

More History in This Spot

105 Sixth Street S



In 1930, Royal Gray, known as Brownie decided to open a cafe and not just any cafe. His cafe was going to be located in the body of a 30 passenger bus. It was a big success and the next year he replaced the bus body with a street car.

BROWNIE GRAY TO OPEN CHICKEN SHACK

"Brownie" Gray has leased the lots owned by Adam Biedermann on the highway at the south end of the bridge, opposite the Pine City Bottling Works, and will open a Chicken Shack. He has purchased a 30 passenger bus body which he will use for his establishment. Bus bodies and street car bodies are used for this purpose in California and other places. He will also put in a filling station.

Pine Poker
March 13, 1930

BROWNIE GRAY WILL ENLARGE CHICKEN SHACK

The Brownie Gray Chicken Shack will be enlarged to over twice its present size by the use of a street car which will replace the bus body used at present. Mr. Gray recently purchased a used street car body in Duluth. It was brought down a few days ago and is being repainted and the interior will be remodeled. The bus body will be moved a little north and will be used as an oil station.

Pine Poker
April 16, 1931



Royal J. Gray, known as Brownie

Learn more about Royal J. Gray in our book:
[The Jonas Gray Family.](#)



Brownie's Cafe about 1932

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The photo on this postcard is from about 1932. It was taken from the north side of the Snake River looking south. If we zoom in we can see Brownie's Cafe.



Tokens for Brownie's

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Alice Lehet, along with her husband George, owned Brownies from 1934 to 1943. In 1994, Alice shared some of her memories in a Pine City Pioneer feature called "Memory Lane"

"The name "Brownies" goes back a few years. A man named Brownie Gray operated a street car cafe on the south side of the property against a steep bank on which the Erridge house stood. When one would come from town, the end of the sidewalk took you down some steps to reach the level of the ground where the street car cafe was. One would also find a small bear there as a tourist attraction.

Alice Lehet 1994



Brownie had a live bear named Buster to help attract customers.

ALICE BUKACHEK, GEORGE LEHET WED

Miss Alice Bukachek, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bukachek of Pine City, and George Lehet, son of Mrs. Mary Lehet of Moose Lake, were united in marriage at Grantsburg on Wednesday evening of last week, November 2nd. The ceremony was performed by Judge Taylor of that place.

The bride spent most of her life in this community. She is a graduate of the local high school and normal training department and taught in one of the rural schools for a couple of years. She has been employed at the Sixty-One Way Cafe since last June. The groom is a graduate of the Moose Lake high school and has also been employed at the cafe since last spring. The newlyweds have an apartment upstairs in the cafe building where they will make their home.

Pine Poker
November 10, 1932

Alice and George were both working at the Sixty-One Way Cafe when they were married in 1932.

"In 1933 George went to work for Brownie. One day he had served two hamburgers to a couple, went back to get their beverage, heard a scream and hurried to give them help. The bear had somehow managed to get loose, walked in and reached for their hamburgers. By that time the woman was standing on the booth and George was escorting "Buster" back to the pen.

"A couple of months later Brownie became ill

and died after a brief illness. We bought the street car cafe but not the bear and already began thinking of something bigger, a train coach. We were paying rent on the land, but we wanted to buy it. Adam Biederman owned the land, and he wouldn't sell. So we paid rent, ordered our coach and built the foundation for it on the bank of the river.

"The coach was delivered to Pine City and left on a side track by the feed mill. Then Al Blomberg, Fred Eastman, Frank and Herb Bukachek, with the help of some more men, took on the job of moving the coach to its destination, the south bank of the Snake River. They had to plank it all the way so they wouldn't ruin the streets and pavement.

"Once the coach was in place, the work on the inside began. First an L-shaped addition was built on the north and west side of the coach to serve as a kitchen, pastry center and a stock room. A small bar and back bar were placed at the west end of the coach. The rest was reserved for the booths. The red plush seats were there so we just made a table between each pair.

"Carl Kvech, from Rock Creek, painted brownie logos on our advertising signs. He also painted a cover for the rim and tire, which was carried on the back end of my brother's 1929 car. (The whole wheel wasn't taken off in those days).

Alice Lehet 1994

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This photo was taken about 1940. Looking south you can see Brownies Cafe on the southwest corner of the bridge.

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"Finally we were ready for business, and it was great! Walt Schwartzwald owned a dance hall called the Crystal Palace, later called the The Topic. Dances were held every night of the week and drew big crowds. After the dance was over, "Brownies" would be packed with customers ordering hamburgers, vegetable soup or chili. These were the three most popular selections at that time of the night. Vegetable soup was ten cents a bowl, and chili was 15 cents. Both were served with crackers and butter. A hamburger on a large bun was ten cents and came wrapped in a special napkin to serve as a plate.

