

PINE CITY MILITIA ARMORY REUSE STUDY

SEPTEMBER 1993

*Prepared by a Reuse Consulting Team
Under Sponsorship of*

THE CITY OF PINE CITY

*THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE OF
THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY*



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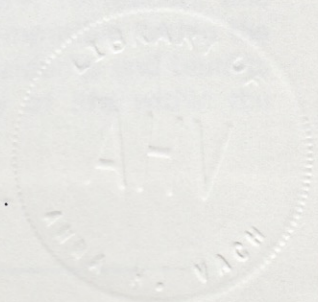
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The Reuse Consulting Team which during August and September 1993 studied the future of the Naval Militia Armory in Pine City, Minnesota, received over fifty suggestions for use of the structure and its adjacent lot. Over an extended time period, many of such suggested uses might prove feasible especially given the changing nature of the community.

However, the team sought to conduct its analysis in ways that would identify appropriate uses for the building that could be developed within a five-year period. Current estimates of the building's structural condition and renovation costs for various uses were developed to assist the owner's decision-making process. To respond to this timing factor, the team had to focus on public and private uses which would be compatible with the current residential character of the neighborhood surrounding the Armory even though portions of the neighborhood might acquire a different character over time including nonresidential uses.

The team also sought to avoid "force fitting" uses into the Naval Militia Armory which could achieve better cost and operational effectiveness in new construction or the rehabilitation of more conventional buildings. A number of the suggested building uses were of this nature.

The current and emerging nature of Pine City also was considered in this analysis. Pine City is within a freeway driven growth corridor extending north from the Twin Cities as well as being part of a county whose economic base is shifting from agriculture to a diversified one that includes a strong tourism component. Pine City currently has need for both tourism attractions and hospitality services for an anticipated increased tourism audience.

Also, the history and heritage of the building itself, the only building in Pine City on the National Register of Historic Places, was considered in evaluating future uses. The building "touched the lives" of many Pine City area residents for several generations and has a story to tell within the history of Pine County.

From the analysis of several factors and issues affecting the Armory, the Reuse Team concluded that two primary uses should be considered for the building.

First: A combination community arts, history, recreation, and public gathering complex would be compatible within the neighborhood and valuable for both residents and tourists in creating a more interesting quality of life within the community.

Second: An apartment complex could be developed within the building that would be distinctive because of the arched windows, brick walls, and building configuration. Both two bedroom and loft type apartments could be included within the space.

In keeping with the team's charge to focus on uses that could happen within a five-year period, the team recommended that the community arts, history, recreation, and civic organizations be given a three-year period to see if they could develop a coalition of organizations and financial resources to renovate and operate the Armory. If this has not occurred at the end of a three-year period, requests for proposals (RFP) should be issued by the City of Pine City to building contractors encouraging the submission of proposals for conversion of the Armory into apartments.

This timing indicates a preference for permitting people and organizations of the community to "package" together a number of important community programs in a coalition effort that would not only preserve the Armory's interior as well as exterior features but would serve both residents and tourists. The apartment complex which could be developed within the Armory would also be a valuable community use and would preserve the exterior character of the building.

The August through September 1993 Reuse study of the 1914 Naval Militia Armory in Pine City, Minnesota, was organized and conducted to assist the decision making of three audiences.

The Pine City City Council and Mayor, who together are considered the owner of the Armory, have been seeking a direction for the future use of the building for a number of years.

- The civic, arts, and educational organizations of Pine City which have expressed a continuing need for additional space and interest in possibly utilizing the Naval Militia Armory.
- A number of local community and military historians who have an interest in "telling the stories" involving the Naval Militia Armory and the Pine City residents who went to war and trained "between the wars."

The focus of the reuse study of the Naval Militia Armory was to intensely examine the multiple values of the property, identify alternative uses of the structure, and the issues surrounding such uses and provide recommendations to the City of Pine City regarding the future of the building.

The Reuse Team was assembled in accordance with the owner's desire to have a thorough "outside" look at the property, up-to-date cost information concerning reuse of the building, and an identification of alternative uses which could be expected to come about within a three- to five-year period.

**MEMBERS OF THE NAVAL
MILITIA ARMORY REUSE
CONSULTING TEAM**

Larry Granger, Principal Investigator, an educational and community development consultant

Charles Nelson, Historic Architect of the State Office of Historic Preservation, Minnesota Historical Society

Richard Faricy, Architect and Partner in the St. Paul based architectural firm of Winsor-Faricy

David MacDonald, Structural Engineer with the Minneapolis based consulting engineering firm of Mattson-MacDonald

Patrick Schifferdecker, Interpretive Specialist and Manager of the North West Company Fur Post historic site of the Minnesota Historical Society

SPECIAL ADVISORS

Robert Voss, City Administrator of the City of Pine City

Earl Foster, Former manager of the Pine City Naval Militia National Guard Armory

Ann Vach, Pine City area historian

The consulting team's interaction with the Pine City community took place on the evening of August 30th during a public meeting in the community room of the Pine City City Hall. Prior to the public suggesting alternative uses for the armory, the presentations were made regarding historic sites.

