

Community Assistantship Program

Appleton Celebrating 125 years 1881-2006

Prepared in partnership with
Appleton Chamber

Prepared by
Anne Bigley
Research Assistant

University of Minnesota
May, 2007

CAP Report 119

May 2007

CAP is a cross-college, cross-campus University of Minnesota initiative coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.

Funds for this project were generously provided by CURA.

This is a publication of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), an all-University applied research and technology center at the University of Minnesota that connects faculty and students with community organizations and public institutions working on significant public policy issues in Minnesota. The content of this report is the responsibility of the author and is not necessarily endorsed by CAP, CURA or the University of Minnesota.

© 2007 by The Regents of the University of Minnesota. This publication may be reproduced in its entirety (except photographs or other materials reprinted here with permission from other sources) in print or electronic form, for noncommercial educational and nonprofit use only, provided that two copies of the resulting publication are sent to the CURA editor at the address below and that the following acknowledgment is included: "Reprinted with permission of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)." For information regarding commercial reprints or reproduction of portions of this publication, contact the CURA editor at the address below.

This publication may be available in alternate formats upon request.

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)
University of Minnesota
330 HHH Center
301--19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
Phone: (612) 625-1551
Fax: (612) 626-0273
E-mail: cura@umn.edu
Web site: <http://www.cura.umn.edu>

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appleton: The Early Years	2
Churches.....	3
The W.J. Jennison Mill	11
Hotels	14
Schools.....	17
Railroads.....	29
The Appleton Press	31
Healthcare	32
Banks	34
City Hall.....	34
The Reno Theater.....	37
Pioneer Public Television	39
Prairie Correctional Facility.....	41
Organizations	45
Elmer A. Benson: Appleton's Governor.....	49
Home of Honored Veterans	50
Natural Disasters	54
Appleton Today	55
Sources	59

This document was made possible through the support of the Martinson Foundation, The Appleton Project, and the Appleton Community Foundation. We also would like to thank the University of Minnesota's Community Assistance Program. The University provided and intern, Annie Bigley, from the University of Minnesota, Morris, to collect and develop this book.

We would also like to thank the numerous community volunteers who also assisted with this publication. Some were interviewed, many provided photographs, stories, facts, or assisted with editing. The booklet was intended as an overview of some of the information about Appleton in the last 125 years. We recognize that not everything or everyone was able to be included and apologize for any errors or omissions.

The Appleton Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 98
Appleton, Minnesota 56208
320-289-1527
www.appletonmn.com

Appleton: The Early Years

Township Background

In the 1870's Appleton was being settled by ambitious people with names like Lathrop, Clark and Phelps. The homes were made of sod, with only shallow wells for drinking water. Wild animals and an occasional farm animal made up their diet.

Originally there was one large township called Fairfield which split into Clarksville and Phelps Townships. However, the name Phelps was changed to Appleton Township.



"Ruth and Child"

Becoming a Village

The December 25, 1880 issue of the Riverside Press notes that a petition was filed with the MN Senate and House of Representatives to make the Appleton Township a village. ¹¹

In 1881 Appleton's petition was accepted and it became an incorporated village, 125 years ago. The three most notable individuals in this process were C.E. Foster, D.D. Robinson and A.W. Lathrop.

On March 12, 1881, the first village elections were held. D.D. Robinson was elected President. J.N. Berg, A. Gillnen, and A.W. Lathrop were elected Trustees. The Treasurer was C.F. Ireland, the Recorder was C.T. Gray, A.F. McKay was elected Justice of the Peace and Ed. Coghlan became the constable. Their first meeting was held on the following Saturday.



Mill Dam



Main Street in Appleton

Churches

The Gethsemane Episcopal Church

Records show that as early as May 14, 1871 missionaries were coming to Appleton to aid the Episcopal congregation. The missionary, Rev. T.G. Crump, from Litchfield held the first service in what would become Appleton on the Pomme de Terre. He continued to occasionally travel out to the Appleton area and services were held in the home of C.E. Foster. Crump's final Appleton service was January 12, 1873.

Seven months later Rev. D.T. Booth of Willmar came to the township and held a service on September 3, 1873. He served as the minister until 1879.

With much credit going to Mr. Lathrop and the devoted congregation, in 1879 the Gethsemane Episcopal Church was built. The lumber was hauled in from Montevideo by men like A.D. Countryman.

The first service in the facility was on June 1, 1879 and was conducted by Rev. D. T. Booth. On May 21, 1880 Bishop Whipple consecrated the new church. Following Rev. Booth was Rev. J. K. Kaercher in 1879. He became the first resident minister of the Episcopal Church in Appleton.

In 1906 the church built a new rectory after selling and moving the old one. Then in 1950 the church undercroft was

remodeled and in 1954 the rectory was completely redecorated.



Gethsemane Episcopal Church

On October 15, 1967, at 7:00 p.m. the Gethsemane Episcopal Church held its last service for six years. Rev. Dean Walter and W.B. Schroeder of Litchfield, representing the Bishop of the Diocese of Minnesota, were in charge of the ceremonies.

In the summer of 1973 the church reopened. On June 24, 1973 at 11:00 a.m. a service was held with Rev. Paul Berg, a former priest of the Appleton Episcopal Church, officiating at the ceremonies. The new resident minister was Rev. Jack O'Dell of Willmar.

The Methodist Church



Appleton's Methodist Church

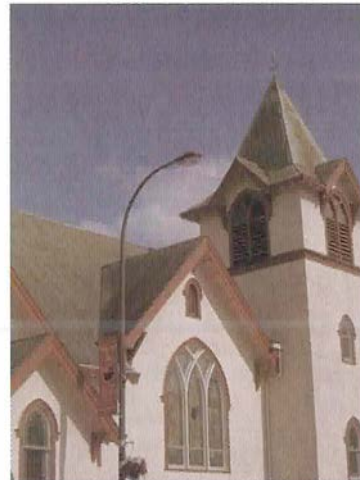
Rev. Kerr organized a Methodist class meeting and appointed himself the instructor. Then at the Minnesota annual conference, the Appleton Methodist Church was organized and Rev. J. S. Bean was appointed the first minister. On November 18, 1878 George P. Wallbridge, H. C. Maxwell, R. Mills, A. Buhholz, H. Squires, S. S. Underwood and H. Wise were the first elected church officials. The first meeting of the Methodist Church was held in the fall of 1879 in the old school house. After that, meetings took place in a hall over the post office.

In 1880 the Methodist Church was erected. Rev. Bean headed the construction of the building and crossed hurdle after hurdle. He noted in October 1880 that the past year had "been the hardest year's labor, both mental and manual".¹¹ Rev. Bean's building was used until 1917 when the current church was built. The original building is the north part of the present building which has been used for Sunday school,

Epworth League, Ladies' Aid and many other meetings.

In 1920 the two east lots were purchased and the present parsonage was built. By 1928 the debt on the parsonage was paid in full, leaving the church debt free. Construction on the education building began in 1959 and was completed within a year.

Appleton's Methodist Church joined the Unity Committee in the early 1970s. Working with the United Church of Christ, Zion Lutheran, and St. John's Catholic they organized large scale community service projects that could not be accomplished by an individual church. These included a taxi service once a week for the elderly in town and supporting 'Meals on Wheels' by delivering hot meals to those in need six days a week.



First Methodist Church Today

Zion Church

(Synod and Unity Churches)

The first record of a Lutheran service in the Appleton area was on August 10, 1874 at Thor Lannegrav's farm, four miles east of the township, with Rev. S.O. Solseth. Five years later plans were made to organize a Lutheran congregation. An organizing committee was appointed and included A.K. Pederson, E. Klokstad, J. Simmons, Ole Brown and Olaf Hegrum.

On Sunday, November 30, 1879, after services in the Lathrop Hall, the Synod church in Appleton was formed. The original name was Appleton's Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church with Rev. Solseth as the pastor, and meetings were held every five weeks.

Not long after, the congregation formed the Ladies' Aid Society. Mrs. J. Simmons was elected the first president, Mrs. L.M. Nelson was the secretary, and Mrs. A.K. Pederson was the treasurer.

In 1881, Sunday school was organized with Jorgen Simmons elected as the Sunday school superintendent with A.K. Pederson and L.M. Nelson as assistants. Class was held from three to five o'clock.

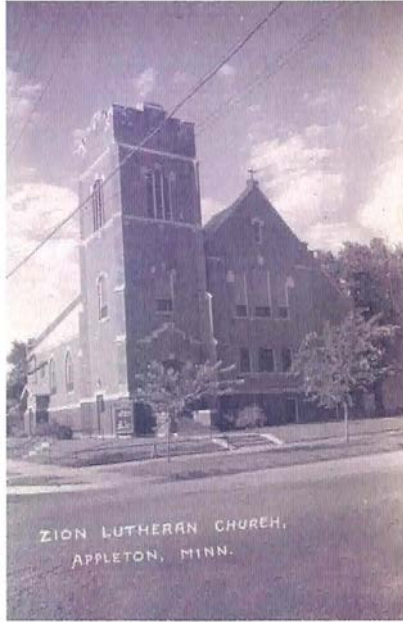
In the summer of 1884 the church was erected and the congregation officially joined the Synod. The steeple of the church was built in 1890 and the bell was paid for by the Ladies' Aid Society. It rang for the first time on November 30, 1890.

The church was dedicated by Rev. O. Estrem of Willmar on July 11, 1897. The same year as the dedication, it was decided to build an addition onto the church. Once completed it was furnished by the funds from the Young People's Society.

The United Church was organized in 1900 and a congregation formed on May 5, 1901 in the studio of A. Brandmo with Rev. Froiland as the presiding officer. He later became the first pastor of the new United Church named Trinity Church. In 1901 the G.A.R. Hall, which later became the Jennison Mill office, was rented for a meeting place.

In 1902 a church from a Norwegian Methodist congregation that was no longer holding services became available. They moved the building closer to town from the north.

In 1918 the two Lutheran churches in Appleton, the Synod and the Trinity (United), merged and are now one church called the Zion Lutheran Church. The first joint meeting of the congregations was on February 13, 1918, at the Synod Church to draw up a constitution. Five days later the constitution was adopted and the two churches officially became Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Appleton.



Zion Lutheran Church

The current church is located on the corner of Hering Street and Rooney Avenue. In 1922 the basement of the church was finished and meetings were held there until the construction of the remainder of the building was completed.

A 66' x 28' addition was added in 1954 and in the early 1970's plans were made for the addition on the east side of the building.

In 1960, the Zion Church joined the American Lutheran Church which united the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Trinity Church

The Trinity Lutheran Church began as a preaching station in 1904 and on April 3, 1918 the church was officially organized. It was on that day that 20 local men met with Pastor

M. Waechter, who had started the preaching station, and subsequently signed a constitution and elected the proper officials to begin their own congregation.

The elected officers were: F. Schmidt, F. Gronholz, H. Thielke, W.E. Boie, F. Vitense and P. Schreck.

Early on, there were two sermons given at the church. Rev. Martin Waechter would deliver the German sermon and Rev. Martin Mueller of Madison would deliver the English sermon.

In 1918, Rev. Waechter wrote to Candidate W. C. Gesch of the St. Louis Seminary in an attempt to persuade him to come to Appleton. The following is an excerpt of the letter, reprinted in the Centennial Issue of the Appleton Press in 1973:

"The week after Easter our congregation was organized with 20 members. Since then we have gained eight members. Besides this we have 16 widows and young girls coming to church. Four hundred dollars was assigned for the pastor's salary for the coming year, plus \$150 from the Mission Board. As yet, we have no living quarters in Appleton, and therefore our wishes for the pastor are to remain single for a while."

"Appleton is a town of about 1,600 inhabitants, has a very good and lively business, two railroads, and even the Flyer stops here. As we have the Pomme de Terre River right in Appleton, we have a lot of fishing and hunting and in winter a lot of skating can be done, so there are wonderful opportunities for a young pastor in

Appleton. He will have to be careful so that old German saying 'fishing and bird catching spoils many a young life of a bachelor,' will not come true,"¹¹

Rev. Gesch did not accept the position in Appleton and on May 8, 1921 Rev. Herman Faedtke, of Wheaton, was installed.

