

ARVID FRANSEN

(Written text and photographs provided by Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson). **Arvid Fransen** was born on July 12, 1914, on the homestead farmed by his parents near Coleharbor, North Dakota, and was the son of John August and Anna Katarina (Johannesson/Nelson) Fransen. He grew up in the Coleharbor community and was confirmed in the Lutheran faith. Arvid Fransen married **Bernice Katherine Larson** on November 26, 1949. Bernice Katherine Larson was born on March 25, 1917, in Bremen, North Dakota. Arvid and Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen had three children: **John Arvid Fransen** born on January 4, 1951, in Bismarck, North Dakota; **Mary Kathleen Fransen** born on January 31, 1952 in Bismarck, North Dakota; and **Robert Lee Fransen** born on October 19, 1955 in Bismarck, North Dakota.

In the songs he sang Arvid told of his love of the land and his dedication to the work that was required to turn North Dakota prairie into billowing and bountiful fields of wheat, barley, oats and flax.

“Oh, give me land, lots of land, under starry skies above,
Don't fence me in.

Let me ride through the wide open country that I love . . .”

He lived his philosophy, “never be afraid of work!” as he always had his eye out for another quarter or two of land. When land came up for sale, he readily jumped on the opportunity to increase the size of the farm. He had lived through the 1930's as a young man and knew how to save a penny. As his pennies piled up he eagerly purchased available land that was within a tractor's ride from the farm.

The land Arvid farmed originated with the 160 acre land claim that was homesteaded by his father, John August Fransen in 1898. Arvid often told the story of his dad arriving in McLean County, North Dakota from Sweden with just fifty cents left in his pocket. The first Fransen broke the prairie sod with a one bottom plow and a team of horses. John married Anna Katherine Nelson who had also homesteaded a land claim further north. Together they lived on and worked the land that John claimed. Their three children were born on the farm with Arvid being the third child and the only boy. Arvid attended school in Coleharbor but as he grew into a teen he dedicated his time and effort to farming. When the cold winter winds gave farmers a season's break, Arvid would move to Bismarck for a few months where he worked driving the city bus.

In the fall of 1948 after the crops were harvested, Arvid was on a bus trip to Minneapolis to visit his cousins, Adolph, Albin, Hilda and Hilma. They were the children of his mother's sister, Amanda. When the bus made a stop in Fargo he went for a short walk. Across the street he noticed a young woman who was a friend of his sister Anne. “Miss Larson!” he called out. As they conversed he learned that she was walking to her piano lesson. We, his children, do not know if she made it to that piano lesson or if he made it to Minneapolis to see his relatives. We do know that the following November Arvid married Miss Larson (Bernice). They made their home on the Fransen family farm.

Arvid and Bernice were blessed with three children: John, Mary and Robert. Life was lived with a close connection to the rhythm of the seasons and the entire family was involved in the work of the farm. When spring came Bernice assigned each child a row of trees to hoe. Together we would be out in the fields planting potatoes. In the summer we ate breakfast together, stopped for a morning coffee and cookies break, ate dinner in the fields, stopped to eat packed lunches in mid-afternoon and we gathered around the table for supper at 9 pm.

In 1956 Arvid purchased a new International Harvester WDR-9 tractor, his first diesel tractor and one with a hand clutch. John was as eager to learn to drive as Arvid was to teach him. By the time Robert grew old enough to run an outfit, Arvid purchased another tractor, an International Harvester 806. With two sons in the field Arvid had time to dream of buying more land. Mary was given the job of delivering fuel to the fields in the blue Ford pick-up. Anyone who was near a radio at 2 pm had to listen to the “market” to hear if the price of wheat went up or down.

Bernice ordered a box of baby chicks that arrived by train every Spring. By the 4th of July the wheat was “headed out” and relatives gathered for picnics featuring Bernice's fried chicken. She also produced enough beets, beans, corn and peas to be canned in jars and colorfully lined up on the shelves in the cellar.

Her kitchen was graced with flowers from her gardens. Her orange tiger lilies could be seen from the front porch window.

The skies, at times, were cloudy, turning Arvid's gaze to the western horizon, reading the sky with hope of needed rain and fear of hail. As soon as the rain was over, Arvid headed out in the pick-up to check the crops.

By August the fields were amber, the weather was hot and season's work culminated in the harvest. It was an exciting time as truck loads of grain were hauled to the elevator or steel bins. Robert recalls the late fall work of picking rocks. When a rock seemed too heavy to lift, Dad emphasized "where there is a will there is a way!" Robert was so inspired that not only did he lift the heavy rock but he now uses this phrase with his team in his business.

While work came first for Arvid he loved to visit with neighbors and to gather with relatives. He also purchased snowmobiles and motorcycles for enjoyment when the work was done.

