



Turner Hall, the home of the *Press & Dakotan*, as seen in this photo from the first decade of the 20th century, when the P&D also published the German-language *Dakota Freie Presse*. Through the years, Turner Hall also housed several offices and organizations, and even served as a temporary Elks Lodge for a time. (P&D archive photo)

A Look At Yankton's Historic Places

New Series Explores Town's Historic Public Venues

Earliest travelers on the Missouri River would have observed the promising location which in 1859 became the village of Yankton. Those who saw and remained were mostly English-speaking entrepreneurs and/or adventurers looking for hospitable locations. The Organic Act which created Dakota Territory on March 2, 1861 and the Homestead Act of 1862 which promised free land encouraged many easterners to come west.

By the late 1860s and especially through the 1870s and 1880s European immigrants including Scandinavians, Germans from Germany and Russia, Bohemians and Moravians from Czechoslovakia, and Irish and others from Great Britain had arrived to claim lands. All brought ethnic traditions and languages which impacted social and business activities in the Yankton area.

Yankton was named permanent capital of Dakota Territory on April 2, 1862. A rudimentary two-story frame capitol building was constructed that year on the northeast corner of Fourth and Capitol. It eventually was razed, but thankfully a replica stands in Riverside Park.

An impressive number of other public buildings built during pre-statehood days and the decade which followed has endured. Several were governmental in function, such as the I.O.O.F. Hall which was Yankton's first courthouse, while others served as public gathering places.

To commemorate South Dakota's 125th anniversary, the Questers Dakota Territory Chapter No. 794, Yankton, is undertaking a series of stories to spotlight some of the historic public buildings that can still be found in Yankton. All the building hail back to the 19th century. The stories will run at intervals of approximately every three weeks.

Chapter No. 794 has chosen several for this series, beginning with Turner Hall, which in its long history in the 300 block of Walnut beginning in 1879 has been, among other things, a German Athletic Club, an opera house, a dance hall and finally a newspaper publishing company, the present home of the *Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan*.

Turner Hall 319 Walnut St.

An announcement published in the *Press and Dakotian* on Oct. 1, 1879, noted that trustees of the local German Turn-Verein Gymnastic Society had purchased property on Walnut Street on which to build a large, badly needed hall for its many ethnic activities. Among surnames of then prominent Turn-Verein members were Schnauber, Binder, Ohlman, Stockwell, Wenzlaff, Wallbaum, Becker, Dilger and Forester.



The balcony above the entrance to the former Turner Hall, located at 319 Walnut, once led to a horseshoe gallery above the assembly hall, which once seated 300.

Turner Hall was dedicated during a two-day celebration in May 1880. Locally-made brick walls enclosed a space 40 feet wide by 80 feet long, an article reported, with attractive facade and 16-foot high ceiling. Interior features included a horseshoe-shaped gallery seating 300 located above the entrance, dance floor, beer bar and elevated stage measuring 20 feet deep and 28 feet wide. A drop curtain painted by musician Felix Vinatieri featured a pretty girl standing alongside a waterwheel. Dressing rooms were below in a small basement. (The dark, gloomy space wrapped in aged field rock remains today.) Numerous kerosene lamps lit footlights, headlights, three massive chandeliers, various offices and refreshment rooms. All lamps had to be filled, lit, raised, lowered and extinguished by hand.

The Turn-Verein Society spoke German at its meetings and activities. Language instructors taught German to children and English to newly-arrived immigrants. Gymnastic activities were all-important as were dance classes, plays, operas, magicians and entertainments of all kinds.

It was said that more than 268 programs and events had been held in Turner Hall. A time line of several follows:

- 1880s — Bands of Santee and Yankton Indians added flavor to local festivities by joining in parades and dancing at Turner Hall;
- 1887, Aug. 14 — Funeral procession for local brewer and member of Turn-Verein Charles F. Rossteucher marched from Turner Hall to his home;
- 1888 — Locals welcomed celebratory firemen upon their return from competition in Huron by manually sweeping Walnut Street en route to Turner Hall;

uator Hejna. Guests are welcome.

