

Anita Wacker Wyatt

Age 72

Born November 16, 1923 in Wilton, Iowa

I was born November 16, 1923 to Harold & Etha Wacker at 1005 Maurer Street in Wilton Junction, Iowa. My grandparents, Pete and Alvena Wacker built a new home next door in the year of my birth. We lived in the old Wacker homestead, across the street from Zion Lutheran church of which we are members.

I have many good memories of growing up in Wilton with my brothers and sisters, one of which is Saturday night band concerts where I spent my nickel at either the Star Drug Store, Duffe's Drug Store, or the Candy Kitchen. You could get a lot of goodies for 5 cents in those days.

One fond memory is of Mom making costumes for all of us to march in the Wilton Days Parade every year. As we children grew up and had families of our own we entered them in the parade also. Now our grandchildren are following that tradition by entering the Founders' Day Parade. We've all been lucky enough to win a prize now and then, too!

I graduated from Wilton High School in 1941 and joined the Marine Corp Women's Reserve in February of 1944. I took basic training at Camp LeJuene, NC, and was stationed at the Marine Base in Quantico, Virginia. There I met John Wyatt, who had returned to the States after serving at Pearl Harbor and the Pacific Islands. We were married at the Emanuel Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

We were honorably discharged from the service after the

end of the war in December of 1945, arriving by train, in Wilton on Christmas Eve. The train did not usually stop at the Wilton Depot, but the conductor decided to let us off there, anyway, since it was in the middle of the night and we were War Veterans.

John was employed at the Rural Electric Coop until he retired in 1984.

In 1962, Wilton Businesses organized the Wilton Chamber of Commerce (C of C). I came aboard as Executive Vice President in 1963 and served for the next 22 years.

In 1979, I was honored as the first woman to be elected President of the Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives. That year I represented Iowa at the Chamber of Commerce National Convention in Washington, D.C.

I served as Executive Secretary of the Wilton Industrial Development Corp. (WIDC) which was organized in 1965. I represented Wilton as a member of the Iowa Professional Developers. On retirement I was honored with a life membership in all of the above organizations.

I was fortunate that during my tenure, the City of Wilton, the C of C, the WIDC, and REC worked in partnership to develop our community to make it attractive to business, industry and the job market. The coup came when MISCO, now CDS, opened a plant in 1970, J-M Manufacturing arrived in 1973, North Star Steel-Iowa in 1975 followed by Precision Steel, Contractors Steel and



HWH Manufacturing Corp. Since then several other industries have chosen Wilton in which to locate, and have helped our economy to grow.

John and I are the parents of three sons: Don, who graduated from the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in Des Moines and was employed as a Motor Vehicle Enforcement Officer with the Iowa Department of Transportation until his death in 1993; Mike, who graduated from the FBI Academy in Quantico, VA and is a Special Agent of the FBI in Denver, CO; and Brent, who is employed at North Star Steel-Iowa. We have six grandchildren.

Since retirement, we've spent our winters in Ft. Myers, Florida but come home to spend the rest of the year in good old Wilton.

Anita Wacker Wyatt
February 20, 1997

Note: John and Anita Wacker Wyatt were honored when they served as Grand Marshals of Wilton's Founders Day Parade August 2000.