In the winter Arvid was a "hands on" father, washing dishes as Mary dried; calling everyone together after homework was done for popcorn. The hard work of summer was balanced with a long, slow winter providing Arvid time to enjoy Bonanza and Gunsmoke from his big easy chair.

He taught his children the value of setting a goal, passionately pursuing it and upon reaching the goal, to set a bigger goal. He demonstrated, by the way he lived, that he clearly knew his purpose in life and never wavered from the path he loved. On Sundays we were all in church at Augustana Lutheran in Underwood. Mary remembers her parents visiting when she lived in Alaska. Riding in a small plane for a bird's eye view of the vast tundra, Dad reflects, "I suppose they just can't do **anything** with this land!"

While Arvid liked to travel, upon returning home he was very expressive of his heartfelt gratitude to be living in the middle of North Dakota and working the land.

"Home, home on the range
I would not exchange my home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day."

Arvid and Bernice spent their retirement years in Bismarck during which time Arvid was often on the farm working side-by-side with John. Bernice planted more flower gardens and they enjoyed traveling, including a trip to Sweden in 1982.

Bernice (Larson) Fransen died on April 29, 2008, from lymphoma at Med-center One in Bismarck, North Dakota. She was 91 years of age. Interment was at the Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck, North Dakota.

Arvid Fransen died July 15, 2009, from congestive heart failure at Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center, Bismarck, North Dakota. He was 95 years of age. Interment was at the Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck, North Dakota.



A photograph depicting three generations of Fransens. From left to right are: Arvid Fransen and John August Fransen holding John Arvid Fransen. Andrew (Gus) Nelson is seated at the left. Bismarck, North Dakota. Date: February 18, 1951.



Arvid Fransen proudly standing on his farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: 1940s. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



Arvid Fransen working on his farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: 1940s. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



Arvid and Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen photographed just outside the residence at the Buggy Creek Community homestead. Tampico, Montana. Date: September, 1974.



Arvid Fransen holding a King Salmon he landed in a river in Alaska. The fishing guide is shown to the right. Date: early 1980s. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).



Arvid Fransen and his wife, Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen. Bismarck, North Dakota. Date: unknown. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).



Arvid Fransen photographed with his wife Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen (left) and cousin, Hazel Ruby (Nelson) Krause. Belle Fourche, South Dakota. Date: Thought to be the mid-1980s. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



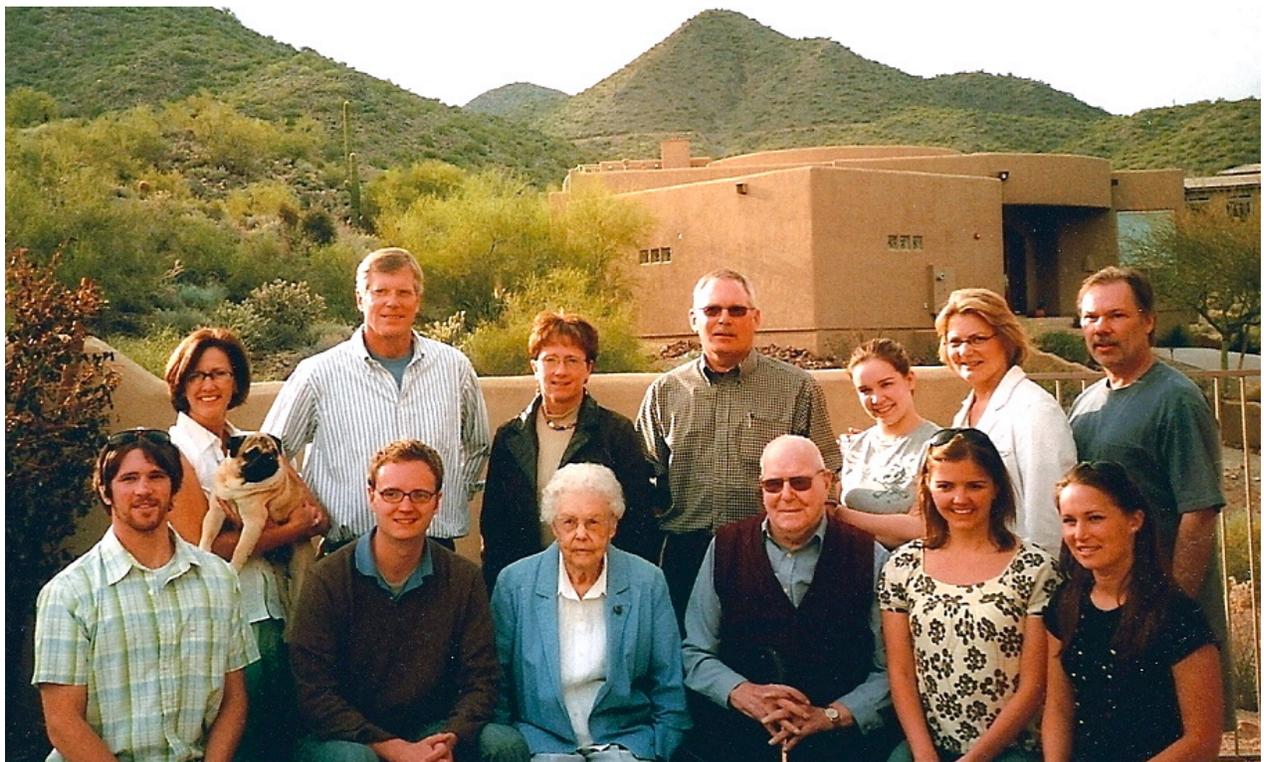
Arvid Fransen photographed and his wife, Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen (left) and cousin, Lorraine Marion (Nelson) Bain. Bismarck, North Dakota. Date: 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



