



OkieLegacy



60th Anniversary of IOOF Carmen Home

[The following information was taken from *The Enid Morning News*, Thursday, April 27, 1967, page 8, written - by Velma Jayne.]

The Headlines Read: April 27, 1907 - Today Marks Sixtieth Anniversary of Founding of IOOF Carmen Home

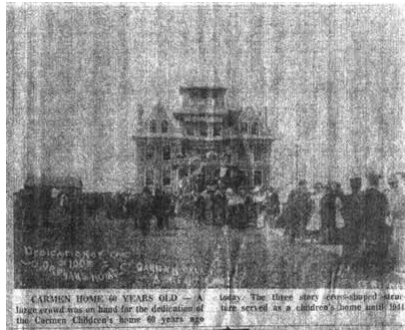


Photo Caption -- Carmen Home 60 Years Old -- A large crowd was on hand for the dedication of the Carmen Children's home 60 years ago today. The three story cross-shaped structure served as a children's home until 1944.

Printed on photo -- "Dedication IOOF Orphans Home, Carmen, Oklahoma, April 27, 1907.

One of the most important early day institutions of Northwest Oklahoma was the Children's Home at Carmen, dedicated 60 years ago today by the late J. S. Romine, then Grand Master of the Oklahoma Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

The principal address was given by the late John B. Goodwin, a national officer from Baltimore, Md. The corner stone had been laid the preceding October by the late J. B. A. Robertson, then Grand Master of Oklahoma. Robertson later became Oklahoma's fourth Governor.

Various cities throughout Oklahoma vied with Carmen for the Home. A committee of six was chosen to decide. In their week's travel over the state, they chanced upon Carrie Nation who engaged them in conversation. The late Martha E. Reger, aunt of Mrs. Gerald Brown, tells of the incident in the October 15, 1920 issue of *The Oklahoma Odd Fellow*. Among other caustic remarks, Carrie Nation insisted that one member of the committee was wearing a blouse that was much too thin, saying she could "see right through her."

Since Carmen offered all, and more, than was asked by the committee, this site was chosen and the three story building was located on a 160 acre farm, on mile north of town. The shape of the building was unique. It was built in the form of a cross with an open court in the center about 40 feet square.

Since the Home was dedicated in April 1907, hundreds of children have called it "home" through most of their formative years. Among these many still reside in Enid and the surrounding area.

On APR 18, 1907, Opal Neal and her three younger brothers arrived and now Mrs. R. Glen Anderson, 510 N. Taylor speaks with affection of Mother St. Clair, the matron. She tells of the loving care the children received and of many happy experiences.

Father St. Clair had time to tell them of early day experiences in the Cherokee Strip. He told how they went to the creek after dark and stored up water for use in making biscuits. When they opened their biscuits, they found buffalo hairs.

Mrs. Anderson came to Enid to attend high school but said that a visit back was always "like going back home." She makes it plain that all in the Home were taught how to do various types of work each one learning some useful trade.

One of the happiest events each year was the Annual Home Coming Day. This affair was originated by the late N. A. Oakley, father of E. A. Oakley, 1401 Munger Drive, who was the long-time president of the Carmen Home Coming Association.

According to the official state magazine, the first home coming was the biggest. It states that 1,155 people came in on the train and that 1,200 cars were counted. The crowd was estimated at 6,500 in all. In the afternoon the children of the Home presented a program.

In spite of good food and "tender loving care," the flu epidemic of WWI struck hard. Mrs. Margaret Clark, 1155 E. Pine, who was a long-time resident of Carmen, remembers that there were 45 of the 150 children down at one time. The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, as well as other residents of Carmen, served in shifts of three, sitting up at night and otherwise caring for those who were ill.

A. P. Morgan, 1702 E. Chestnut, who has served his organization in various capacities, was for years a member of the Home Board. He said that as aid began to come to widows and dependent children, from various sources, there was no longer the need that had existed previously.

Two men who deserve much credit for their contribution to the home are the late G. W. Bruce and George Duel of Carmen.

Around 1944, the Home was sold to the Oklahoma Conference of the Pentecostal Church and they converted it into a home for the elderly.

But on the day that the Carmen Home was dedicated, the Wilson children- Claude, Norval, Nora and Rennie -- made up the first family. Claude and Norval are now living in Missouri. Rennie recently retired from Conoco and is now living in Tucson.

- [Carmen Odd Fellas Home](#) - Yesterdays & Today (1907-1944)
- [60th Anniversary of Carmen Home](#) - Article from Enid Morning News, dated April 27, 1967, pg. 8
- [Carmen Parade](#) - Parade through downtown Carmen.
- [IOOF Cemetery](#) - North of Carmen, Oklahoma
- [IOOF Childrens Home](#) - North of Carmen, Oklahoma (Photo)
- [Dairy Barn at the IOOF Childrens Home](#) - North of Carmen, Oklahoma, destroyed by tornado June 2, 1949.
- [Carmen Home Roster of Families](#) - 2002 List of those residents or spouses still living [Page-1](#) -- [Page-2](#)