No information available.

1909 -- See ad from the Charles Mix New Era, August 27, 1909

The Charles Mix New Era: Wagner, Charles Mix Co., S.D.
 Friday - September 2, 1909
 Come to Wagner to the Labor Day Celebration Next Monday



Henry Evers and wife, and Mrs. A. A. Cochran and friend, come chugging down the parade line. The Ford car (and wheels) was covered with a large fringed bedspread and decorated with pink hollyhocks and the ladies carried bouquets of pink roses. Hollyhocks were on large stalks and grown in profusion at many town and farm homes.



"The Busy Store that is Still Afloat" was presented by Naeves -- Frank and Fred Rochelle driving. The young boys atop the float are dressed in sailor suits as the navy aboard ship.



Now follows the Industrial floats. Wagner State Bank, "Watch Us Grow", as these two tots wonder what's the big ado as they ride in this small wagon float pulled by a collie, Laddie.

ONE BIG DAY

For the past ten years Wagner has celebrated Labor Day, sparing no time money, or energy to have a grand celebration. This year special efforts have been put forth to make this celebration excell all others.

Monday, Sept. 6.

Sports During the Entire Day at Wagner

SYNOPSIS OF THE PROGRAM.

An elegant parade at 10 a. m.

Horse races, Ball games, Foot races and Street shows.

Fine Band music all day.

Exciting Automobile racing. A sharp competition is expected on this race.

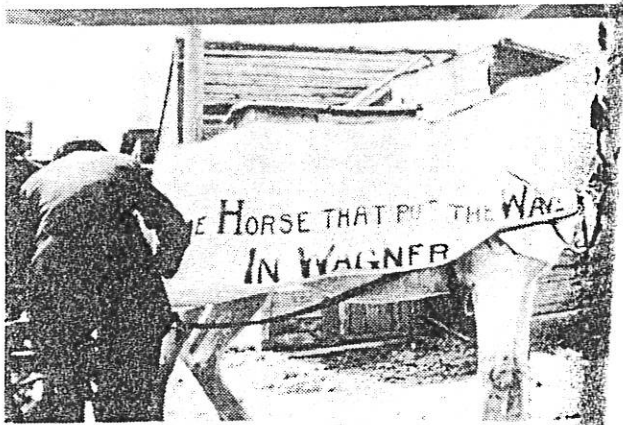
Grand floral parade. Business men and Farmer's floats and display of babies in cabs of bunting.

One of the main features of the day will be the Lady umpire at the ball grounds. Amanda Clemments will umpire all the games.

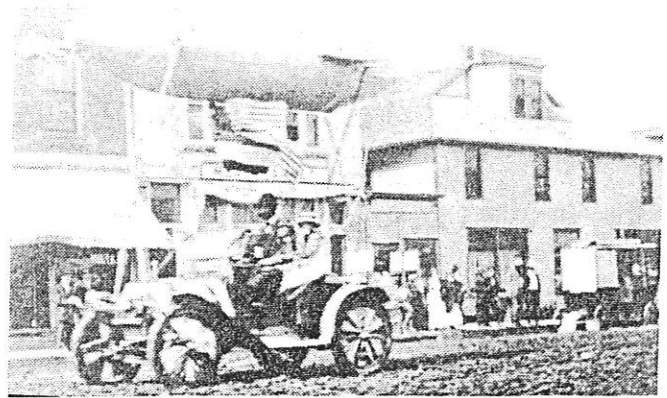
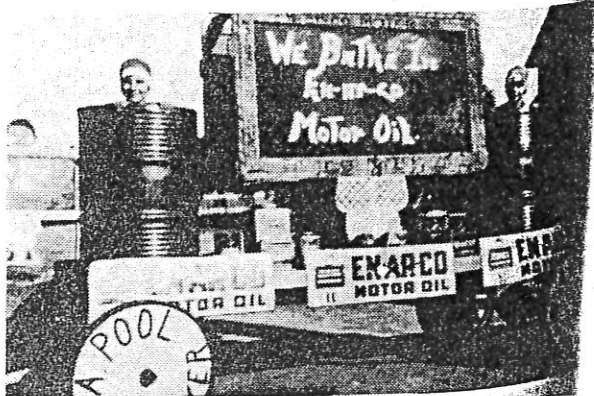
Come early so you won't miss any.

Over \$300 will be given away in prizes and purses. No efforts will be spared to make it an enjoyable day for all and you can bank on having a good time, Grand dance in the Hall at night.

DONT MISS THIS GREAT DAY



A. Poole, the Fixer (blacksmith) enters his two daughters in oil barrels, "We Bathe in Enarco Motor Oil. Come in the water's fine, A. Poole".

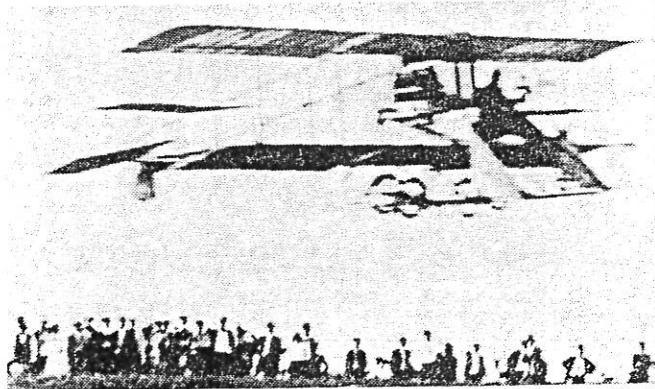


This Ford Roadster promotes the industry of automobiles by ground, and the zeppelin by air travel.

1909 - This "Farmer's Float" was decorated and presented by Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Ahrens. Mrs. Ahrens is driving. Shocks of corn, grain, and milo with orange pumpkins make this attractive float.

1910 -- 10:30 a.m. Grand Industrial and Floral Parade; 11:00 - an address by Honorary Chauncey L. Wood, Democratic candidate for the Governor of South Dakota; 7:00- a band concert and a street performance of Indian Dances.

The Labor Day celebration held here Monday September 9, 1910 was the best ever held in the city. On behalf of the Labor Day Association and the citizens of Wagner, we wish to thank each and every one who were within our gates on that day, and also thank the citizens of the surrounding towns for the large delegations sent, and extend to you a pressing invitation to come again next year. We will surely give you a hearty welcome and do our utmost to give even a better two days entertainment than we did this year."



1910 - After the rodeo this glider type air machine did its stuff for the spectators as it soloed to earth after flight.

See excerpts and pictures from The Epic of the Realm of Ree, which is available at the Wagner Public Library.