A photograph of Arvid and Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen's children taken on Christmas 1960, in North Dakota. From left to right are: John Arvid Fransen, Mary Kathleen Fransen, and Robert Lee Fransen. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).



Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen celebrating her 90th birthday in Tucson, Arizona, with her husband, Arvid Fransen. March 25, 2007. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).



The entire Fransen family gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen in Tucson, Arizona, at the winter home of Robert Lee and Melanie Fransen. Front from left: Brian John Fransen, Matthew Robert Fransen, Bernice Katherine (Larson) Fransen, Arvid Fransen, Erin Leigh Fransen, Carolyn Ann Fransen. Back from left: Melanie Fransen, Robert Lee Fransen, Renee (Bares) Fransen, John Arvid Fransen, Emily Verlinich, Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson, and James H. Johnson. March 25, 2007.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Bernice Fransen

Bernice Fransen, 91, Bismarck, died peacefully with her family at her side after a brief illness, April 29, 2008, at Med-center One. Services will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, May 2, at First Lutheran Church, Bismarck, with the Rev. Allen Wagner officiating. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck. Visitation will be held from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday at Eastgate Funeral Service, Bismarck, where prayer services will begin at 7:30 p.m. Visitation continues one hour prior to services at the church. Bernice was born March 25, 1917, to August and Blenda (Peterson) Larson at their farm home near Bremen. She grew up in a vibrant Swedish immigrant extended family. Her faith was nurtured in Augustana Granfield Lutheran Church, where she was baptized and confirmed. Upon graduating from Sheyenne High School, she moved to Bismarck and attended Capitol Commercial College. Bernice then worked at the Capitol, where she was employed by the State Health Department. Her adventuresome spirit led her and her sister, LaVerne, to Seattle, where they worked for Boeing Company in the early 1940s. After the war, she returned to North Dakota and worked for Standard Oil, Fargo. On Nov. 26, 1949, she married Arvid Fransen. They settled on the Fransen family farm near Coleharbor and became partners in farming and raising a family. Bernice was an avid vegetable and flower gardener. She was a long-time member of Augustana Lutheran Church, Underwood. In 1979 they moved to Bismarck. They became members of First Lutheran Church and enjoyed the friendships of their Plaza Tower neighbors. During these years they traveled to Sweden to explore their heritage and reconnect with relatives. They often hosted Swedish travelers. They also enjoyed travel to Alaska and the southwestern areas of the country. She will be remembered for her keen awareness of nature, her sense of humor and her enduring faith. Her influence lives in the lives she touched through her intuitive ability to sense when encouragement was needed. She is survived by her husband of 58 years, Arvid, Bismarck; her sons, John (Renee), Coleharbor, and Robert (Melanie), Eden Prairie, Minn.; her daughter, Mary (James Johnson), Northfield, Minn.; her brother, Wendell (Linda), San Diego; her sister-in-law, Marion, New Rockford; five grandchildren, Matt and Erin Fransen, Carrie and Brian Fransen and Emily Verlinich; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; her sister and brother-in-law, LaVerne and Clarence Moe; her brother and sister-in-law, Merle and Ardeth Larson; and her brother, Ralph Larson. In lieu of flowers, the family prefers memorials to First Lutheran Church Memorial Fund.

The obituary of Bernice (Larson) Fransen published electronically in The Bismarck Tribune on May1, 2008.



“I BELIEVE IN FARMING”

I believe a man’s greatest possession is his dignity and that no calling bestows this more abundantly than farming.

I believe hard work and honest sweat are the building blocks of a person’s character.

I believe that farming, despite its hardships and disappointments, is the most honest and honorable way a man can spend his days on this earth.

I believe my children are learning values that will last a lifetime and can be learned in no other way.

I believe many of the best things in life are indeed free; the splendor of a sunrise, the rapture of wide open spaces, the exhilarating sight of your land greening each spring.

I believe true happiness comes from watching your crops ripen in the field, your children grow tall in the sun, your whole family feel the pride that springs from their shared experience.

