

HISTORIC HOUSE MAKES WAY FOR MEDICAL CLINIC

It was built in 1894 by the first mayor of Sublimity

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SUBLIMITY – The pain in Maxine Borst’s face was evident as she watched her grandfather’s 1894 home on East Church Street glow with violent orange flames on Thursday.

She was surrounded by family members, including Vera Boedigheimer, who was born in the home in 1926, and many members of the Kintz, Hassler and Zimmerman families among others. To fight off tears she knew would well up, Borst, nursed a Budweiser and watched as volunteer firefighters attacked the intentionally set fire. She watched the roof cave in and eventually the walls. By 9 p.m., little was left except two brick chimneys and smoldering ashes: the remnants of a home she lived in for more than 25 years.

The pain is temporary, according to Boedigheimer, who has lived in Sublimity her entire life. She said the family patriarch and first mayor of Sublimity built the home with his own two hands but would have been proud to see the community thrive and would have welcomed the addition of a new medical clinic that will soon replace the old home.

The past

The day before Sublimity Fire District volunteers conducted a burn-to-learn exercise, Boedigheimer, the Kintz family historian, smiled and recounted the history of a young Sublimity and the family home.

“That house was in the family for more than 106 years,” she said. She said that John and his new wife, Agatha Zimmerman moved to Sublimity in 1897 from Minnesota and at first rented a home. After the birth of their second child, they purchased five acres of land where they farmed and raised pigs and cows. This was also where he built his home.

According to family records, John Kintz was a thin man, 5 foot, 9 inches tall, who believed in hard work and was tremendously committed to his eight children and wife, his church and his community. His dedication to community led him to become the first mayor of Sublimity in 1903.

During his time as mayor, he ordered the first jail to be built and authorized spending \$100 to grade and gravel the main street. He also enacted an ordinance that said no cows, sheep or goats would be allowed to roam free in the city.

His legacy also lives on in the St. Boniface Catholic Church. In 1889, John Kintz helped build the church and parish.

John Kintz died on Dec. 26, 1923 and Agatha in 1931, however, the family did not. Sons and daughters continued to work the land and generations used the home as a central place for family reunions, holiday meals, celebrations of birth and mourning in death.

“The Kintz household was always a welcome spot for relatives, friends and even

strangers,” Boedigheimer said in a family history. “Many times a passer-by would find hospice at their home for a meal and a night’s lodging. There always seemed to be enough food and room for a few more.”

She added that living in Sublimity in the early 20th century was also a lot of work for adults and children,

“It was a completely different time,” Boedigheimer said with a chuckle. “You didn’t have kids riding around on their skateboards. The boys would have to take the cows out to the fields in the morning and bring them back at night. Another family member, Rita Young, said she remembered when her mother would go into the fields and carry back pails filled with fresh milk from the cows.

Though many years have passed, Boedigheimer said the family legacy continues. She said more than 70 direct descendants of John Kintz still call Sublimity or Stayton home.