They broke ground on the current church site on September 25, 1949, and it was dedicated January 18, 1953. In the 1960s the congregation purchased two lots for future expansion and the parsonage was remodeled. A custom made chancel cross was purchased in the 1970s along with a new Conn organ with electric pipe speakers and a sanctuary lamp.



Trinity Lutheran Church 2006

Congregational Church

The organization of First Congregational Society of Appleton dates back to October 16, 1879 with 19 active members. In 1891 articles of incorporation were drawn up and the name changed to the First Congregational Church of Appleton.



Congregational Church

The original church was a small chapel. Early on, missionaries conducted services in Appleton as well as in Dawson, Madison and Lac qui Parle. Appleton was the largest congregation and the only one with a church building. In 1891 the small chapel was sold to the school board.

They erected a new church for around \$2,500 that was dedicated on February 28, 1892 with Rev. E. E. Webber as the pastor. The parsonage was built in 1904 and remodeled in 1949. Rev. Webber served as pastor until 1951 when Rev. Lee C. State took over.

For a cost of \$28,000 the church was remodeled and the current building constructed in 1951. The dedication ceremony was held on June 1, 1952. By 1973 there were plans to add the ground level entrance and large narthex. The inside of the building was remodeled, the bell tower altered and a new steeple erected.

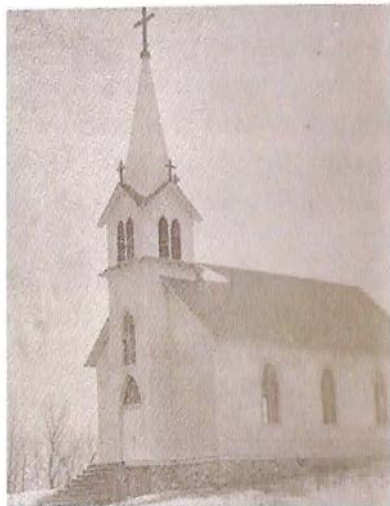
St. John's Catholic Church

The first known Catholic service in the Appleton Township was on May 11, 1880. Mass was

said by Father Oster from Clontarf and Father Brioty at the home of O. H. Poirier.

November 30, 1888 the Articles of Incorporation of the Church of St. John of Appleton were drawn up and signed.

The first church was built on a hill where Riverview Park is currently located. The building was not plastered and the interior was never finished. It was impossible to hold mass in the winter because of the cold.



Roman Catholic Church 1892

St. John's bought the church behind city hall in 1899 for an estimated \$600. The dedication was held on December 17, 1899.

Prior to Father M. Condon, who was the first resident pastor in 1914, the congregation was served as a mission from the Graceville parish.



St. John's Catholic Church 2006

In 1953 construction began on a new church on the corner of Edquist Street and Reuss Avenue. The new building included a full basement, a large kitchen, a choir room and mother's room. The first service held there was on Christmas Eve 1954.

St. John's was the first church in the area to be remodeled in accordance with the liturgical decrees of the Vatican Council.

Baptist Congregational

The Baptist congregational services for the area were originally held in Holloway. In November of 1888 the Holloway Baptist Church was organized. In 1889 the trustees actually purchased four lots in Appleton to build a church but ended up building in Holloway which was then known as Norton.

In 1953 the congregation began construction on their new church building in Appleton. The dedication ceremony was on April 4, 1954.



First Baptist Church 2006

In 1970 the mortgage on the church was paid in full and to celebrate a mortgage burning ceremony was held. Updates were made in 1973 when a new heating system was installed and a new organ was donated by a family.

The First Baptist Church of Appleton is affiliated with the North American Baptist General Conference.

Bethel Evangelical Free Church

On November 1, 1955 Mr. and Mrs. E. Milton Gross hosted a prayer meeting in their home. This led to further meetings at the homes of Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Sallen and Mrs. Grace Ferguson. Eventually, a local group of about 60 people began holding gospel services in their homes on a semi regular basis.

The first Sunday service was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Christensen and the services were later moved to the Earl Maynard home and the Milton Gross home.

This was the early makings of the Bethel Evangelical Free Church. The church was organized

on November 23, 1955, with 44 charter members. On December 7 of that year, actions were taken to affiliate with the Evangelical Free Church and the name Bethel Church of Appleton was adopted and later changed to Bethel Evangelical Free Church of Appleton.

The first pastor was Rev. Lee C. State who had been a resident pastor in Appleton since 1952.

On December 1 the congregation purchased the former Artichoke Lutheran Church which was located 12 miles north of Correll. The building was moved to town and placed on a lot purchased by Dr. W.C. Kaufman off of Bordson Street.



Evangelical Free Church 2006

Two days before the first service was to be held in the new church, a fire destroyed the interior and plans began for repairs.

In 1965 the church held a mortgage burning celebration in honor of their ten year anniversary.

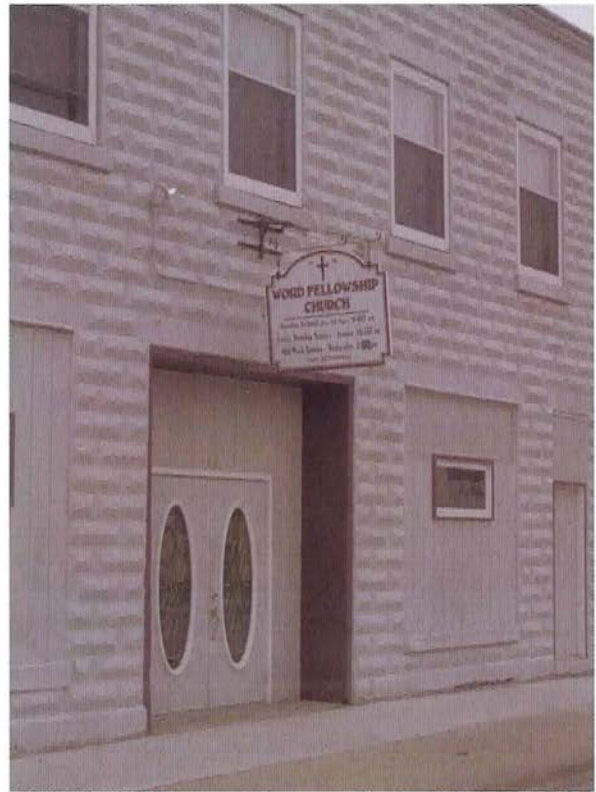
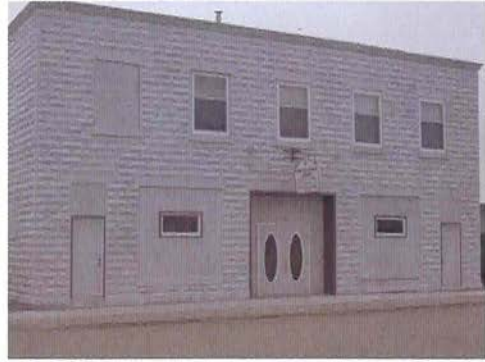
Word Fellowship Church

In September of 1979 the Word Fellowship Church began with a membership of 15 people. The first meetings and services were held at the Russell Johnson Post #72 of the American Legion.

In May of 1981 the first permanent pastor came to the church, Rev. Galen Dunn. He worked as the resident pastor until April of 1993.

In October of 1981, the church bought the former Pontiac Garage on Sorenson Avenue. It has been completely renovated, including the old apartment upstairs which is now the Sunday school room. The membership has grown from the 15 in 1979 to 75 people.

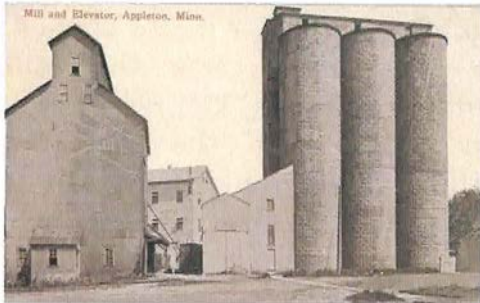
The summer of 1993, Pastor Jeff Funderberg became the new resident pastor and is still working at the church today.



Word Fellowship Church 2006

The W.J. Jennison Mill

For decades the north end of Main/Miles Street was characterized by the W.J. Jennison Mill. The building was an Appleton landmark for over a century.



When Appleton petitioned the state to become a village, there had already been many settlers who had begun building their businesses. The mill on the Pomme de Terre River was originally the idea of a Mr. Clark and was to be called Clark Mill, but he quickly ran out of money and the Lathrop brothers took a share in the mill. The Lathrop Brothers and Clark Mill opened in 1872 as one of the founding businesses of Appleton.



Over the first couple of years the mill passed from owner to owner and experienced numerous name changes. In 1873 A.W. Lathrop bought Clark's interest and the mill became A.W. Lathrop Brothers Mill. In 1879, W.V. Lathrop sold part of his share to Mr. Thompson, making it the Lathrop Brothers and Thompson Mill. In 1881 the business was incorporated as the Appleton Mill Company and Thompson was the president.

Finally, in 1887 it was sold to W.J. Jennison and obtained the name that it retained for over a century, the W.J. Jennison Mill.

By 1887 the mill was operating with an elevator capacity of 140,000 bushels daily and a mill capacity of 7,000 bushels daily. In 1905 the original building burned down. It was rebuilt in January 1906 and six new grain storage tanks were built, enough to hold 10,000 bushels.



The W.J. Jennison Mill about 1910

For many years the farmers from the area would come to town to exchange their wheat for flour. Sweet Cream Flour was sold in 50 lb and 100 lb sacks. The 50 lb sacks were actually pillow cases and the 100 lb sacks were checkered cloth.



Sweet Cream Flour 50 lb sack

These sacks were then used by many families to make everything from clothing to window dressings. The Sweet Cream Flour Company published a booklet for women demonstrating the endless possibilities of the material. It included ideas and patterns for adult and children's clothing, home decor and ideas for charity bazaars.



For 73 years the mill remained the W.J. Jennison Mill and a staple of the community. Then in 1960 it merged with Springfield Mill Company and

continued to operate for one year. In 1961 the facilities became a distribution point and continued to have Sweet Cream flour for retail and farm trade. Finally, the mill was sold and then leased to Appleton Farm Chemicals, Inc. in 1962.

Nineteen years later the demolition of the mill began, more than a century after it had opened. The first to go was the mill building and the storage tanks. That same year the Appleton Fertilizer Plant constructed a new building next to the elevators that remained.



