

The Conrad Fink / Horace Young home is located at 322 – 1<sup>st</sup> Street West (or Lot 6 of Block 41) in downtown Chaska. The lot was originally platted by the Shaska Company. The Shaska Company sold lots 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 to Charles A. Warner in March 1866.

Mr. Warner was very active in the growing town of Chaska. According to a January 1865 Weekly Valley Herald article, Mr. Warner purchased a steam saw mill in West St. Paul and removed it to Chaska. A July 1866 Weekly Valley Herald article announces a brick addition being added to Mr. Warner's store. Unfortunately, Mr. Warner died in October 1867 after contracting Typhoid Fever. He was 38 years old.

After the death of Mr. Warner, Lots 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of block 41 were transferred to his wife Catherine through probate. There was no indication of a home existing on lot 6 of block 41 while it was owned by the Warner family. Mrs. Warner held title to the lots until 1882. She sold lots 6, 7, and 8 to Konrad (Conrad) Fink in June 1882.

Conrad Fink was no stranger to the area, as he had been residing on a 180-acre farm on the south side of Chaska Lake since the mid 1850's. [Chaska's Athletic Park is located on the north side of Chaska Lake.] Mr. Fink was one of the Charter Members of the Guardian Angles Catholic Church in 1858. The 1880 Census for the city of Carver lists Mr. Fink, 50, his wife Mina, 40, and their children, Steven, 19, Conrad, 17, Joseph 15, Juliane, 13, John, 11, Mathias, 9, Magdalina, 7, and Leopold, 2.



Conrad Fink Family

### **The Home is Built**

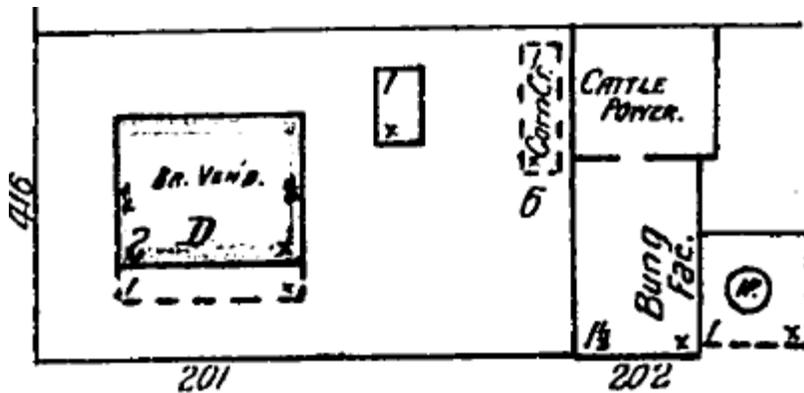
In April 1883, the Weekly Valley Herald reported Conrad Fink had commenced working on the foundation for his new residence. A family member believes Mr. Fink got the rocks for the foundation of his home from the nearby Minnesota River bottom. Another family member described the basement of the home as fairly deep with plenty of head room.

In August 1883, the Weekly Valley Herald reported Conrad Fink would be commencing on his new residence in the coming week. The home was described as a veneered building.

In October 1883, the Valley Herald reported the Conrad Fink residence had been enclosed, and when it was fully completed it would make a fine appearance. The brick work on the home was completed by the Oestreich Bros.



In 1885, Mr. Fink built a Wood Turning and Bung factory on lot 6 with his house. Bungs are wooden plugs used to plug whiskey or pickle barrels. An 1885 Sanborn map notes the factory will be powered by horses. The 1899 Sanborn map of lot 6 (shown below) notes cattle power in Mr. Fink's bung factory.



Mr. Fink operated his Wood Turning and Bung factory from this location until it was torn down in 1911



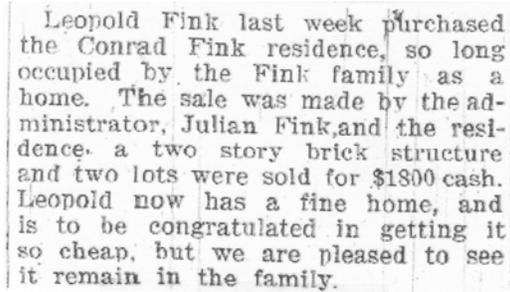
Pictured in front of the Fink Wood Turning and Bung Factory are Anton Fink, Charlie Resch, and Math Fink. The steeple in the background is Guardian Angels Catholic Church.

Mr. Fink appears to have been a man who liked to keep busy. He was very much an entrepreneur. The Weekly Valley Herald Newspaper referenced Mr. Fink's twice daily milk wagon in 1882, helping his sons with a Steam Saw Mill near Hutchinson in 1887, and manufacturing syrup from cane in 1890.

Conrad and his wife Wilhelmina resided in this home for many years. Wilhelmina passed away in March 1904. Conrad passed away in March 1908. Conrad's obituary described him as a noble pioneer, and a man left with a heavy brow after his wife passed away a few years earlier. It also described him as a citizen of the highest type, a loyal Christian and member of the Catholic Congregation, a noble husband and father, and "... *the type of man who makes lots of friends and but few enemies ...*"

### **The Home Stays in the Fink Family**

The Conrad and Wilhelmina Fink home was sold to their son Leopold in July 1909. Leopold purchased lots 006 and 007 of block 41. The Weekly Valley Herald announced the 1909 sale.