1911 -- No information available

1912 -- August 30 taken from The Wagner Eagle--The Grand Industrial and Floral Parade, led by the Geddes Band. The parade will consist of lady horseback riders, decorated carriages, business men's floats, Wagner Band, decorated automobiles, farmers' floats, novelty floats, Indian warriors on horseback, Boyden's band. The Executive Committee for Labor Day consisted of Frank Patton, President, L. M. Gable, Secretary, Wm. Coughlin, F. S. Strohhahn, and H. D. James. Please read the following article.

Prospects Are Big For Labor Day

This Year's Celebration Will Be a Record Breaker in Attendance—Unusual Sightings For Visitors

LAKE ANDES AND RAVINIA WILL PLAY BALL ON THAT DAY

The Air Ship Flights to Occur in the Afternoon—16 Different Free Vaudeville Attractions on the Street

Labor Day next Monday! Let it come! Wagner is ready for it; and a good many thousands in the surrounding country are getting ready for it. It only remains for the weather clerk to treat us nicely. With his help the celebration is bound to be a glowing success.

The business men of Wagner have endeavored to the utmost to provide not only plenty of entertainment for visitors on that day but also means for their comfort as well. Every store in town will be open for the use of anyone. If information is desired on any subject (except who will be the next president) and a member of the reception committee cannot be found, ask any merchant and he will be glad to assist in every way possible. Seats will be provided along Main Street, also plenty of drinking water. The Baptist and Congregational churches will be open all day for those who want to go there and rest quietly. The Masonic and Odd Fellows Halls will be opened as rest rooms for women and children, where toilet arrangements can be found and where any woman, especially if she has children with her, is welcome to come and rest, aided by looking glass, comb and water.

The ball game has been arranged between Lake Andes and Ravinia, which will afford an interesting and evenly balanced contest. The two teams have often met, good games have always resulted and it is an even

bet who will win. This event will star early—at 1:30 p. m. It will have to start early or else no one will see its finish. Two hours have been allowed for its completion before the biplane flight.

The flying of Hillery Beachey in his Curtiss type of biplane will, of course, be the big event of the day. This will occur at 3:30 on the Jake Eggers land in East Wagner. It requires a clear space of 800 feet square to get off the ground. Not that Beachey will use that much space but the ascent must necessarily be made against the wind and we can't always have the wind blowing the way we want it to.

A number of special police will be on duty that day to keep the crowd off the aviation field. It would be terrible if a mob got in the way of the airship and a number of people should be killed. But that is just what might happen if the requests of the police are not respected. Let each one keep himself safe. Everyone except extremely nearsighted people can see the sight just as well at a distance—and can hear it, too. The contract calls for two flights, with a total of thirty minutes in the air. If he exceeds that time there is no penalty but if he flies less than that he will only be paid pro rata.

The day has been well advertised from one end of the Platte line to the other and in all the surrounding country, and prospects are very flattering

A number of pleasing surprises in the parade are in store.

Nothing much has been said about the free street attractions but they would be headliners at any ordinary event. They will afford most excellent entertainment themselves.

All of these features and the many other events are given below with the time and place of their occurrence:

7:30 a. m.—Band Concert at depot by the Wagner Band. Meeting of visitors by the reception committee and band at depot.

8:00 a. m. to 9:55 a. m.—Band Concert on streets by Wagner and Geddes bands.

9:55 a. m.—Meeting of the visitors from east at the depot by reception committee and Wagner and Geddes bands.

10:00 a. m.—Grand Industrial and Floral Parade, led by the Geddes Band. Parade will consist of lady horseback riders, decorated carriages, business men's floats, Wagner Band, decorated automobiles, farmers' floats, novelty floats, Indian warriors on horseback, Boyden's Band.

Immediately after the parade Indian war dance and street attractions.

11 a. m.—Exercises in opera house as follows: Music by the Geddes Band Invocation by Rev. Underwood. Music by Geddes band.

Address of Welcome by Hon. John Stedronsky, Mayor of the city.

Oration of the day, Rev. L. E. Canfield.

Music by the Geddes Band.

12 to 1 p. m.—Dinner.

1 p. m.—Free street attractions by the celebrated Kami Kich Jap Troupe, by The Talbuts and Bluches, on the platform on Main Street.

1:30 p. m.—Ball game at base ball park, Lake Andes vs. Ravinia.

3:30 p. m.—Air ship flight at aviation grounds in East Wagner, by the celebrated aviator, Hillery Beachey, who will make two flights in one of

4:30 p. m.—Horse races at track: Free for all, quarter-mile, purses \$10 and \$5; free for all, half mile, purses \$10 and \$5. Winners in first race barred from entering the second.

From 4:30 to 6:00 p. m.—Continuous vaudeville and comedy performance on platform on Main Street by the celebrated Kami Kich Jap Troupe, The Talbuts and The Bluches, putting on sixteen acts during the day.

5:00 p. m.—Free for all men's race on street, 100 yard dash, purses \$3 and \$2; free for all boys' foot race on the street, 100 yard dash, boys under 15, purses \$2 and \$1; free for all girls' foot race, purses \$2 and 1; tug of war, Choteau Creek against the world, prize to be furnished by the Wagner Commercial Club.

6:00 to 8:00—Continuous band concerts and free street attractions on street.

All attractions are furnished free by the committee, except dances, merry go round, picture show and street privileges.

The committee have done their best to furnish a splendid free entertainment without charge, and any grafting or overcharging by any street concessions will be promptly suppressed if reported to committee.

Executive committee as follows: Frank Patton, president; L. M. Gable, secretary; Wm. Coughlin, F. S. Strohhahn and H. D. James.

Your wife at all times appreciates your professions of your love and esteem, but she would accept it as a proof of your sincerity should you come home with one of those Power Washing Machines. Better stop in at Stedronsky Bros. Co. and look it over. It will run with your pumping engine at a cost of ten cents a washing, and will preserve \$10.00 worth of your wife's health, beauty and sweetness of temper. It's a good investment. Try it and be convinced.

1913- Labor Day was advertised as "All Aboard for Labor Day". C. K. Shay, Chairman. Dr. Frank J. Bell will make flights in his 85-horse power Curtis Biplane, Ringling Bros. Circus and a Wild West Show. A reward was offered to anyone bringing in a horse or mule that his or her cowboys could not ride. A special excursion from Yankton was arriving.

The Labor Day Parades



Hats off! Along the street there comes a blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums, a flash of color beneath the sky! Hats off! The flag is passing by!