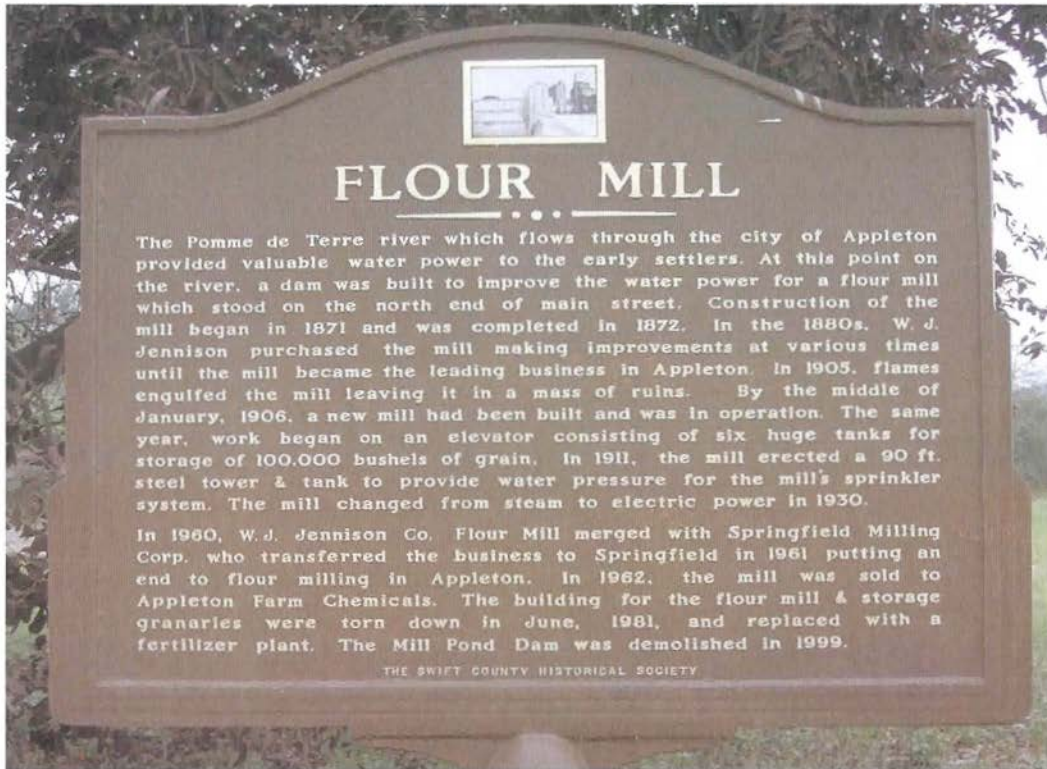
Sewing Booklet from Sweet Cream



Sweet Cream Flour Bags

In 2004, after the roof of the 1981 building collapsed, it was decided to tear down all of the buildings on site. All that remains today is a historical marker

containing a picture and a brief history of the mill. The marker was installed by the Swift County Historical Society in 2006.



Hotels

The Appleton House

The Appleton House was the first hotel in town. It was opened in 1872 by A. Becker and located on the South side of Broadway. In 1876 Becker purchased Lathrop's store and the Appleton House was moved to the new location. That same year it is sold to D.C. Dow who later sold it to Sol. Sias.

In 1899 the building was taken down and sold to the lumber company to build the granary in Fairfield Township.

The Syndicate Hotel

The Syndicate, was the fourth hotel to be built in Appleton. It opened in 1884 by H.P. Allen and was located on the current site of Trinity Lutheran Church.

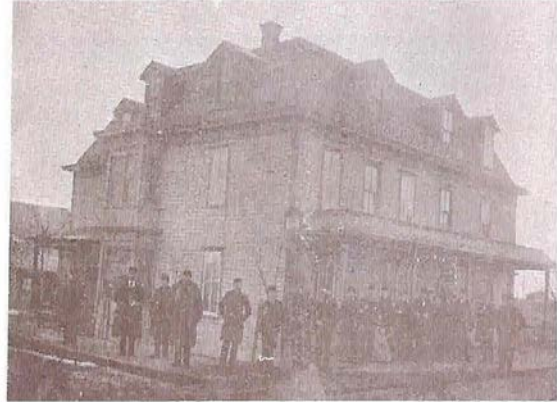


The Syndicate Hotel 1892



The Brown's Hotel 1935

The Brown's Hotel



The Brown's Hotel 1892

The Brown's Hotel was opened and operated by Ole Brown. Ole came to Appleton in 1880 and decided there was a need for a hotel and livery barn to house the town's visitors and their horses. The hotel became a success but the livery barn closed as the horse and buggy was replaced by automobiles.

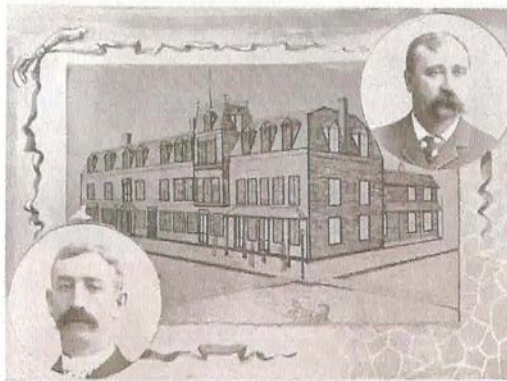
In 1911 Dr. W.C. Kaufman opened the first hospital rooms on the second floor of the Brown's Hotel.



The Brown's Hotel

The St. James Hotel

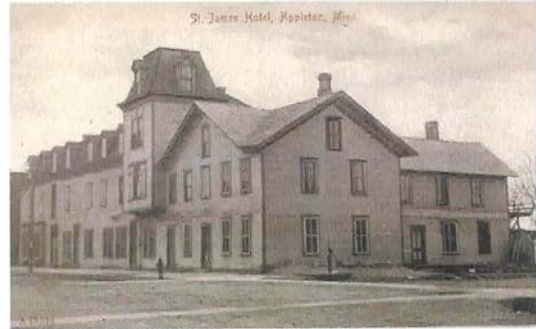
The St. James Hotel was a land mark in Appleton for many years. It was built in 1879 by Sol. Sias. In 1880 it was purchased by the Mehgan Brothers, Thomas and William. Then in 1883 the Mehgan brothers built on to the original small building, adding it to the Marshall-Wells Store.



The St. James Hotel and the Mehgan Brothers-1892

Later it was operated by Mills and Fairchild and eventually became the property of Mrs. M.M. Mills. It was finally sold to J. Hershel Hardy who ran it as part of his chain of hotels and building properties.

Outside the St. James were benches where the guests would wait for either the horse and buggy or the motor bus in later years to take them to and from the train depot.



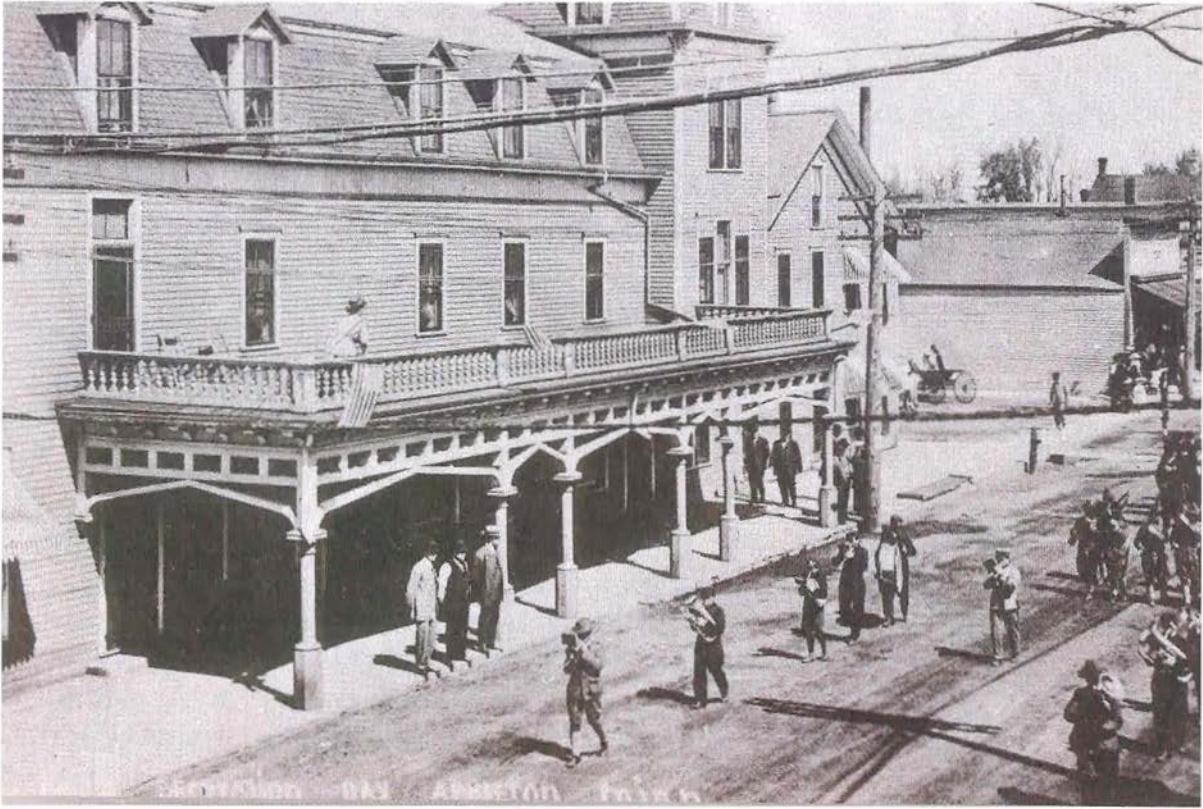
St. James Hotel 1910

The St. James Hotel was often a hub of activity in town. It was home to restaurants, stores and gatherings. It made its way into the hearts and memories of those who grew up in Appleton. Many local citizens interviewed for this book claim the hotel to be the backdrop for some of their favorite childhood memories.

The St. James burned down after 67 years of business. There were no lives lost in the fire but there was an estimated \$30,000-\$40,000 in damage. Mickey's Café, Teigen's Barber Shop, Osmundson Cigar Store, Henry Jewlers, Heinecke Insurance Agency, Marshall-Wells Store and Greyhound Bus Depot were all put out of business by the devastating fire.



The St. James Hotel on Main Street 1912



The St. James Hotel



The St. James Hotel After the Fire

Schools

How It All Began

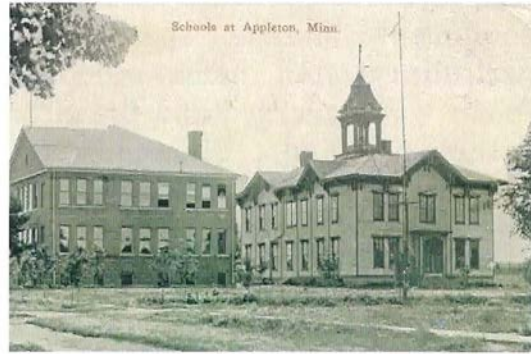
The first school in Appleton began before the village was even founded. It began as a one-room schoolhouse near the current Riverview Park that was donated in 1873 by the Lathrop Brothers. There was one teacher named Utter who remained active in the Swift County Education as Superintendent.

In 1880 the Common School District No. 9 reorganized to Independent School District No. 1 and C.F. Ireland, G.A. Grout, William Murphy, D.C. Dow, S.S. Ricker, and D.D. Robinson were appointed to the new Appleton Public School Board of Education. The same year construction began on the new school building, with a total cost of \$6,000. Mrs. Fate and Mr. Elwell were hired to teach the 130 students enrolled.

Seven years later a high school was established to teach grades 10 to 12 subjects including Rhetoric, Geometry, Latin, English Literature and Algebra. The very first graduating class was made up of seven young ladies and one young man named Ole Anderson. Graduation from this high school qualified each student to the State University without examination.⁴



Appleton Board of Education 1892



The first Appleton Public School and the 1906 brick building

As the years went by the school expanded and in 1906 a new brick building was constructed next to the first Appleton Public School. Finally, in 1916, for \$65,000 a new high school was built and used until 1990.



The Appleton High School built in 1916

When the Great Depression of the 1930's hit, President Roosevelt introduced the New Deal and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) that gave employment to those in need by funding "worthwhile projects planned locally".² One of the projects was the \$55,000 construction of the Annex Addition to the high school in 1936. Construction continued on even as classes were in session. This

addition provided facilities for physical education, a janitor's supply room and athletic equipment storage space. The agricultural and home economic rooms were enlarged and the girls' bathroom and shower was transformed into a new art room and the boys' bathroom and shower became a band room.

Outside of the building underground storage was created for a 1,000 barrel cistern, a heating plant, coal bins and a large record vault. It was covered by 100 square feet of concrete that later became a tennis court and playground. A 50 by 50 foot, fully equipped garage was erected to house the buses as part of the WPA project.

In 1952 the high school expanded again by adding a music room, wood shop, auditorium/gym and six new elementary classrooms. The total cost for this remodeling was \$310,000. Ten years after the last construction the elementary school was built for \$670,000.

