

## DEKALB AG office Historical Marker Dedication

September 11, 2018

Doug Roberts

My grandparents were Eleanor and Tom Roberts, Sr.

My parents were Mary and Charlie Roberts, my mother was the daughter of Eleanor and Tom, Sr, married a guy with the same last name from Ohio she met while attending college in Indiana.

Today's dedication is about the people who worked for the DEKALB companies. The DEKALB Ag family. I am honored and truly blessed to be able to be here to recognize the contributions so many people made to this company. Thank you to all of you here and to those who could not make this trip, for your efforts that made this company a family and a success!

I started with DEKALB in 1952.

In the 60's I remember the 5<sup>th</sup> Street office where tours were given of the computer room where there were punch card operators, magnetic reel to reel tapes and the hum of printers running.

Dad would take us to the office on the weekend and I would sit at the telephone switchboard and pull out the plugs and toggle the switches.

In the summer of 1966 when this location was opened I detasseled corn. Any one else remember that job? Most kids my age that grew up in DeKalb County detasseled as a summer job...every one of those "kids" deserves a thanks.

In 1967 I worked on the grounds crew here at the home office. On this campus was the corn research office, headquarters, poultry research buildings and corn demonstration plots. Later a pig nursery was added. Across the street was a large poultry growing complex and an active company farm with the house and barn footprint right across the road.

There were two flag poles out front of this building when the entrance faced Sycamore Road. USA flag on one pole. The State flag of Illinois flew on the second pole unless there was someone visiting from another country. The flag of the visitor's country was raised on the second pole. Growing up, it was fun to try to guess the flag's country and to know people from other countries were visiting DeKalb, IL. (India, France, Argentina and Chicago)

Looking back for me, the AG was family and family was the AG. I don't think you had to have my last name to feel that way.

This was a special place, DEKALB employees were dedicated and hard-working people from all walks of life. Many employees worked here because they lived here. Others came to DeKalb, IL to work at DEKALB Ag. Many made their lives' about DEKALB just like my life was about DEKALB.

I want to recognize each of you for your efforts whether you are retired or if you promote the DEKALB brand today. I ask you to pass on a big thank you to any of your friends who could not make it here today.

This was a special place for me and I know it was a special place for many of you. Congratulations on the dedication of this historical place and thank you.