

Historical Tours of Sandstone, Minnesota

By Amy Troolin and LaJune Troolin



Main Avenue, Sandstone, Minnesota

**Sandstone, Minnesota
Historical Walking Tour
2012**

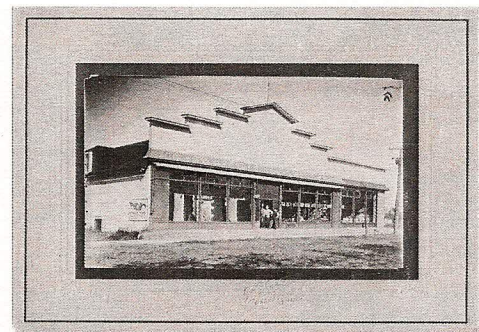
1. Sandstone School – Sandstone's first school was actually held in a warehouse in the quarry. Classes met for only three days in the fall of 1886 before the teacher died! Over the years, Sandstone students moved from school to school as their population grew. On April 22, 1902, the community dedicated its regal new school building, which was designed by Minneapolis architect F.B. Kendrick and built of local sandstone at a cost of approximately \$23,000. The school was destroyed by fire on September 20, 1909, after being struck by lightning. Students attended classes in rented spaces while the school board made plans to rebuild. Village residents provided funds through \$26,000 in bond sales; local builder E.O. Hanson won the contract; and the new, larger school soon rose from the shell of its predecessor. The rebuilt Sandstone school was completed in the fall of 1910 for \$30,390.



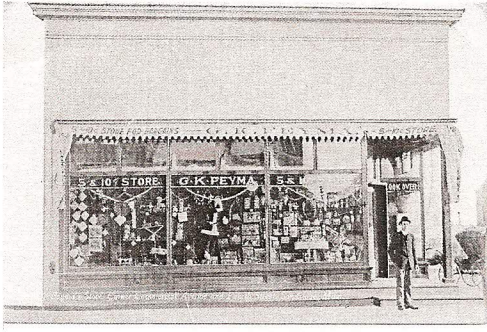
2. Welsh Hotel – The two-story, family-owned Welsh Hotel once stood on the northwest corner of Fifth Street and Commercial Avenue. At about 2 a.m. on May 8, 1912, Mrs. Welsh woke to discover that the hotel was on fire. She quickly awakened her family and guests, and everyone escaped unharmed. The Sandstone fire department soon arrived on the scene and rescued some of the hotel's furnishings. Unfortunately, they failed to make much headway against the fire because the town's water pressure was almost non-existent.

The hotel was entirely destroyed with an estimated loss of \$5,500. The owners carried only \$3,500 in insurance.

3. Sandstone Cooperative Store – Walter Scott first built a store on this site in the 400 Block of Commercial Avenue in 1901. The Sandstone Cooperative Company purchased the business some years later but was destroyed by fire in 1933 along with several other businesses on the block including Gust Larson's Drug Store, Gaumnitz Hardware, Rudisuhle Tire and Repair Shop, and the Rubinell Cafe (which had a mini-golf course in the basement). The business was soon rebuilt. It was owned by the Larson family for many years. Today the Ben Franklin store occupies part of the building.

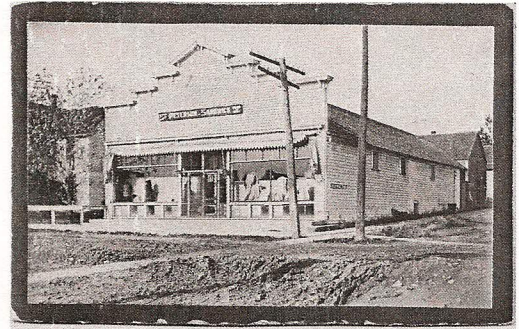


4. Pearson's Clothing Store and Meat Market – The original Pearson's at 114 Fourth Street was destroyed by fire in 1925, but owner C.J. Pearson rebuilt his store on the same site almost immediately, choosing more fireproof materials to avoid future disasters. The store was partitioned down the center with the meat market on the east side of the building and the clothing store on the west. The building housed Jon's Clothing for many years and is currently home to Kettle River Grafix.

