

Officer Kersey Gowin was fatally wounded at about 11 p.m. when they were on a stake-out in a field where thieves had been stashing tires.

Jan. 15, 1920

Ward County deputy Earnest W. Thompson, 56, was shot during a jail break from the Ward County Jail.

Ward McCrill shot Thompson during the successful escape attempt at 7:15 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15. The incident occurred while Thompson was locking the prisoners in their cells for the night.

McCrill ordered Thompson to "stick 'em up" and fired once before Thompson could reach into his pocket for his gun. The bullet struck Thompson in the forehead, killing him instantly.

Jan. 21, 1921

Minot Police officer Lee S. Fahler died Jan. 21, a day after exchanging shots with whiskey runner Avery Erickson in down-

were arrested by U.S. postal inspectors for the murder of Sneesby.

September 1930

Martin Johnson, chief of police at Ray, was working part-time as a clerk in the Ray Hotel when he was killed by a gang of bank robbers.

On a September night, bank robbers known as the Barger Gang robbed the bank in Wheelock, N.D., and killed the banker.

After committing the crime, the gang stopped in at the Ray Hotel. The gang presumably did not realize the desk clerk was a police chief. They shot Johnson in the hotel lobby. He died in Trinity Hospital 12 hours later.

The Barger Gang fled the scene and were later arrested in Washington for a murder in that state. One of the suspects was shot by a railroad police officer, the other was either executed or sentenced to life in prison. Neither were tried for murder in North Dakota.

Bear's partner, BIA Officer Alfred Bordeaux, remained by the kitchen window while Bear snuck around the house to get a better view. He caught the eye of one of a 16-year-old boy. Bear waved his service weapon to assure the boy that he was going to help.

The boy was holding a .22 caliber pump action rifle. He said he was responsible for protecting the family while his father was away. The boy fired four shots at the window.

Bordeaux saw Bear fall over backwards. Fearing he would also get shot, Bordeaux ran for help. He met other family members returning home. They found that one bullet entered Bear's left temple. Bear died at a Minot hospital.

February 3, 1963

Rugby police officer Frank Peterson, 56, was shot 16 times with a .22 caliber revolver and his own weapon while investigating a burglary.

Roadblocks were set up and two suspects were stopped. However, they were released.

May 18, 1966

Burdette Miller, 65, Ray police chief, died from injuries received when he was struck by a stolen vehicle driven by a 16-year-old Minot youth.

Miller was trying to stop the vehicle, which was being pursued by other officers. He was standing by his parked car in a driving rain when he was struck by the youth's car. The driver was attempting to reduce his speed — which had reached 100 miles per hour at times — but lost control, swerving into the south ditch and back across the road to where Miller was standing.

Feb. 13, 1983

U.S. Marshal Kenneth B. Muir and Deputy Marshal Robert Cheshire were shot while attempting to serve a warrant on a Posse Comitatus tax protester.

They were among several law enforcement officers who went to Medina to serve a warrant for the arrest of Gordon Kahl. While serving the arrest warrant, shots were exchanged and both officers were killed. Several other

History of Ray

Courtesy of Ray Opera House Museum
Written by Doris Langager

Knickerbocker Band

The Knickerbocker Band was organized in 1922 by William Brunsvold, who was promoter, teacher and leader of the organization. Members were boys from the Ray vicinity, ranging in age from eight to 18. It was financed largely from Ray businessmen. The uniforms were purple and white. The name of the band came from the knicker trousers worn by the boys.

Mr. Brunsvold was strict on discipline and one boy who came 15 minutes late to practice found the door locked. He let his boys know they had to learn to play music or they would be out! Regular concerts were given in the auditorium and practically every Saturday night, during the summer months, from a bandstand that was hauled onto Main Street. There were always 20 to 30 members in the Knickerbocker Band.

Before the band went on an extended trip, such as to Yellowstone Park, L.B. McFarlin served as an

advance man and went ahead to make the necessary arrangements. All travelling was done by touring cars in a caravan, all roads were gravel, and sometimes very muddy.

One concert in Sidney, Montana had to be cancelled, as this was irrigated country which raised sugar beets and watermelons. A watermelon could be purchased for a dime and over half of the band members were sick from overeating.

There were seven or eight cars and a truck hauling the tents, bedding, food and cooking equipment on a camping trip to Yellowstone. There weren't many miles travelled each day due to the work involved in taking camp down and setting it up every day and then preparing for a concert. The band was often asked to organize similar bands in other towns. Several members of the Knickerbocker Band were given high ratings in music contests in the area.