CELEBRATED LABOR DAY, AS COVERED BY THE MIX NEW ERA, September 9, 1910:

The city of Wagner entertained the largest crowd at her celebration that ever assembled within her gates. The weather brought us the finest kind of weather, after a warm Sunday afternoon. The people came pouring in from all directions. The regular train from the West and the special train from Yankton were loaded to the rails. The floats that came in later were covered with people who

LABOR DAY PARADE moves into formation on Main Street. There is a tent to the left -- for bingo or other conditions. I see a ferris wheel already filled with riders. It is a great two days of fun and games, races, shows, a rodeo, and the dances at the end of the day. The people and their families eagerly looked forward to the parade. The girls had new dresses, and the boys new trousers. A big picnic dinner was brought along and eaten and shared, in the park, with their friends and acquaintances made that day. Although it rained, it did not dampen the youngsters enthusiasm. They walked down the street in the mud, washed their shoes off in a spring trough, and went to dance in the hall above the blacksmith's store. (The building shook so, she finally fell two story off). This was a big disappointment until a prize was made for all the dancers at the Labor Day

town ladies baked up a quantity of bread, the supply getting low, and sold fresh bread and butter with which went like hot cakes. Water was scarce so some of the people hauled in barrels of water, put in ice and were full for five cents. At the rodeo a bowery was set up in the branches where the water was kept clean. A tin was tacked to each barrel. One couple, Old John Pretty and his wife were chasing each other most of the day and were an added attraction. The Chautauqua did not open until after 1919.

The parade was the first big attraction and was an immense success. The grand floral and industrial parade was the highlight of the day, which was followed by floats of near-by business houses of the city; decorated automobiles;

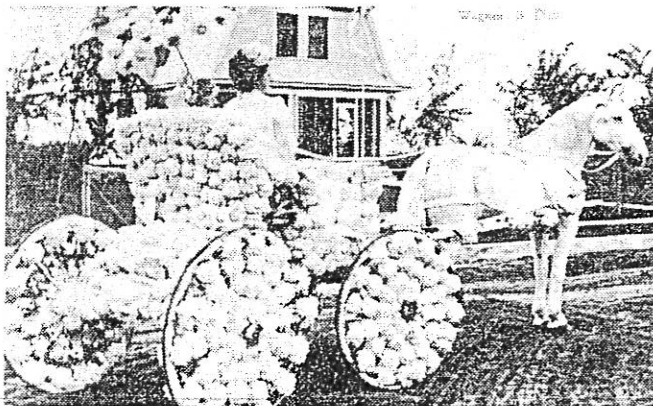
came to help us celebrate. By the time the parade started at 10:30, there were estimated to be between 8,000 and 10,000 people in Wagner.

It had been the custom for Wagner to celebrate Labor Day since the time the town was started.

The doors of the city were thrown wide open and a hearty welcome extended to all. The several committees appointed had collected \$1200. for the event which sum was subscribed by the business men for the occasion."

farmers floats; lady horseback riders and a large band of Sioux Indians who participated in the Sioux Indian dance. It was headed by Wagner and Geddes bands, and the Platte boy band was in the central part. After going through the principal streets of the city, the march went back through Main Street to the starting point where the parade disbanded."

COME TO WAGNER TO THE LABOR DAY CELEBRATION NEXT MONDAY



The first prize, Ladies Carriage, was won by Mrs. Harry James for her floral float. Her husband was the mayor of Wagner and also a city lawyer. Large yellow and white dahlias or mums decorated the buggy drawn by a pure white horse. The large house is that of Hannah Williams of the Wagner Post.

WAGNER LABOR DAY

Ball Game
Lake Andes
vs Wagner
For a Purse of \$100.

Air Ship Flight
By
Dr. F. J. Bell
No Flight No Pay
Two
fifteen Minute Flights

You

Want to be There on

Monday, Sept. 1

There are thousands of people who count each year on taking in this celebration

Wagner Labor Day

ALWAYS MEANS A GOOD TIME

Grand Parade
Indian Dance
Free Street Attractions
Original Bernards
Stilson and Wilbert

RACES
of All Kinds

Tyndall Concert Band All Day

There will be a large band of Yankton Sioux Indians, who will put on a Regular War Dance.

There will be a Rest Room, Shade and plenty of Seats so that everyone can come and enjoy themselves.

Aviator Frank J. Bell will make two fifteen minute flights. Don't miss seeing this wonderful bird-man.

Special Excursion from Yankton



Remember the Date, September 1st

Labor Day in Wagner Means a Good Time for All

The Wagner Post

VOLUME X

WAGNER, CHARLES MIX COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1914.

SPEND LABOR DAY IN WAGNER

This is the Fourteenth Annual Celebration, and every one a success. Wagner invites you once more.

STREET PARADE

This will be an attractive feature this year. The various business houses will display floats, there will be decorated automobiles, agricultural displays, Indians on horseback in costume and many other features of interest. Liberal cash prizes will be given in the several classes.

BALL GAMES

Four of the best teams in this section of the country will be on hand to furnish the best of entertainment for all lovers of the sport. Geddes and Springfield will play in the morning, and Tyndall will contest in the afternoon. Bobby Black, Sr., the popular and efficient Sioux City umpire, will hold the indicator. This means a square game.

Excursion from Yankton

A special excursion train will be run from Yankton that will bring visitors from all intermediate points in plenty of time for all the doings.

Program of the Day

- 10:30 a. m. Base Ball Game. Springfield vs Geddes.
Bobby Black Sr., umpire.
- 11:00 a. m. Parade and Tyndall Band.
- 1:00 p. m. Indian War Dance.
- 1:30 p. m. Street Attractions.
- 2:30 p. m. Base Ball Game. Wagner vs Tyndall.
Bobby Black Sr., umpire.
- Aviation Flights. After the Ball Game, at Ball Grounds.
Savage Bros. with Biplane; W. E. Price with Monoplane.
- 6:30 p. m. Street Attractions. Horse Races and Foot Races: Mens' Race, 100 yds., \$5, \$3; Boys' Race, under 15 yrs., 100 yds., \$3, \$2; Girls Race, under 15 yrs., 50 yds., \$3, \$2; Horse Race, \$15, \$10.
- 7:00 p. m. Street Attractions and Tyndall Band.

INDIAN DANCE

To those who have never seen an Indian dance this number on the program will be a rare treat. It is interesting to everyone. Yankton Sioux Indians will appear on the large platform and, in native costume, illustrate their dances.

BAND CONCERTS

The Tyndall Band, a very high-grade musical organization, will be in attendance and give things up generally in addition to their full concerts.

FREE STREET ATTRACTIONS

High-grade free street attractions have been scheduled to take place during the afternoon and evening. These will be furnished by two different companies and will consist of tumbling, high wire, comedy acrobatics and contortion. Plenty of laughs and plenty of clever work, too.

