

between Monteith and Porquis, Hoffman would walk almost two miles to school every day. At that time, there were no snowplows and the children were forced to make the long trek through the experimental farm on their way to school.

Students who wanted to go to high school were forced to go to Iroquois Falls since there was no secondary school in Monteith. According to Hoffman, many of the local children stopped going to school every day once they reached grade eight since it was difficult getting to Iroquois Falls. Many of them started working on their family farm or got paying jobs on the experimental farm or in some of the local stores.

Once the village was founded, many of the local people began building homes on the other side of the river, while, others began establishing family farms in the surrounding area. Hoffman's father, Watts was employed at the experimental farm, in addition to running his own farm which specialized in timber.

"My father thought it was great to work there (the experimental farm). In those days, things were done by hand. We didn't have any horses or machinery. We lived on a farm two miles north of Monteith on the way to Porquis. It (our farm) was not any great shakes. We did everything by hand. All the pulp that was brought to the railway was done by hand. It was all timber. We cleared the land, cut the trees and brought them to the railway cars. They would be sent down south, and we would receive money for them," Hoffman said.

The Watts also grew their own vegetables. Other families raised cattle in addition to growing grain and vegetables. According to Hoffman, the experimental farm attracted many people to Monteith, who would come to see all the different trees, shrubs and plants that were being grown. The experimental farm was also known for its immaculate flower gardens and provided a great deal of employment for the local people.

As the experimental farm began to expand, more and more people started moving to Monteith. Between 1913 and 1930 there were at least three stores in the village. Some of these businesses included Critchley's, Clarks, Whitneys E.T. O'Boyle's and Jack Lupin's. There was also an ice cream parlor and a small community hall where dances, movies and box socials were held. The Anglican Church also held several social events including an annual Thanksgiving dinner. Although they did not have much time to socialize, there was always a great deal of amusement when the people did manage to get together.

"It was a lot of fun. We didn't go anywhere else. The ladies would get together on a regular basis to clean the hall, wash the windows and clean the floors. All the ladies did their share. We had dances and box socials. The ladies would decorate a box and make a lunch and the men would bid on each box during an auction. We didn't have much time for socializing. Sometimes, our neighbor would come over on Saturday nights to play cards or games, but that's about all," Hoffman said.

In 1916, the Northern Academy was established in Monteith. The Academy offered regular and business courses to 175 students from as far away as Haileybury and Hearst. There was a small tuition fee, however, the students did not have to wear an official school uniform. Because so many students lived far away from the school, boarding facilities were provided so students could live on the school grounds. Some residents of Monteith sent their children to the Academy. According to Hoffman, the school had a positive effect on the local economy by providing employment

and by increasing the amount of sales in the local stores.

"It (the Academy) helped because the students would come into town to shop and that helped the stores," Hoffman recalled.

Due to a declining enrolment, Northern Academy was forced to close its doors to students in 1937. A drastic change took place on the grounds where the Academy had been located in 1940. From 1940 to 1945, a Prisoner of War (P.O.W.) camp for German prisoners was run on the site which is now the Monteith Correctional Centre.

The camp housed 50 prisoners at one time who would live in small huts and would eat in a large building that had been converted into a mess hall. The property was surrounded by high wire fences and watched carefully by guards who would patrol the property on a regular basis. Even though it was a P.O.W. camp, the institute was run similar to a regular prison. Hoffman doesn't remember being afraid of the prisoners, however, she said that most people did not go for long walks late at night.

"You couldn't go wandering. They (the prisoners) had guards and lived in huts close to what is now Second Avenue. If you were poking around, they would shine the light on you," Hoffman recalled.

Despite being locked up, Hoffman said that the prisoners were treated better than if they had been overseas.

One of the former prisoners visited the area a few years ago to relive some of the memories of the years that he spent at Monteith.

"I had one man and his wife come to see me. He was from Germany and had been a prisoner of war at

Monteith. They came up to Monteith to see the old camp. They went to the post office and the lady from the post office phoned me to ask if they could come and see me. I said sure send them right over. They were very nice. He said that he had been treated really well when he was here. But he was disappointed that all the huts where the prisoners had stayed, had disappeared. He wanted to know why they had all been torn down," Hoffman said.

In 1945, the P.O.W. camp became an industrial farm for sentenced Ontario prisoners. Under the supervision of Irvine White, the prisoners grew many different types of fruits and vegetables including current trees. They also maintained beautiful vegetable and flower gardens which attracted people from miles away. At the time, Hoffman's husband worked as a guard in the camp in the public works department. During the time, the farm provided a great deal of employment for the local residents. The farm also offered short and long-term classes to the prisoners on such subjects as agriculture and general

living skills. Eventually, the name of the institution was changed to a Correctional Centre and a district jail was added in 1965. A Young Offender's Unit was added to the institution in 1985, after the Young Offender's Act was passed by the Ontario government in 1984.

The Ministry of Correctional Services presently operates a 176 bed unit combining a correctional centre, jail and young offender's unit. The Correctional Centre is a 120 bed unit, with minimum security for adults who are serving sentences of not more than two years less one day. The jail is a maximum security unit with 26 beds. The Monteith Correctional Centre is the second largest single employer, next to Abitibi-Price. The centre employs 142 people, 100 of which are full-time positions. Some of these positions include correctional officers, nurses, social workers, psychologists, trade instructors, maintenance and farming staff as well as administrative and clerical staff. The farm still plays an important role at the Correctional Centre. The Correctional Centre produces its own pork, beef, potatoes and vegetables.

She has been an active member of the Anglican Church and the Monteith Women's Institute for many years. Her sister, Lilian Taylor lives in Iroquois Falls.