Transportation

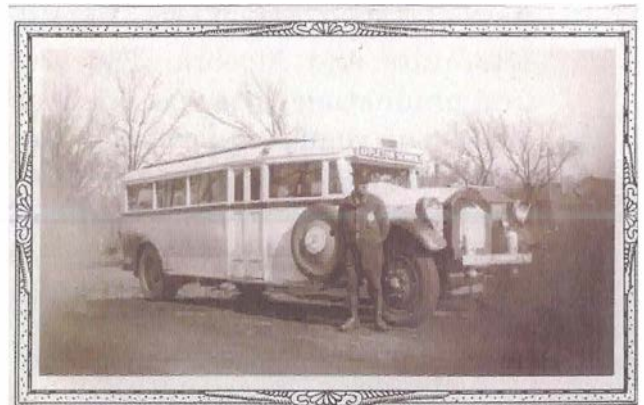
Appleton was the first city in the State of Minnesota to bus their rural students to school. It began in 1927 when G.T. Rugland became the superintendent of schools. About a week after obtaining his new position he had already received a complaint. Mrs. Sivert Boraas needed a way to get her two sons, Abner and Joseph, from Lac qui Parle to the school in town.

Rugland, upon hearing her troubles, came up with a revolutionary idea: a school bus. It had never been done before in the

state and many people were wary of the idea. The other superintendents laughed at the idea of a running a bus on the rural roads in the middle of a Minnesota winter.

Both Rugland and Mrs. Boraas put in the time and the effort to convince the five members of the school board of their idea. Their work paid off on August 16, 1928 when Elmer Benson, Peter Martinson, K. Knutson, Carl Krebs, Frank Wright and Martin Grimsrud voted to pass the motion to arrange for a school bus for rural children.

The next step was to find an affordable bus. The solution was a used Greyhound Motors bus, a Pierce Arrow, from the brother of M.P. Ronning of the Appleton Jennison Mill. They purchased the bus for \$1,500 and were able to have it painted the school colors: white on top and red on the bottom with the lettering "Community of Appleton" on the front and sides for the price of two drinks to the Greyhound painters.



The first bus, driven by C.G. Johnson, went to Lac qui Parle and brought the Boraas boys to school. The next year they bought another

bus and sent it to the north and the third year yet another bus was added and that one brought children to school from the east.

Three of the early bus drivers were Clarence Johnson, Harold Westrom and M.P. Saterbak. They had to work under two contracts, one while they were in the school district land and another for Mr. Rugland for when they crossed district lines.

After three years of the Appleton bus system successfully running, the other superintendents started to make noise again. Even though they were not providing transportation to get the students to school, they did not want someone else coming into their district to pick them up.

Shortly thereafter, Theodore Utne of the State Department met with Rugland at Grimm's Café to inform Rugland that his unlawful actions would have him arrested if he did not stop bussing the students into his district.

Rugland claimed that he was not worried. He said, "by that time Aitkin County was doing it and so was Litchfield. Many small schools were following suit. They couldn't put us all in jail".¹¹ And they did not. The Appleton buses ran for 62 years before the school closed. Through the years the bus drivers and students developed a unique bond. In the early days the roads could be treacherous and the drivers would house the students in their own homes for the night when it was too dangerous to get back.

The buses had to travel down one-lane, dirt roads to get to the rural students. In the winter

there were no snowplows so the bus would cut the tracks used by the farmers to get needed supplies for their families.



Clarence Johnson

Originally the drivers were responsible for the care and repair of their bus. His first year driving, Clarence Johnson had his repairs done downtown, but soon realized that he could do it himself. The next year he was hired as the school mechanic and eventually had as many as eight buses under his care at the bus garage.

As the years passed the fleet grew. More buses were bought and in 1990 there were a total of 12 buses. Today there are 24 buses that bring students from Madison, Milan, Appleton and the surrounding areas to Lac qui Parle Valley High School.



Lac qui Parle Valley Bus Drivers 2006
L to R: Brad Oyen, Leonard Meyer, John Stock, Greg Ruether, Gary Borstad, Lisa Brown, Phillip Borstad

Classes and Programs

Appleton High School has always offered a variety of courses to ensure the most comprehensive education for its graduates. Elsie Slater Steele, class of 1909, took an array of classes including English, Plane Geometry, German Grammar, Chemistry and Zoology in her senior year of high school.

In the early 20th century the Appleton High School (AHS) curriculum also included Algebra, German Literature, Ancient History, Modern History, Physics, Solid Geometry and Botany.

The last students at Appleton High School in 1990 were taking courses that included English, Journalism, Social Studies, History, World Geography, Geometry, Algebra II and Advanced Math, Chemistry, Biology and Advanced Biology, Agriculture II, Business Management, Physical Education, Psychology, German, Spanish I-II, French, and Typing.

Throughout the years AHS also picked up a number of courses that encouraged the students to go beyond the basics of math, literature and science. Offering programs such as Music, Visual Arts and Speech gave students the opportunity expand their interests and discover new talents.



The Appleton community has been actively involved in the arts since the 1880s. There have been community bands and local performance troupes. In 1914 Charles H. Sundburg was in a local cast of "Why Smith Left Home." His son, Clinton Sundburg became active in high school drama and eventually went on to become a Broadway Theater and Hollywood film star.⁹ He is the only Appletonian to reach national fame in the arts by appearing in various television commercials and for his role in Broadway's "Arsenic and Old Lace" in the 1940's.

The Appleton High School's Theater productions date back to at least 1915 when the school put on the play "Hicks at College" with a cast that included Elmer Benson.⁹

Traditionally there was a junior and senior class play almost every year from the 1930's to 1974 when it changed to all-school performances. This allowed any student from grades 7-12 to participate. The first year of an all-school play seventh grader Dwain Keller starred in "The Hobbit."

In addition to the all-school plays there were One-Act Play Contests. The students competed on a district, regional and state level. Appleton had numerous regional placements and in 1980 competed at the state level. "The Brick and the Rose" cast of Sandy Schwab, Rick Olson, Janet Haak, Larry Christenson, Randy Trelstad, Liz Busse, Monica Stotts, Steve Bucholz and Donna Harris was directed by Nancy Schmidt and assisted by Richard Walker.

The final performance in 1990 at Appleton High School was "The Miracle Worker" directed by Carol Roiger. It starred sisters Danielle and Kelly Nelson in the roles of Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan.

Appleton High School students have also flexed their musical muscles over the years with programs like vocal music, instrumental and string programs.

The vocal music program has had as many as 200 to 300 students involved at a time. The largest senior choir was directed by the late Lois Sylvester Masee. In Masee's memory there is a generous music scholarship awarded annually to the top music graduates.

In 1935 the Boys' Quartet, directed by Virginia Mills, received an "A" rating at the state competition. Operettas were popular until the 1960s. Through the 1970s and 1980s Broadway musicals became the new favorite with shows like Fiddler on the Roof; The Fantasticks; Oklahoma; and Man of La Mancha.

Many of Appleton's finest vocalists have auditioned for the All-State Choir and five AHS students qualified: Mike Dove, 1979-80; Nadine Johnson, 1980-81; Daniel Schroeder, 1981-82; Larry Mahoney, 1983-84; and Margo Dove, 1984-85.

The Appleton High School Band played an important role in the community for decades. Through the 1960s there were summer band concerts, band camps, summer parade performances, district conferences and festivals. In the last 20 years

of the high school the band became more involved in school events and some community functions in addition to their concerts.

Over the years solo performers and ensembles competed in regional competitions. Four of Appleton's musicians were honored as All-State Band performers. They were Dale Lien, Alternate, 1976-77; Kurt Pfaff, 1977-78; Dan Rieppel, 1979-80; Jenny Kodet, 1984-85.

The Appleton String Program came and went in the 1970s. In October of 1976, 35 students enrolled in the String Class taught by Evelyn Horton. It came to AHS through the Rural Arts Program but it was phased out after only three years.

Appleton members of the All-State Orchestra include Brad Hanauer, trumpet, 1979-80; Kayla Grams, violin, 1980-81; Dan Rieppel, clarinet, 1980-81.

AHS had a long history with the visual arts. Originally it was part of the Industrial Arts and Home Economics curriculum. By 1986 Appleton schools had two full-time art instructors, one at the elementary school and another as a secondary instructor.

In the 1970's there was an increase in funding and the switch to an eight-period school day. This allowed AHS to offer art electives to its students. Dean Warner was the secondary art instructor from 1972-1990 and began the tradition of students' art displays at musical performances.

Since the turn of the 20th century speech was a part of AHS. In the 1900's it was called forensics and declam contests in the 1930's.

The early '30s and through the '60s there was an increase in the popularity of debate teams.

Since 1937 there were 16 AHS students to be All-State Speech Contestants. They were: John Daughtery, 1937-38; Dianne Stock, 1956-57; Jane Radtke, 1958-59; Myra Johnson and Sandra Schramm, 1959-1960; Deborah Sandberg, 1967-68; Mark Dove and Debbie Schwab, 1974-75; Dave Wagner, 1975-76, David Smith, 1977-78, Beth Hanauer, Nina Johnson and Karen Pfaff, 1978-79; Karen Bucholz, 1982-83; Paulette Wojtalewicz, 1985-86, 1986-87, 1987-88; and Heather Ehrenberg, 1989-90.

Football

Football is one of the first organized sports played at AHS. It began as early as 1898 but it was not until 1903 that it became officially recognized by the school as an interscholastic team. Some of the early players included the names of Cameron, Emery, Hayes, Harker, Iverson, Scott, Little, Rosenkranz, Gilbertson, Helseth, Michel Eckenbeck, and Harstad. If one of these players chose to wear a helmet it would have consisted of straw stuffed into a stocking cap.

The original football field was called Tompkins Field and located on the fairgrounds. In 1930, a public address system was set up at the field. Also lights were installed allowing for night games. In 1948 the home games moved to a field located on the site of the current elementary school until 1962 when it returned to the fairgrounds. In 1974 the Aces

moved to Centennial Field which is the current site of the apartments and homes next to the Appleton baseball and softball field.

There have only been two coaches that have remained with the Aces for more than five seasons. Bob Gave coached in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Then in 1958 Billy Beck came and remained the coach at AHS until it closed its doors in 1990, then he continued his coaching career at Lac qui Parle Valley High School.



Appleton High School football experienced five seasons of undefeated teams: 1913 winning six games, 1943 winning five games, 1959 winning eight games, and the back to back teams of 1972 and 1973 who championed their way to the State Class B playoffs and in 1973 won State runner-up.

Basketball

In 1907 the girls at the Appleton High School did something their male classmates had never done. They started a basketball team. There were six on a team and some of the first players were Thena Thompson, Clara Pearson, Eva Benson, Anna Arneson, Hazel Dawson, Winnifred

Hanson and Minnie Thompson. Before the 1916 High School was built the games were played in the upstairs of the City Hall. The first known coach was Miss Madsen.

Once the boys basketball team was formed the girls often played as opening game for the boys. The two teams would travel together to neighboring towns by train or even sleigh.

In 1924 girl's basketball was dropped at Appleton High School. However, three years later it made a comeback in 1927 and by 1930 they had won a District 11 championship and had a season with only one loss under the

leadership of Coach Miss K. Anderson.

After the 1933-34 season girls basketball was dropped again but this time remained absent for 40 years.

In 1973 it made a comeback with Coach Peggy Thompson and players Linda Arndt and Darcy Rheingans. In the last 17 years of AHS girls basketball there were a number of star players and record setters. The Rheingans sisters, Darcy and Jodi, set school records with career scores of 611 and 699. Dawn Waldon was also a record setter by tying Darcy's record of scoring 32 points in a game.



AHS Girls Basketball Team 1910

Boy's basketball was the third sport to become an interscholastic level sport at AHS in 1913. The Aces had their best seasons from 1925 to 1928. They won eight district championships and went to four state tournaments. Sports fans across the state began to know Appleton as "that little town that was always winning everything in basketball".⁸



1947 Boys Basketball Team

The boys followed the girls to the second floor of the City Hall for their 1913-1914 season. Then the games were moved to what was the new gymnasium and was known as the old gym or lunch room. The games were played in that location for a few seasons before moving to Armory in 1922. In 1952 the games were moved for a final time to the new high school auditorium and the Aces made their last appearance at the state tournament.

