

Don Enright

7-4-21

I am very grateful for Frances Franca Hyland's tribute to her father, James Babcock, in the July newsletter. Jim was killed by a drunken driver in 1955. Many of the readers of the Historical Society Newsletter never knew Jim. It is encouraging to let people know of the type of person that lived in the village at that time.

For me Jim was an answer to prayer to at that time I didn't know existed. From the ~~time~~ moment I first had my hand on a baseball I was passionate about the game. By age 10 I wanted to be on a team and compete against other teams. Fat chance! There were no leagues for youth.

The Land O Lakes had been around for several years for adults. Then the Land O Puddles and Land O Brooks leagues were formed for youth. Jim Babcock organized a team in Eagle and gave Russ Chapman, Gerry Crawley, Dex Badinger etc an opportunity to play the great sport of baseball.

In some detail, Frannie expressed what a great public servant her dad was. He was a friend to all who knew him and obviously a fantastic husband and father.

On a personal note Jim's tragic death provided me with a lesson I have never forgotten. My father, Luke Enright, showed me the spot where Jim died which is where Generac is located on highway 59. This was before the current highway was constructed. Jim was going east over a knoll/hill when a drunk driver hit his vehicle head on. after crossing the center line

My dad told me to always stay as far as you can to the right when going over the crest of a hill. When I am in my right mind, I always follow my father's advice

Over

on whatever road I am on. I ride 59 often and when I approach that spot it is very rare that I don't think of Jim Babcock, an extraordinary man and an answer to a young man's prayer.

Don Enright

7/4/21