

# Introduction

This project started as a dream, hoping to put into words and pictures the memories of this little community that once was the home of the Winnebago Indians. It was the site of future dreams of our forefathers who came from different foreign countries looking for a better and more prosperous life for their families. My intent was to encourage people to reminisce about the past in order to preserve for the future. As the sesquicentennial is celebrated in 2005, I feel it is an opportune time to collect and organize this project.

Unwilling to attempt to do a project of this magnitude alone, I solicited the help of several St. Clair area natives. A special thanks to Shirley (DeMars) Fitzloff-Halberg, Norla Hesse and Mary McComb for their help in research, interviewing and in every other way of assisting in this project.

A “special thanks” for the financial assistance from Dale Stolt at the St. Clair State Bank, which was needed to complete this book and for everyone who in any way assisted by contributing stories, pictures and information. Without all of you this would have stayed as a “dream.”

It is my intent to make the reading of this book an enjoyable as well as an informative experience. Although I am not a professional author, I have attempted to be as accurate as time allowed. Many people have contributed even though they felt they were not able to submit an appropriate article. It is the desire of the entire committee that you find the contents as exciting as we did while doing the project.

The discrepancies that may be found are inevitable as every one may remember different events in different ways. Exclusion of any family or other portion of life in this production may be due in some part to lack of sufficient time, failure of people to submit information and misinterpretation. Although this book of memories is not a complete history of the area, please be assured that every event that has taken place over the years has played an important role in who and what we are today.

Thank you to the many, many individuals whose contributions are found throughout this publication.

I trust all who read this book will overlook any errors with tolerance and in proper perspective.

“God Bless America” and bless everyone who takes the opportunity to read *Years of Memories*.

Myrtle Westphal, Project Coordinator

*Behold the Work of the Old...  
Let your Heritage not be Lost,  
But bequeath it as a Memory,  
Treasure and Blessing...  
Gather the lost and the hidden  
And preserve it for thy Children  
Christian Metz, 1846*

(Submitted by Nick Cords)