



James Family To Be Honored At 55th Annual Alexander Old Settler's Picnic Saturday

By Linda Wells

Frederick (Freddy) and Marilyn James, this year's honorees at the 55th Annual Old Settler's Picnic, will ride in the parade Saturday, Sept. 2, in their "buggy with the fringe on top". The buggy originally belonged to Marilyn's grandmother, who rode from Portal, ND to Crosby, ND, before the turn of the last century. The buggy was refurbished by Freddy years ago and has since been driven in parades and weddings. Two former North Dakota governors, Art Link and Allen Olson have also ridden in the "Democrat Buggy". All that Freddy ever asked in return was a picture.

This year, Freddy will not be driving the buggy in the parade. He and Marilyn will be chauffeured by Marilyn's brother, Jerry Bratsberg.

Freddy, a longtime rancher/cowboy, was raised on a farm seven miles southeast of Alexander, where both his father and grandfather homesteaded. He and Marilyn, who was born in the Portal and Lignite, ND area, but moved to Alexander to live with her mother and step-father, met at a dance in Alexander.

"When I walked into the hall I saw this pretty brown-eyed girl across the room. I asked her to dance, but she ate supper with

another guy. This made me mad and I decided I had to work harder. I spent the rest of the night dancing with her and took her home; and I've taken her home ever since," laughs Freddy.

Freddy and Marilyn were married March 11, 1949 and lived for 32 years on their farm, but when their son, Kit, got married they moved to the Badlands about 20 years ago. "The Badlands was always my love," states Freddy.

The James' family consists of Kathy, who lives in Medora and operates James Java Coffee Shop in the summer and is a substitute teacher in the winter. Sherri Tracy, lives in Des Moines, IA, and along with her husband, are involved in racing horses. They have three children, Tanner, Jake and Geena. Kit, who with his wife, Tammy, live on the farm and have three children, Jessica, Kole and Bo. Bonnie Ginther, who is a teacher at Lewis and Clark Elementary School in Williston has two children, Kelcie and Rory. Their daughter, Mary Lou, was killed four years ago in a car accident. She had two sons, Brady and Rowdy Lund, Watford City.

For the Old Settler's events, see inside today's Roundup.