These stories from local history are sometimes so extraordinary it's hard to believe they actually happened. Check out 'fact or fiction' stories: they're actual Enterprise news clips reprinted from the past.

An automobile and a brick building were damaged here Monday evening in a freak mishap. Damage to the car was estimated at $75 to $100. No estimate in the building damage has been reported, but it is expected to be a similar amount.

Involved in the unusual accident were a 1963 Chevrolet owned by Mr. and Mrs. Max Starbuck and the office building of Harry Peach. The building is owned by the Sterling Savings and Loan Association.

Mrs. Starbuck apparently did not have the shift lever completely in the park position when she got out of the vehicle in the alley behind the Ben Franklin store, and it slid into the reverse position after she was out of the car. The George Sumpters reside in an apartment in the rear of the store building, and Mrs. Starbuck had stopped to pick up Mrs. Sumpter.

After she stepped out of the car, it began to move backward down the alley to the south, and Mrs. Starbuck was unable to get into the vehicle to stop it. The car backed approximately 200 feet—out of the alley, across Highway 6, up over the curb on the south side of the street—and crashed against the building. A hole was knocked in the brick wall and a window was damaged.

The collision jolted the shift lever into the low position and the car then began to move briskly back across the highway, headed north. Gordon Leben of Amherst, driving along the highway, said he saw the car backing across the street but at first thought that some foolish driver was in the vehicle.

Taking a closer look, he discovered that there was no driver, so he immediately stopped his car, quickly got out and ran after the Starbuck vehicle as it rolled north across the street. He leaped into the moving vehicle and braked it to a stop after it had traveled approximately 90 feet from the building it had struck and had jumped the curb on the north side of the street.

When Leben got the car stopped, it was headed directly toward another vehicle that was parked parallel to the sidewalk near the rear of Smythe's Department Store.

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