Three of the many great players include Harry Schoening, 1927; Dave Schneider, 1953; and Bobby Beck, 1992. In the 77 years of boys basketball there were more than 25 coaches remembered for their accomplishments, including Walt Chapman for his teams of 1930 and 1934; "Buzz" Gray of the early 1950's; Ted Grams whose seven season earned him the longest run as coach in AHS history; finally, Roger Johnson who followed the

students to Lac qui Parle Valley High School.

Baseball

Baseball first began at the high school in 1906 but did not have much support and faded in and out of the sports scene until 1935 when they joined the West Central Conference. In 1949 the Aces were declared the District 11 tournament champions with their win over Holloway. Appleton continued to win district championships; eventually they held nine other district titles.

Track and Field

Boy's track and field dates as far back as 1926 and the girl's track and field became available 47 years later in 1973 with Carol Erickson as coach. Over the years both teams won District 11 titles and the boys made their first appearance at State in 1935. It was not until 1952 that Bill Fischer was named the first track and field coach.

Wrestling

Wrestling first came to AHS in the 1959-60 school year and was coached by Billy Beck and Norbert Hearnen. In 1961 Roger Bonk became the first of many wrestling success stories for Appleton by competing at State. He competed at the state competition again in 1962 and was State runner-up. The Aces won three District 11 team titles in the early 1960's and won five second place trophies in the 1960's and 1970's.

The Aces received their highest title as a team in 1970,

winning the Region III runners-up. The team consisted of Lee Krebs, Dean Baumgartner, Steve Krebs, Byron Giese, Kenny Olson, and Brad Rheingans. They were coached by Chuck Tatge.



Tennis

From 1937 to 1940 tennis was a part of Appleton High School sports. Two tennis courts were laid out on top of the concrete slabs that resulted from the WPA building addition built during the Depression. In the 1936-1937 season, AHS initiated the West Central Conference Field Day. On May 15, 1937 tennis, track and field, and baseball teams from Benson, Glenwood, Litchfield and Willmar came to Appleton to compete. Ten AHS boys decided to enter the tennis competition and practiced on their own because there was no coach. After the 1940 season the sport became obsolete when the most enthusiastic players graduated and the bus garage expanded to the south court.

Golf

In the spring of 1934 four boys, Ernest Thielke, Lloyd Briggs, Ole and Alden "Babe" Veum, with manager Julian Thompson began the first AHS golf team. Two years later the Veum brothers went to state and "Babe" tied for 14th place.

In 1978 the girls joined the boys on the green. Cindy Allen, Janine Lund, Mary Johnson and Beth Hanauer were the first AHS girls to golf. Three notable competitors over the years were Cindy Allen, 1981; Annette Berglund, 1984; and Dawn Waldon, 1989.

G.A.A.

In 1934 Appleton's interscholastic sports for girls ended and in its place was the Girl's Athletic Association. It provided intramural activities and recreation for girls of all athletic abilities for 40 years. G.A.A. gave Appleton girls the opportunity to participate in activities like volleyball, basketball, softball, hiking, golf, bowling, and many more.

Because Minnesota State High School League prohibited competition for girls between schools, "play days" with surrounding area schools were set up where the teams could play each other.

While G.A.A. was a great organization for girls, it came to an end in the 1960's when interscholastic competition for girls was sanctioned by the Minnesota High School League. However, it was an unfortunate loss for the less athletically skilled girls.

Organizations

AHS students did not limit their extra curricular activities to the Arts and sports; they also found themselves in all kinds of organizations.



1947 AHS Student Council

Like many other high schools across the nation, AHS had an active student council beginning in 1934. Originally there were 25 students who worked to represent the study body and make Appleton High School the best it could be.

For 56 years the Student Council helped with the orientation of new seventh graders and rural students, promoted the sale of annuals, held class elections, worked with faculty and administration to develop behavioral guidelines, decorated the Christmas tree during the holidays, and planned Homecoming.

The school newspaper, School Spirit, was published weekly by a staff of dedicated students. It was started in 1934 but was no longer being published in 1957. However, thanks to the 10th grade class of 1969 it was started back up. In the 1970s it became the Journalism Class's responsibility. It continued to make it to press each week through spring of 1990.

School Spirit was not the only student publication. The Annual Staff worked each year to document the year in passing. The Student Council, a Stenographer's Class, and eventually a Graphics Class all aided the Annual Staff in creating each annual.

With such a heavy rural population, it is no surprise that AHS had an active Future Farmers of America chapter. It all began on July 25, 1930, when AHS started one of the first 10 chapters in the state. Louis Thurwachter taught agriculture at AHS from 1928-1943 and was the first FFA advisor. Harvey LaGrange was the president that first year and his vice president was Mike Zinda; Leslie Brown was the secretary, and Lloyd Roberts was treasurer.

Other members included Myron LaGrange, Carroll Diffenbaugh, Bernard Zinda, Jens Halvorson and Lynn Thurwachter.

FFA activities included judging contests, supervised farming, speech contests, Parliamentary Produce Contests, and an FFA banquet. They were also co-sponsors of Snow Daze and in the years before the school closed, sold high quality fruit for the holidays and fresh asparagus in the spring.

In 1943 the school board voted to cancel the Agriculture program at AHS despite opposition. Finally, in 1952 the program was restored and Norman Brakken became the new Agriculture instructor.

Over 50 AHS students received the State Farmer degree through the history of the FFA program. Three members received the highest degree of American Farmer: Ronald L. Schmidt, 1967;

David C. Larson, 1977; and Randy Ascheman, 1989.

The school year of 1956-57 marked the organization of the Appleton chapter of Future Homemakers of America. It was open to students from grades nine thru twelve, and in 1960 a junior chapter was added for grades seven thru nine. However, it ended in 1980 when an advisor could not be found. By 1990 the senior chapter included students from grades 10 to 12 and in 1987 FHA was integrated into the ninth grade curriculum. The first advisor to FHA was Ms. Mattila who was the Home Economics Instructor and was responsible for the formation of Appleton chapter.

The heart of the organization is the promotion of leadership skills and healthy families. FHA activities included an annual parents banquet, a Daddy-date night, Mother's tea, college campus "Career Day," local and state community service projects, and "Snow Daze". Snow Daze began in 1970 during half time at a basketball game. Eventually, it became a celebration as memorable as homecoming.

The Appleton Aces

The name "Aces" was decided in a contest in the 1930s won by Carroll Diffenbaugh. It is believed that the school song was adopted at this time and many believe that it was written by Superintendent Rugland while others believe it to be the work of a student. It was not until the 1967-1968 school year that Snoopy became the mascot. For the 60 years that AHS was the Appleton Aces, no other school in the State of Minnesota carried the name Aces.

Commencement

Appleton High School commencement ceremonies experienced a number of changes over the years. Early on, the Junior High graduates were honored at the same ceremony as the AHS seniors and the event was usually based on speakers who came from outside the community. In the late 1930's, English teacher and drama coach, "Talkie" Blank shook things up. He produced pageants outdoors and included all of the graduating class in extravaganzas.

It was in the 1940's that the graduation attire of a cap and gown became standard. Commencement continued to feature the American Legion and Auxiliary awards and short speeches from the highest-ranking graduates. The last to graduate from AHS was the class of 1990 with 42 seniors.



1990 Commencement

The three largest classes to graduate from AHS were the class of 1965 with 111, the class of 1969 with 100 and the class of 1970 with 111 students.



Appleton High School Memorial 2006

All School Reunions

At the 1990 All School Reunion there were graduates ranging from 1909 to 1990 attending. It took place from July 20-22 and included activities such as a Style Show on Saturday where young ladies modeled clothes spanning the century that Appleton Public Schools had been educating, a guided tour of the new Lac qui Parle Valley High School, and the Sunday Program at the Swift County Fairgrounds with Chuck Brown as the master of ceremonies. 1355 AHS alumni, faculty, staff and board members registered, 1680 dinners were served on Saturday, and 2215 attended the dance.

The '52 Wing

After closing its door as a high school, the AHS building has been put to good use as pre-school classrooms but members of the Appleton Community have ensured that it never be forgotten as the Appleton High School and home of the Aces. In a classroom of the 1952 addition there is a memorabilia room with pictures, scrapbooks, trophies and other pieces of AHS history.



Inside the '52 Wing Museum



The back wall of the '52 Wing Museum

Railroads



Hastings and Dakota

The first railroad to come through Appleton was the Hastings and Dakota line from Montevideo in 1879.



The Hastings and Dakota Depot



The Great Northern Railroad

Great Northern

In 1887 the second railway line came to Appleton. The Great Northern was a trunk line coming from Benson that ended up crossing with the Hastings and Dakota line.



Hastings and Dakota Railroad



Great Northern Depot

The Appleton Press

The local newspaper began as The Riverside Press in 1880, printing its first edition on April 3. The first owner and publisher was C. T. Gray. In 1883 the name of the newspaper was changed to The Appleton Press but was still widely known as 'The Press'. In 1886 it was sold to Charles W. Stanton. He was an attorney who held many positions in town including; the postmaster, the Judge of Probate of the county, and Mayor. ⁴

The editors between 1880 and 1914 include C.T. Grey, W.J. Gordon, C.W. Stanton, A.D. Countryman, Lynn Haines and Homer Sigler.

Martin J. McGowan purchased The Appleton Press in 1914 and remained the owner for almost 40 years. The Press was a family business with Martin's sister, Gertrude McGowan, working as editor and bookkeeper for several years before becoming the Appleton Postmaster. His son, Marty McGowan, was the editor for 26 years before taking over the business when his dad died in 1954. Marty McGowan later sold The Appleton Press in 1965 to Bill McGeary. He ran the paper for the next seven years.

In 1972 it was sold to the Johnson family. Brothers Curtis and Loren co-owned the business until 1995 when Curtis retired. In 2002 Leslie Ehrenberg, Loren's daughter, became the owner of The Press after 20 years of working in

the family business. Ehrenberg is still the owner and editor of The Appleton Press.

The Press has moved to many different locations over the years. The first location built specifically for The Appleton Press is on West Snelling Avenue. It opened March 1, 1921 and remains the home of the newspaper today.



Appleton Press 2006

Since WWII there have been a number of improvements made on both the interior and exterior of the building. Equipment has been updated a number of times and the inside has been remodeled. The front of the building has been updated but retained much of its character.

The Appleton Press has also been the home of the Milan Standard, the local paper for the neighboring town of Milan. However, the last issue of the Milan Standard was published on August 30, 2006.

Healthcare

The first two known doctors in Appleton were Dr. LaRue and Dr. White in the 1880's and 1890's. They saw their patients in Brown's Hotel or the St. James Hotel.



Brown's Hotel -The first hospital rooms were on the 2nd floor

On September 1, 1911 Dr. W.C. Kaufman took up practice in Appleton. At the time there was no local hospital facility and he opened the first hospital room on the second floor of Brown's Hotel. On December 29, 1918 he moved his practice from the hotel room to the first hospital of Appleton on the east end of Snelling Avenue.



Dr. W. C. Kaufman



The Kaufman Hospital

Following his uncle as the town doctor was Dr. E.J. Kaufman in 1936. He also practiced out of the original hospital on the east end Snelling Avenue until 1952. The old hospital building was sold to L.B. Shelstad and it was turned into an apartment building.



Dr. E. J. Kaufman

The Appleton Municipal Hospital opened in 1952 with 20 beds. The dedication ceremony took place on July 6, 1952 and Dr. Rorem began treating patients there that same day.



Appleton Municipal Hospital - 2000

1977 marked a year of change for the hospital. A nursing home and modern clinic were added in the expansion. In 1991, additions included assisted living facilities in the Pleasant View Apartments, now called Apple Ridge Estates.



Appleton Clinic - 1991



Apple Ridge Estates

Currently Dr. Kabatay, Dr. Austria, Dr. Miniano and Nurse Practitioner Deb Colon are all on staff at Appleton Area Health Services. Dan Swenson is the administrator for the facility.