Presentation 1

"The Value of Historic Properties - Examples from East Central Minnesota" presented by Britta Bloomberg, director of the State Office of Historic Preservation of the Minnesota Historical Society

Presentation 2

"Pine County Sites on the National Historic Register" presented by Charles Nelson

Presentation 3

"What Can You Do With Historic Structures?" presented by Richard Faricy from experience in converting a number of structures to current day uses.

On August 30th and 31st additional information was collected on possible uses for the armory through interviews with the following individuals:

- Jane Robbins, Mayor of Pine City
- Robert Voss, City Administrator of Pine City
- Sue Sharp, Librarian of the Pine City Library (since 1977)
- Donald Stoffel, Chairperson of the Pine County Tourism Association
- Steve Drazkowski, Pine County Extension Educator and advisor to the Pine County Tourism Association

Informal discussions were also held with representatives of the Pine City Fine Arts Council, the Heritage Players theater, and the Pine County Historical Society both during and after the on-site visitation.

On August 31st the Reuse Consulting Team developed preliminary recommendations for future use of the armory and identified the additional research necessary to further describe the conditions, costs, and requirements for such uses.

The following "potential" uses for the Naval Militia Armory were identified during the course of interviews and public meetings held by the Reuse Consulting Team. During September, additional inquiry and research will be done on the most feasible uses and recommendations brought to the Pine City City Council during October 1993.

POTENTIAL PUBLIC USES

Military Museum ... "Basketball museum of early days" ... art gallery ... offices for county government --- continuing education center ... youth hostel ... health club ... meeting space for city commissions ... youth center ... Fine Arts Council office ... bingo parlor ... overflow classrooms for school (as in the past) ... family resource center ... bath house for reopened city beach on Cross Lake ... center for animal control program ... Humane Society building for unwanted animals ... swimming pool ... drivers license testing center ... weekend movie theater ... a place for story telling ... dance hall (as in the past) ... indoor flea market .. mini-expo center for car shows, boat shows, etc. ... expanded library ... home of community theater for productions and storage ... community general purpose meeting space ... City Police Station if city ever develops its own police department ... National Guard Museum ("between the wars") ... art and craft shows and sales ... senior citizen center ... base for submarine fleet on Cross Lake.

POTENTIAL PRIVATE USES

Restaurant ... office building ... art studio and gallery ... medical center ... church... funeral home ... conference center ... light assembly plant ... rental hall for weddings anniversaries, receptions, etc. ... bulldoze and use site for residential housing ... business incubator center ... dinner theater ... micro brewery ... senior housing service center with housing built in adjacent vacant lot ... apartment complex (6-10 units).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Originally constructed in 1914, the Pine City Naval Militia Armory is a rectangular-shaped brick structure consisting of three distinct parts: office, drill hall/auditorium, and garage. The two-story office section fronts directly on First Avenue and is of symmetrical design. It retains original fenestration and in-set stone sculptural detailing. A parapet conceals the low hipped roof. It is faced in a hard-fired orange brick, distinguishing it from the drill-hall/auditorium to the rear which is constructed of common brick. The architectural design of the drill-hall/auditorium is articulated by prominent arched windows and a broad gable roof.

The garage section was added during two eras. In the first, a low, flat-roofed one-story structure was constructed across the rear face of the drill-hall/auditorium and necessitated by the change from horse-drawn to motorized vehicles. The second garage addition was constructed during the 1940-period to accommodate yet larger equipment.

The interior of the office wing is of frame construction. Original woodwork, flooring, and wall/ceiling surfaces remain in place. In plan, it is symmetrical with a central stair hall and two classrooms on each floor. Access to the balcony of the drill-hall/auditorium is from the second floor of the office wing; the balcony has been partitioned at a later date to provide additional classroom space. The basement contains several storage rooms, a firing range, shower, boiler room, and coal bin.

The drill-hall/auditorium boasts the most impressive space to be found in the armory. It contains approximately 6,720 square feet of space with a ceiling height of 17 feet to the lower chord of the trusses. The floor system is poured concrete overlaid with maple strip flooring. Interior walls are brick.

The garages are extremely utilitarian in construction, the earlier garage being constructed of brick with wooden roof structure. The later garage is constructed of hollow tile with a brick facing. The original doors have been removed and replaced with modern overhead doors to accommodate large vehicles.

Overall, the armory is in sound structural condition. However, immediate attention must be focused on correcting water intrusion from deteriorated roofs and flashings. Water intrusion has resulted in loss of mortar in the parapets of the office causing instability and hazard of falling bricks and has penetrated behind a cementous coating on the lower three feet of the exterior walls causing it to separate from the brick walls behind.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Minnesota Naval Militia was organized in 1903 and operated exclusively at Duluth for the first 10 years of its existence. With the formation of the Third Division, a decision was made to locate at Pine City and to construct a building solely for its operation. The Pine City Naval Militia Armory was designed by Duluth architects Kelly and Williams in 1913; construction began the following year. The site selected for the armory provided proximity to Cross lake which was the site for lifeboat drills and other naval maneuvers. The armory was one of only two such armories in Minnesota (the other was constructed at Crosby in 1916) to function as headquarters for naval units. Major training and excursions were undertaken on the Great Lakes.