I believe when a man grows old and sums up his days, he should be able to stand tall and feel pride in the life he’s lived.

I believe in farming because it makes all this possible.



Arvid Fransen, 95, Bismarck, died peacefully on July 15, 2009, at Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center, Bismarck.

Arvid was born on July 12, 1914, the son of John and Anna (Nelson) Fransen on the farm they homesteaded in 1898 near Coleharbor, ND. On November 26, 1949, he married Bernice Larson and she became his partner in life and farming for the next 58 years. His son John joined him in farming in 1970. He cherished his life in farming well into his 90s. He served on a number of community boards including Augustana Lutheran Church board and the Underwood School board. They moved to Bismarck in 1979, and became members of First Lutheran Church. Arvid and Bernice enjoyed the friendships of their Plaza Tower neighbors. Arvid will be remembered for his dedication to his family.

Arvid is survived by his sons, John (Renee), rural Coleharbor, ND, and Robert (Melanie), Eden Prairie, MN; his daughter, Mary (James Johnson), Northfield, MN; five grandchildren, Matt and Erin Fransen, Carrie and Brian Fransen and Emily Verlinich; one brother-in-law, Wendell (Linda) Larson, San Diego, CA; one sister-in-law, Marion Larson, New Rockford, ND; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Bernice; his parents; and his sisters, Victoria and Anne.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Immediately following the funeral service, the family invites you to join them at the church for fellowship and refreshments.

*Eastgate/Parkway Funeral Service
Bismarck, North Dakota*

The memorial bulletin for Arvid Fransen. Date: July, 2009.

Obituary published in Bismarck Tribune on July 17 & 18, 2009.

Arvid Fransen, 95, Bismarck, died peacefully on July 15, 2009, at Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center, Bismarck. Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. today, July 18, at First Lutheran Church, Bismarck, with the Rev. Allen Wagner officiating. Burial will be held in Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the services at the church. Arvid was born July 12, 1914, the son of John and Anna (Nelson) Fransen on the farm they homesteaded in 1898 near Coleharbor. On Nov. 26, 1949, he married Bernice Larson and she became his partner in life and farming for the next 58 years. His son, John, joined him in farming in 1970. He cherished his life in farming well into his 90s. He served on a number of community boards including Augustana Lutheran Church board and the Underwood School board. They moved to Bismarck in 1979, and became members of First Lutheran Church. Arvid and Bernice enjoyed the friendships of their Plaza Tower neighbors. Arvid will be remembered for his dedication to his family. Arvid is survived by his sons, John (Renee), rural Coleharbor, and Robert (Melanie), Eden Prairie, Minn.; his daughter, Mary (James Johnson), Northfield, Minn.; five grandchildren, Matt and Erin Fransen, Carrie and Brian Fransen and Emily Verlinich; one brother-in-law, Wendell (Linda) Larson, San Diego; one sister-in-law, Marion Larson, New Rockford; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife, Bernice; his parents; and his sisters, Victoria and Anne.

Published in the Bismarck Tribune, July 18, 2009. Page 5A.



Combining wheat on the Fransen Farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota, during the early 1950s. Arvid Fransen is pictured in the hopper of the combine above and John August Fransen is standing in the field holding his grandson, John Arvid Fransen. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).

JOHN ARVID FRANSEN

(Written text and photographs provided by John Arvid Fransen). **John Arvid Fransen** was born January 4, 1951, in Bismarck, North Dakota, the oldest child of Arvid and Bernice (Larson) Fransen. John grew up on the family farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota, that was homesteaded by his grandfather John August Fransen. He was baptized at First Lutheran Church in Bismarck, North Dakota, and confirmed at Augustana Lutheran Church in Underwood, North Dakota. John attended grades 1-6 at Coleharbor School and graduated from Underwood High School in 1969. He continued his education at the North Dakota State School of Science at Wahpeton, North Dakota, graduating from the Electrical Technology Department in 1971. John then returned to the farm to join his parents in their farming operation.

John enjoyed the outdoors. Growing up he was not one to be in the house watching TV or even reading a book if it were not required for school. He could be found enjoying the outdoors with his first gun (a 22 rifle) that was given to him by his dad. In the winter he would be hunting rabbits and in the summer it would be gophers. John knew at an early age that he was going to be a farmer just like Dad. He would always be with his dad whether working in the yard, riding along on the tractor or in the trucks hauling grain. One of his first jobs in the field was to drive the truck while his dad and the hired man picked rocks by hand. John, his sister Mary, and brother Robert had all the typical chores on the farm which included picking eggs from the chicken coop, feeding the cows, cleaning the barn, hauling bales, hoeing weeds in the garden and even washing dishes. John always thought that any job that was done by hand could be better done by a piece of equipment or a machine. John enjoyed operating machinery and the bigger the better.