Appleton Area Health Services -2006

Banks

The first private bank in Appleton was called the Bank of Appleton. This bank was opened in 1883 by Ireland and Lathrop. In 1884 Ireland and Lathrop incorporated and the Bank of Appleton became the State Bank of Appleton located on the north end of Mill Street.

Through the years the original Ireland and Lathrop bank changed its name five times. It began as the Bank of Appleton and became the State Bank of Appleton. Then it was the First National Bank that became Northwestern State Bank, then Prairie State Bank, and it is currently known as the Prairie Sun Bank.



The State Bank of Appleton 1892

The second bank to open was the first Farmers & Merchants Bank in 1884 but it was open for only one year. In 1915 a new F&M Bank was established in town and is still operating today.



Citizens Bank 1894

In 1894 A.K. Pederson opened the Citizens State Bank in the building that would become Gill's Drug Store in 1926.



Prairie Sun Bank 2006



Farmers & Merchants State Bank 2006

City Hall

Twelve years after the village of Appleton was founded, plans were made to build a city hall. In 1893 the village council purchased a site with the intention of building a city hall. A special election was called to provide bonds to finance it. The proposal was rejected. Several more votes were held and it was rejected again. Then in 1895, another proposal to sell \$8,000 of village bonds to build the hall was accepted in a 2-1 vote.



The top level of the hall was an opera house that served many purposes over the years. Dances and other community events including high school basketball games have all taken place in the opera house. In 1896, the public library was established in City Hall. The first Appleton librarian was Mrs. J.H. Johnson. By 1937 the building was housing the fire department equipment, a public library, a polling place, and the village jail. By this time the demand for use of the building was dwindling.



During construction, rumors began to spread in town that the building “was settling out of shape on one corner and would never be safe; in fact, it might crumble at any moment”.¹¹ Eventually, the rumor subsided and on December 3, 1895 the Appleton City Hall formally opened.

On November 21, 1976 the new Appleton Civic Center was formally opened and the city hall offices moved up the street to the new building, which included the library.



Appleton City Hall -2006

The former City Hall building remained empty until 1980 when Pioneer Public Television leased it. An addition was built in 1983 and more

remodeling was done in 1985. The old City Hall building is still the home of Pioneer Public Television today.



Pioneer Public TV - 2006



Pioneer Public TV - 1983 Addition

The Reno Theater

For many years a Saturday night in Appleton was characterized by car lined streets and people bustling about town. Many headed for the local theater. Reno Risch had an idea in the early 20th century to open a theater on main street. The other businessmen around town laughed and said that it would never last.



R.G. Risch

Risch did not listen and continued to pursue his vision. He went to work and transformed an old butcher shop into a theater and on June 10, 1910 he opened the Scenic Theater. It contained 133 folding chairs, a one-hand projector and a whitewashed muslin sheet as a screen. The programs were usually between 30-40 minutes that consisted of illustrated slides with live performers. There was a vocalist and a pianist to accompany. Admission to a show was 5 and 10 cents.

Eventually Reno built on an addition and the new and improved Scenic Theater had 250 seats and one projector. Admission went up to 15 cents. Around this time the programs also improved with names like Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford added to the lineup.

October of 1925 there was a devastating fire at the theater causing it to shut down until it could be rebuilt. By this time the theater had become so much a part of the community that a temporary one was opened in City Hall only four days after the fire. Even the local businessmen who had once mocked the theater were now pitching in to help reopen it.

The following year The New Scenic Theater opened and it was better then ever. It contained 333 veneer seats, a stage, dressing rooms, a toilet, a lobby and two projectors. In 1930 The New Scenic Theater began showing talking pictures.



The Reno Theater Lobby

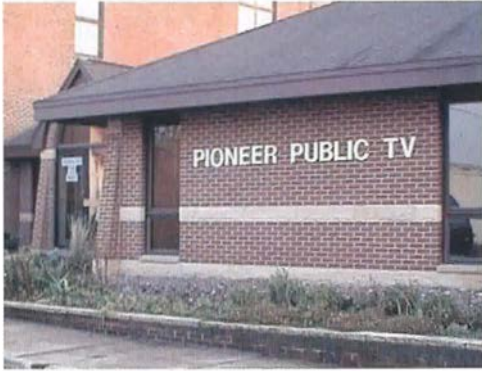
When the depression hit, the theater held events like Bank night and had free dish giveaways. The movies have always been an escape for Americans when times got tough and The New Scenic Theater was no exception.

Tragedy struck again for the theater on February 3, 1938 when it caught fire again. It was rebuilt quickly and named the Reno Theater. The Risch family continued to own and operate the theater until it was sold in 1967.



The Reno Theater

Pioneer Public Television



Public Television began in 1951 when the FCC endorsed the startup of 242 television channels for educational programming across the country. Not long after, it was realized that a region in southwestern Minnesota was not covered by any of the stations. Appleton happened to lie in the middle of the uncovered area, making it the ideal location for a new station.

In 1956 the license was allotted for Channel 10 Appleton. The first board members for Channel 10 were Ralph Schmidt, James Bennett, Orville Pring, J.A. Rorem, William Sandberg and Robert Miller. On March 10, 1959 by-laws were adopted and the station name became West Central Minnesota Educational Television Incorporated (WCET).

Early on, the new station struggled to get and stay on the air. The Twin Cities station, Twin Cities Area Educational Public Television (KTCA), provided the support necessary for Channel 10's success.

On January 14, 1964 KWCM filed for permission to construct a new educational, non-commercial station. The first location of the Appleton station was on 8.25 acres of land donated by the Alvin & Rena Lia family, about two miles southeast of town. They also bought a little red schoolhouse for \$1. Eventually, Channel 10 received statewide recognition as the "little red schoolhouse that went back to work".³⁰ In 1964, a 500-foot tower was built next to the little red schoolhouse on the donated land.

February 7, 1966 marks the date of the first broadcast as WCET aired on KWCM Channel 10. For the first few years Channel 10 would only re-broadcast the signal from the Twin Cities station KTCA.

The only financial aid received from the State of Minnesota was \$20,000 from the Minnesota Statehood Centennial Memorial Commission. Goldie Schmidt championed the fundraising for the station. Donations were made from individuals, businesses, clubs, churches and associations. From November 1962 to June 1964, \$17,243 was raised in support of the station.



From 1967 to 1972 KWCM made various advancements. They received two-way interconnecting systems between four cities. The station was awarded the Ford Foundation grant amounting to \$20,000.

In 1970 the Appleton – Hetland Microwave was completed and allowed for a new source of programs from South Dakota. Two years later new legislation resulted in community service grants to help fund the station.

Ralph Schmidt became the General Manager of KWCM Channel 10 in 1973 to 1978. In the years between 1978 and 1981 the station made important changes and updates. A PBS direct satellite interconnection, a new transmitter, and microwave were installed.

In 1980 the station leased the former City Hall building for \$1 with the option to buy. In March of that year, the first on-air fundraiser for KCWM was held. It

was in the old opera house upstairs of the old City Hall, and featured a national PBS feed of Kenny Rogers live from Nashville. The fundraiser was a success with a 212% increase in contributors.

Also that year, Ansel Doll was hired as Station Manager by the board; the height of the tower was increased; master control taping facilities improved; and a receiver and antenna were added to the top of the building.

In 1982, the name changed to what the station is currently known as, Pioneer Public Television. In 1983 an addition to the building provided 20,000 additional square feet of office and production space.

In 2005 Pioneer Public Television went digital and is currently entering the next phase of technological development that includes satellite and Internet delivery of programs.



Pioneer Public Television- 2006

Prairie Correctional Facility

An Idea Realized

The 1980s had produced a farm depression that left the Appleton community and surrounding areas in need of an economic boost. In 1990 Bob Thompson of the Appleton Economic Development Association (AEDA) came up with an idea to bring more jobs to the area. He proposed that they build a medium security, privately owned prison for male inmates.

The next step was to pitch the idea to the Appleton Business Development Board in March and April of 1990. That summer the AEDA became the sponsor and the Appleton Prison Corporation was formed as the owner. The corporation consisted of mainly AEDA members.

They bought 80 acres of land for development and management companies were hired. In October of 1990, \$28.5 million dollar bond issues were sold in order to finance the construction of the facility.



Ground Breaking Ceremony

In November of 1990, they broke ground on the construction site and the prison was completed in late 1992 with 494 beds. Between January and June of 1992 the first staff and Jon Huenink, the first warden, were hired for Prairie Correctional Facility (PCF).



Prairie Correctional Facility Under Construction

In May of 1993, the first inmates arrived from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. A new contract was signed with the State of Colorado in the summer of 1994, and with the new inmates from Colorado, the facility reached capacity for the first time. By 1995, the last inmate from Puerto Rico left and the facility housed just the inmates from Colorado.



Corrections Corporation of America

Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) was founded in 1983. Their mission is to “provide for public safety while providing a safe, secure, sanitary, and humane environment for staff and inmates”⁽¹³⁾. They are also a worldwide leader in the industry, specializing in design, building, and operating correctional facilities. CCA contracts for more than 69,000 beds in over 63 facilities, including 38 owned facilities under contract for management in 19 states and the District of Columbia.

In the summer of 1996, CCA signed an agreement with Prairie Correctional Facility and bought the debt from the bond trustees. Since October 1996, CCA has been the management company and agreed to fund an expansion that was completed in the fall of 1997. By 1998, Corrections Corporation of America finalized its purchase of the Prairie Correction Facility and still owns it today.



Flag Raising Ceremony to Commemorate
Management by CCA

Wardens

In the last 14 years there have been six wardens at Prairie Correctional Facility. The first was Jon Huenink, who was hired during construction of the original building. In the two and one-half years following the hire of Huenink, there were a number of wardens; John Cole, Charles Lee, and Charles Bucholz. In 1994 Hoyt Brill was hired as warden and was followed by Tim O'Dell and Darren Swenson in 2002. Swenson transferred to Prairie Correctional Facility in 2002 and is the current warden.

CCA-PCF Programs

The Prairie Correctional Facility offers a variety of classes and programs for the inmates to participate in. The goal of this facility is to “rehabilitate, educate, and train through programs.”¹⁴

Their Anger Management class is a 12-week program that focuses on the cognitive approach to managing anger. Their Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse class is a 20-week program based on criminal behavior as well as alcohol and drug uses and is centered on a highly structured, residential therapeutic community. It provides an encouraging atmosphere and innovative approaches.

CCA-PCF uses education as a vital part of the rehabilitation of inmates. Adult Basic Education (ABE), levels I-IV, and GED

preparation classes are offered for all inmates. With the courses approved by the Education Department, inmates with a high school diploma, GED or college degree can enroll in college classes. The Pro-Literacy Program trains inmates to take an active role in the education of other inmates. In order to become a tutor in the Pro-Literacy Program the inmate must become certified, and that certification is nationally recognized and can be used upon release.

Beyond traditional classroom studies, CCA-PCF also provides a range of vocational training. This includes Horticulture, Wood Shop Studies, Small Business Management and others.

The Facility has a full time Chaplain and offers Christian, Islam, Native American, Wiccan and Buddhist services. There are 170 trained volunteers from the surrounding communities who aid in providing religious services.

The Prisoners of Hope program allows inmates the opportunity for transitional reintegration. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America provides a minister to lead a Lutheran congregation in the facility. Inmates are then able to worship with the congregation and are referred to a local congregation in their release area.

Community Involvement

The employees and the inmates of CCA-PCF have taken an active role in the community over the years. Many of the CCA-PCF staff volunteered in the community with activities that include cleaning up the Appleton camp ground park, washing out the Appleton Municipal Pool, weeding and planting flowers, cleaning ditches as part of the "Adopt-a-Highway Program" and answering phones at the annual spring pledge drive at Pioneer Public TV.