In April of 1917, the naval militia was mobilized for action in World War I. The Third Division, consisting of 35 officers and enlisted men, embarked on April 8th for Philadelphia and service on the Atlantic Ocean. After the completion of the War, the Division disbanded and the Armory stood vacant until 1924 when it was occupied by Battery E, 2nd Battalion on the 125th Field Artillery of the Minnesota National Guard. This Battery was equipped with horses until 1936. In 1941 it was mobilized for service in World War II and shipped out to Europe in 1943. In 1946 it was replaced by Battery C of the 257th Anti-aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion. In 1977 the Armory was vacated following construction of a new facility.

Throughout its existence, the Armory served not only a military function, but was a community center for Pine City. Civic and social events were regular occurrences, and the Armory was best known for the large dances, athletic events, and other gatherings held there. Over the years, the community has regarded the Armory as an integral component and local landmark.

PROFILE OF THE PINE CITY NAVAL MILITIA ARMORY

Building Dimensions

Original construction: 1914
Remodeled, repaired, or altered: 1940, 1961, 1972
North 2 story section: 28'
South 111' - auditorium and garage
Southwest 75.4 feet garage
Basement under north portion
Approximate interior areas:
Main floor (north): 1,710 sq
Main floor (south): 6,720 sq
Southwest garage: 3,350 sq
Balcony & 2nd floor: 2,280 sq
14,600 sq



CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- July 30, 1914** Armory completed and designated a Minnesota Naval Militia Armory
1st Unit stationed was 3rd Division - 7th Naval Area (held summer training on Lake Superior - practiced lifesaving on Cross Lake)
- April 6, 1917** Minnesota Naval Militia ordered to mobilize for World War I. After the war, the Pine City unit was not reformed. Armory was vacant until 1924.
- May 29, 1924** Battery E, 2nd Battalion, 125th Field Artillery was mustered into the Minnesota National Guard and stationed in Pine City. Equipped with horse drawn 75mm guns from World War I.
- 1936** Horses were replaced by trucks for towing guns.
- February 1941** Battery mobilized for federal service.
- February 1943** Battery shipped out for European theater of war.
- November 1946** A "new" unit, Battery C, 257th Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion was assigned to Pine City Armory.
- 1977** New armory built and Pine City Naval Militia Armory became property of school district before being sold to the City.

COMMUNITY USE OF ARMORY ... throughout its history, the armory was used for community events including basketball games, dances, funerals, and parties.



**SURROUNDING THE
NAVAL MILITIA ARMORY**

The Naval Militia Armory is located at the intersection of 1st Avenue and 1st Street in a narrow residential neighborhood two lots east of Cross Lake and approximately nine lots away from an industrial zone. The current character of the neighborhood is keeping with it R1 zoning for one and two family residential.

The current residential character of the neighborhood led the Reuse Team to not consider several uses for the building which were incompatible with the neighborhood although the building itself would accommodate them. These included:

- restaurant
- business incubator center
- private office buildings
- bingo parlor and conference center
- light assembly
- government office buildings
- animal shelter

An interesting aspect of the history of the Armory is that from 1914-1977 the community regularly used the building for public celebrations and dances often attracting hundreds of people who parked throughout the neighborhood or walked in from the downtown area. The neighborhood was apparently tolerant of such crowds although the same may not be true today. The most compatible uses of the Armory in this residential neighborhood would be for multiple dwellings, a community center, or a library at this time.

The future character of the neighborhood may change to include a mixture of uses if some adjacent land uses change. These could include a redevelopment of the riverfront area to include hospitality industries such as motels and restaurants, an abandonment of the nearby railway right of way and a conversion to recreational use. Individuals may find some of the larger homes in the area attractive over time for home based business as illustrated by interest in the nearby Dr. Knapp house for a bed and breakfast.

The apparent availability of any publicly controlled building or open space often produces an outpouring of suggestions of possible uses that reflect existing or anticipated future community needs. Such suggestions are often put forth informally in the community's coffee shops and whenever a public input session is provided through public meetings or media surveys.

