



Harrison County Historically Speaking

Pisgah, Iowa



WHY PRESERVE THIS BIT OF HISTORY?

This panel "Tells the Tale" of an era gone by... part of Harrison County's treasured past. By appreciating the importance of the past, we can continue working in the present to ensure future generations will respect and preserve the enduring history that is represented here. By working to connect our past with the present, the structures on this panel have been identified as being historically significant by Harrison County Tourism as part of ongoing efforts to preserve local history. It is 1 of 10 in a series of panels throughout Harrison County.

For a complete list of panels and locations, go to: <http://destinationharrisonia.com/historically-speaking.html>



Destination Harrison Interpretive Signage Project made possible by funding from the Dean J. King Family Foundation

Designed by Harrison County GIS & Mapping in conjunction with Harrison County Tourism

HOME BASE

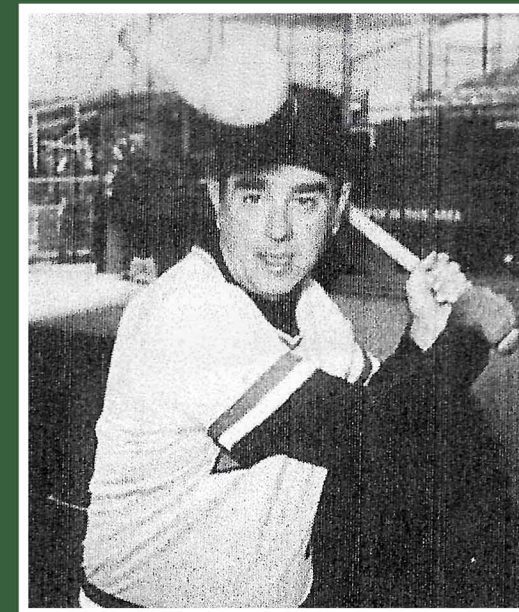


Baseball has always been one of the most important events in Pisgah. In 2004, Pisgah's ball field was named one of the Top 10 Vintage Baseball Diamonds in the state of Iowa by the Society of American Baseball Research.

The first grandstand was built by Walter Powell with used lumber from a grain storage building. The grandstand as it stands today was completely rebuilt in 2017. Many guys who played baseball here as children came to help rebuild the grandstand just as it was in the past. The fund raising was spearheaded by Joyce Hall, Kevin Holben and Jeff Deitering. The project raised over \$38,000 before the rebuilding even started. Many people from all over the country donated to this cause. Social media played a role in getting the word out. Mike Wohlers and Pat Barry tore down the old structure that was condemned by the insurance company. Mark Flint hauled rock to rebuild the diamond. Pat Barry worked the ground to get the ball field in the best shape ever. Carl Beers, Nathan Hussing, Kody Petersen and Bob Hall completed the construction of the grandstand and Mike Kirlin did the electrical by May 5th, 2017 in time for the dedication at Pisgah Play Days. All of the volunteers had played baseball on this field as a kid.

Pisgah, Iowa has been Home Base for many talented baseball players. Two of the talented, Loren Babe and Bob Wiltse left Pisgah to play with the New York Yankees and Detroit Tigers.

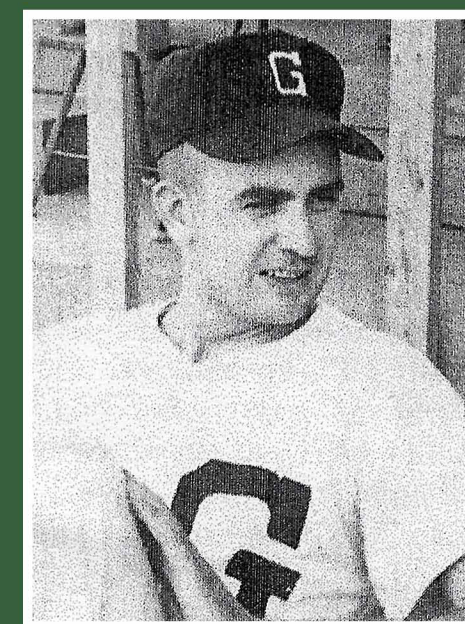
LOREN BABE



Loren Babe was a left-handed batter that played on Pisgah's baseball team. This team went to the Iowa State Baseball Tournament 3 consecutive times during his time with the team.

Loren Babe signed with the New York Yankees when he was only 17 years old. He played for the Yankees in 1952 when they went to the World Series. Loren also played for the Philadelphia Athletics. He joined the Chicago White Sox as a manager in 1975.