Fundraiser Volunteers



Fair Booth Volunteers

The inmates have also given time, energy and even goods to the community of Appleton. It was the CCA-PCF inmates and staff who built Veteran's Park on the corner of Sorenson Ave. and Miles Street. Colorado inmate Taylor designed the plans for the park.



1997 Flood Sandbagging

During the flood of 1997 the inmates came to the aid of the Appleton community. They did sandbagging, and made a donation of \$300 to the Salvation Army. Inmates also worked to solicit food donations from other inmates that added up to 1,242 pounds of food, and donated it to the St. Peter Area Food Shelf in response to their 1998 tornado.



1997 Flood Sandbagging

The Economics

Was Bob Thompson's dream of the prison as an economic development project for Appleton a success?

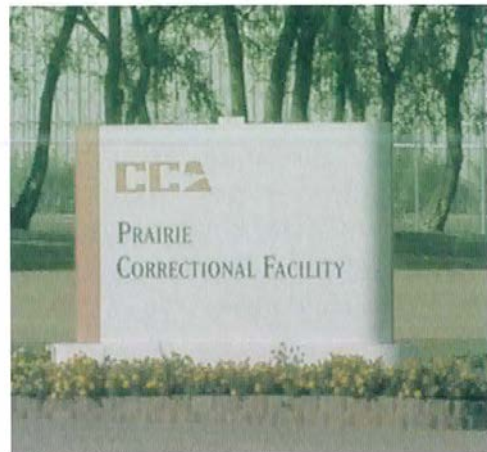
In 1997 the facility had 350 employees, mostly locally hired, with an annual payroll of approximately \$7 million. By 2006 there are 296 employees from Swift

County and at full capacity there are 380 employees with a payroll of approximately 13.2 million.

Because CCA allows each facility administrator the flexibility to shop for the best value, which is often found locally, it is estimated that the prison spends \$850,000 locally each year. This number does not include the contributions made by the inmates and facility to local causes.

In 1998 the proceeds from the sale of PCF to CCA were \$3.6 million. The city asked for \$1,957,500 of the proceeds and received \$2,505,000. The money was then used for a variety of projects in town. Updates were made to the '52 Wing, the Civic Center, the tennis courts and softball field. New trucks were purchased for the city including dump trucks, plows, a street sweeper and fire rescue vehicles. The proceeds also funded sewer water projects.

Since 2000 the facility also contributes to the local economy by paying approximately \$200,000 in annual taxes.



Organizations

In the last 125 years Appleton has had countless organizations. They have included everything from enriching the minds of community members to helping those in need. It would be an impossible task to list and go through the history of each one. That is why there are only a select few discussed in this piece.

The American Legion



On March 26, 1921, the Russell Johnson Post 72, The American Legion, was chartered in Appleton. The charter members were Palmer L. Anderson, Elmer A. Benson, Oscar J. Boe, William R. Boe, Foster B. Broadbent, Raymond J. Lassell, Homer D. Little, Lester M. Lund, Martin J. McGowan, Ebel M. Pederson, Ludvig N. Pederson, Alfred Sorteberg, Phillip J. Stillwell, and Walter C. Stillwell.

The original 202 members met in the top floor of the Armory until 1948 when they purchased a house on West Sorenson Avenue to function as their clubroom. Around seven years later they purchased another building on North Miles

Street, which is their current residence.

The Post in Appleton is named for Russell Johnson who became an Appleton resident in 1895. He had made numerous attempts to join the Army and the Navy but was unsuccessful due to a food ailment. Finally, on July 15, 1918, he was accepted to train as a mechanic and assigned to Dunwoody Institute in Minneapolis. Unfortunately, he became ill with the flu and he died on October 10, 1918.

The purpose of The American Legion is to assist all veterans. This has included helping to find employment for recent vets, financial aid, and providing an honor guard for members' funerals. To join The American Legion, all that is required is to have completed basic training.

The American Legion Auxiliary was chartered on June 26, 1922. There were 16 ladies that signed the charter. The Auxiliary's purpose has been to assist The American Legion in their programs. They also provide service to the veterans, their children, and spouses as well as the community.

Veterans of Foreign Wars
Post #4995

The Pomme de Terre Post No. 4955 of Appleton, Minnesota, was organized on November 18, 1945. The First VFW Commander was Marlow Podoll and there were 84 charter members.



This is a "Fraternal, Patriotic, Historical, and Educational" organization that works to "preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to maintain true allegiance to the government of the United State of America and fidelity to its constitution and laws, to foster true patriots; to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies whom so ever and extend the institutions of American Freedom".¹⁰

The first post meetings took place in the Armory until September of 1946 when the organization was incorporated and moved to West Snelling Avenue.

The VFW Ladies Auxiliary began on April 3, 1946. Mrs. Corrah Ibbotson was the instituting officer and the first Auxiliary president was Viola Halvorson.

In the last 60 years the VFW Auxiliary has collected canned goods, aided numerous veterans in need, helped make rugs at the Veterans' Hospital in St. Cloud as part of a rehabilitation program, and collected clothing for Native American Reservations in need. One of their most important undertakings is sponsoring projects to benefit cancer patients and research.

To fund all of their vital projects they host a taco feed at the Post Home once a month.

AMVETS Post # 151

In January 2004, the AMVETS Post #151 held their first meeting. They were formed a veteran's organization to work with Appleton's VFW. The first officers were Dennis Kohlman, Jim Boraas, Richard Anderson, and Dan Perseke.

The members volunteered at The Flags of Honor, funded the American Legion Boys State representative from Appleton, raised funds for the VFW's building expenses and provided other financial support to those in need.

Home Town Calling

Home Town Calling began during the Korean Conflict on January 25, 1951. The name Home Town Calling was decided on through a local contest, which Jim Bennett won. The initial purpose was to remember those in the service with help from the surrounding communities. Cards and letters are sent on holidays and birthdays, and a subscription of their hometown newspaper is sent to each service member.



The original area of service was restricted to Appleton but over the years it expanded to Holloway, Danvers, Artichoke and Akron Townships in Big Stone County and even to other townships in Lac qui Parle County.

The first elected officers were Mrs. Arthur E. Artzen, Mrs. P.C. Peterson of Correll, Mrs. Henry Zinda of Holloway, Stanley Holton of Louisburg, G.L. Hauglans and Mrs. Myrtle Smith.

In its first year, 55 parcels were shipped overseas for the Christmas holidays and over 100 parcels were sent to those in service stationed around the United States. In 1951 and in 1952, Home Town Calling received national recognition for their services performed.

In November 1966, the organization became a project of the VFW Auxiliary and the

Auxiliary continues to operate the organization. Leonora Stock took over as chairman of Home Town Calling that November but relinquished her position to Gen Hayes in May of 1967. Hayes continued as chairman until February of 2005 and Vivian Swenson took over.

The Appleton Area Chamber of Commerce

In 1915 the Appleton Association was organized as a non-profit organization to work for the well being of the town.



The association is now known as the Appleton Area Chamber of Commerce and is still a non-profit organization that promotes the welfare of local businesses and the community as a whole. The Chamber organizes numerous business and community events each year and maintains a membership of businesses that serve the community of Appleton.

Currently, the Appleton Area Chamber has an office space next to Veteran's Park, behind Conroy Eye Care and has a part time director, Shala Korstjens, who coordinates the efforts of the Chamber.

The Chamber promotes the community by producing brochures; maintaining a website (www.appletonmn.com); and by advertising in local, state and national publications. Each year the Chamber works with businesses to develop community business promotions to encourage shopping locally. They also organize numerous community events such as: Applefest which is always the third weekend in September, an Easter egg hunt, a winter gala fundraiser where proceeds are donated to another local organization, a parade of lights in conjunction with the smorgasbord which is always held the Friday night of Thanksgiving weekend, and many others throughout the year.

The Chamber raised funds to establish the two granite welcome signs on the southeast and northeast edges of town and a new community sign at the Appleton campground. Each year chamber volunteers maintain these community signs by weeding, trimming, and planting new plants when needed. They also are responsible for planting the main street hanging flower baskets and take on the responsibility of watering them over the weekends throughout the growing season.

The Searchlight Club

On March 28, 1928 a study club for rural women formed at the home of Mrs. E. Lindahl. Mrs. W.N. Carter was the mastermind behind this organization that included Mrs. L.C. Howard, Mrs. E. Lindahl, Mrs. C. Kavanagh, Mrs. Miles Cunningham, Mrs. F. Beal, Mrs. H. McKinney, Mrs. G. Hill, Mrs. E. Williams, Mrs. M. Baldwin, Mrs. A. Snyder, Mrs. L. Steensland, Mrs. G. Clapp, and Mrs. C. Lund.

The goal of the club was to learn and improve their speech, language, self confidence and concern of public responsibility through papers, discussions and guest speakers.

They touched on important world issues with their combination of poetry, opera, biographies, studies of Minnesota and other places around the world, debates, medical articles, current events and discussion of everyday life.

They also gave back to the community. They donated a globe to the Public Library and had a book slot installed. They also helped sponsor the first Appleton cancer drives.

On May 28, 1978 they celebrated their 50th Anniversary at the First Congregational Church. Val Behlen served as the Mistress of Ceremonies and there was singing, a reading of the history of the organization and lunch was served.

Elmer A. Benson: Appleton's Governor

Elmer A. Benson was born on September 22, 1895. He grew up in Appleton and graduated from Appleton High School in 1915. He attended the Saint Paul College of Law, now William Mitchell College of Law, for his law degree.

Benson served in the Army Signal Corps in France during WWI from 1918 to 1919. Three years after returning from France, he married Frances Miller on October 14, 1922.



Elmer A. Benson

His career in politics began when Governor Floyd B. Olson appointed him the Secretary Commissioner of Minnesota and later the Banking Commissioner. In 1936 Benson was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Tom School in the U.S. senate. Later that year he was elected the 24th governor of the State of Minnesota. He was the second and the last candidate to be elected to governor on the Farmer-Labor Party ticket. He only served for one two-year term. Benson remained active in politics as chairman of the National Political Action Committee and chairman of the Progressive Party.

In 1944 he played a role in the Farmer-Labor and Democrat merger.

Later in his life, he moved back to Appleton from St. Paul. There he ran a farming store with A.J. Kaufman. Later he owned and operated a farming store with his wife and son until his death in 1985.

Throughout his life, Benson was heavily involved with organizations in town. He was the Post Master of the Appleton Masonic Lodge #137 in 1921. He was a charter member and Post Commander of the Russell Johnson Post #72 of the American Legion, a member and chairman of the Appleton School Board, and a member of the Appleton Library Board.

He died on March 13, 1985 and funeral services were held on March 17 at the Appleton Elementary School.

One of the well recognized homes in Appleton is the Benson home. Current owners are Glen and Susan Cerny. Glen is the current General Manager of Pioneer Public Television. The Cerny family has preserved many of the homes historical artifacts.



Home of Honored Veterans

Off to War

A 1918 copy of The Press showed 170 men and two women who were enlisted in the service from this area at the time of WWI. Seven men from Appleton and the surrounding areas died at war.

To help with the war effort the Appleton Red Cross was organized at the home of Mrs. Y. Laws on April 30, 1917. Children got involved through the Junior Red Cross. They bought war savings stamps and made knitting blocks that the local teachers pieced together to make afghans.

On December 19, 1920, Company M 135th Infantry was organized. They assisted at strikes at the Armory Packing Plants and at two truck driver strikes.



The officers and enlisted of the original Company M

In 1941 Company M departed for Camp Claibourne in California for one year of training. After training they were shipped as a unit to serve in WWII.

Street Names Honor Fallen Heroes

Memorial Day 1947 the city of Appleton held a ceremony to dedicate their newly named streets. Mayor Robert P. Miller wanted a way to honor the 33 men who had been raised in Appleton and were killed in World War II. His solution was to name Appleton's streets and avenues after the fallen soldiers. The plan was approved by the village council in 1946 and on May 30, 1947 all of the new street signs were up and a dedication ceremony was held.

