

# INCORPORATED TOWN OF ROLAND

## ROLAND, IOWA

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROLAND, IOWA

By Willard B. Rod, Editor, The Roland Record

According to "A History of Story County, Iowa", dated March 1, 1887 and written by William G. Allen, Nevada, Iowa, Roland was surveyed and platted in October, 1881, but was a point of considerable business eight years before that, in 1883. In that year, a store, known as the Grange was built on the site of the present H. M. Bakka residence. Paul Thompson, Jonas Duea, John Evenson and Abel Olson were the managers. As they were all farmers, they took turns spending two days each at the store. The firm, Duea & Co., had a rather short life. In addition to this one store, there was a blacksmith shop operated by one Albert Thompson and a shoe shop owned by Tom Johnson. These constituted the industries of Roland in 1877.

In May 1870, before any businesses had been started, and before the town had a name, Jonas Duea had been appointed as the first postmaster at a salary of \$5.00 per year. The post office was located for a time on Mr. Duea's farm at which is now the west town limits. About 1876, the post office was moved to the Evenson store, located at what is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Michaelson. The name "Roland" was suggested by John Evenson as an easy one to pronounce, both in Norwegian and English, and easy to spell.

With the coming of the railroad in 1881, another building was built at the present site of Borwick Plumbing & Heating, and the Evenson store was moved to the present site of the Roland State Bank. The new building housed a hardware store, owned by O. O. Stole and Jonas Duea, and the post office was also moved into that building, with O. O. Stole taking the job of postmaster.

The coming of the Iowa Central Railroad in 1881 was a big boost for the young town. The railroad was completed in 1882, from Marshalltown to Story City, and the depot was opened March 23, 1882, with H. E. Carpenter as the first station agent.

On December 22, 1891, a commission was appointed to carry out the necessary steps for incorporation of the town. A general election was called for March 7, 1892, at which W. O. Bates was elected as Roland's first Mayor. Councilmen were Andrew J. Olson, Jonas Duea, Charles Christian, O. O. Stole, Iver Johnson and Carl Oleson. The Clerk was Sam J. Michaelson.

A school district was organized in 1862 and a building erected on the corner of the present Main and South streets, then a part of Jacob Erickson's farm. An independent district was organized in 1885 as the community grew. In 1891 a high school was established, and the first class graduated in 1893. The school was moved and enlarged in 1894 at the corner of South and Vine streets, and enlarged again in 1900. The Consolidated School District of Roland was established on January 26, 1915, and in April of that year a bond issue of \$50,000 was voted to build and equip a school house, which was completed August 10, 1916. Governor George W. Clarke made the dedicatory address. A new gymnasium was dedicated December 12, 1941, and a further addition was made in 1964.

Roland has two Lutheran Churches. Salem church was organized November 7, 1868, and a church was built one mile west of Roland. It was later moved to Roland and enlarged in 1890. The present church was built in 1915, and an addition was made in 1951. Bergen church was a part of St. Petri congregation, organized in 1857. Some members resigned and built a new church at Roland in 1874. The present church was built in 1929. The Trinity Lutheran congregation was organized August 5, 1900, and bought the building just south of the Record office, remodeling it for a church. The congregation dissolved March 4, 1917.

The municipal water system was constructed in 1911 with a 120 foot water tower erected. The sanitary sewer system was built in 1919, and a sewage disposal plant constructed in 1920. A sewage lagoon was completed in the spring of 1963.

Some other notable events in the history of Roland are:

1885--Farmers Mutual Insurance Association established. T. K. Henryson, president; R. K. Gaard, secretary and treasurer.

1900--Ladies' Cemetery Association organized.

1908--Roland Community Club organized. Mr. J. H. Larson, president.

1912--Roland Volunteer Fire Department organized. S. J. Michaelson, chief.

1918--Roland Co-Op Shipping Ass'n. organized.

1918--Farmers' Co-Op Elevator Co. organized.

1899--60-ft. Wooden flagpole erected. Replaced by 80 ft. steel pole in 1923.

1902--Four gas street lights erected. Rural mail delivery started.

1894--Roland Opera House built.

1895--First newspaper, Roland Record, started by Armstrong & Son.

1899--Farmers Bank organized and incorporated.

1897--Iowa Telephone Co. in operation.

1919--Marshall Canning Company factory built. First year of operation.

1959--Organize corporation to build Professional Building for doctor.

1968--Roland Swimming Pool expected to be ready for operation June 1.

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OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK

It is resolved by the Town Council of Roland, Iowa, on its own motion, that the following brief history of Roland is a true and accurate account. This record to be placed on the cornerstone of the Story County Courthouse, Nevada, Iowa, which is to be installed May 18, 1968.

Councilman Rod introduced the above Resolution and moved its adoption, which was seconded by Holtorf.

On roll call on the said motion, the Town Council of the Town of Roland, Iowa, voted as follows:

Ayes:

Willard B. Rod

Lester R. Holtorf

Keith E. Gilmeland

Max H. Larson

Lester Severson

Nays: None

Absent: None

Lester Britton Clerk

Harold J. Sage Mayor