AIR SHIP FLIGHTS

If weather conditions permit

SAVIDGE BROS., with their bi-plane

W. E. PRICE, with his monoplane

Knowing the uncertainty of airship flights, the committee has done everything in its power to safeguard a satisfactory exhibition this year.

**Always a good time in Wagner on
LABOR DAY**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER the 7th, 1914—ALL DAY.

1914 -- There was a mass meeting at the Community Club Rooms with 11 committees formed with three members on each committee to prepare for the Labor Day under the direction of an Executive Committee. There was a storm the night before and the train from Yankton and the Tyndall Band were cancelled. It was determined to be a grand success anyway although the rain kept people away. John Stedronsky took first place and the Wagner State Bank took second place in the parade. Pete O'Connell took 1st in farm products and Dave Bucholz took 2nd place with a silo presentation. D. B. Coffman took the prize for the best decorated automobile.

Note: It became very apparent as we read each Labor Day's accounts that one thing was very constant -- every upcoming Labor Day was advertised as going to be the best one ever to be held and the following week it was always proclaimed to have been the biggest and best Labor Day ever held!

1915—Labor Day began at 9:45 a.m. with the arrival of the Excursion Train followed by a band concert, the Industrial and Indian Parade, Indian War Dances, Baseball games between Springfield and Tyndall for a purse of \$100.00. Everything stopped at noon to eat. The free street attractions began at 1:30, more baseball with Wagner vs. Geddes for \$100.00. An airship flight was held after the ballgame; 4:30 street sports and races, 7:00 a band concert and more free street attractions and at 9:00 p.m. the train departed. Col. R.W. Hipple was advertised as the Marshall of the Day.

1916—Auto Polo, Indians vs. Yankees. The only American Indians playing auto polo. There were two bands and a Merry-Go- Round.

1917—Zat Zams, The Knife Thrower from Old Mexico-The Barlo Sisters as the Diving Nymphs-Parade at 10:30 a.m. after which the "Keys of the City" will be turned over to the visitors by Mayor Patton in an address. Alfred E. Smalley was the Marshall of the Day.

1918 -- The First World War was on. Home Guard Units from Wagner, Lake Andes, Geddes, and Greenwood dressed in uniforms and formed for drills and exercises. The Wagner Company was the largest and best drilled. The following is an article from the Wagner Eagle published on September 26, 1918.

1919—No information available.

1920 -- September 6 -- There was a Labor Day pavement dance and music was by Ray O'Maniac's orchestra of Winner, S. D. The Committee in charge was Fred Nedved, Dr. Hirsch, Clark Thompson, Dan Morgen, Matt McCarthy, Harry Ely, James Grayson, Henry Keeler and Dick Fort.

Frank Strohbahn, Henry Schneider and W. H. Frei headed 1921-The Labor Day Committee. There were ballgames, auto polo, and a Wild West Show. In the Farmer's Float Division Adam Youngbluth took 1st, A.Z. Vondracek took 2nd and Joe Hall and son took 3rd.

...LABOR DAY...

The following little dialogue may be enacted in any home on the morning of September 6, 1915. No special scenery necessary. Give Dad the hero's part and watch things hum. A free ticket to the airship flight will be given each person working out this acrostic.

W hat is on your mind, Bill? You're looking rather gay.
H aving quite a time, Bill? Tell me, what's the lay?
E verybody's happy, answered Bill with glee,
N ever missed a Labor day in Wagner don't you see.

W ell it's here again boys; old labor day has come,
A nd we're going down to Wagner, going there to have some fun.
G ames of all descriptions in that enterprising town,
N o better celebration in this country can be found.
E very moment's one of pleasure, every minute one of joy;
R elaxation for the parents, laughter for the girl and boy.

C all the children in, Malinda, tog 'em out in gay array;
E very one deserves a treat now, for they've worked hard every day.
L et 'em have a recreation, hear 'em gladly shout with joy;
E ver working, never playing, will soon make Jack a dull boy.
B all games there will be a plenty, games of every kind and sort,
R aces too, there will be many, and, in fact, all kinds of sport.
A irships sailing o'er you gently, slowly mounting toward the sky;
T hrongs will line the streets of Wagner watching the parade go by.
E ntertainments by the dozen, free to everybody there;
S omething for your aunt and cousin that will drive away dull care.

L et us have a day of pleasure, let's forget about our toil,
A fter which we will feel better when we go back to the soil.
B rass bands will discourse sweet music, something doing all the time;
O Malinda! come, let's beat it for the program's simply fine.
R un along now boys, get ready, or you'll miss 'bout half the fun,

D on't you see those Indians dancing to the beating of the drum?
A ll aboard, now kids don't holler, jump right in, ah! "that a boy!"
Y ou can bet your bottom dollar it's the day we all enjoy.

—P. R. P.

Please Make Note of the Fact that all Wagner Banks will

COMMERCIAL STATE BANK WAGNER

LABOR DAY AT WAGNER

Little Traveler Writes Tersely
Celebration in This Wide-
Awake Little City

THE SARCASM—BUT WITTY

He Has Ear-Marks of Genuine
Farmer Boy Who Has Been
"Through The Mill"

The first of last September I was
around the hotel at Yankton
pondering whether I would go north or
south when a traveling man from Chi-
cago said: "Tramp, come and go with me
to Wagner and see what they do up
there on Labor Day. They have big

doings—about the biggest doings for a
little town you ever saw."

"All right," says I. "I might as well
be in Wagner as where I am. Wait un-
til I pack my bandana and I will be on
my way with you."

Wagner, South Dakota, is on the rail-
road line from Yankton to Platte in
Charles Mix County. It has 1,000 popu-
lation of white people and is located in
the Sioux Indian Reservation. The
St. Paul is the only railroad in this
county and it runs up to the little town
of Platte and turns around and runs
back to Yankton every day.

A native there told me that Wagner
had been celebrating Labor Day ever
since the opening of the reservation.
I don't know how long that has been,
but it has been long enough for Labor

Day doings in Wagner to have become
an established institution.

Although it is a little town of only
1,000 inhabitants, on Labor Day Wagne-
r entertains 10,000 people who flock
from the surrounding townships.

The traveling man and I had to sleep
on a cot in the hallway of Wagner's
leading hotel and two men on a cot is
not very comfortable. Consequently I
was out of bed and on the street at 4
a. m.

I thought I was up early but I wasn't.
Every proprietor and every employe of
the business houses of Wagner were
out decorating their store fronts with
bunting and flags.

By 5 a. m. the country people began
coming to town to attend the big doings.
There were Indians on horseback and
Indians on sleds and Indians in wagons
and Indians in automobiles and there
were white farmers and white villagers
coming into Wagner in the early morn-
ing by every means of locomotion avail-
able in that part of the country.

