

# **Prophetstown Businesses**

**in 1964**

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in 1964

by

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Prophetstown Area Historical Society  
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# Introduction

Our community in 2026 is quite different than it was in August 1964 when we arrived in our U Haul truck and deposited our family in the house at 411 Riverside Drive. Even the house we came to in 1964 is different now.



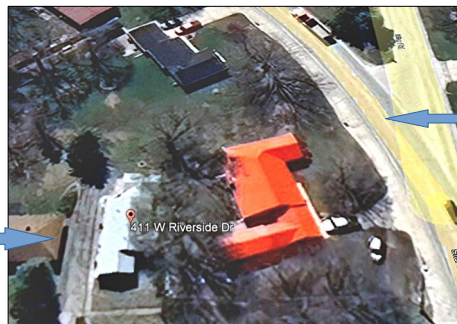
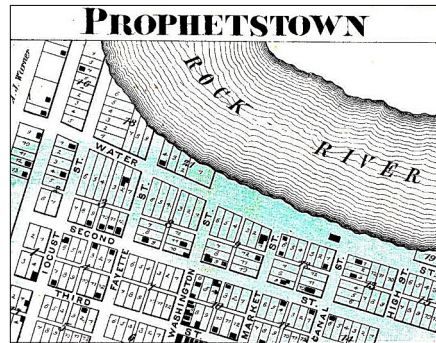
1964



2025

An enclosed front porch has been added

Riverside Drive was originally called Water Street. It seemed like a reasonable name because some of Water Street actually ran beside Rock River. However, in April 1956 a petition was granted by the City Council changing the name from Water Street to Riverside Drive



Our house

Where Terry was sitting.

While living in this house something really bizarre happened. We lived here for about one year. One night Barbie woke me up screaming that Terry, our son, was out on the street and had been hit by a car. I assured her that he was in the next bedroom asleep. A month or so later she was doing the washing while Terry played in the sand box by the clothes line. She came in to get another load of clothes to hang, went back out and a man came walking up to the back of the house carrying Terry and asked if she knew who the little boy belonged to. The truck driver found him sitting in the street.

## The Businesses

There has been a drastic change in the Prophetstown's business environment since 1964. When we arrived in town there were a total of 118 businesses operating. According to the Prophetstown Proud web site there are about 83 operating today. But Prophetstown is a lot better off than many other small towns we have driven through. In all too many cases small town business districts all over the county have declined until in many cases there are few, sometimes no businesses left.

### Prophetstown Businesses in 1964

A. V. Skarin, 702 Grove St  
Ace Hardware, 317 Washington St  
Armour & Co., RFD 2  
Arnold Waite Barbershop, 341 Washington St.  
Beard Pontiac, Cadillac, Studebaker, Grove St.  
Beien's Coffee Shop, 344 Washington St.  
Bender's Whiteside Service Station, 202 E. Railroad St.  
Benters & Allen Implement, 323 Washington St.  
Bert Swanson Trucking, RFD2  
Bills Tavern, 345 Washington St.  
Blair's Conoco Service Station, 402 Washington St.  
Bread Rite Bakery, 341 Washington St.  
Brown's Super Market, 313 Washington St.  
Buck's Body Shop, 605 Grove St.  
CB & Q Depot, 411 Washington St.  
Chuck's Place, 107 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Clark's Locker Service, 108 E. Railroad St.  
Collinson Brothers Sand, Prophetstown  
Craig Finnicum Insurance, 110 Grove St.  
Dean Hansen Contractor, 313 Park, Ave.  
Dick's Texaco Service, 103 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Doctor George Nelson, Dentist, 328 ½ Washington St.  
Doctor John Gerhardt, MD, 220 Washington St.  
Doctor L. M. Dingman, Vet, 6 E. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Doctor Q. R. Sly, Chiropractor, 214 Washington St.  
Doctor Sherwood Bryan, Dentist, 108 W 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Doctor Stanley Robinson, MD, 348 Washington St.  
Eli's Electric & Plumbers, RFD 1  
Eugene Wilson Real Estate, 308 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.  
Everett Brown, Contractor, 922 Washington St.  
Fadden's Market, 324 Washington St.  
Farmers Mutual Insurance, 118 E. Railroad St.  
Farmers National Bank, 114 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Federated Store, 312 Washington St.  
Fenn & Son Drugstore, 316 Washington St  
Francis Stone Tree Removal, RFD 3  
Frary & Sons Building Materials, 412 Washington St.  
Freda & Ray's Restaurant, 319 Washington St.  
Gambles, 334 Washington St.  
Gardner Funeral Home, 351 Washington St.