It was apparent during the reuse study inquiring into the future of the Naval Militia Armory that various community individuals and groups have had their "eye on the building" for a number of uses. The limited community uses made of the building during the 1970's and 80's as well as suggestions for additional uses have tended to be in the education and recreation areas. As the community has changed in the 1990's, the need for additional services have developed or been promoted with such services often in need of new "space." A listing of such services emerged during the reuse study:

1. Uses reflecting the current or future growth of community:
 - offices for county government
 - meeting space and offices for city government
 - drivers license testing center
 - home for possible "future" city police department
 - center for animal control program and county humane society
 - expanded library space
 - swimming pool
 - community center
2. Uses reflecting changing nature of community's population:
 - youth center/teen center
 - family resource center
 - weekend movie theater
 - bingo parlor
 - small business incubator center
3. Uses reflecting desires for expanded and more diverse year-round "quality of life"
 - indoor exposition and flea market space
 - Fine Arts Center
 - permanent theater space for theater company
 - history museum for Pine City area

The tourism industry in Pine County has grown steadily in the last decade to the point in 1991 that it accounted for 325 jobs and \$15,000,000 in sales (estimate of State Office of Tourism).

Tourism attractions in Pine County are varied and distributed across several areas of interest as shown below with a listing of attractions and their 1992 attendance figures.

Outdoor Recreation

Banning State Park (81,217)
St. Croix State Park (200,382)
Munger Trails (40,000)

Entertainment

Grand Casino (2,000,000 for 8 months)
Pine County Fair (4,200)
Quarry Days (1,500)
Heritage Players (1,500)
East Central HS Theater (1,475)
Pine County Gun Show (2,300)

History

North West Company Fur Post (16,915)
Hinckley Fire Museum (12,306)
Askov Museum (870)
Rural School Museum (820)
Finlayson Depot Museum

To date, attendance for history attractions have lagged behind that of outdoor recreation uses and all attractions have lagged behind the figures of Grand Casino Hinckley whose attendance is expected to grow to six million a year by 1996.

The history attractions of Pine County are distributed throughout the county although the formal history museums tend to be in the northern areas. Pine City has not had a county historical museum since 1954 although recent discussion has taken place regarding the possible creation of a history building at the Pine County Fair Grounds. Another project under development by the Pine County Tourism Association and the Pine County Historical Society is the development of a series of scenic and historic tours throughout the county.

History is viewed by the Pine County Tourism Association as one of its programming and promotional themes for both current and future times. The 21st Century Vision for Tourism in Pine County which was developed in 1993 by the Pine County Tourism Association states:

"Tourism activities utilize the natural resources, history, ethnic culture, and agriculture of the area."

Until recently, Pine City has not significantly utilized its history for promotional purposes. However, the increasing success of the Wild Rice Rendezvous held each September at the North West Company Fur Post has led the community to begin utilizing the fur trade period of history and the voyageur as community themes. A 30-foot wood carving of a voyageur now is located in a city park and the municipal liquor store is called the Voyageur Bottle Shop. The Rural School House Museum located in Pine City touches upon both late nineteenth century and early twentieth century history of the surrounding area.

However, most of the history of the Pine City area remains to be told and would require the existence of a number of community organizations such as:

- A city heritage preservation commission to serve as official advisor to the Pine City City Council on preservation of historically significant structures.
- A Pine City Heritage Society or task force which could work as a subunit of the Pine County Historical Society to begin telling the stories of southern Pine County.
- A Pine City military history organization which would collect and interpret materials and artifacts on the involvement of Pine City residents in military activities. Much of this history relates in some fashion to the Pine City Naval Militia Armory.

The existence of all of the above bodies would contribute to the development of tourism in Pine County and particularly would support the desire of Pine City to be "a destination" for tourists by providing additional reasons to visit and stay in the community. The work of the above bodies could be displayed in the Naval Militia Armory as well as elsewhere in the community. As of September 1993, none of the above bodies is organized however and any role in the use of the Naval Militia Armory would have to be considered strictly a future possibility.

Constructed as a facility where movement of people and equipment is of primary importance, the Pine City Naval Militia Armory has few of the accessibility problems commonly associated with historic buildings. This is not to say that the building meets modern accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but that solutions to existing problem situations are readily identifiable and achievable.

With the passage of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), which became law on July 26, 1990, properties and services which provide accommodations for the public in general must be accessible to those with disabilities. The ADA defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. As such, the ADA addresses issues of employment, State and local government programs, telecommunications, transportation, and places of public accommodation. One of the primary emphasis of the ADA affecting historic properties is the elimination of barriers where public accommodation is concerned. (These requirements are addressed in Titles II and III of the ADA.)

In satisfying the obligation to provide accessibility, there are two major issues. The first of these concerns whether the necessary work is "readily achievable," or whether necessary work can be accomplished without much difficulty or expense. Examples of readily achievable measures include installation of ramps or widening doors. The second issue, of most concern to historians and preservationists, is the impact of the work on the integrity of the historic property; in other words, whether compliance with the ADA will result in the threat to or destruction of significant features or qualities of that property. In such a case, the ADA allows alternative minimum requirements which are to be developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). In unique cases, the SHPO may determine that even compliance with alternative minimum requirements would threaten or destroy significant qualities of an historic property; it must be emphasized, however, that only a very small group of historic properties would qualify for an exemption of minimum ADA requirements. In these unique cases, alternative accessibility solutions could include the use of audio-visual materials and devices to portray inaccessible areas of the historic property. Although there are minimum requirements, each property must be examined and evaluated in its own right and solutions developed must be specific to that property.