Leopold Fink last week purchased the Conrad Fink residence, so long occupied by the Fink family as a home. The sale was made by the administrator, Julian Fink, and the residence, a two story brick structure and two lots were sold for \$1800 cash. Leopold now has a fine home, and is to be congratulated in getting it so cheap, but we are pleased to see it remain in the family.

Leopold Fink sold lot 007 of block 41 to John Burkhart in April 1915.

The 1910 Census for the city of Chaska listed Leopold, his wife Annie, both 31, and their seven-year-old daughter Adeline as residents of the home. Adeline married Jerome Holzer in May 1924. The Holzer wedding reception was held at the Fink home. The Weekly Valley Herald mentioned a breakfast reception following the wedding with an afternoon reception later in the day.

At the time of Conrad Fink's death in March 1908, Leopold and his brother Mathias were listed as managers of their father's dairy business. Leopold also worked at his father's Bung factory, started a cement contracting business, and went into partnership with Albert Leivermann in a retail meat business.

Leopold Fink passed away at the age of 51 in March 1930. His obituary described him as "*well known ... a popular favorite ... a genial, whole-souled fellow, generous to a fault, the friend of everybody.*" Anna Fink may have moved to California later in 1930. Title for lot 006 of block 41 was transferred to Anna Fink in June 1931.

### **Local World War I Veteran and Business Owner moves into the Home**

Horace and Margaret Young, and their children Harold, 5, Margaret, 4, Mary, 2, and baby Elmer moved into the home in 1930, and rented the home for several years.

Horace Young was the son of Judge and Mrs. A.F. Young. The Weekly Valley Herald wrote about Horace joining the Army in December 1918, and published some of the letters he sent "*back home*" from San Antonio, Texas while he was in the Army. Mr. Young mentions receiving the Weekly Valley Herald and reading every page with interest. He thanked the people back home for sending him a box and its contents, and how nice it was to be remembered.

Horace Young married Margaret Hart in June 1924. He started managing the Rex Movie House in Chaska around the same time. He purchased the Rex from W.T. Haugen in May 1925. The first "talking" pictures were shown at the Rex in 1939.

Anna Fink sold the Fink home to Horace Young in January 1938. By this time the Young family had grown and included, Harold, 13, Margaret, 11, Mary, 10, Elmer, 9,

Bert 8, Wally, 6, Betty, 5, and 3-year-old Myrna. Their youngest daughter Irene was born a few years later.



Horace Young Family

Horace Young owned the Rex Theatre until his death in September 1956. He also worked for the American Crystal Sugar Company for 23 years. Horace's obituary described him as a "*Chaska Businessman ... Managed Rex Theater Since 1924 ...*" He was a member of the American Legion, past President of the Southern Minnesota Theater Owners Association, and President of the Mount Pleasant Cemetery Association.

Title to the home was transferred to Margaret Young in October 1959. Margaret continued living in the home, and at some point her mother, Catherine Hart, moved in with her. Catherine Hart lived in the home with her daughter Margaret for about thirty years. Catherine's birthdays brought many of the family members back for a visit.

The home has been described as a fun loving welcoming place, much like "Grand Central Station." The Young family members returned to the home for holidays and many family events. When the Young family daughters got married they had a wedding dinner at the Guardian Angels Catholic Church followed by a party at the home.

Margaret Young was known for working at the Chaska Rex Theater, attending daily Mass at the Guardian Angels Catholic Church, and for belonging to her Bridge Club for 50 years. Margaret Young passed away in November 1992.

### **The Home Stays in the Young Family**

After Margaret Young passed away there were discussions within the family about who might be interested in purchasing the home from her estate. Margaret's grandson John Perrill expressed interest in purchasing the home for himself and his Fiancée Madeline. John Perrill is the son of Horace and Margaret Young's youngest daughter Irene. John and his Fiancée' Madeline purchased the home in March 1993. They were married in May 1993.

John and Madeline Perrill resided in the home until July 2005. They sold the home when they purchased the historic Eder – Baer home across the street. Before the Perrills moved out of the home they held a going away party for the house. Many of the children, grandchildren, and extended family members of Horace and Margaret Young returned to the home for one last family visit.

### **The Home is sold to a Descendant of Conrad Fink**

Norman and Lisa Oberski purchased the home from John and Madeline Perrill in July 2005. Lisa Oberski is the great-great granddaughter of Conrad and Wilhelmina Fink, great granddaughter of Conrad's son Joseph, granddaughter of Joseph's son Henry, and daughter of Henry's daughter Patricia. Lisa Oberski knew she wanted to own the home when she learned it was for sale. The Oberski's still own the home.

*\*\* This history of the Conrad Fink / Horace Young home was researched, compiled, and written by Debbie Boe. Ms. Boe is a Commissioner on the City of Chaska Heritage Preservation Commission. \*\**