By 6 a. m. the brass band from Des
Moines was arousing all the late sleep-
ers by marching through the resident
district playing away as if the mem-
bers were trying to burst their lungs.

By 7 a. m. merry-go-rounds and tents
and booths began to be set up along the
curb stones of the business streets.

Some of these booths were occupied
by Indians selling souvenirs of their
handiwork. Others were occupied by
business men who made a living by run-
ning the yokel out of gas with their
wheels of fortune and other devices.

The four merry-go-rounds each owned
a steam caliope and soon these musical
instruments were screeching out noises
in strenuous efforts to burst the ear
drums of the inhabitants.

Gradually the sidewalks and the
streets filled with a collection of In-
dians and whites in an indescribable
collection of dress and styles represent-
ing their holiday costumes.

Apparently everybody was bent on
having a good time and had come with
money to spend. The lemonade and
popcorn sellers began to do a land of
office business very early, and the man
at the three shell booth had a crowd all
the time.

At one end of the street an auctioneer
surrounded by old furniture and various
other lines of merchandise was enter-
taining the crowd of probably five hun-
dred people and making a sale every
three minutes.

There are fourteen good, active busi-
ness houses in Wagner and a number
of others that are not so good.

I made the rounds at each one, from
the racket store of Feinberg and Satin
to Ed Schreiber's jewelry store. The
dry goods and general merchandise
shops and the restaurants and furni-
ture stores, the garages and meat shops,
the pool rooms and bakeries, the har-
ness stores and blacksmith shops, the
implement stores and other emporiums
were busy as bees. In fact every busi-
ness house in Wagner was busy that

**STOP! LOOK!
LISTEN!**

**SAFETY
FOR
BUILDERS**

Fortunately in this country we can
still build in the security of peace-
ful prosperity.

You need not hesitate to build at your own
pleasure. Select good building plans, a
satisfactory contractor & buy your mater-
ials of us

You will then have observ-
ed all the rules of safety
for builders.

LUMBER COAL FARM IMPLEMENTS

FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE ASSN.
A. B. CLEMENT, MGR.

PHONE 24

EVERYTHING TO BUILD AND WARM YOUR HOME

(Continued on page 2.)

(Concluded from page 1.)

morning except the undertaker. He stood in the doorway looking upon the street scene apparently not caring whether anybody got killed or not.

At noon time lunch was served everywhere. It looked as if nine tenths of the people had brought their lunch with them.

It had been put on the printed program that when the whistle blew at noon all activities would cease for one hour while the people ate their lunch.

Consequently when the whistle blew out came packages from pockets, baskets, and hand satchels and the people sat down wherever they were, on counters inside the store, in door ways, on the curb stone, in the middle of the street and ate their noon day meal.

At one o'clock the whistle blew again. That was for everybody to clear up the "dishes" and get ready for the big parade. The parade started at 2 p. m. It was the biggest parade I ever saw in a town the size of Wagner. There must have been 5,000 people and 1,000 horses and 500 wagons and 200 automobiles in that procession.

The town marshal led the way, and was followed in turn by Indians from the reservation, floats erected by business houses, societies of Wagner and adjacent towns, lodges, farmers' organizations, and a mixed lot on foot, on bicycles and motorcycles, express wagons and drags—any old way to get along and have fun.

Wagner had prepared special attractions for this occasion which was aside from the parade.

There were two balloon ascensions—one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and the operator dropped from his parachute and made a successful drop each time.

The Burlew Sisters, six of them, were advertised as the greatest diving nymphs of the world. They had a specially constructed tank on a vacant lot and did wonderful diving from the top of a derick. This was a good, expert exhibition. It was the only one that was not entirely approved of by the visitors from out of town. Some of the men and women who watched them said that the suits worn by these diving girls were "something scandalous." To me they were very attractive.

Senor Zat Zam, who is a genuine Aztec Indian from old Mexico, gave a sensational exhibition of knife throwing and he certainly was a peach at the business. Senor Zat Zam looks to be about 145 years old, but it may be he is a younger man than that. Anyway he could throw a knife 50 feet and split a match right thru the middle.

Then there was a company with an educated horse and a free picture show out in the open after supper showing Charlie Chaplin and a lot of other funny stuff. Two baseball teams were there on the outer edge of town and entertained quite a large portion of the crowd. Two other picture shows run from 8 o'clock in the morning until 12 at night, charging 10 cents admission for a one hour show.

An implement store had been cleared of its machinery and was used as a dance hall and some were dancing there all morning, all evening and all night.

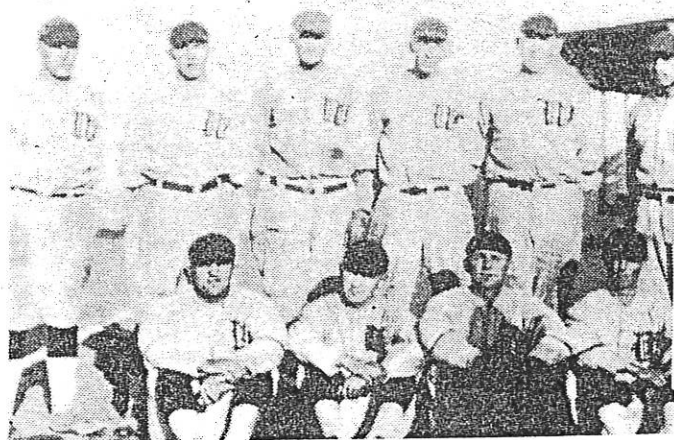
The people had a good time. Wagner showed that she knew how to show the people a good time. The stores stayed open all the afternoon and evening until 12 o'clock, but only half the force were on duty at any time after the noon hour. There wasn't nearly the amount of retail business done in the afternoon there was in the morning. It was understood by all the people that the stores kept open in the afternoon and evening not to sell goods but to give the tired people a place to rest.

About half of the visitors went to their homes before 6 o'clock in the evening, but the other half stayed until the "last dog died." I was up until 3 a. m. and at that time they were loading themselves in wagons and shaking hands and bidding each other good night. Instead of going to bed I went into Chapman's restaurant and drank coffee until the train pulled out for Yankton, and as I left Wagner I left with a good taste in my mouth and I am going back again this year to have a good time at their Labor Day celebration. If you want to learn how to make a big success of a celebration in your town, pack your bootjack and come with me and spend a day in Wagner.