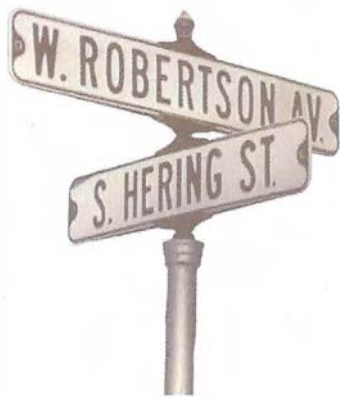


Major General Robert P. Miller

There was a Memorial Day parade in the morning with a broken formation flying over the route by the 133rd Fighter Squadron. At the Munsterman Street Bridge, exercises to honor those who died at sea were performed with a salute from the air corps.

The actual dedication of the streets took place at the Memorial Mall at the cemetery and was performed by Gen. Norman E. Hendrickson of the 47th Division, National Guard. He had been chief of staff with the 34th division that included the Appleton soldiers. Over 1,000 people attended and took part in the dedication. Appleton received national recognition for the dedication and is still widely known for its enthusiasm and commitment to honoring local heroes.

Since 1947 Appleton has renamed five more streets in memory of men lost in the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War and the current War in Iraq.



Flags of Honor Memorial



The dedication ceremony for the VFW Flags of Honor site was held on September 17, 1989.

There are 205 names of deceased war veterans on gold nameplates in the brick memorial wall and it is accompanied by 100 flag posts. On every patriotic holiday the VFW raises 100 flags in honor of the deceased. They rotate the 205 coffin flags donated by the families of the war veterans. The VFW continues to add flags and names to the memorial as veterans pass away.

Veteran's Memorial

The newest memorial was dedicated on September 17, 2004 during the annual Applefest celebration. It is located on the north end of Miles Street and consists of seven pillars, each honoring a branch of the military with the center pillar featuring an engraved eagle and the names of Appleton's soldiers lost in service.



Veteran's Memorial 2006

The three pillars on either side of the names bear the emblem and flag of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and the Army National Guard. An American flag flies behind the center pillar.

The Martinson Foundation, The Appleton Project and the City of Appleton funded the \$40,000 memorial.

The Appleton Armory

On May 12, 1922 the Armory officially opened. Not long after, the formal opening, plans began for an addition. In November of 1927 the addition was completed and included an orderly room, officer's room, a check room, supply room and a ladies' bathroom on the first floor. The Armory also had a drill room and basement that housed a gun range, a kitchen, dining room, showers and toilets. Once the addition was completed it was the largest Armory in the state built exclusively by state funds.



Appleton Armory

The Armory has become an important part of the Appleton community. Prior to the completion of the new Appleton High School auditorium, basketball games and numerous other school and community functions were held there. Community groups such as the Appleton Sportsman's Club have held events at the Armory and it is the practice location of the Shadows Danceline from Lac qui Parle Valley High School.

In 1954, the interior of the Armory was overhauled and completely redone. In the summer of 2003 a new gymnasium floor was added. During the summer of 2006 the building underwent renovation for the second time. The Appleton Armory was chosen along with a handful of other armories in the State of Minnesota for renovation. They updated the water heating system, the sprinkler system, the lighting, the bathrooms and locker rooms. Handicap accessibility was addressed and updated, the work office space was expanded, and the outside of the building was tuck-pointed.

Once a month the 80 soldiers assigned to HHS (DET) 1-151FA in Appleton come to the Armory to train. Over the years there have been as many as three full-time military personal working at the Armory but in recent years there have only been two.



National Guard



The Appleton Armory Summer 2006

World War II M-4 Patton Tank

It is hard to drive through Appleton and not notice the WWII tank outside of the Appleton Civic Center. For 20 years the tank marked the entrance to Camp Ripley in Little Falls until 1967 when it was moved to the Civic Center Park.

The VFW, the American Legion, and the National Guard were responsible for getting the tank moved to Appleton to serve as a memorial to the National Guard

members who died in service during WWII as well as everyone who served with a tank company.



Natural Disasters

From the summer of 1876 through the summer of 1877 there was a grasshopper invasion that destroyed nearly all of the crops. Between 1880 and 1881 Appleton was hit with terrible blizzards, floods, dust storms and cyclones.

In December 1880 the “King of Blizzards” lasted for seven days which caused the loss of livestock and endangered many lives. William Gray was frozen to death December 4, 1880 when walking 3 ½ miles west of Appleton to the Gray Farm.

From December 1880 to March 1881 there were 11 major storm periods recorded. When the snow melted in the spring, it caused major flooding that in turn damaged the railroad.

On July 11, 1881 there was a cyclone in Appleton resulting in the loss of lives and livestock as well as destruction of crops, buildings, machinery and goods.

During the winter of 1969, over 80 inches of snow was recorded. It halted just about all town activity, including the mail.

Over the years, Appleton has experienced both droughts and floods. The Appleton Press reported that in 1913 “Appleton went dry for a second time”, and it is hard to forget the flood of 1997. In parts of town the water rose up past the doors of homes and businesses.



“Farm 6 Miles East of Appleton”



1997 Flood

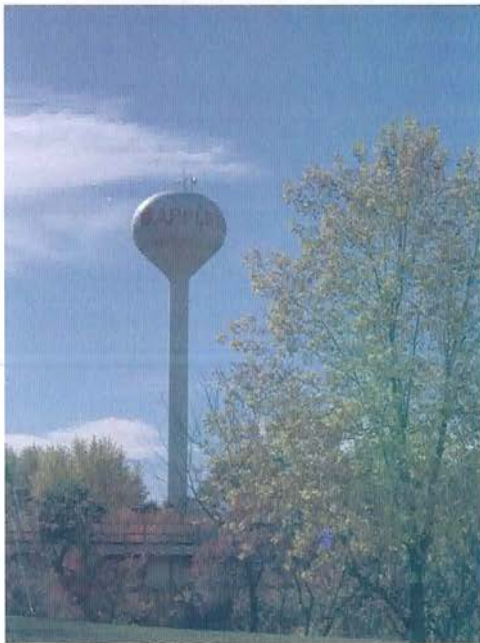
Appleton Today



Appleton downtown – 2006



Appleton Elementary School



In 2006, Appleton is an active community today with a population of 2,871. More than 1,000 of that number is directly attributed to the inmates of Prairie Correctional Facility. There are numerous businesses in town, including two banks, a campus style healthcare facility, three restaurants, three convenience stores, and numerous other retail stores and professional services.

Appleton is part of the Lac qui Parle School District and currently offers pre-school in the Appleton '52 Wing, grades two through four at Appleton Elementary School, grades five and six travel to Milan for classes, and grades seven through twelve attend Lac qui Parle Valley High School, which is located eight miles south of Appleton.

Appleton is the “Home of Honored Veterans”. The American Legion and Auxiliary, the VFW and Auxiliary, AMVETS and Home Town Calling play an active role in supporting the local veterans, current military personnel, and their families.



Appleton National Guard

Recreation is a favored pastime in Appleton. A Variety of activities are offered including the Appleton A's baseball team, the Appleton Golf Course, Appleton Public Swimming Pool, the Appleton Area OHV Park, canoeing and kayaking on the Pomme de Terre River, the community bike trail, the Ridge Runners snowmobile trails, and utilization of the nearby Lac qui Parle Lake and state game refuge.



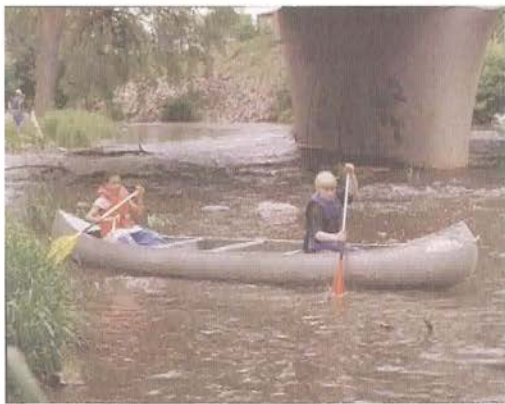
Appleton bike trail



Appleton A's Baseball



Goose Hunting



Canoeing the Pomme De Terre River



New walking bridge and campground



Appleton Swimming Pool



Appleton Area OHV Park

Appleton Celebrate Applefest

In 2006, to celebrate the 25th annual Applefest and the City of Appleton's 125th Anniversary, Applefest will include a craft show, flea market, car show, Appleton Art Club exhibit, quilt show, photo display, Harlem Ambassadors basketball game, a walk/run/bike race, golf tournament, kids games and zoo display, scavenger hunt, parade, moto-cross race, rubber ducky river race, walking history tours, fire works, and live entertainment by Eclipse, The Shaw Brothers, and the 34th Infantry Red Bull Band. The band will debut a new song written about Appleton's streets, which are named after local veterans.



Appleton banners promote Applefest



Applefest parade



Applefest parade



Applefest craft show

In celebration of the Appleton's 125th anniversary, the Chamber of Commerce also produced numerous new souvenir items. T-shirts and sweatshirts with logos designed by local artist Kerry Kolke-Bonk, clocks, travel mugs, key chains, a pottery pitcher made by area artist Richard Handeen of Montevideo, a calendar depicting Appleton photos, a postcard with the Appleton mural completed by DeV Vaughn Kolke, a new aerial view postcard of Appleton taken by Jon Boese, a reprint of a Appleton souvenir book originally printed in 1892 that is on file at the Appleton Library.



Postcard made from the Appleton Mural By DeV Vaughn Kolke



Sources

1. Swift County Minnesota: A Collection of Historical Sketches and Family Histories. 1979. Swift County Historical Society. Taylor Publishing Company: Dallas.
2. Bryant, Charles S. "History of the Minnesota Valley". Swift County Minnesota: Excerpts from Historical Writings.
3. Anonsen, Stanley Holte. A History of Swift County A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Minnesota. 1929.
4. Appleton Minnesota Souvenir. 1892. The Appleton Press.
5. McGowan, Martin Sr. Men About Town Volume I. 1949. The Appleton Press: Appleton, MN.
6. McGowan, Martin Sr. Men About Town Volume II. 1950. The Appleton Press: Appleton MN.
7. McGowan, Martin Sr. Men About Town Volume IV. 1951. The Appleton Press: Appleton, MN.
8. "Appleton Public School 1880 to 1990".
9. "Appleton All-School Reunion Edition" July 20, 21, 22, 1990. The Appleton Press.
10. "Appleton, Minnesota Home of Honored Veterans".
11. "Appleton Area Centennial Souvenir Packet 1873-1973"
12. Bredeson, L.B. Athletics 1898-1980.
13. "CCA Prairie Correctional Facility"
14. "CCA Prairie Correctional Facility Scrap Book"
15. Interview with Gen Hayes
16. Interview with Ralph and Goldie Schmidt
17. Interview with Leonard Masseur

18. Interview with Del and Joan Voorhees
19. Interview with Jeanine Arnold
20. Interview with Lawrence Bergman
21. Riverside Press 12-25-1880
22. Riverside Press 3-12-1881
23. Riverside Press 2-19-1881
24. Riverside Press 3-26-1884
25. Willmar Tribune 12-20 1992
26. Interview with Bob Thompson
27. Interview with Glen Cerny
30. Swenson, Judy. "Still Pioneers After 40 Years". Montevideo Newspaper February 2006.
31. "Pioneer Public TV 40th Anniversary" Appleton Press
32. "Elmer A. Benson Funeral Services" The Appleton Press 3-20-1985
33. Interview with Clarice Maher 7/25/06 (Clippings/pics)
34. Appleton Municipal Hospital webpage.

Photographs

Photographs for this publication came from a variety of sources. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Larry Christenson, who loaned his tremendous postcard collection to the Chamber of Commerce. Without which we would not of been able to display the fine variety of community photos.

Other contributors include: The Appleton Press, Dawn Hegland, Del and Joan Voorhees, Clarice Maher, Ralph and Goldie Schmidt, Lawrence Bergman, Kerry Bonk, Prairie Correctional Facility, "Men About Town" Vol. I and II.