With the exception of basement and second floor spaces in the office section of the building, all of the interior is accessible on grade. Both the garage and drill-hall/auditorium have exterior doorways meeting code. The front entrance requires minimal grading of the sidewalk to eliminate a low threshold. Openings meet or exceed minimum width requirements.

The greatest expense related to ADA compliance would be attributed to installation of a passenger elevator to access basement and second floors

of the office. Currently access to these floors is provided by a central staircase. Secondary egress from the second floor has been provided by construction of an enclosed staircase from the balcony to the main floor of the drill-hall/auditorium (originally, access to the balcony was through the second floor of the office wing; the egress staircase was likely added at the time the balcony was enclosed to provide additional classroom space.)

An elevator could feasibly be constructed in two locations. The first of these locations would require taking critically needed square-footage from existing classrooms in the office wing. The mechanical space above the elevator shaft could be concealed behind the parapet, minimizing visibility. Access would be provided to all floors of the office, including the balcony of the drill-hall/auditorium. The second alternative location would be to construct an enclosed shaft within the drill-hall/auditorium in the vicinity of the balcony. Although this alternative would save the space in the office wing, it would introduce a new element into the open space of the drill-hall/auditorium and penetration of the shaft through the roof would most likely be visible.

A second alternative would be to develop programmatic alternatives to provide access to services which would normally be located on basement or second floors. Although this is least costly, it is least desirable and should be considered only as an interim measure until funds are available to achieve total accessibility through installation of an elevator.

After a publicly-owned historic resource is identified and a compatible use determined, a plan for protection of that resource is necessary, if not critical, to insure its preservation. The role of the community in this process is called "stewardship." Good stewards are sensitive to the needs of the resource and of the community. Concerns to be addressed range from the technical conservation requirements of building materials to economics of restoration, operation, and maintenance to what will provide the best service to those who will occupy or visit the property to partake in activities there.

Several factors or priorities are integral to a successful stewardship program. A four-step program for caring for historic buildings is recommended. This program is valid for any resource.

The first step is to set up a permanent building committee, one that will be able to participate in the planning and decision-making processes. It is suggested that committee members serve throughout the duration of a major project to provide continuity. It is important that members of the committee are chosen for particular expertise, whether it be in construction or in project management. The most important element is time; the committee must be able to devote the time necessary for monitoring and follow-through.

The second step is to obtain competent professional help where needed. Ironically, the less money a committee has, the more important it is to obtain the services of a professional. Such professionals include consultants such as architects, project management advisors, fund raisers, and contractors. In the case of historic buildings, it is imperative to ascertain whether the consultant has experience with similar buildings and stations, and that the consultant is familiar with up-to-date technical developments specifically related to your situation.

The third step is to identify the building's problems. Here is where an acute awareness of the building's needs and changing conditions is required. The building should be inspected at least twice every year; once in the early spring and once in the fall. A one or two page inspection report form should be developed which documents conditions and makes suggestions for prioritizing items needing attention. It is strongly suggested that a number of photographs are taken at each inspection to document conditions. Remember, film is the cheapest ingredient in a preservation program, and also the most valuable in documenting conditions and work in progress. Photographs provide invaluable historical records for research and indisputable evidence in litigation.

Finally, and most important, is to establish and implement a realistic plan of repairs and maintenance. A maintenance program has several goals which lead to the conservation of money, energy, and the structure itself. In setting up a realistic maintenance program one must establish priorities for dealing with problem issues. Secondly, a budget and timetable must

be set. Following this, negotiations for work and development of fund-raising alternatives begin. When work is completed, maintenance requirements for the particular item are added to the overall maintenance program. Too often, maintenance is related to the lowest priority -- an extremely costly mistake!

The current condition of the Pine City Naval Militia Armory was evaluated by a structural engineer in August 1993 for the purposes of:

- determining the general condition of the building,
- identifying immediate building stabilization actions,
- developing estimates of rehabilitation costs for various building uses.

These reports were provided to the Reuse Team and to groups in the community interested in possible use of the building upon rehabilitation. They expand upon previous structural analyses of the Armory conducted in 1975 and 1989 which indicated the basic structural soundness of the building.

**GENERAL STRUCTURAL
CONDITION IN 1993**

The building structure is in good to very good condition. No deterioration to date threatens the stability of the structure. The concrete slab under the drill floor and floor joists are sound. Floor surfaces in the drill hall would have to be replaced although flooring in most other rooms can be renewed, even if it is warped.

**ROOF AND EXTERIOR
WALLS**

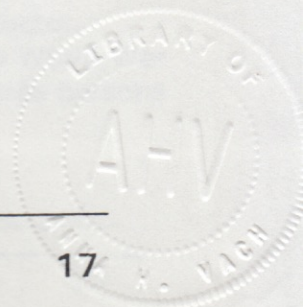
As of 1977 when the Armory was purchased by the City of Pine City, a relatively new roof was in good condition. Since that time, the roof has developed several areas of leakage which occur near the flushings to the parapet walls.