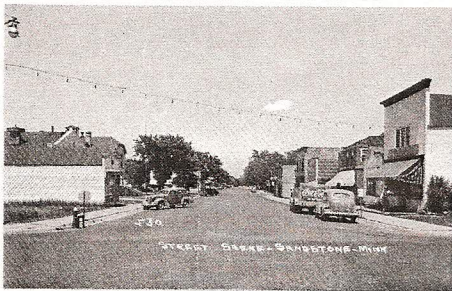


5. Feyma's Variety Store – Feyma's Variety Store was located where the Lake State Federal Credit Union now stands on the northeast corner of Fourth Street and Commercial Avenue. It was built about 1913 by G.K. Feyma and carried a huge selection of merchandise. Old-timers used to say that when Sandstone residents couldn't find what they wanted at other stores, they could just go to Feyma's and get exactly what they were looking for. The store and all its contents were destroyed by fire in 1962.

6. Peterson-Sandwick Store – Peter Peterson opened a general merchandise store on the corner of Fourth Street and Court Avenue in 1896. Hans Sandwick joined the business in 1908, and the Sandwick family operated the store for the next 66 years. In the early days, the shop was filled with all kinds of merchandise, everything from shoes and clothing to groceries and hardware. After a fire destroyed the business' warehouse in 1941, the Sandwicks decided to focus primarily on groceries. Chris Thorvig bought the business in 1974 and demolished the old store after building a new one in 1983.



7. Falk Block – Anna Falk opened a millinery shop in a uniquely-shaped building at the southeast corner of Fourth Street and Commercial Avenue in 1907 and sold hats, notions, and dry goods until she retired in 1932. Numerous businesses, including a pool hall, a television repair shop, and the Book Nook, occupied the building's street level spaces while upstairs rooms were rented as apartments. The building, which stood where the Cheri's Flower Basket parking lot is today, was torn down in 1985.



8. Asklund Block – Tailor Oscar Asklund constructed the Asklund Block on the 300 Block of Commercial Avenue in 1914. His tailor shop occupied the south side of the building while his family ran a small store on the north side that sold school supplies, groceries, candy, ice cream, fruit, shoes, and tobacco. The second floor provided family living quarters. The building's interior featured embossed metal walls and ceilings. It stood where the Wild River Apartments parking lot is today.

9. Masonic Temple – Local contractor Gust Gjertson built the Masonic Temple on the 300 Block of Commercial Avenue in 1922 for a total cost of \$16,000. The building's corner pillars, window facings, and trim are made of local sandstone. The Sandstone Masons received their dispensation to function in 1900; they met at Dr. Duke Cowan's office and then in a room above the Sandstone State Bank until their building was completed.

10. Vogue Theater – In 1895, C.A. Anderson built the Sandstone Opera House on the 300 Block of Commercial Avenue. The Larson Brothers, Adolph and Oscar, purchased the business in the early 1900s and operated it until musician Guy Thorne moved to Sandstone in 1921 and opened a movie theater, which unfortunately burned down in 1924. Mr. Thorne rebuilt “The New Theater” immediately. After remodeling the business in 1936, Mr. Thorne changed its name to the Vogue Theater, which was billed as one of the most modern theaters between Duluth and the Twin Cities, complete with a sloped floor and air conditioning. The Thornes operated the Vogue until 1971. Today the building houses the Midwest Country Theater.

11. Bullis/Dredge House – Mathew Bullis built this house on the southwest corner of Third Street and Commercial Avenue shortly after the devastating 1894 forest fire destroyed Sandstone. Mathew Bullis had moved to Sandstone about 1889 and over the years, served as the Eastern Railway depot agent, banker, postmaster, village treasurer and recorder, and school board member. Mr. Bullis and his family saved themselves in the Kettle River during the 1894 fire. The family's house was later purchased by Dr. Homer P. Dredge. It originally had clapboard siding before it was stuccoed in 1917, becoming the first house in Sandstone to sport this “new-fangled” finish.