After the farm work was done in the fall, John would move to Bismarck for the winter and work in the electrical field. He worked for a local contractor doing electrical construction on commercial and industrial projects. One of the projects he worked on was the Plaza Tower Condominiums where his parents would live after retiring from the farm. When spring came, John would follow his heart back to the farm and the life he enjoyed most.

It was during the winters spent in Bismarck where John joined the Bismarck Ski Club and learned to ski. The ski club took many week-end trips to the mountains of Montana. It was on one of these bus trips where he would meet his future wife. **Renee Bares** was a commercial artist from Dickinson, North Dakota, working in Bismarck. John and Renee were married July 12, 1980. After their marriage John and Renee moved to the Fransen farm where they still live today. As a farm wife, Renee helps out where needed, whether that is operating machinery, driving truck, going for parts, running errands and keeping all of the workers fed. In her spare time she is very active volunteering in her church and community. She also has beautiful flower gardens that are enjoyed by all who visit the farm. John Arvid and Renee (Bares) Fransen had two children: **Carolyn Ann Fransen (Carrie)** born on March 21, 1983, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and **Brain John Fransen** born on December 20, 1985, in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Carrie is an Occupational Therapist living and working in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Brian has joined his parents in the farming operation.

The Fransen farm has seen many changes since the original 160 acres was homesteaded in 1898 by John August Fransen. In the early years, work was done with horses and manual labor. The prairie sod was broke by a team of horses and a sulky plow capable of covering up to five acres per day. Today, modern equipment is capable of getting over several hundred acres in a single day. The main crops in the homestead years were wheat to sell at market. Oats and corn were also grown as feed for livestock. Today the farm produces wheat, malting barley, edible peas, pinto beans, canola, sunflowers and corn.

All the crops are sold locally with wheat then going to flour mills and processed for baking. The barley is malted and goes to breweries for beer making. Corn is used for cattle feed or made into ethanol. The peas and pinto beans are used for human consumption in soups, canned or dried products or the beans may be made into refried beans to be used in Mexican food dishes. The canola and sunflowers are crushed for oil to be used for cooking or industrial use. The sunflowers can also be sold and bagged for bird food. All these commodities may at times find their way into the export markets as well. The life of a farmer is very rewarding. We get to work together as a family with nature as we watch the seeds that we plant, grow to a bountiful harvest. We enjoy what we do and we work hard to produce food to feed a hungry world.

A few Remembrances by John Arvid Fransen when growing up in North Dakota. I do have some memories of my grandmother Anna Katarina's side of the family. While I was born after she died, there were many stories told about her by my dad and my aunts, Victoria and Anne. As were most of the pioneers she was a hard worker. I guess they had to be or they wouldn't survive life on the prairie. Most work was done by hand. She was a quiet person whose main concern was for her family. She sold her homestead when she married my grandpa, John August Fransen. She deposited the money in the local bank in Coleharbor, North Dakota, and was saving it for retirement. Well needless to say she lost all of it when the banks went broke during the depression. She could never get over or understand how the banker (who was a friend) could lose the money she trusted him with. When she and Grandpa retired from the farm and moved to Bismarck, North Dakota, she was so happy to have some of the modern conveniences that could only be found in town. Running water, sewer, gas stove, and a furnace just to name a few. Sadly, she did not live very long after moving to her house in town.

As I was growing up I do remember visits to the farm from Johnny and Hazel Ruby (Nelson) Krause. Also the yearly visits from Lorraine (Nelson) Bain and her family as they made their trek from Texas to her roots in Montana. My mother had a sister and family that lived in Williston, North Dakota, and on many occasions when we would visit them we would also continue on to Glasgow, Montana to see "Aunt Mary" (Mary Elizabeth Nelson). I remember many times out at that farm, Aunt Mary would be cooking up a meal and we "men" would be out looking over the ranch with Pete and Max Nelson. If time would allow we would travel over to the Floyd and Bertha Nelson ranch and would then stop in Glasgow to see Martin and Mabel Nelson.

My aunts, Anne and Victoria Fransen, would get on Great Northern's Empire Builder in Minot, North Dakota, and ride the train to Glasgow, Montana, for their yearly summer visit to see Mary Elizabeth Nelson and all their cousins.

Victor Chris Nelson spent 2 or 3 years in North Dakota with my grandparents while going to school in Coleharbor, North Dakota. I have memories of my dad telling me that he was a good basketball player and I believe (but not sure) that he graduated from high school in Coleharbor. I visited him at his home in Napa, California, in the mid seventies. I'm glad I got to meet him.

