

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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DRESSING UP

This curious photo of some local women was taken around sixty-five years ago by James S. Lent, an Albion photographer. It depicts the front parlor of the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Sanford T. Church which is now the Merrill-Grinnell Funeral Home at 12 Ingersoll Street in Albion. Note the Greek Revival woodwork and a very decorative gasolier.

The general ambiance of such a picture as this represents a much slower pace of life and a more gentle attitude toward living. It also represents an era when men were the "bread winners" and women were "homebodies." Consequently, to entertain themselves, this group of ladies occasionally had such dressup parties. It was not necessarily unique to these Albion folks either. There may have been a theme to this one but it's hard to tell just what the common denominator is, as some look old-fashioned and some look more contemporary. Perhaps they simply dressed up as literary characters. It's anybody's guess. And, I might add, this had nothing to do with Halloween.

Now for their identification: Seated left to right - Mrs. Bronson, wife of Edwin Bronson who worked for the E.W. Wilcox Hardware Store; Julia Fitch, wife of Gurden Fitch, attorney (Vol. XVIII No. 7); Mrs. Daniels, wife of John Daniels, jeweler; Helen Bur-

rows, who later married Ray Hudson, one-time Orleans County Sheriff; Dorothy Blake, wife of Francis H. Blake Sr., who ran the Growers Cold Storage for many years; Unknown, and Mrs. McGregor, wife of J. Roy McGregor who worked for the Citizen's Bank.

Standing in the back are: Bea Burrows, wife of Lynn Burrows, a civil engineer, and a sister to Dorothy Blake; Katherine Church, wife of Sanford L. Church, attorney, and the daughter-in-law of Sanford T. Church; Mrs. Reed, wife of F.A. Reed who ran a fruit growers supply business; Mrs. Sutton, wife of Dr. John Sutton, M.D.; Elizabeth Brodie, wife of Dr. Ralph Brodie, M.D.; Mrs. Mack (no information available); Mrs. Burrows, wife of Albert Burrows, attorney; Florence Church, wife of Sanford T. Church, attorney; Mae Bartlett, wife of Harry D. Bartlett, broker, and our last person is unidentified. Both Elizabeth Brodie and Dorothy Blake were very active in the Albion PTA and the state organization as leaders back when this picture was taken.

It is plain that women of this social standing had time to engage in cultural entertainment in this bygone era when it was "a man's world."