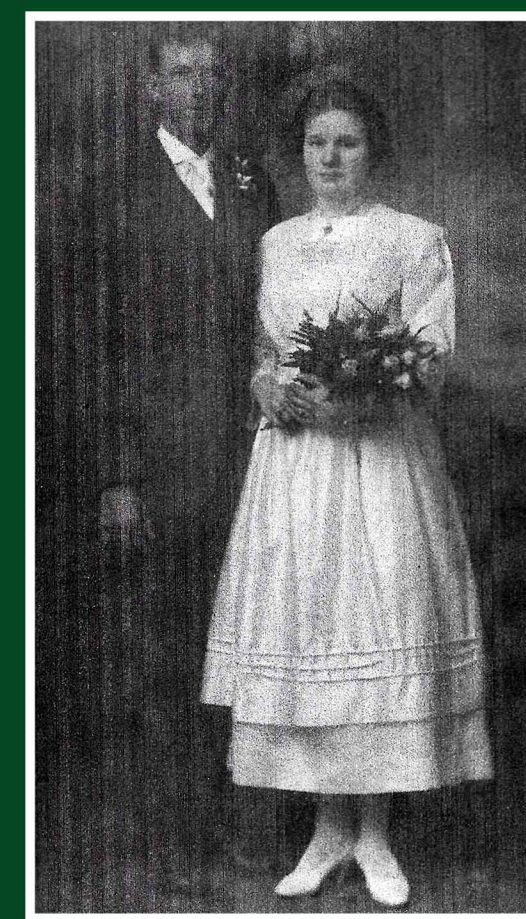
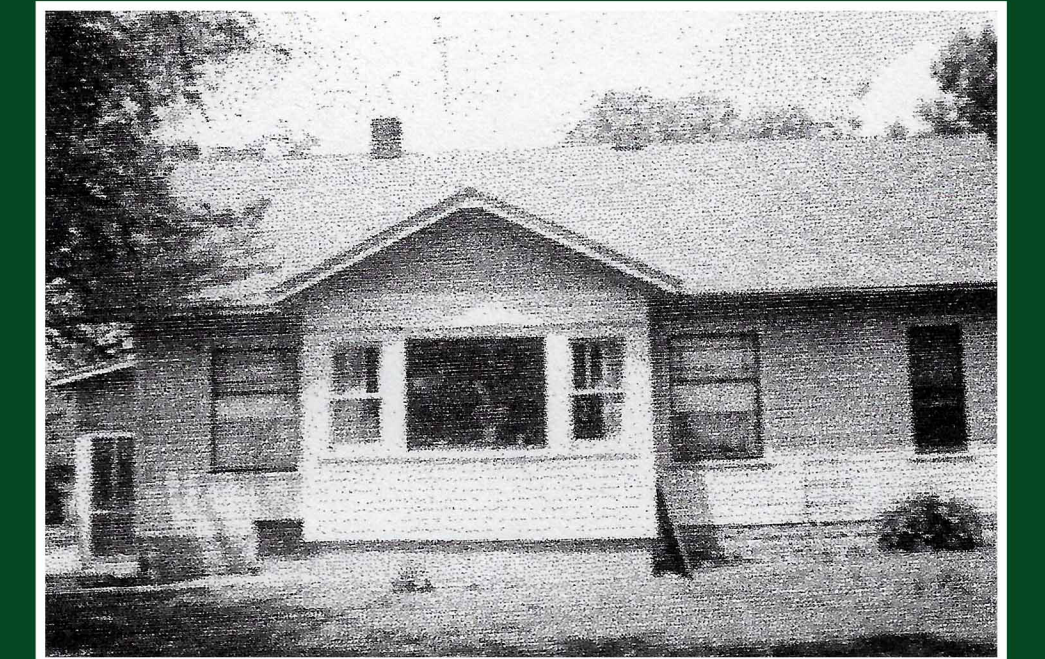
BOB WILTSE



Bob Wiltse was also a left-handed pitcher and batter. Bob Wiltse signed with the New York Yankees in 1947 when he graduated. Bob went to Morningside College in 1956 and graduated in 1959. He became a teacher at Correctionville, Iowa and served as the Athletic Director.

THE HESTER MATERNITY HOME

The Hester Farm was established in 1882 by James and Amanda Hester. Bob Hester was their son and he and his wife Bertha purchased the farm in 1943 from the Hester Estate. This was also the year that Bob and Bertha Hester started the Hester's Pisgah Maternity Home.



Robert & Bertha Hester

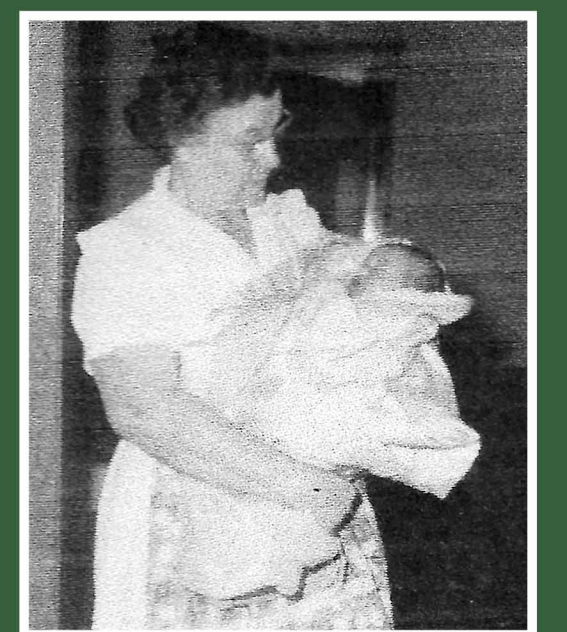
This lovely home was the birthplace of nearly 2000 babies delivered by Dr. W.T. Ferguson and Bertha Hester. Bertha Hester started helping Dr. W. T. Ferguson in 1942. In 1943 Bob and Bertha opened the Pisgah Maternity Home. Bob and Bertha Hester ran this licensed maternity home until 1968. The mothers and babies would often stay with the Hesters for 10 days post-delivery. During World War II the closest hospital was in Council Bluffs, Iowa or Omaha, Nebraska. Gas rationing was a real issue that greatly limited the distance a person could travel.

Dr. W.T. Ferguson and Bertha were kept very busy delivering the children of many families in the Pisgah area. The garage down by the road was used by Dr. Ferguson to pull into and to take the tunnel from the garage to the basement of the home. It really was of benefit during rainy and snowy weather.

The maternity home had no plumbing, running water or electricity when it began. They used a wood stove to heat the home and to cook all the meals. Dr. Ferguson and Bertha made a great team. They worked together until 1968, when the Hesters closed the maternity ward.



Dr. & Mrs. W.T. Ferguson with Grandchildren.



Bertha Hester