Lorraine (Nelson) Bain tells this story about my dad, Arvid Fransen. She always called dad "Arvie". While I am not sure who all was involved nor their ages, it seems that Mary's and Anna's families had gathered at the farm at Coleharbor, North Dakota, and Arvie was teaching his girl cousins some Swedish. When they all went in the house for a meal, Lorraine was excited to tell her mother and aunt that she could speak some Swedish. Well the Swedish that cousin Arvie had taught her was not something that was to be spoken in the house! Needless to say Mary was embarrassed at what her daughter had said and Arvie was scolded to never do that again.



A photograph of John Arvid Fransen when he graduated from Underwood High School in Underwood, North Dakota. Date: 1969. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



A photograph of John Arvid and Renee (Bares) Fransen taken in Bismarck, North Dakota. Date: early 2000s.



A photograph of the John Fransen family taken at their residence on the Fransen family farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. From left to right are: John Arvid Fransen, Renee (Bares) Fransen, Brain John Fransen, and Carolyn Ann Fransen (Carrie). Date: July 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



John Arvid Fransen standing in a field of pinto beans he was growing on his farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: July 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



John Arvid Fransen (right) and his cousins, William John Krause II and Dennis Lyle Krause (left), standing at the grave site of their great grandmother, Maria Mathilda (Setterberg) Johannesson/Nelson, at the Coleharbor Cemetery near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: July 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



John Arvid Fransen standing in a field of wheat he was growing on his farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: July 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



John Arvid Fransen standing with his cousin, William John Krause II, sampling sweet peas he was growing on his farm near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: July 2005. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



A photograph of John Arvid Fransen standing with his cousin, Kelvin Keith Krause, at St. Johns Lutheran Church in Belle Fourche, South Dakota. Date: June 2006. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS



A aerial photograph of a portion of the John Arvid Fransen family farm located near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Note Lake Sakakawea formed by Garrison Dam in the background. The Fransen Farm of today consists of the following related homesteads. That of John August Fransen, that of Axel Fransen (John August Fransen's brother), that of David Carlson (cousin of John and Axel Fransen), and that of Axel Nelson, brother of Anna Katarina (Johannesson/Nelson) Fransen. Date photograph was taken is unknown.



John Arvid Fransen seeding wheat on the Fransen Farm at Coleharbor, North Dakota, during the spring of 2010.



Wheat harvest on the Fransen Farm during 2005.



John Arvid Fransen applying herbicide on a crop at the Fransen Farm during the spring of 2010.



The house that was on the farm in which John Arvid Fransen grew up. This house was sold and moved in 1995 and became a lake home on Lake Sakakawea, North Dakota.

CAROLYN ANN FRANSEN

(Written text provided by John Arvid Fransen). **Carolyn Ann Fransen (Carrie)** was born on March 21, 1983, in Bismarck North Dakota, and was the daughter of John Arvid and Reenee (Bares) Fransen. Carrie grew up on the Fransen family farm, north of Coleharbor, North Dakota, with her younger brother, Brian Fransen. Carolyn Ann Fransen was baptized and confirmed at Augustana Lutheran Church in Underwood, North Dakota. She attended both elementary and high school in Underwood, North Dakota, where she graduated in 2002. Carrie obtained an advance degree at University and now is an Occupational Therapist living and working in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.



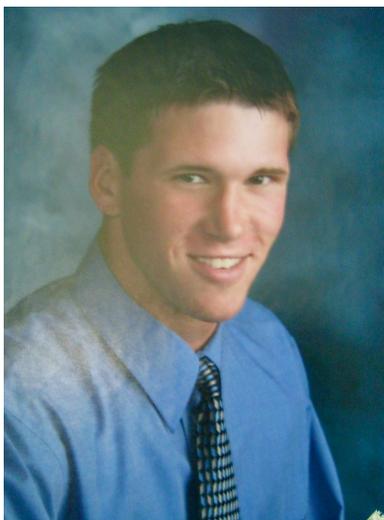
A high school graduation photograph of Carolyn Ann Fransen (Carrie) when she graduated from Underwood High School, Underwood, North Dakota, in 2002. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).

BRIAN JOHN FRANSEN

(Written text and photographs provided by Brian John Fransen). **Brian John Fransen** was born on December 20, 1985, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and was the son of John Arvid and Renee (Bares) Fransen. Brian grew up on the Fransen family farm, north of Coleharbor, North Dakota, with his older sister, Carrie and parents John and Renee (Bares) Fransen. He had a wonderful childhood with countless opportunities. Brian was baptized and confirmed at Augustana Lutheran Church in Underwood, North Dakota. Dad and Mom were kept running their own race trying to keep up with school activities, especially athletics. Brian participated in football, basketball, and track for the Underwood Comets. He attended both elementary and high school in Underwood, North Dakota, where he graduated in 2004. The fall of 2004 brought the start of college at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Brian joined the track team and ran primarily the quarter and half-mile races. “Real athletes run, others just play games.” It is fair to say that running has shaped Brian’s life immensely. While he enjoyed playing all these other games growing up, it has been running that has been a constant. He especially enjoys the quiet alone time running over the rolling prairies while his worries and problems set with the sun. It was in track that he met his future wife, Renee Aune. Renee was a distance runner for the Fighting Sioux. Their mutual love for adventure and travel was apparent immediately. They traveled throughout the continent on various trips. They especially enjoyed the mountains. This love led them on many Colorado ski and snowboard trips to visit sister Carrie. It also led to Brian moving to Lake Tahoe to work as a snow groomer at Squaw Valley for a winter.

