

A population explosion (or at least a fair-sized boom) boosted Sarpy County's head count from 10,835 in 1940 to 15,693 in 1950 – a gain of 4,858 or nearly 45% in 10 years.

City populations were reported in the 1950 census: Bellevue 3,858 (over 3 times its 1940 figure), Papillion 1,034 (an increase of over 35%), Springfield 377 (just 7 more than the 1940 figure of 370), and Gretna 438 (about a 10% loss compared to 1940).

The Baby Boom after WW II continued into the 1950s. That and many other factors including the growth of the whole metropolitan area resulted in the doubling of the county's population between 1950 and 1960.

One of the first stretches of Nebraska's part of the Interstate Highway system opened in northwestern Sarpy County. It took a few decades for the expected development along its corridor, but the highway nevertheless opened up opportunities for commercial and residential growth along the county's few miles of roadway.

One of the most important occurrences of the 1950s was a massive change in the county's educational system. Until that time, over 30 school districts existed in the county. Almost all were rural districts without high schools. Most of the schools in those districts were the typical one-room, one-teacher schools that characterized the county during its 100-year history. Consolidation of school districts occurred throughout the county in the mid-to-late 1950s. Within a few years nearly all the rural schools had merged with city districts with high schools. The result was basically four city-based high school districts: Bellevue, Papillion, Gretna, and Springfield-Platteview. A few districts along the county's northern edge joined either the Millard or the Omaha Districts.

Sarpy County celebrated its Centennial in 1957. A week-long program included a daily pageant with a county-wide cast re-enacting scenes from our county's history.

Meanwhile, back at the Fort (now Offutt Air Force Base) . . . In 1950, Congress authorized the construction of Wherry Housing units. Capehart Housing units were authorized in 1956 and that same year the new Base Chapel was dedicated. The first 9-hole golf course on the base was opened in 1958, and in 1959, B-36 #22217 was received to become the first aircraft for the Strategic Aerospace Museum, which was established on part of an abandoned runway on the base.