Brick masonry parapets have been weakened by roof leaks and the trapping of water and snow between the sharper sloping roof surfaces and the masonry walls.

**STRUCTURAL
STABILIZATION
NEEDS IN NEXT
3 TO 5 YEARS**

A number of immediate building repairs are needed during 1993 as well as several over the subsequent three to five year period. Immediate attention should be given to correct the roof leaks occurring around the flashings. Parapet bricks which are loose should be removed and either recemented or stored until such time as they could be recemented. An asbestos survey should be conducted followed by a limited cleanup of the interior in all areas where asbestos will not be encountered.

In a subsequent three to five year period, the building will require a series of basic repairs to continue its stabilization and also improve its appearance. This includes the tuckpointing of the brick on both the exterior and in the basement, interior masonry, and wall repairs and repair or replacement of the concrete facade which wraps around the building. THESE REPAIRS WILL BE NEEDED REGARDLESS OF THE USE OF THE BUILDING. Their estimated costs is \$40,000-\$55,000.



DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR THE MOST PROBABLE REUSES OF THE NAVAL MILITIA ARMORY

These costs are based upon survey data of recent new construction and renovation projects.

<u>Uses</u>	<u>Costs if New Construction</u>	<u>Costs if Use Located In Renovated Naval Militia Armory</u>
Community Arts - History - Recreation - Meeting Center	\$60-70 sq. ft.	\$25-30 sq. ft.
Apartment units	\$42-52 sq. ft.	\$30-35 sq. ft.
Library	\$80+ sq. ft.	\$40+ sq. ft.



The Pine City Naval Militia Armory, as the only building in Pine City on the National Historic Register, is both a visible symbol of the community's heritage and an usable space for a number of public and private uses.

**AS A VISIBLE SYMBOL
OF THE HERITAGE
OF PINE CITY**

The Naval Militia Armory with or without a historical exhibit provides an opportunity for story telling about the early 20th century that answers the question, "Why is a Naval Militia Armory located on the shores of Cross Lake and the Snake River and not along the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans?"

Answering the question provides a way to tell about the days when Pine City leaders, particularly United States Congressman J. Adam Bede (1903-09) were "wheelers and dealers" in both state and national politics. A second question, "What was the building used for?" provides another opportunity to remind viewers that the Armory was a building that "almost everyone in town" had some connection with before the local school built a gymnasium in 1937 and school sporting events and large gatherings could be held within the school.

As long as the exterior building stands, the question can be asked by continuing generations of Pine City residents as well as visitors, "Why a Naval Militia Armory in Pine City?"

**AS A SITE VISITATION
POINT FOR STUDENT
STUDY OF THE
MILITARY HISTORY
OF PINE CITY AREA
CITIZENS**

The Naval Militia Armory had as its first and foremost function the preparation of men to go to war if so required. The nature of this building was so designed with a drill floor, shooting range, ammunition room, vehicle storage, locker rooms, battalion offices, flag and material display areas, and classrooms.

If the building remains open to public use, student visitation to the Armory would permit a telling of several stories relating to Pine City's military history that complement the existing curriculum in Pine City schools regarding World War II. Currently, on an every other year basis, the fifth and sixth grade classes combine for a special unit on World War II that includes interviews with family members or area residents who had a direct involvement or memory of World War II. Veterans of the war and others with special knowledge of the time period visit classrooms for discussion with students.

Site visitation to the Armory by students would expand the existing curriculum to permit students to:

- tour the Armory areas where various training activities took place by Naval Militia and National Guard members,
- march on the drill floor under guidance of a drill instructor,
- hold classes in the Armory during the special unit on World War II and hold discussion with veterans and other resource persons in that location.

Interest among a number of community members has also developed over the past several years in the creation of a military museum or series of exhibits describing and commemorating the involvement of Pine City area residents in military actions from the time of the Civil War to the current era. Such an exhibit could be developed in one of the classroom spaces in the two-story section of the building and would be valuable for tourists as well as student and residents.

AS A LOCATION FOR AN EXPANDED PINE CITY LIBRARY

Pine City currently has a public library that is well utilized but undersized both in its square footage and collection (12,000 volumes). It is currently part of a six-county, fourteen building regional library system through which the community provides the space and the regional system provides staffing and collections.

The Pine City Library began in the 1920's in the lounge of the 1st National Bank Building before moving to the Pine County Courthouse. In 1978, it moved to its current location as part of a complex which includes the city council chambers, city administrative offices, and a multi-purpose community room. The library has a broad collection for its size and has a specialization in local history including a nearly complete microfilm collection of community newspapers. It also has an interest in developing a specialized collection involving the history of the fur trade and Ojibwa culture.

Locational considerations for libraries whether they are neighborhood, citywide, or regional involve being in the center of the service area and also providing adequate parking. The current Pine City Library has a large number of walk-in users, particularly elementary age students who would be affected by a change in locations.