In 2008, Brian graduated from UND with a B.B.A. in Business Management. He had held other jobs in the city, but none of them had the appeal that taking over the family farm where his great-grandfather (John August), grandfather (Arvid), and father (John Arvid), had worked so hard to build. Brian’s favorite activity on the farm is running the sprayer where he can float high above the field and witness acres upon acres of prospering green crops.

Brian John Fransen and **Renee M. Aune** were married July 10, 2010 in Underwood, North Dakota. Renee M. Aune was born on April 6, 1986. They moved to Minot, North Dakota, where Renee works as a Physical Therapist at Trinity Health. Brian and Renee still enjoy the exhilaration of running and have moved up to running marathons. They have many future adventures and travels planned and always look forward to the unplanned and unexpected.



A high school graduation photograph of Brian John Fransen when he graduated from Underwood High School, Underwood, North Dakota, in 2004. (Courtesy of William John Krause II).



Brian John Fransen (number 286 in black and white, with headband) running the 800 meters in a North Central Conference track and field meet in Duluth, Minnesota. Date: May, 2007.



A photograph of Brian John Fransen when he visited Big Sur, California, during March of 2009.



Brian John Fransen combining corn on the Fransen Farm located near Coleharbor, North Dakota. Date: about 2009.



A photograph of Brian John Fransen and Renee M. Aune kayaking on Lake Superior during July of 2009.



A photograph of Brian John and Renee M. (Aune) Fransen on their wedding day, July 10, 2010, in Underwood, North Dakota.

MARY KATHLEEN (FRANSEN) VERLINICH JOHNSON

(Written text and photographs provided by Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson). **Mary Kathleen Fransen** was born on January 31, 1952, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and was the daughter of Arvid and Bernice (Larson) Fransen. Mary grew up with her parents, Arvid and Bernice Fransen, and two brothers, John and Robert, on the Fransen family farm which is located two miles north of Coleharbor, North Dakota on the land that was originally homesteaded by her grandfather, John August Fransen. He and his wife, Anna (Nelson) and their three children, Victoria, Anne and Arvid also made a livelihood farming this land. Mary attended grades 1- 5 at Coleharbor Public School and 6 - 12 at Underwood Public School. She was baptized at First Lutheran Church, Bismarck, North Dakota, and confirmed at Augustana Lutheran Church in Underwood, North Dakota.

Inheriting the adventuresome spirit of her ancestors, and armed with a B.A. from Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota (1974) and a Masters in Social Work from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1978), Mary headed north in 1981 for new experiences in Alaska. She became employed by the State of Alaska and later by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation.

For eight years she lived 400 miles west of Anchorage in Bethel, a town of 5,000 with no roads going in or out. Her work as a social worker took her to over 25 villages along the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers and on Nunivak and Nelson Islands in the Bering Sea.

Living among Yup'ik Eskimos she was invited be a guest in the subsistence activities of a welcoming and industrious indigenous culture. She joined them to fish for salmon and halibut, to cut salmon into strips for smoking, and for berry picking trips on the tundra. Despite Mary's diligent efforts at berry picking she was ever perplexed that her Eskimo friends would have a 5 gallon pail filled with berries by the time hers was a third full.

No doubt her Swedish heritage and her North Dakota childhood enabled her to enjoy even the short days of the long winters with wind chills often reaching -60 F. The highlight of the winter was the potlatches with Eskimo dancing as a form of story-telling. Alaska's never-ending summer days provided the opportunity to venture into the wilderness for camping, trout fishing, river rafting and kayaking. After eight years in Alaska, in 1989, Mary and her family which consisted of her husband, **David Verlinich**, and their daughter, Emily Jan Verlinich, moved to Morgantown, West Virginia. Mary met David at the University of Michigan and they were married on July 25, 1981. **Emily Jan Verlinich** was born on March 15, 1988, and was adopted by Mary and Dave when she was 15 days old. During the three years they lived in West Virginia, David attended graduate school. Mary and David were divorced in 1992. In 1992 Mary, with 4 year old Emily, moved to Eden Prairie, Minnesota, and lived near her brother Robert and his family. Mary became employed by Eden Prairie Schools and worked as a school social worker with 10 - 12 year olds.

