

John Gibbs marked his 90th birthday with party May 27

John 'Jack' Mitchell Gibbs was the guest of honor at a 90th birthday party May 27 at the Willow City Community Hall. His actual birthday was May 31.

Although Jack has been a man without a home much of his life—he also is a man everyone liked, a fact which was definitely attested to by the large group of friends and relatives present for the occasion.

Jack is one of four remaining members of the nine John Harlow and Ann Eliza Mitchell Gibbs children, some of whom were born in Armstrong, Iowa, and the rest in Blaine Township of Bottineau County. The other three are: William Harlo, Moorhead, Minn.; Jim,



Jim and Jack Gibbs

Phoenix, Ariz., and Muriel Guttrud, Texas. The deceased brothers and sisters were: Jennie Louise, Mrs. John Oscar Hagen, Percy Ray 'Dick' Gibbs, Susie, Mrs. John Johnson, Mary, Mrs. Gilbert Hagen and Gladys, Mrs. Julius Hegg.

Jack spent his working days as a farm laborer for many area farmers, including Hans Hill and the Foss Brothers of the Overly/ Bottineau area, the late Elmer and Harold Welkes and Albert Anderson in the Willow City area. His winters were spent with family, particularly with Gilbert and Mary, whose children really got to know Uncle Jack, and with his brother, Jim in Phoenix. Since moving to the Soldiers Home in Lisbon several years ago, he has still taken an occasional trip to Phoenix and quite often spends holidays with Marlyce Hagen Cole and family at Valley City.

In fact, when a birthday party was planned, it was Marlyce who was the instigator of the project. While Jack was with some of the family the day before the party and someone made a slip and asked what time they were going to eat in Willow City Sunday, Jack said, "Oh that's okay, I read about my party in the Bottineau paper." Once again, his sense of humor came smiling through.

A 1 p.m. potluck dinner was enjoyed by all present with two birthday cakes baked by Linda McNae and coffee served all afternoon to the well-wishers. Later in the afternoon Gene and Ruth Baune and Opal Hagen provided music enjoyed by all.

Besides his brother, Jim, others present representing the different families were: (Dick) Cecil, wife Carrie, Morris and Chester Gibbs, Pauline Schoenborn, Crystal Dolbeare and Jean Gibbs; (Mary) Raymond and Opal Hagen and daughter, Ramona Sather and husband, Brian, Norene Hagen McNae, husband Floyd and all their children except Melvin, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and Marlyce Hagen Cole, husband Raymond, their three sons and families and an exchange student from Denmark; (Susie) Hazel Johnson McNae and Ruby Johnson Wittmayer; (Jennie) Muriel Hagen Wagner and family, Willard Wagner, husband of the late Ilene Wagen Wagner and son Bob, John Hagen and Donald Hagen and wife, Mae and son and many more family members of those mentioned above. What started out to be a great party for Jack, really became a family reunion for the entire John Gibbs family.

Note: This poem was written and read at Jack's party by his niece, Hazel McNea of Bottineau.

Uncle Jack

*Birthday greetings from friends in
Bottineau are being sent;
No cards nor gifts as all their money,
they have spent.
But enclosed are happy and good
wishes galore.
We hope you reach the age of at least a
hundred and four.*

*At ninety you are just a big kid at
heart,
Until those lousy aches and pains do*

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*their part.
 Cake and ice cream for all of us,
 You really shouldn't have fussed.*

*Birthdays come and birthdays go,
 Just like your hair and also your
 dough.
 Phoenix isn't so great, should I tell you
 why?
 Have you been there May, June, July?
 Don't fly!*

*You can fry your breakfast egg on the
 sidewalk;
 That is really a fact, not just ND talk.
 Jack plays cards, he's been known to
 grand,
 Without an ace or a face in his hand.*

*For your birthday, did you really want
 a teddy bear?
 Sorry, we didn't produce, but next year*

*we will get you a pair.
 Tell me, how did you remain single,
 When in your pockets, the money did
 jingle?.*

*Happy, happy birthday and many
 more,
 May happiness and wealth on you
 pour.
 Health and best of luck be in store,
 We don't want to be a frightful bore.
 So we do tell you we are your friend,
 Down life's road and around the bend.
 Now have something to eat and drink,
 Talk and smile and stay in the pink.*

*To Uncle Jack with a sense of humor,
 Have you heard the latest rumor?
 Happy Birthday to one neat guy!
 Who doesn't like to wear a tie.*

May 31, 1990