

The Beginning of the Winkler MCC Thrift Shop

The Goodwill Store, as it was then called, was started in August 1970. The Health Nurse Mrs. McKennitt and Eileen Kroeker were working with the underprivileged and they felt it would be better for the poor to be able to buy clothes and other items instead of being given clothes they could not use. There were many people who wanted to give, but did not know how or where. So the decision was reached to start a store where all the goods would be donated and then sold at a reasonable price.

The members of the committee were Erna Elias, Eileen Kroeker and Sue Derksen. The M.B. Bible School on 8th Street generously allowed them to use their facilities free of charge. They put an ad in the newspaper for donations and with eight or nine women helping they were open for business one day a week.

The money raised was spent locally for food and medicine for needy families. At Christmas time hampers were packed with food, clothes and toys and delivered to these homes. Teachers notified the store of children who needed glasses or overshoes but the family could not afford these items. These women would look after supplying them. Betty Goossen was the truant officer and discovered where poor families lived and those who had recently moved into the community. She was able to bring clothes to them. This ministry was very gratifying to the women in charge of the Goodwill Store.

During the first four years, surplus money was donated to the United Way, Stanley Agricultural Society, the Ambulance Fund, Salem Home, CAMR, a piano for the Highrise, Bethel Hospital, the Fire Department and the Jerry Hildebrands who were on the mission field in Brazil. The clothes that they couldn't use were sent to MCC, Union Gospel Mission, and gospel missions up north.

Excerpt from "The Shopping Bag" (History of the Winkler MCC Thrift Shop)