Employee Benefits History

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A Peek at (some of) the History of St. Ben’s & St. John’s Employee Benefits

From a handshake to employee handbooks...A peek at (some of) the history of St. Ben’s & St. John’s Employee Benefits

[HR website retrieved March 2, 2011.]
Some lay workers were needed to do the physical labor.
Farm worker photo LP289, 1920s, Ascheman photo collection, St. John’s Abbey Archives
Plasterers in the quad, 1885; photo from St. John’s at 150, p. 102, St. John’s Abbey collection
1866-era wages at St. John’s
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SJUArchives,3431 Scriptorium Dec. 1954 – from Alexius Hoffmann’s copy of an account re: how much earliest workers earned building the Old Stone House in 1866. Joseph Broker was related to Abbot Alexius Edelbrock; the Broker farm still exists along the Wobegon Trail. Peter Eich’s descendant, Alcuin Eich, still owns the farmstead just west of St. John’s, on the far side of Stumpf Lake.
Workers and their families lived in Flynnville (later Flynntown) – including Michael Roske and his son Joe.
LP156, Flynnville, Ascheman photo collection, St. John’s Abbey Archives
LP184, Roske family, Ascheman photo collection; in *St. John’s at 150*, p. 104
Also: July 24, 1947 http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?/CSBArchNews,30068
“The Flynnville Sluggers, sponsored by St. John’s Worker’s Guild, outhustled Sundstrom’s Children in a hard fought game on July 18 to win the championship of the summer session softball league.”
Meanwhile, at St. Ben’s…

The sisters hired workmen to help build and farm. They lived in the St. Joe area.

Bricklayers photo from http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm/ref/collection/stbm/id/408, 1912, St. Ben’s Monastery collection

St. Joseph main street from O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\CSB photos from SBMA\COLLEGE\003College.jpg.
St. Ben’s farming operation on campus was extensive.  

http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/stbm&CISOPTR=501&CISOBOX=1&REC=9 aerial view of SBM farm, 1940s. “In their efforts to be self-supporting from their very beginnings, the Sisters developed a farm area. By the 1940s, the farm of 640 acres of pastures and cultivated fields for crops included large gardens and shelters for cows, pigs, sheep and chickens.”
A large barn was close to the Monastery

http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SBM,189, 1940s

SBM.11b39 Aerial view of campus including the Sacred Heart Chapel (cropped)
The barn was moved to the west edge of campus in the early 1950s. Barn photo 2007 by the archivist; O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\Buildings Photos\CSB Buildings\CSB Archives\June 23-25, 2007\CSB\CSB261.jpg. Inset photo of barn being moved, ca. early 1950s, from the St. Ben’s Monastery Archives. Hog barn photo from LaVerne Lodermeier Landwehr: O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\Buildings Photos\Monastery\St. Isidore Farm (Hog Barn).jpg.
The sisters also had a hog farm, SE of campus, now “Grace Acres”, operated ca. 1960 by George and Anna Lodermeier
Photos from LaVerne Lodermeier Landwehr:
O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\Buildings Photos\Monastery\St. Isidore Farm (house).jpg and St. Isidore barn.jpg;
Anna (Mauer) and George Lodermeier, ca. 1950
March 1948: “Workmen’s Social Club” begins

S. Evin Rademacher, 2011: Workmen also lived in the horse barn. “Caedmon house (once the horse barn) we now call the Welcoming House. . . St. Wendelin’s is just east of it – between Caedmon and the circle drive in front of chapel. The horse barn had sleeping quarters for our men employees who sort of worked here all their lives and didn’t have homes of their own.”
Employee benefits included more than wages
14.3.1.f3 007005.jpg
Lard was one of the “certain food items” employees could buy – and a major ingredient in the Lodermeier Christmas cookies!

January 1962 - 14.2.1.f16Bk1p1.jpg
“Social Club” name chosen over “union”

14.3.1.f3 006004.jpg and 14.3.1.f3 006005.jpg
List of dues paid, 1949 / “The photo of S. Benedict laughing is by far the most typical.”

14.3.1.f3 007001.jpg
1962 pay rates: employees received $5/month extra for each additional child
Dated 6-16-62, 14.3.1.f3.007022.jpg; Power house included in Supervisory rates, Maintenance included in Agricultural rates

$ 225/month = $ 1.25/hour

$ 180/month = $ 1.00/hour

(St. Ben's, 1962)
Fr. Ignatius was the Procurator (Treasurer) and helped develop the initial Employee Handbook.

Photos from *Sagatagan*, 1948 and 1950, p. 8[?].

1956 May 18, p. 4 [http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?/CSBArchNews,30755](http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?/CSBArchNews,30755) *The Record* “Fr. Ignatius Appointed to New Position” - “The formation of the St. John’s Abbey Workers' Guild during this period was encouraged and supported by Father Ignatius as a means of promoting closer contact between the abbey and its lay workers.”
Abbey Employment Policy 1956-57: vacations and holidays with pay were rare
1957 Empl Pol Box 1601.f1_Page_1.jpg (also 1956, and based on earlier one which Ignatius had shared with St. Ben’s).
Abbey Employment Policy 1956-57: five cents more pay per hour for each additional child

1957 Empl Pol Box 1601.f1_Page_2.jpg (also 1956, and based on earlier one which Ignatius had shared with St. Ben’s)
The Workers’ Guild: St. John’s version of a union

*St. John’s at 150*, p. 107. Photo from St. John’s Abbey Archives.
Many Guild members’ names are familiar and still represented on campus

From box 600:11
Three of John Dwyer’s sons are St. John’s employees now

From box 600:11
Compiled in March 2011 from resources in the CSB, SJU, St. Ben’s Monastery and St. John’s Abbey Archives and other sources cited herein by Peggy Landwehr Roske, CSB/SJU Archivist

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