"The daytime menu always had a choice of two special meals ready to serve, which could be ordered as a plate luncheon or as a dinner. Plate luncheons were 35 cents, and dinners were 50 cents.

"Short orders were available at anytime. Homemade doughnuts and pies were made daily and cake as needed.

"We worked long hours, but we enjoyed it. When George returned from the service in January 1946, our lease was up, and Adam's son, Michael Biederman, was our new landlord. Like his dad, he wouldn't sell us the land either. It ended up that we sold the cafe to Mike and his wife. Harland Ruby and his wife were the next ones. I don't know who else after that used "Brownies" as a cafe."

Alice Lehet 1994

Crystal Palace



Riverview Cafe

ANNOUNCEMENT Riverview Cafe OPENING JULY 4

Formerly Brownie's Cafe, under the management of Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Biedermann.

REFRESHMENTS

LUNCHEONS

BEER

MINNOWS

FOR THE

FISHERMEN

ALL SIZES

COOLEST SPOT IN TOWN

Hamburgers --- Our Specialty

BY THE BRIDGE

In 1946 the Mike Biedermanns took over Brownie's and changed the name to Riverview Cafe.

Pine Poker Pioneer
July 4, 1946

More History in This Spot

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The cafe changed hands frequently through the 40's.



Pine Poker Pioneer
November 20, 1947



Pine Poker Pioneer
October 13, 1949



Pine Poker Pioneer
October 27, 1949

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In 1954 Carl Stucke and his wife bought the Riverview Cafe and converted it into a sport shop.

Carl Stucke Buys Riverview Cafe

Carl Stucke of Rush City recently purchased the former Riverview Cafe property on the bank of Snake River at the South end of the bridge, from Otto Soos. He also bought the boats, bait and minnow business from O. E. Blood.

Mr. and Mrs. Stucke will operate the boat and bait business at their newly acquired location and will also install a stock of sporting goods.

The announcement of the opening will appear in this paper at an early date.

The Stuckes are selling the contents of the cafe.

