

GAINES CELEBRATION

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In 1909, the people of Gaines decided to hold a centennial recognizing the first permanent settlement in the town. However, Gaines as a municipality was not formed until Feb. 14, 1816. Consequently, in 1959, a sesquicentennial was held and in 1984 a celebration occurred for the 175th anniversary. Each time, a mammoth parade with bands and floats has processed along the historic Ridge Road.

In 1909 the parade went from Gaines to Childs and back again so people could see it twice. In 1959 the parade went from Childs to Gaines and in 1984 from Gaines to Childs.

This year for the Bicentennial, the parade will begin at 10:30 a.m. Sept. 12 from Childs (Route 98) to Gaines (Route 279).

Many activities are planned for this bicentennial event at the Gaines Town Hall grounds as well as Old Tyme Day at the Cobblestone Museum in Childs.

As in the past it is the parade which is the main focus and premier event with many side activities making for a fun filled day in Gaines, ending with fireworks.

In 1959 one of the side line activities for the men was a beard growing contest. Back 50 years ago beards were not commonly worn, as style dictates meant a clean shaven face. However, men got the go-ahead for growing beards when it came time to celebrate local history. In 1959, the sesquicentennial committee authorized such a

contest as a sideline. When it came time for judging they all lined up for a group picture as seen here.

In the front row are William Woolston, Theodore Schoonover, Thomas Manning, Glen Woolston, Ralph Appleton, Maynard Bannon, Gerald Thaine, David Sanford and Everett Hobbs.

In the middle row are Richard Appleton, Herbert Morrison, Paul Chappius, Richard Peruzzini, Harold Peruzzini, Peter Ricci, Wesley Bennett, James Kerridge, Colonal Ball, Dominic Martillotta, Sorfman Jordan, Clure Appleton and Howard Pratt.

In the back row are Jesse Downey, Carl Huthsteiner, Donald Bennett, Andrew Butz, Albert Neal Jr., William Schuler, Terry Neal, Kenneth Drew, David Youngs, Wilbur Scroger, Royce Freeman, Wayne Rath, Gordon Miller, Arthur Gould, Richard Hill, David Vagg, Rev. John Minott, Whitney Howes and Clifford Allen.

Fifty years makes quite a difference. More than half the men in this picture are now deceased. Also, what was a rarity in 1959 has practically become a fashion statement for many men in society today. Hence, a beard growing contest would certainly be a lot less intriguing than it was 50 years ago.



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