Yankton Toastmasters Club 1294 met at the Fryn' Pan Restaurant on Saturday July 19 2014. Acting Club President Teresa Rentsch called the meeting to order and asked Steve Hamilton to give the invocation and lead the pledge of allegiance. Guest at the meeting was Don Samp, who is a Toastmaster from Houston an alumnus from Yankton College. Kevin Buhl was as introduced as Toastmaster of the meeting and called on grammarian Matt Stone to give the word of the day "Deineate." Jeremy Skrenes gave a speech from the Persuasive Speaker manual entitled "The Effective Salesperson" and Harry Voelzke gave a speech entitled "A Very Intimidating Trip." Table topics were led by John Swensen who called member at large to respond to questions related to the future of Yankton and the surrounding area. Master Evaluator of the meeting was Angela Mann, who called on Janice Stone to evaluate Skrenes and Roy Wilcox to evaluate Voelzke, and then presented her evaluation of the meeting in general. Other members with duties were Brea Stone as Ah

counter, Teresa Rentsch as timer, and Jack Dahlseid as vote counter. Trophies were awarded to Matt Stone for best table topics response, Jeremy Skrenes for best speaker, and Roy Wilcox for best speech evaluator. Yankton Toastmasters Club 1294 meets each Saturday from 7:30-8:40 a.m. at the Fryn' Pan Restaurant and guests are always welcome to attend a meeting. For information about Toastmasters, call 665-1523 or 660-3904.

INTERCHANGE

Interchange held their weekly meeting at noon on July 21, 2014, at Minerva's Restaurant in Yankton. Frani Kieffer, President was the Presiding Officer. The meeting was called to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Daisy Kambeck, from Aflac introduced her guest JoEllen Geveshausen, also with Aflac. Announcements were as follows: Kathy Gerstner complimented the Yankton Area Arts for a wonderful event on the Meridian Bridge. Kathy Wibbels from the Yankton Community Library provided announcements related to events for this week. She also stated that they will be having

an open house on Aug. 1, 2014, to say farewell to Becky Pittenger. Frani Kieffer, Avera Foundation mentioned that according to the Chamber website there will be "Biggest Barn Dance in the Dakota Territory" on Sept. 3, 2014, as a kick off to the wagon train event. Carla Ewald, from Shur-Co was our hostess and presented on Shur-Co and the impact that it has on the Yankton community. She shared the growth of the company and the different areas and products that they have produced. The next meeting will be held on July 28, 2014, at Minerva's Restaurant in Yankton at noon with Donna Dietrich as hostess. She will introduce guest speakers Marlene and Chopper Johnson, this year's Riverboat Days Captain and Belle, to talk about this year's Riverboat Days event.

TOASTMASTERS CLUB 6217

Avera Sacred Heart Toastmasters Club 6217 met July 17 at noon in the Benedictine Center with Chelsi Hames giving the Invocation and Joyce Stevens as Toastmaster. Guest for the day was a YHS Grad, Don Samp. General Evaluator Jan Schiferl introduced her team. They were

United Way

Partner Agency Highlight: Boys & Girls Club

BY TARA MILLS
Boys & Girls Club

One out of five youth won't graduate on time. Between 3 p.m.-7 p.m., juvenile crime escalates. An estimated 15.1 million youth are left unsupervised during those hours. Three out of 10 youth are obese or overweight.

Despite the alarming statistics facing the youth of our nation, the Boys & Girls Club knows we have great children in Yankton and is proud to support and aid in the youth development to ensure our youth don't fall into these statistics.

The Boys & Girls Club is an organization focused on youth development with a mission to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens. We serve youth from kindergarten to seniors in high school in many ways. The Academy is a before and after school program in various school sites for youth kindergarten through fifth grade. This is a fee-based, licensed program with scholarships available through United Way's Connecting Kids Youth Scholarship program. Our Traditional site is a place for youth 6-12th grade with membership fees of only \$25 for the entire year. As the opportunity for crime or other bad decisions increases afterschool, the Boys & Girls Club provides a place for youth to

grow and learn to make good choices. All of our programming is based on three priority outcomes: academic success, character & leadership, and healthy lifestyles.