12. Dr. Dredge's Office – In the early 1900s, Dr. Dredge constructed an office right next door to his home. The building later served as Dr. Stokes' dentist office and has been a barbershop since it was purchased by Rich Watrin in the mid-1960s.

13. Lundquist Shoe Service and Harness Shop – The Lundquist family's store on Third Street was a popular leather-goods business in the early 1900s.

14. I.O.O.F. Hall – The Independent Order of Odd Fellows constructed the building at the southeast corner of Main Avenue and Third Street in 1899. The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs (the women's division of the organization) focused on charitable projects, social and personal development, and fraternal activities. The organization met upstairs in their Sandstone building while the downstairs was rented to various businesses.

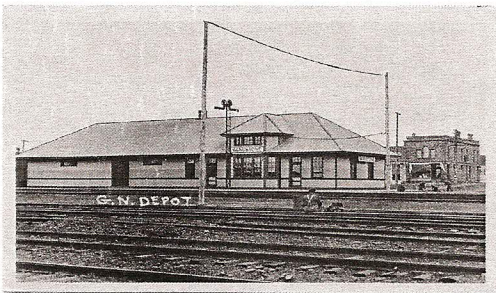


15. Klein's Department Store – In 1920, Joseph and Ethel Klein constructed a one-story sandstone store building at 218 Main Avenue. Klein's soon became “America's Largest Small Town Department Store,” carrying clothing and accessories for men, women, and children; featuring millinery, shoe, and dry goods departments; and even employing a full-time seamstress for alterations. The store had a system of baskets and pulleys that carried purchases and payments up to the balcony where clerks would wrap customers' packages and then send them back down with any change. By 1940, the store's gross sales climbed to over \$100,000. Klein's closed in 1958, and the building became Coast-to-Coast Hardware and later Ace Hardware.

16. Hotel Madison – In 1926, a massive fire destroyed several Sandstone businesses, including Harry Madison's hotel. Later that year or in 1927, Mr. Madison built a new hotel at 106 Main Avenue where the PHASE building stands today. The hotel was the site of community events for many years. Dean Carlson bought the business in 1972 and changed its name to the Shady Rest Hotel.



17. Quarryman's State Bank – Fred Dennie organized the Quarryman's State Bank in 1900. The bank building was erected in 1902 at 306 Main Avenue. It later became the Security State Bank of Sandstone. The First National Bank of Sandstone purchased the building in 1963 and rented it out to various businesses for several years until Arnold and Millie Beneke turned it into a law office. Today it is home to the Gas Light Bar.



18. "New" Sandstone Depot – Sandstone's railroad depot once stood on the 400 Block of Main Avenue just across the street from the current bowling alley and Sandstone History and Art Center. Built in 1922, the depot, which was Sandstone's third, was a center of community life. Residents gathered daily to meet the trains, greet passengers, pick up their mail, and catch up on local gossip.

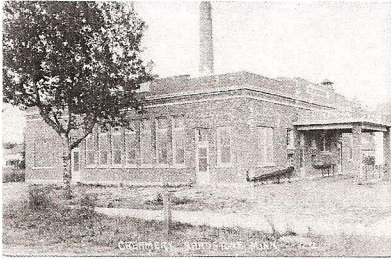
19. Minneapolis Trust Company/Webb Hardware/First National Bank – James J. Hill constructed this sandstone commercial building for his Minneapolis Trust Company at the corner of Main Avenue and Fourth Street right after the 1894 fire. Mr. Hill was instrumental in rebuilding Sandstone after the fire, donating parcels of land for businesses and churches in order to shift the town site closer to his railroad. The building was later home to H.P. Webb's Hardware Store, the First National Bank (later the Sandstone State Bank), and upper-story offices for doctors, dentists, and lawyers. After the Sandstone State Bank moved into its new building in 1969, Ray Stockamp opened a TV store. Today the building houses the Sandstone History and Art Center.



20. 1895 School/Courier Office – Before the 1894 fire, Sandstone students attended classes in a large two-story sandstone schoolhouse. This building was completely destroyed in the fire. Since it was not insured, Sandstone residents had to settle for a much smaller frame schoolhouse, which was completed by the State Fire Relief Commission in January of 1895. As the Sandstone school population grew, the building became too small. It was purchased in 1902 by *Pine County Courier* editor Howard Folsom and moved to its current location on the 400 Block of Main Avenue. It served as the newspaper office and print shop for decades. The Colby family owned the *Courier* from July 1, 1905, to September 1, 1980.

