

## **Businesses in Oskar.**

Early Polk Directories have these business people in Oskar (See Polk Directories in notebook and last names section for more information on the people):

Farmers, Laborers, Boarding house owners, Teamsters, Domestics, Postmasters, Sawyers  
Carpet weaver- Annie Koller,

Carpenter - John Koller and Jeremiah Lahti

Shoemaker - Frederick Saatio

Shoe Store in at least 1906 - Herman Hermanson.

North Canal Brick Company working in 1906 at least.

1906 Oskar School Teacher was Genevieve Bogan. Her assistant was Mary Peck.

A Store and Cut fence poles in 1906 was Nels Burkman

Tanner - Matti Stranger

Henry Garnell shares on his 1977 WMPL Heritage line interview: Oskar had a tannery. It was built in 1888 and burned down in 1902.

Cheese Manufacturer - John Zurcher (According to Libby Bjorklund Koski he lived where Mel Anderson lives today.)

Blacksmith for Nels Burkman was John Karvonen.

History of Finns states: Oscar Eliassen had the first General Store and carried everything from salt fish to pocket watches. The community had small tannery, a couple of shoemakers, a brickyard, and public sauna (sow-na not saw-na).

General Store in 1916 - Frank Eilola. This is the building that today Otto Saterstad rents from Dave Jukari- in front and to the East of a large white home. This home was Frank Eilola family home. (and home of Oscar Eliassen).

The 1920 census has him listed (age 51) with wife Clara (49). Their children: Martha (25), Frank H (22), Wm (18), Mary (15), John (11), Anna (9), Paul (8), and Alvar (5).

Frank Eilola was a businessman according to the book History of Finns. In 1868 he worked for Oskar Eliassen delivering groceries to lumber camps. In 1907 he bought Oskar's farm and lived there until his death in 1950.

Hermanson also had a general store. Barb is told it was the North end of the home that Don Hermanson lives in now... the second house back from the Oskar curve on the West side across from Ray Shoos. A Hermanson also had a store out by Stanton Township Park today along with a fish house.

Barb was also told that there was a Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company in Herman Hermanson's home now owned by his relative Don Hermanson. Eleanor Hermanson Nelson and hubby Happy/George had the business. Don has taken many documents found in the attic to the Finnish American Culture Center in Hancock. Barb indexed them by date and family name.

Norm Ruohonen told Barb in 1998 that his father William had a blacksmith's shop by the creek. Where the Oskar Dome is now he had a chicken coop. Norm grew up to the North and West of his and Betty's present day home. The home is Ted and Irene's today.. it was a duplex home then.

Norm also shares: 3 charcoal kilns on the shore where Vezzetti cabins are. There was a creamery to the right of where Ray Shoos home is today.

Betty Ruohonen shares that Oskar community had a Blacksmith shop on her property near the creek. There was a sauna there also, and a post office. She recalls a candy store across from Ray Shoos. (Hermansons). Betty recalls a Raitushaali Hotel. It burnt down on first day of business. A sidewalk remains on her property.

Don Heikkila tells Barb that he remembers a Usitalo making 2 large cruisers in the building that is fallen in to the right (south) of Ray Shoos.

Hermanson and Fratick had a net/ fishing boathouse. Hermanson 1/2 still stands. Other half is Ray Shoos's home now. (Fratick is Ozzie Koski's mother's dad). Fratick had the boathouse next to the net house. Fratick had 25 feet of the boathouse and Hermanson 35 feet.

First Schoolhouse was on now Todd Markham's property.

Chris Bohjanen, son of Henry Bohjanen, says his grandfather? Henry had an insurance business on property that Betty Ruohonen lives on today.

According to a book History of Finns: Jacob/Jack Ruohonen born in 1882 wrote a memoir of Oskar community. Ted Ruohonen has the black book and it is being copied and translated. It is quoted in subject sections appropriate.

See pictures of Oskar.

### **Farming.**

A Daily Mining Gazette article states: in 1906 there were 250 people in the community of Oskar and 80 farmers.

See section on farming.

Research and interviewing done by Barb Koski, Osma Plat Road, Houghton MI. I welcome more stories. Contact the webmaster. Submitted in 2009.