Pine Poker Pioneer
March 25, 1954

Minnows for Sale

All Sizes Muskie, Pike & Crappie Minnows

baits of all kinds

Boats for Rent

Fishing Tackle & Sporting Goods
EVINRUDE OUTBOARD MOTORS

ALUMA CRAFT BOATS

CANDY - CIGARETTES - SOFT DRINKS

ICE CREAM - BEER

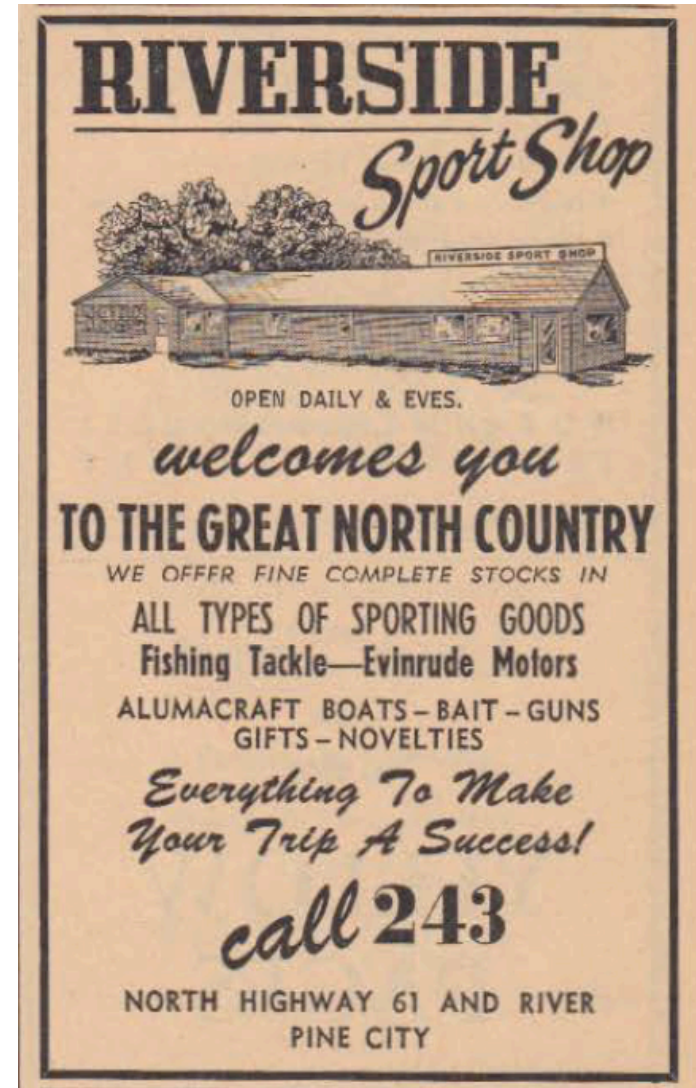
OPEN EVERY DAY AND EVENINGS

Riverside Sport Shop

Carl Stucke, owner

TELEPHONE 243

Pine Poker Pioneer
May 13, 1954



RIVERSIDE
Sport Shop

OPEN DAILY & EVES.

welcomes you

TO THE GREAT NORTH COUNTRY

WE OFFER FINE COMPLETE STOCKS IN

ALL TYPES OF SPORTING GOODS
Fishing Tackle—Evinrude Motors
ALUMACRAFT BOATS—BAIT—GUNS
GIFTS—NOVELTIES

*Everything To Make
Your Trip A Success!*

call 243

NORTH HIGHWAY 61 AND RIVER
PINE CITY

1956 Phone Book

More History in This Spot

105 Sixth Street S

Carls Purchase Sport Shop

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Carl of Chanute, Kansas, have purchased the Riverside Sport Shop from Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stucke who have been in the business three years.

The Carls have four children, three of whom are in school. They are adding two rooms to the building for needed space.

Mr. Carl, who is acquainted in the Wrenshall, Minnesota area, was in the feed and trucking business in Kansas.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Carl are anxious to get acquainted and offered an invitation for people to stop in and meet them. They plan to carry on the same type of business, which featured the sale of boats, motors, sporting equipment and live bait.

Pine Poker Pioneer
September 1956

In 1956 the Harold Carls of Chanute, Kansas bought the sport shop from Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stucke. Interestingly Harold Carl had memories of this location from 1934, which he shared in the 1994 Memory Lane feature.

HAROLD CARL wrote: "Back in 1934 I used to drive truck through Pine City at night. We would pull into the Pure Oil gas station in the little rock building (today houses Happy Tails Pet Grooming, next to Scott's Major Muffler). When we left the truck there to be serviced, we would walk across the street to the old railroad car. It was used as a coffee shop. There was also an old log cabin in back of the car. It was used for gambling and drinking. A person called Brownie ran it then."

Carl went on to say, "There was an old seven-room house just south of the phone booth owned by two older ladies. I bought the house and lots. I tore down the house to make room for the motel I was building and opening in the spring of 1958. Some material from the house was used in building the motel."

Pine City Pioneer
Memory Lane 1994

Open House Held At The Riverside Motel Sunday

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Carl, proprietors of the new Riverside Motel, express their appreciation to all who called during the open house at the motel Sunday afternoon. About 200 people viewed the project.

The Carls hope to be ready to accept reservations by the end of this week. The motel has eight units including a utility room and a double unit.

Pine Poker Pioneer
May 15, 1958

In 1958 the Harold Carls added a motel to the property.

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A 49-pound sturgeon caught by Douglas C. Hostrawser, 539 Harrison Ave., St. Paul, gave him the battle and the thrill of his life. He hooked the big fish at about 10 a.m. Saturday and after a battle lasting an hour the lunger gave up. Mr. Hostrawser has a cottage on the east side of Cross lake.

Pine Poker Pioneer
June 19, 1958

More History in This Spot

105 Sixth Street S



Riverside Sport Shop



Riverside Motel 1967

**RIVERSIDE
MOTEL
&
SPORT SHOP**

OPEN YEAR AROUND

ONE STOP FISHING & HUNTING
HEADQUARTERS

- FREE TV IN EACH UNIT
- STEAM HEAT
- SHOWERS & TUBS
- BOAT & MOTOR RENTAL
- 4 BLKS FROM BATHING BEACH

ON THE RIVER IN THE HEART
OF TOWN

CALL 629-2529

105-6 ST PINE CITY
N HWY 61 & THE RIVER

1963 Phone Book

More History in This Spot

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In 1991 Harold Carl sold the sport shop and the motel. It was renamed the River Front Marina.



In 1994 when the owner died, Roger Cummings, owner of the neighboring Chrysler Dodge dealership, saw a chance to expand his business. He purchased the 105 property and 105 Sixth Street South was joined with 135 Sixth Street South. It remains that way today.