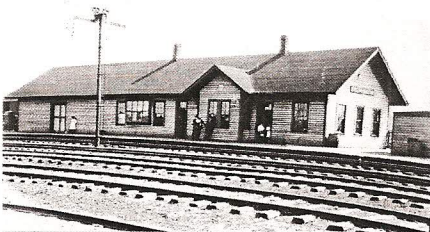
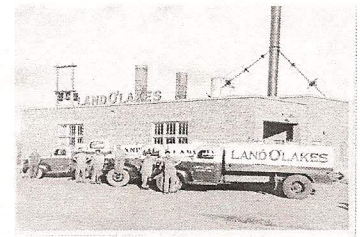
**Sandstone, Minnesota
Extended Historical Tour
2012**

A. Fire Relief House – After the 1894 fire completely destroyed Sandstone, residents applied for help from the State Fire Relief Commission to rebuild their homes and lives. The Commission provided two sizes of “fire relief houses.” Small families received Number 1 houses while larger families could move into Number 2 houses, which featured a one-story addition on the back. The houses cost between \$125 and \$190. Sandstone residents received a total of seven Number 1 houses and 27 Number 2 houses. The house at 602 North Court Avenue was built as a fire relief house.



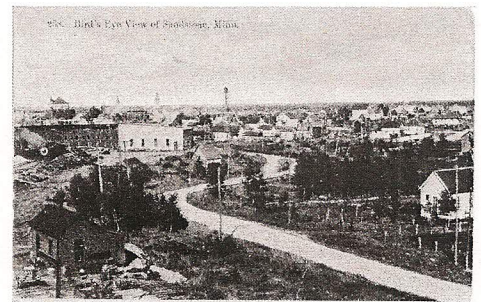
B. “New” Creamery – Sandstone's “new” Farmers' Cooperative Creamery was built in 1928 on the northeast corner of Main Avenue and Fifth Street. Later, P & L Meats occupied the building for several years until it was torn down to make way for the new bank building.

C. Milk Drying Plant – The Land O' Lakes milk drying plant, which was located on Highway 23, opened in 1942 to produce dry milk products during World War II. Through the 1940s and 1950s, the plant was one of Sandstone's largest employers. Over the years, the building housed the Pine County Dairy Cooperative and the vocational and early childhood programs for the public school system.



D. “Old” Sandstone Depot – The first railroad depot after the 1894 fire was built on the south end of the new Sandstone town site. It was located on Main Avenue where Lampert's storage yard is today.

E. Roundhouse – Sandstone's 20-stall roundhouse was built in 1895. Shortly after the 1894 fire, Sandstone became a division point on James J. Hill's Eastern Minnesota Railway. The roundhouse handled the significant train traffic that came through Sandstone everyday and provided space to repair engines, divert cars to other tracks, and change trains' directions.



F. "Old" Creamery – Sandstone's first Farmers' Cooperative Creamery was located at the southwest corner of Park Avenue and Fourth Street. Percy Robinson was the buttermaker at the creamery for many years and won several state awards for his outstanding buttermaking.

G. Quarry – William H. Grant founded Sandstone's quarry in 1885. For more information about quarry history and for a self-guided trail map of Robinson Park, please see the Sandstone Quarry brochure available at Sandstone History and Art Center.

H. Old Sandstone Town Site – When Sandstone was incorporated in 1888, the village was located at the southeast corner of the current town.

For Further Reading:

Sandstone, the Quarry City, edited by Muriel Langseth

Early Sandstone and Its Schools, by Ellen Walker

Sandstone Quarries, edited by Muriel Langseth

100 Pictures of Sandstone in By-Gone Days, by Richard VanDerWerf

Images of America: Northern Pine County, by Earl J. Foster and Amy Troolin

These books are available at Sandstone History and Art Center and Cheri's Flower Basket.