On June 21, 1997, Mary married **James H. Johnson** who is originally from Cannon Falls, Minnesota. Mary, Jim and Emily then moved to Northfield, Minnesota, where they continue to live. Jim is self-employed as a lawyer and fills his free time building custom electric guitars. He also enjoys astro-photography and collecting minerals and fossils. Emily, age 22, lives in Rochester, Minnesota where she is a student at Rochester Community and Technical School. She is employed at Bed, Bath and Beyond. Mary now works as a psychotherapist at Mental Health Professionals in Owatonna. Additionally, she created Jasper Retreat Center in Northfield which is a personal growth business in which she facilitates groups and retreats. Visit at www.jasperretreat.com. Her retreats include Retreat on Lake Superior where women of all ages have an opportunity for a maiden kayak voyage.

Every August Mary spends a few days in the harvest fields on the North Dakota farm where she grew up which is now farmed by her brother, John, and his family. With chaff under her collar she rides round and round on the combine in the jumper seat . . . forgetting what day it is . . . experiencing the rhythm of the seasons . . . remembering who she is and where she came from.

Mary and her brothers, John and Robert, and their families will embark on a trip to Sweden in July 2011 to gain a greater sense of the land and experiences of our ancestors.



Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson photographed during a trip to England. Date: unknown.



Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson (center) photographed with her daughter, Emily Jan Verlinich, and husband, James H. Johnson. Northfield, Minnesota. Date: 2010.



Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson (center) photographed on the shore of Lake Superior. Date about 2010.

EMILY JAN VERLINICH

(Written text and photograph provided by Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson). **Emily Jan Verlinich** was born on March 15, 1988, in Edmonds, Washington, and was the adopted daughter of David Michael and Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich. Emily lived for three years with her parents in West Virginia and then moved with her mother to Eden Prairie, Minnesota, in 1992. Emily Verlinich was educated in Minnesota, and now lives in in Rochester, Minnesota, where she is a student at Rochester Community and Technical School. She is employed at Bed, Bath and Beyond.



A photograph of Emily Jan Verlinich.
Date: about 2009.

ROBERT LEE FRANSEN

(Written text provided by Robert Lee Fransen). **Robert Lee Fransen** was born on October 19, 1955, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and was the youngest child of Arvid and Bernice (Larson) Fransen. He attended his first two years of grade school in Coleharbor, North Dakota, then in the Underwood, North Dakota schools where he graduated from Underwood High School in 1973. He graduated from the University of North Dakota, home of the Fighting Sioux, in 1977. While attending UND he became an **All-American high jumper** and became recognized as the first native North Dakotan to clear 7 feet in the high jump. His greatest accomplishment while attending UND was capturing the heart of **Melanie Gohdes**. Melanie Gohdes was born on November 10, 1955. They were married in rural Davenport, North Dakota, on May 27, 1978. Robert and Melanie made their home in Bismarck, North Dakota, where he began a life-long career in real estate and Melanie began her career in elementary and special education. Robert Lee and Melanie (Gohdes) Fransen had two children: **Matthew Robert Fransen** born on April 21, 1980, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and **Erin Leigh Fransen** born on March 30, 1983, in Bismarck, North Dakota. The lure of the big city brought the family to Minneapolis in 1986, where Robert pursued a career in commercial and investment real estate. The family settled in suburban Eden Prairie where Robert and Melanie still reside today. Currently, Robert is the President of Timberland Partners, a real estate investment company that invests in apartments and commercial properties throughout the Midwest. Melanie retired from teaching in 2002 after many years in the Eden Prairie school district. Matt graduated from the University of Colorado with a finance degree and currently works in investments at his dad's company. Erin graduated with a finance degree from Boston College where she was a four-year letter winner on the Boston College swim team. She currently works for Target Corporation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Robert and Melanie spend some winter time in Fountain Hills, Arizona, and are avid Twins and Vikings fans. Robert especially loves his annual Harley rides back to the wide open spaces of the Holy Land (North Dakota).

MATTHEW ROBERT FRANSEN

(Written text provided by Robert Lee Fransen). **Matthew Robert Fransen (Matt)** was born on April 21, 1980, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and was the son of Robert Lee and Melanie (Gohdes) Fransen. Matthew Robert Fransen was educated in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, school system and went on to graduate from the University of Colorado with a degree in Finance. Matt then went on to work for Timberland Partners, a real estate investment company that invests in apartments and commercial properties throughout the midwestern United States.

ERIN LEIGH FRANSEN

(Written text provided by Robert Lee Fransen). **Erin Leigh Fransen** was born on March 30, 1983, in Bismarck, North Dakota, and was the daughter of Robert Lee and Melanie (Gohdes) Fransen. Erin Leigh Fransen was educated in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, school system and went on to graduate from Boston College with a degree in Finance. While attending Boston College Erin Fransen was four-year letter winner on the Boston College swim team. Erin then went on to work for the Target Corporation in Minneapolis, Minnesota.