How does the Naval Militia Armory in size, building, and neighborhood character and location meet the need for a library? The Armory has more than adequate space for an expanded library and the cost of renovating it for library purposes would be 30-50% lower than the cost of new construction. Its location in a residential neighborhood is permitted within the zoning code and would represent a common pattern of libraries often being within residential areas. The adjacent undeveloped lot could be developed for parking. However, the Armory does not have a central location for its service area and would be considered "out of the way" by many prospective users.

The Armory could contribute to library expansion for Pine City in another manner by providing the public meeting space for activities that currently take place in the community room of the city hall complex. This would permit the expansion of both the library and city administrative offices into the existing community room and address two community needs which might otherwise require new construction.

AS AN APARTMENT
BUILDING CONTAINING
HIGH QUALITY UNITS

Should the Pine City Naval Militia Armory be considered for development into housing units? Based upon a preliminary structural analysis and a "walk through" of the building and site by architects familiar with the renovation of historic properties, the answer appears to be yes. Between 10 and 14 units could potentially be created from the existing space.

A possible scenario as to how this could develop is as follows:

- The front two-story administrative block could be converted to four small apartments or two two-story townhouse type units containing two or three bedrooms.
- The drill floor has fine formed arches and curved windows within its space which lend to the development of loft style apartments. Approximately 10 units could be provided in this way utilizing either a separated corridor or individual outside entries for access. Common use space or additional small units could be developed in the storage areas at the west end of the hall. This concept may require the demolition of the 1940's garage addition.
- The total housing spaces that would result from this approach would be:

- 2 Two-story, three-bedroom units in the north block
- 10 Loft one-bedroom units in the drill hall
- 2 One-bedroom units in the garage area

There are many redevelopment concepts possible which would vary the size of the units and might retain the 1940's garage facility. A study of the building based on measured drawings would be required to further explore the housing option.

AS A LOCATION FOR
A COMBINATION
COMMUNITY
ARTS, HISTORY,
RECREATION, AND
PUBLIC GATHERING
COMPLEX

The August-September 1993 study of the Pine City Naval Militia Armory brought forth suggestions (or requests) for many community program spaces. No use, with the possible exception of a library, was identified which could fully utilize the Naval Militia Armory at this time. The terms community center, community arts center, and community meeting center were used by citizens in describing the need for a place that had a number of community uses or in terms of "what was missing" in the community.

It also became apparent during the study that there was a limited number of tourist attractions in Pine City for diverse audiences particularly in the downtown and riverfront areas. Consequently, in considering a "package" of potential community uses for the Armory, the possible joint attractiveness of programs to both tourists and residents should be considered.

For example, the following set of public uses which would be compatible with the residential character of the neighborhood were identified during the study:

<u>Potential Use for Armory Space</u>	<u>Used by Residents</u>	<u>Used by Tourists</u>
Art Gallery	X	X
Art Council office	X	
Arts Instructional space	X	X
Theater performing stage	X	X
Theater office and storage	X	
Pine City Heritage Museum	X	X
Pine County Historical Museum	X	X
Military Museum	X	X
Meeting rooms	X	
Exhibition and large gathering space	X	X

The above analysis illustrates where tourism development and community development can come together and produce "something good for the community" that is also "worth visiting" for the tourists.

A combination program and activity space as described above would require a coalition of community and area-wide organizations to form a partnership with the City of Pine City to redevelop, maintain, program, and operate the facility. If the city government chooses to use a significant portion of the Armory for public meeting space such as the drill hall and other rooms in the two-story administrative wing of the building, then the City would assume primary financial and operational responsibility for the Armory.

As of September 1993 the organizations which could potentially use the building for the above described uses in partnership with the City had no formal positions on the use of the Armory for their programming:

Pine City Arts Council is in process of seeking new art exhibit and office space but is heavily engaged with event programming and fund raising.

Heritage Players - the board of directors is not interested in exploring the use of the Armory for theater space at this time.

Community Band, Community Orchestra, and Other Musical Groups - not in existence at this time.

Other Theater Groups - no indication of interest at this time from existing theater groups or those likely to form in near future.

Pine City Heritage or Historical Society - not in existence at this time.

Pine County Historical Society - currently sponsors museums in Hinckley, Askov, and Pine City. Has some interest in a location in Pine City where county museum existed from 1948-1954.

Military History Organization - not in existence at this time. A number of military veterans and community residents are interested in forming such an organization.

Many of the above organizations have access to non-local funding sources which could be used for building restoration and the development of programs and exhibits. These are primarily grant programs from such sources as the National Endowment for The Arts, National Endowment for The Humanities (history and culture), and private foundations interested in historic preservation, education, and the arts. These include the Butler Foundation, International Multifood Corporation, Pew Charitable Trust, Griggs Foundation, and the American Express Minnesota Foundation.

