

Fire Department Carnival, Dancing to the Vienna Syncopators

SM: One of the things that I really enjoyed the most and I think kids nowadays don't get is the carnival we used to have. The (Vienna) Fire Department put on a carnival every year. They had a dance pavilion and the Vienna Syncopators used to play. They were a band of guys that got together. In fact, most of them were family. They had booths with all different things around.

AS: Where was it?

SM: It was up where the Bowman House is now, most of the time. The Bowman House was back.

AS: So on Center Street.

SM: Yeah.

AS: The Fire Department Carnival. Was it called that.

SM: Yeah. They usually had a car that was donated by some dealer. They would sell chances on it and somebody would win it. Mother always had a booth there for her business. It was just so much fun. And the dancing. I liked to dance on the pavilion. The girls would dance with each other. The Vienna Syncopators were the Mandible family, most of them, and D Krickenberger, who was a partner in Money and King eventually. He married one of the sisters. One of them married Howard and one of them married D. They were really good friends, Howard King and D. He was the band leader and he would sing.

CG: When was it held?

SM: It was usually in July.

AS: Was it usually the 4th of July?

SM: Well, no, we didn't have anything like what they have now for the 4th of July. It was sometime during the summer. Usually it was in July.

AS: What kind of activities do you remember at your carnival? You had dance and stalls.

SM: Well, if I remember correctly, they had a Ferris Wheel and that was about it. They didn't have any of the stuff that they have nowadays except for the Ferris Wheel.

AS: Food?

SM: Yeah. They had food. The Ladies' Auxiliary and the Fire Department usually had the food. Mother was a charter member of that. And Aunt Weethan.

AS: Was the carnival a one-day event?

SM: No, it was a week.

AS: Annual, one week.

SM: Mostly all I wanted to do was dance.

VH: Was it swing dancing?

SM: It was jitter-bugging. I'd rather dance than eat at that time, I'll tell you.