

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## PROGRAM & EXHIBIT One Man's Work 1925-1940



Throughout his adult life, Fred Holt (1900-1988) was what we would call a semi-professional photographer. He literally took thousands of pictures mostly for his own amusement. Around four years ago the Orleans County Department of History was given sixty years of his work. This not only included old black and white prints, but also thousands of negatives. I am very grateful to Ann Holt for donating her husband's work, thereby putting it in the public domain. Likewise, I thank Dr. Jim Orr for reproducing old pictures, printing old negatives and making around 300 slides to get this material into some kind of useable form.

Therefore, on Sunday, June 2 at 7:30 p.m. I will be privileged to present a premier program of: One Man's Work 1925-1940, Part I at the Pullman Memorial Church in Albion. This program will consist of eighty slides showing Albion scenes, Events, organizations, candid shots and people. Part II of this premier series will take place on Friday evening, June 7 at 7:30 p.m. also at the Pullman Church during the Albion Strawberry Festival. Again, eighty slides will be shown with the emphasis on Fred's aesthetic work including portraits, scenery and generally beautiful pictures of a timeless quality.

If you grew up in the Albion area during the 1920's and 1930's, you are sure to recognize and reminisce about the things you'll see. However, if you are a teenager, you will be fascinated at what we used to look like and the changes which have come about over a half century.

Because there was so much work, it has been a difficult task in editing. To give you a sample, I've included six photos with this article. Beginning in the upper left and moving clockwise around, they are: Girls in a Home Economics Class in Albion High School circa 1935. Next, is a picture of Fred's mother,

Frances Holt, circa 1930. We might classify this as a character study. Below her is a picture of William Dye Curtis and Thomas Heard who were both associated for many years with what became Marine Midland Bank in Albion. The three unidentified girls in the corner are seen skating in the mid 1930's on the Davis & Stevenson ice pond which was located on West Avenue in Albion. Next to them is a photo taken in the late 1920's showing members of the GAR (Civil War Veterans) at a Memorial Day service in a cemetery. And finally, above them we see a threshing machine in operation on a local farm some time in the late 1930's.

For this program, I have selected Fred's earlier work because of its historical value and in many cases its artistic merit.

Fred Holt was one of six children and grew up on South Clinton Street in Albion. He attended Albion High School but in his senior year, during World War I, went to Hamilton College for Officer Cadet Training but graduated with his high school class of 1919. Late in 1919 he went to work for the Orleans County National Bank which became Marine. In 1942 he entered WW II and attended Army Air Force photo school at Lowery Field in Denver, Colorado. In 1943 he started working in the office of Snider Canning Company in Albion. He retired from there when it was Hunt-Wesson in 1963. He took great interest in parades, plays and pageants where he always had camera in hand.

Along with the slide presentations there will also be an exhibit of Fred's photos on display in the social room of the Pullman Church where a reception will follow both programs. In some cases the people in his pictures are identified but in many they are not. Any help in this phase of historical work will be appreciated.