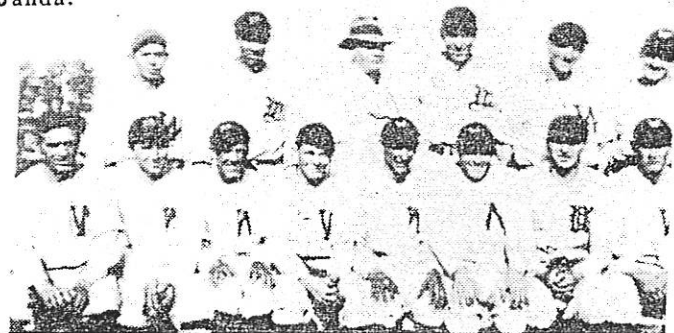
THE TRAMP.

*Will you stroll awhile with me
these many fringed aisles?
We'll pluck, perchance, some memories,
Some kindred thoughts, or smiles.*

A. Ferne Ramsdell



1919 - Wagner Baseball Team: K. Pinnard, "Pud" Harney, D. Stokesbury, Belitz, Roy Harney, Noel Pinard. Front: Joseph Abdouch, Ed Petrik, John Kaberna, and Ray Janda.



1929 - Wagner Baseball Cubs: Back row: Charles Kallail, Walter Pigsley, Fred Weber - Manager, Fred Latke, Mike Soukup and Charles Swett. Front: Tom Soukup, Dan Vitth, T. McBride, Don Kaulitz, Arnie Gau, Jack Hennies, Dewey Drappeau, and F. Weber.

1922-There were 1,000 people present for the free street attractions, a Merry-Go Round all day and all night, greased pole climbing at the ball park and R. W. Hipple rode a horse to lead the parade.

1923-No information was available.

1924-Labor Day was held on one day only, Monday, Sept. 1. R. W. Hipple, was Marshall of the Day. There were men's foot races, bicycle races, boy and girl races, and a fat man's race.

1925-Ball games and races all day, it also rained all day.

1926-No information available.

1927-There was a big representative parade at 10: 30 a.m. that started at the ballpark. A horseshoe contest was a big attraction. Profits were \$129.71.

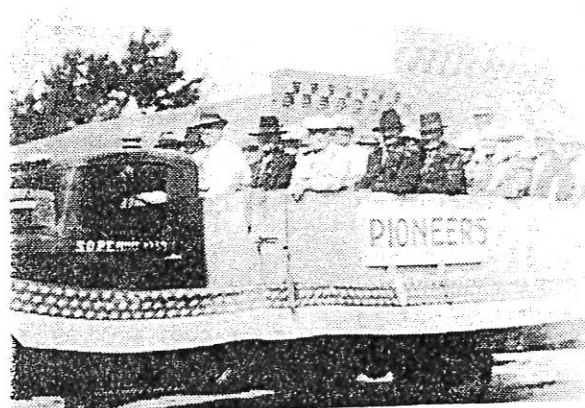
1928-There was a dedication of the new Wagner Speedway. Committees for Labor Day were the Reception Committee, Decorations, and a Sports Committee. There were horse shoe contests and auto races with a purse of \$1,000.00.

1929-There were three rides from Tyndall.

The Wagner American Legion and the City of Wagner did the Labor Day planning 1930-September 11. The total receipts were \$1,504.50 and expenses were \$1,033.75 leaving a balance of \$470.75, which was applied, to the debt on the Legion Building. The crowd was estimated to be around 9,000. Badges were given to anyone who had lived in Wagner for 30 years. There were 100 in the Old Settlers parade on Main Street. For entertainment prizefights were big and there was free entertainment for all day.



Farmers Co-Operative Association. Bill Coughlin led the wheel as Clara Smith and Cathryne Mitchell led the streamers.



"Pioneers Float" an International truck loaded with homesteaders of the last frontier of Charles Mix Frank Hron, Frank Verba, Sr., Frank Rubertus, DeNoma, Hans Jespersen, James Kostal, Al Smith, Bailey, Anton Votova, and standing up in the back is J. H. Crisman.

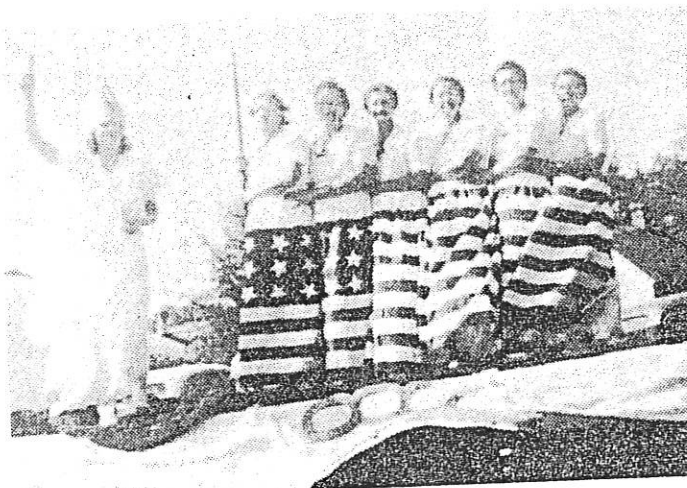
1931-There was another Old Settlers Parade and Walt Wagner; the founder of the city was wearing a Badge of Honor. Local pioneers represented historic characters of early days.

1932-There were races and concerts but no parade.

1933-There were foot races, band concerts, Indian War Dances, dinners, ball games, horse and pony races, farmers, boys and girls foot races. It was estimated to be the largest crowd in three years, around 2,000 people.

1934-There were the usual attractions. For a parade the farmers, clubs and businesses had a parade on their own. Labor Day netted \$360.92 and it was applied to the improvements at Wagner Lake. The Wagner Chamber of Commerce appointed six members at its meeting to oversee Labor Day. There was an Executive Committee, Reception, Concessions, Sports, Decorative, Advertising, Indians, Music, Lake, and Marshall R.W. Hipple. For the past four years Wagner Labor Day had no parade. Mr. Holzbauer was in charge in the past of having the farmers and Old Timers present. There were three truckloads of army men from the Veterans Camp at Lake Andes.

1935 -- The Parade Committee consisted of A. Pool, Fred Nedved and Leonard Corey. There was kiddie and pet parades with a reported 4,000 to 5,000 people on hand. It was reported that for the past few years there had been no parade and/or one with poor results. The well came in at 125 gallons per minute. The profit was \$275.00, which was applied to the Wagner Lake improvements.



1935 - The Rebecca Float at Labor Day. Caroline Peterson is the Statue of Liberty lady; the ladies wrapped in the United States Flag are Olive Cork, Ina Mawhinney, Maggie Jay, Almira Troxell, Tena Patterson, and Fern Powers. The sign of the Odd Fellows at their feet.

1936-An estimated 5,000 people present. There was boxing, events at Wagner RaceTrack, two dances; Roy Crisman was Marshall of the Day.