Gardner Furniture Store, 351 Washington St.  
Garner Ambulance Service, 351 Washington St.  
Gene Westlund, Architect, RFD3  
Gentz Sales & Service, 328-330 Washington St.  
George Wilson Real Estate, RFD3  
Gorzney's Sanitary Service, 217 Washington St.  
Grant Mulcay electric Service, 218 Washington St.  
H & L Produce, 105 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Harley Church Trucking, 511 Locust St.  
Hayner Heating & Cooling, 335 Washington St.  
Heralds Drug Store, 326 Washington St.  
Hillcrest Greenhouse & Gift shop, 2 Victoria Dr.  
Johnson Antiques, 709 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Kathryn's Salon, 334 ½ Washington St.  
Kilberg Construction, 412 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
King's Variety Store, 309 Washington St.  
Lawrence E & E Repair Shop, 107 W. Railroad St.  
Legion Lanes, 75 Grove St.  
Lenore's Beauty Shop, 503 Market St.  
M & L Fruit Farm, RFD1  
McNeill Twins Oil Co., 415 Locust St.  
Meier's Super Market, 308 Washington St.  
Micro Gear, 910 Swanson Dr.  
Mileage Mart, 500 Washington St.  
Modern Beauty Shop, 216 Washington St.  
Moline dispatch, 229 Washington St.  
Morris Dever Construction, RFD1  
Mosher Farms, Inc., 209 Railroad St.  
P & J Garage, 109 W. Railroad St.  
Penberthy Manuf. Co., 320 Locust St.  
Perkins Plumbing & Heating, 217 Washington St.  
Phil Swanson Excavating, RFD1  
Pierceson Morot Sales, 112 W. Railroad St.  
Plautz Auction, 211 Washington St.  
Plautz Realty, 211 Washington St.  
Prophet Motel, 201 Washington St.  
Prophetstown Auto Supply, 314 Washington St.  
Prophetstown Cattle Co., Box 85 RFD2  
Prophetstown Cleaners, 310 Washington St.  
Prophetstown Echo, 219 Washington St.

Prophetstown Feed Mill  
Prophetstown Telephone Company, 106 E. Railroad St.  
Prophetstown Thermogas, 6770 Bishop Rd.  
Prophetstown TV Service, 352 Washington St.  
Ray Mulcay Plumbing, 106 Short St.  
Ray Price Feed Grinding, 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Ray Schryver Piano Tuning, 210 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Reichard Insurance Agency, 320 Washington St.  
Robert Hansen TV, 412 Maple St.  
Rock River Lumber & Grain, 02 Washington St.  
Royal Jackson Painting & Decorating, 506 W. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Sandrock Feeds, 3 Elm Court  
Schuneman Insurance Agency, 304 Washington St.  
Scott's Electric, 218 Washington St.  
Scott's Grocery, 320 Lafayette St.  
Shirley's Beauty Shop, 211 Riverside Dr.  
Shull's Clothing, 332 Washington St.  
Siefken Std. Oil Products, 314 Maple St.  
Soliday Farm Equipment, 80 Grove St.  
Sommers Song Shop, 322 Washington St.  
Speed Wash, 349 Washington St  
Sterling Gazette, 335 Washington St.  
Stringer's Cities Service Station, 202 Washington St.  
Taber & Son T V, RFD1  
Ted Peterson Painting Contractor, 311 East St.  
Thompson & Son Livestock, RFD2  
Tots & Teens, 318 Washington St.  
Town & Country Enterprises, RFD1  
Town Theater, 212 Washington St.  
VanDamme Rendering Works, RFD1  
Vet Clinic, RFD3  
W & L Dress Shoppe, 340 Washington St.  
Weburg Jewelry, 302 Washington St.  
Weldon Lawrence & Sons, 320 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Western Auto Store, 350 Washington St.  
Whiteside Cooperative Locker, 116 E. Railroad St.  
Whiteside Service Co., 202 E. Railroad St.  
Wirth's Garage, RFD1

## Business Summary

3 Auto dealers, 2 medical doctors, 2 dentists, 1 chiropractor,  
2 plumbers, 3 TV repairmen, 3 grocery stores, 2 lumber yards,  
5 gas stations, 2 painting contractors, 3 clothing stores,  
2 restaurants, 1 piano tuner, 1 auto supply store, 1 music store,  
1 bakery, 1 Railroad, 1 meat market, 2 locker plants,

In 1964 we could buy anything we needed right here in town, including a new car.

## Our 1964 Locker Plants

Our locker plants back then were places where you could keep your frozen food. You might wonder why there was a need for such businesses. It was because the refrigerator freezers of that day were much different than those today. Very few had much freezer space, usually just a space for a couple of ice cube trays. Some had a little space for popsicles or ice cream bars. In the summer when you needed more ice cubes, there was little if any space left for other frozen items. We always kept our meat in the Clark Locker Plant and in the summer kept other frozen items there as well. It was a challenge to go to the plant, get your ice cream, use it and get it back in the locker before it melted.

The freezer.



The Clark's Locker Service.  
108 E. Railroad St.



The Whiteside Coop Locker Plant.  
116 E. Railroad St.

A couple young fellows in town found a way to enter the locker buildings and steal items out of the lockers, which were just large drawers. Those who rented lockers were given a key for their drawer, but these guys were able to somehow get to the items inside without using the owner's key. Many years later when these boys had grown up one was telling about what he used to do. One of the guys in the group exclaimed: "So that is how our steaks disappeared!" They didn't bother the hot dogs.

One day we invited my homeroom 6<sup>th</sup> grade class to visit us. Recognize anyone?