Every day afterschool in Yankton, at least 150 youth are working on homework or high yield learning activities for 30-60 minutes. Power Club, which includes homework help, tutoring, high yield, fun learning activities, and homework time, is mandatory each day. Youth at the Club are also learning about healthy lifestyles through collaborations with the Summit Center and Yankton Parks and Recreation. More than 10,000 healthy snacks were served in 2013. Youth at the Club logged more than 1,400 hours of community service in 2013 as they learned about and grew in character and leadership. Yankton teens were also given a second chance through the Teen Court program where first time offenders face a court of their peers. These teens are sentenced with community action points and have a chance to clear their record if they don't reoffend.

More than 150 Yankton youth are making strides towards realizing their full potential and becoming productive, caring and responsible citizens. The community of Yankton and the support of United Way & Volunteer Services of Greater Yankton are a huge part of that transformation. We are grateful to have great partners that invest in the youth of our community, our most valuable resource.



Boys & Girls Club Jr. Ranger Fishing Clinic.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Annual 4-H BBQ Set

TYNDALL — The annual Bon Homme County 4-H barbecue will be held Saturday, Aug. 2, at the 4-H ground in Tyndall. Meals will be served from 5:30-7 p.m.

The 4-H Barbecue meal feature a half-chicken meal, potato salad, baked beans, bun and lemonade.

The barbecue is sponsored by the Tyndall Cham-

ber of Commerce and Businessmen. Tickets are available from all County 4-H Members and at the Bon Homme County Extension Office. Proceeds from the 4-H Barbecue benefit the Bon Homme County 4-H Program.

For more information, call 589-3531.

MEETINGS

TOASTMASTER CLUB 1294

Yankton Toastmaster Club 1294 met Saturday, July 12, at 7:30 a.m. at the Fry N' Pan restaurant. The meeting was called to order by President Vernon Arens. The invocation was given by Kevin Buhl and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Vernon Arens was introduced as the Toastmaster of the meeting. Teresa Rentsch was introduced as the Master Evaluator of the meeting. Grammarian Jack Dahlseid gave the word of the day, "intensity," which means to increase the force or power. Prepared speech was given by Doug Fickbohm from the Competent Communication Manual Speech #2, Organize Your Speech. Speech titled "I Pledge" history of the Pledge of Allegiance. Table Topics was led by Roy Wilcox, who asked members to expand on book titles. Master Evaluator Rentsch evaluated the meeting and called on Kathy Hejna to evaluate Fickbohm. Presentations were also given by Grammarian Dahlseid, Ah Counter Buhl, Timer Dahlseid, Joke Master Fickbohm and Vote Counter Arens. Table topics winner was Buhl, best speaker Fickbohm and best eval-

job her first time as general evaluator.

Toastmaster Stevens then turned the meeting over to President Greg Stach for announcements, which were: club picnic at Steven's house July 30.



MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Friday, July 25
7:40 am
Press & Dakotam
(Nathan Johnson)
8:20 am
Dakota Theater
(Tara Gill)

Fran Kocer Timer; Greg Stach and Eric Taylor as Evaluators, Hames "Ah/um" counter; and Muriel Stach grammarian. Stach's Word of the Day was "Reminisce."

Speeches were given by Steve Anderson and Jeff May. Anderson spoke of earthquakes and how they affected the earth. May spoke of the highway bill and how it affects Kolberg-Pioneer, Inc. and other construction companies.

Anderson was evaluated by Stach and May by Taylor giving praise for their great facts and the layout of the speeches. Vocal variety and bringing up more local references were the only helping hints for the speeches.

Table Topic Master Muriel Stach asked impromptu questions about reminiscing over childhood books. Kocer enjoys family names but recognizes today's naming of children is more based on the unusual names. Samp enjoys the wild life, quietness and valley and hills at his mother-in-laws house outside of Yankton so much that time just disappears. Taylor remembers trips in the car being boring but now today he entertains his kids with the TV in the car and is well worth it.

GE Schiferl gave the meeting overall good mark and did a great