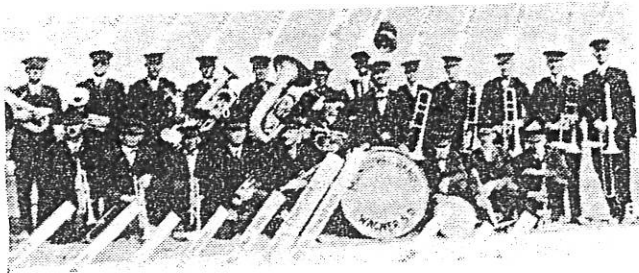
1937-4,000 people estimated. The Sons of the American Legion, which is composed of all Indian boys, is the only organization of its kind was present. There was a Kid's Parade, water fights, and a parachute jump.

1938-There was a two-day celebration on September 5th and 6th on a Monday and Tuesday. O. W. Courtney was a comedy juggler, horse races at the airport, boxing matches, a fireman's dance at the airport and another dance at the ZCJ Hall, Indian War Dances. The farmers took part by saving grain bundles and picked choice corn stalks to decorate their floats. There was a "Municipal Band".

1939 -- It was the 50th year of statehood for South Dakota. The parade "idea" was "The Progress of Transportation over the Past 50 years". The parade will be portraying the modes of travel. There were approximately 75 to 100 members in the Whiskers Club and also a Sun Bonnet Club. Radio Station WOW from Omaha was on the street.

"Immediately following the parade, the Honorable Chauncey L. Wood delivered a fine speech at the big tent where several hundred people had assembled to hear him. At the termination of Mr. Wood's speech a recess was taken for dinner.

At one o'clock the bands appeared upon the streets and rendered some fine music, at the same time several free attractions were going on."



Wagner Municipal Band plays a stirring March as they march down the street on Labor Day. Back row: John Honomichel, Frank Honomichel, William Uherka, Steve Thaler, William Thaler, Joseph V. Janda, John Bollinger, Wilbur Carter, Frank Thaler, Vincent Uherka, James Honomichel, Emanuel Kostal, and Anton H. Scott, director. Front: Joseph E. Bures, Joseph Thaler, Joseph Carda, Guy

"Tried and True" Club won first place in the Child Day Parade May 1, 1938. This was a large white am-



balance in which they demonstrated the "right" and "wrong" way of eating and living. Tried and True Extension Club.

W. Williamson, Alfred E. Smalley, Johnny Trantina, Otto Trantina, Alma Talberg, John L. Dostal, and Frank Brodsky.

1940-There were war dances and mock Indian attacks performed on the golf course north of Wagner's Main Steet. There was a turkey drop with a prize coupon on each leg. Estimated 8 to 10,000 people present. Ernie Bures won 1st prize on his farm float.

1941-There was a free outdoor circus. Competition between baseball teams was strong. There was a very small parade. A greased pig race was a new feature.

1942-The shortage of tires due to the Second World War had an effect on the number of concessions present. Two of the three street acts also failed to arrive.

1943-Labor Day featured a big bond drive. The Chamber of Commerce and Commercial State Bank sold War Bonds. At 11:00 a.m. there was a big Victory Parade featuring the soldiers from the Sioux Falls Army Base. There were jeeps, navy officers and waves and the Sioux Falls Army Air Base Band. \$40,000.00 in war bonds was sold. The Bohemian National Dancers from Tabor were present.

1944-Ed Honner had pink mules in the parade. Baseball was big entertainment. Tabor and Kimball had a 14-inning ball game.

1945-There was captured war equipment on display, an air show with a parachute jump, and a Treasure Hunt with 2,000 pennies.

1946-The Wagner Labor Day Celebration was cancelled. It was the first celebration Wagner missed in 46 years because of the Polio Epidemic throughout the country.

1947-Klein Amusement had four rides including a \$10,000.00 Merry-Go-Round. Free street attractions. This year the businessmen of Wagner pay tribute to the farmers of the area.

1948-There was a full two-page ad. Band Concerts at 12:00, and two outdoor stage shows, one at 1:00 and one at 7:00. King of Diamonds owner Ed Pillar of Scotland was there; Art B. Thomas Show's, and the White Horse Patrol, which has presented shows throughout the country.

1949-Parade at 11:00-dances at the ZCBJ Hall

1950-This was Wagner's Golden Jubilee Labor Day Celebration. It was very disappointing to find no mention of this fact, nor any other information on this being a special event. The crowd was estimated to be 5,000 to 6,000 people. This writer can remember my father and many of the other men wearing a black derby hat, which must have had some special significance.

The coverage for the whole decade of the 50's was much the same. The ads for Labor Day were practically identical each year. There were no written articles about the details of the planning of the celebration or any articles as a follow-up after Labor Day. No pictures either. We are lucky to have the excellent reporting in pictures and words that we have today.

1959-Finally some coverage. The theme for the Parade was Song Titles. Captain 11 was here in Wagner. Antique autos were introduced as a big attraction. George B. German of WNAX was the Master of Ceremonies for the Parade. A Welcome Tent drew over 1200 visitors with exhibits and pictures.

1960-The theme for the parade was Nursery Rhymes.

1961 -- This was the beginning of the Labor Day Queen Contest. The first Labor Day Queen was Joan Buus. This was also the Dakota Territorial Centennial and the parade theme was along the centennial lines.

1962-Labor Day theme was Modern World Theme. Labor Day Queen was Kathy Uecker. There were lots of free street acts and dances, and the Native Americans' war dances were part of the street acts. The war dances appeared for one more year and then after that there is no mention of them.

1963-Minnie Pearl was at the Wagner Armory. Businesses ran ads soliciting votes for their Queen candidate. Carolyn Vitek was the Labor Day Queen and Buches sponsored her. The theme was Comedy and Beauty.

1964 -- The theme was Nursery Rhymes. Patty Cuka was the Queen. the Ink Spots and Blue Boys were here, softball and horseshoes.

1965-The Queen was Kathy Zolnowsky. Rodeo, cow and calf roping, greased pig contest.

1966-Labor Day was a three-day event. The theme was It's Fun Time, and there were 21 candidates for Queen. Vicki Duncanson was crowned Queen.

1967 -- South Dakota, The Proud State was the theme and Paullette Stogsdill was the Queen. Early pioneers were asked to be in the parade in cars marked "Pioneer". They were all over the age of 80.

1968-America The Beautiful was the theme. Ann Szymonski of Tyndall was crowned Queen. There were 24 contestants and two of the three judges in the queen contest were from Tyndall! There were a lot of pictures for coverage in the Wagner Post.

