

Sandstone History & Art Center
4th & Main Street
Sandstone, MN



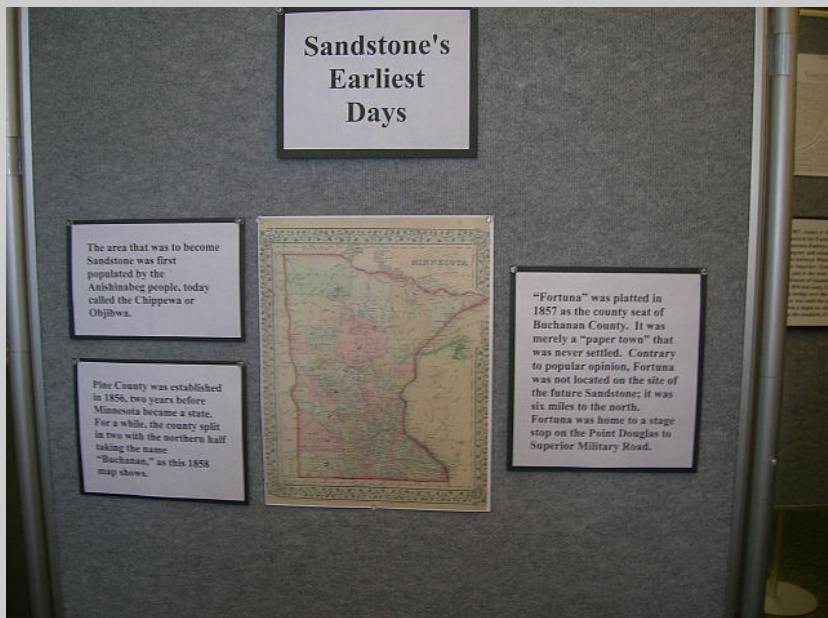
Amy & LaJune Troolin



Your donations are a vote for the preservation of history and the arts in the area. This is a ballot box from the late 1800s.

The area that was to become Sandstone was first populated by the Anishinabeg people, today called the Chippewa or Ojibwa.

Pine County was established in 1856, two years before Minnesota became a state. For a while, the county split in two with the northern half taking the name "Buchanan," as this 1858 map shows.



Sandstone's Earliest Days


The area that was to become Sandstone was first populated by the Anishinabeg people, today called the Chippewa or Ojibwa.

Pine County was established in 1856, two years before Minnesota became a state. For a while, the county split in two with the northern half taking the name "Buchanan," as this 1858 map shows.



"Fortuna" was platted in 1857 as the county seat of Buchanan County. It was merely a "paper town" that was never settled. Contrary to popular opinion, Fortuna was not located on the site of the future Sandstone; it was six miles to the north. Fortuna was home to a stage stop on the Point Douglas to Superior Military Road.


The country around Sandstone was once covered by majestic white, jack, and Norway pines. Logging companies began their operations in the 1860s and felled thousands of trees. Fo's Big Spring logging camp was located near the present Sandstone.




While these loads were usually not actually hauled anywhere, they did reveal the abundance of pines that once covered the Sandstone area. After their picture was taken, loggers unloaded these massive stacks and reloaded them into more manageable piles.

Sandstone is located near a deposit of high-quality sandstone along the Kettle River. In the summer of 1885, William H. Grant, a local landowner, opened the Kettle River quarry. Progress was slow at first; hauling the heavy sandstone blocks ten miles from the quarry to the railroad took a team of oxen a whole day.

The Kettle River Railroad Co. was organized and built in 1886. It connected the quarry to the St. Paul & Duluth Railroad west of town and made hauling sandstone much easier.



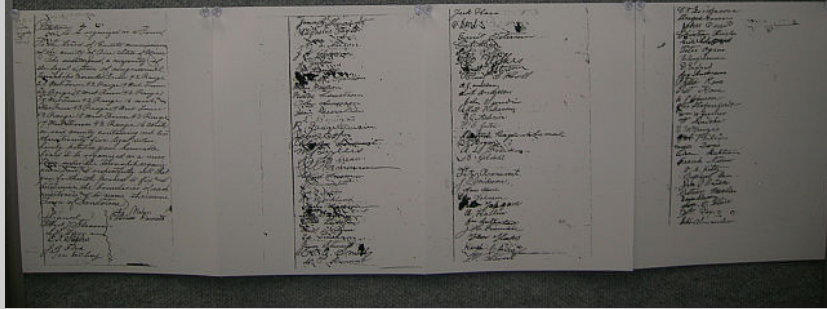
This 1888 photograph of the quarry shows...




One of the quarry workers posed among the cut sandstone. Workers drilled deep holes into the sandstone, filled them with black powder, and blasted large chunks of stone free from the cliff walls. Stones were cut to order with a variety of chisels and mallets. The quarry grew and remained prosperous for several decades.

By 1889, the little village of Sandstone was flourishing. It boasted several hotels and boarding houses, including the three-story Sandstone Hotel; several stores, including the Finn Brothers' General Store and the Glasow Brothers' Store, a meat market, a blacksmith shop, a laundry, a bank, a post office, four saloons, and more than fifty houses.


The village of Sandstone was officially incorporated in 1889. This document is a copy of the original incorporation papers, signed by Sandstone's most prominent citizens.



These three images show Sandstone in 1888. It was a rough and rugged place, but it was expanding quickly. By 1888, it was home to about 300 people.



Over the next six years, Sandstone continued to grow. Residents built churches and a school and participated in local government. The quarry did brisk business, with a brief interruption due to the "panic of 1893". The population had increased to about 350 people.



Vergil Nielson created this map of 1894 Sandstone. It shows the locations of homes, businesses, churches, and the school on the eve of the great fire of 1894.