1969-Kitty Wells was at the Armory this year. Comedy and Cartoons was the Parade Theme and Debra Ross from Andes Central, sponsored by Epsilon Sigma Alpha was the Labor Day Queen. There were 18 contestants this year and a great deal of dissatisfaction over the fact that the past two years had produced a Labor Day Queen not of Wagner residency. The Queen Contest was dropped in future years and did not appear again until 1980.

1970-There was a Go-Go-Western Theme and George Soukup was the Parade Marshall. A tornado hit Wagner during the rodeo performance at about 7:30 p.m. The townspeople pitched in and had everything cleaned up and ready for the parade the next day.

1971-Mayme Sadler and Clara Justice were the Parade Marshals. This appears to be the first time that any woman was a parade marshal. The parade theme was sponsor's choice, meaning that everyone did whatever they wanted to with their float.

1972-Mr. And Mrs. Virgil Hawley were the Parade Marshalls. Theme was once again up to the sponsor.

1973-Salute to the Farmer's of America was the parade theme with Mr. and Mrs. Percy Archambeau leading the parade.

1974-The Energy Crisis was on everyone's mind this year and it was chosen as the Parade Theme. Dr. R. W. Honke and B. T. Brookman were the Parade Marshalls. Wagner Community Hospital and the Charles Mix Historical Society had tents erected with exhibits inside.

1975-This was Wagner's 75th Labor Day and was also the U.S. Bicentennial year. The theme was Past Times. There was a beard contest conducted throughout the year and a judging was held on North Main Street. There was a community picnic, and an Old Timers Hospitality Center. This was the first mention of a Rodeo Queen. Dr. M. E. Sellers was the Honorary Parade Marshall.

1976-Bicentennial Theme was carried out again with the parade theme being Memories of Yesteryears. The Parade Marshall was Jack Hennies.

1977-Parade Marshall was Morris Schuurmans; Theme was Ecology, S.D. and its Natural Resources.

1978-Parade Marshall was Verne Moehling and wife Muriel. Theme was "South Dakota Recreation"

1979-Parade Marshall was Ed Honner and wife Mary, theme was Energy Crunch. There was a bed race this year.

1980-Hard Times Theme-Beverly Soukup, Labor Day Queen, John Ramsdell, Parade Marshall

1981-South Dakotan's Favorite Pastimes Theme-Penny Wiechmann, Queen; Robert Frei Parade Marshall

1982-Nursery Rhymes and Fairy Tales Theme-Cindy Crisman Queen; Hugo Haar, Parade Marshall.

1983-Comic Strips and Cartoon Characters Theme-Tami Pudwill Queen; Don Juffer Parade Marshall

1984-Those Good Old Days Theme-Patty Hubbard Queen; Loretta Conway and Vene Eitemiller Parade Marshalls

1985-South Dakota Sports Theme-Jacqueline Stone Queen; George Smith Parade Marshall

1986-Tribute to the American Farmer Theme-Meika Bich Queen-Martin Nesgaard Parade Marshall

1987-South Dakota Seasons Theme-Kim Slaba Queen-Don Piroutek Parade Marshall

1988-Famous Landmarks Theme-Susan Kaberna Queen-Ken and Wilma Sadler Parade Marshalls

1989-Celebrate the Century Theme-Tonia Isebrands Queen-Ione Bertsch Parade Marshall. This was the year of the South Dakota Centennial. Governor George Mickelson was present for the parade and the dedication held in the City Park of our Lasting Legacy Centennial Pavilion and Flag Viewing. This ceremony was attended by about 300 to 350 people. A granite memorial was placed at the east picnic shelter and a large flagpole was part of the project. Time capsules were entombed in the memorial to be opened in 25 and 50 years. In addition to the regular Labor Day Committee there was a Centennial Committee of Chairman Ken Cotton and Jim Jaeger and Connie Fechner.

1990-Hits of the 50's and 60's Theme-Jenny Koupal Queen-Glen and Marguerite Jespersen were Parade Marshalls

1991-Walt Disney Movies and Characters Theme-Janelle Twitero Queen and Noel Troxell Parade Marshall

1992-Nationalities of the World-America's Melting Pot Theme-LaRae Youngbluth Queen and Oscar Abdouch was the Parade Marshall.

1993-Comic Strips Characters Theme-Kim Link was Queen and Dora Faughender was Parade Marshall

1994-Holidays of the Year Theme-Stacy Holzbauer Queen, and Ernie Bures Parade Marshall

1995-Fairy Tales Theme-Donnelle Wieichmann Queen and Dale Meyer Parade Marshall

1996-TV Commercials Theme-Jennifer Uherka Queen and Marian Schuldt Parade Marshall

1997-Looney Tunes Theme-Nicole Soukup Queen and Bill and Hazel Evers were Parade Marshalls.

1998-Song Titles Theme-Sara Uherka Queen and Dick Hoffman and Al Pirner were Parade Marshalls.

1999 -- Sitcoms Theme --- The 1999 Labor Day Celebration will be a kickoff for our 100th Labor Day Celebration to be held September 1, 2, 3 & 4, in the year 2000! There is a Wagner Centennial Committee consisting of R.F. Buche, Chairman, Linda Soukup, Secretary, Mary Jo Kuhlman, Treasurer, Don Hubbard, Wayne Scherr, Roger Schroeder, Alan and Jean Pirner, Scott Podhradsky and Sandy Fechner. the Centennial Committee will be working in cooperation with the usual Labor Day Committee to plan for this important event.

At present there are plans to begin the Labor Day Weekend on Friday night with and All-School Reunion at the Football Game. There will be food, entertainment, and a dedication at half time of the game. There are plans to have exhibits set up inside the Wagner Community School during the weekend for viewing by the public. Individual class reunions will be taking place at locations and times designated by the classes themselves.

A commemorative print was commissioned by the Wagner Centennial Committee and painted by local artist Johnny Swatek titled Memories of Home. A limited edition of 500 prints was unveiled July 2, 1999 and sales are underway. The original print was donated and dedicated to the Wagner Community School and will be hung in an appropriate place for the public to see.

The Committee also ran contests for the selection of a logo theme for souvenirs and T-shirts. George Stumpf was the winner of the theme-Wagner Over Time, and former Wagner resident Jaclee Slaba was the winner of the logo theme, which appears on our T-shirts. George Stumpf has also handcrafted a beautiful clock, which he presented to the Wagner Chamber of Commerce that consists of Labor Day Belt Buckles from past Labor Day Celebrations.

There are many events, which are being planned at this time—a Reunion of all former Labor Day Queens, Wagner High School Homecoming Queens, Military Ball Queens, an old-time Pow-Wow, walking tours of historical homes in Wagner, etc. One thing is certain, the 100th Celebration of Wagner's Labor Day will definitely be the best, the Biggest, and THE GRANDEST EVER HELD!