Local funding sources for building renovation and ongoing operation would include contributions from veterans and service clubs, rental fees from use of the building space, revenue producing arts performances or exhibits, fund raisers, gift shop proceeds (if housed in building), City of Pine City appropriations, and joint fund-raising promotions with Grand Casino Hinckley.

The development of a coalition of building uses and the undertaking of a fund-raising campaign and restoration work when funding became available would likely be a three to five year project.



1. That the Naval Militia Armory be preserved under public, nonprofit, or private ownership and management.
2. That immediate action be taken by the City of Pine City to stabilize the head house portion of the structure through repairing leaks in the roof and removing or recementing loose bricks. Bricks removed during this effort could be stored and later recemented during renovation. A oversight committee should be appointed by the City of Pine City to monitor the condition of the building prior to its rehabilitation.
3. That reuses for the building be pursued that are cost efficient in utilizing the space, compatible with the neighborhood, and valuable to the community. The primary uses to be considered at this time are:
 - a. A combination community art, history, recreation, and public gathering complex.
 - b. An apartment building containing 10 to 14 units.
4. That the City of Pine City, by council resolution, go on record that it intends to establish a new use in the building within a five-year period and during the first three years of this period it will only consider proposals for establishing the community arts, history, recreation, and public gathering complex. If such a proposal of an acceptable nature has not come forth after the three-year period, the City should issue Requests for Proposal from building developers for conversion of the Armory into apartments.
5. That consideration be given by the Pine City City Council to establishing a City Heritage Advisory Commission which could provide ongoing consultation to individual property owners, organizations, businesses, and local governments regarding the utilization and stewardship of historic structures in the community.
6. That area historical groups be encouraged to develop and disseminate a comprehensive history of Pine City's most distinctive building, the Pine City Naval Militia Armory.



*Larson was the
armory list.
A.V.*

CHRONOLOGY

THE NAVAL MILITIA ARMORY OF PINE CITY MINNESOTA 1913 - 1993

prologue

WHY would a Naval Militia Division and an armory for the training of its members be located in Pine City Minnesota during the early part of the 20th Century? The likely reason WHY is that a number of prominent community and political leaders in Pine City were farsighted and assertive in getting their community included in federal legislation authorizing new armories. In addition, the business community contributed matching funds and a significant number of men from the area came forward to volunteer for service in the Militia.

Congressman Larson of Sandstone and his predecessor J. Adam Bede of Pine City who served in Congress from 1903 - 1913 became convinced by late 1912 that Pine City could obtain an armory if it positioned itself to meet all requirements in the forthcoming federal legislation. Beginning in early 1913, developments moved quickly in both Pine City and Washington DC which resulted in the only Naval Militia Armory located away from ocean coasts being built on Cross Lake in Pine City.

- January 24, 1913 The Third Division of the Minnesota Naval Militia was organized when 70 of 78 candidates were mustered in at Pine City. At this point, the Third Division was the largest Naval Militia division in the state, even surpassing the Duluth division which had been organized in 1903. Officers elected at this organizational meeting: Lieutenants Robert Wilcox and Dr. KW Knapp and Ensign Fred Japperson. The militia began training weekly at Stekle Hall in preparation for summer training on the Great Lakes.
- March 1913 The United States Senate passed the Naval Militia Act authorizing local militia armories in cities which had an organized militia division and provided lots for building and a \$1000 in matching funds. The final version passed by both the Senate and the House of Representatives included an amendment by Representative Larson to include Pine City among the authorized sites.
- April 12, 1913 Members of the Pine City Naval Militia received two sets of uniforms, one blue and one white.
- May 2, 1913 Citizens of Pine City held public meetings to discuss meeting all conditions for having an armory. Former State Senator Fred Hodge and Mrs Hodge donated three lots for armory construction.
- May 3, 1993 The Pine City business community was approached for \$1000 in contributions to meet the matching requirement. By the end of the day, the \$1000 had been raised.

- June 1913 Thirty five members of the Pine City Naval Militia took their first training mission on the Great Lakes which was a two day trip to prepare the division of "inlanders" for ocean travel.
- October 1, 1913 A Pine City delegation of Judge Robert Wilcox, J. Adam Bede, Dr Karl Knapp and Emil Larson met with the State Armory Board in the Governor's Office to receive the \$15,000 award for construction and to display the deeds of the lots donated by the Hodge family and the \$1000 provided by the community. The community funds were designated to cover the expenses of the architect.
- October 1913 The construction team for the armory was organized.
 Architect: The firm of Kelly and Williams of Duluth
 General Contractor: Emil Larson of Pine City
 Heating System: Black and Company of Duluth
- November 15, 1913 Construction of armory begun.
- March 1914 Eight ships of the Great Lakes militias left Duluth to be in the ceremonies celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal scheduled for January 1, 1915. No documentation has been located to date indicating the presence of any Pine City Militiamen on these ships.
- July 30, 1914 Armory was completed and designated a Minnesota Naval Militia Armory.
- Summer 1914 Fifteen members of the 3rd Division of the Naval Militia took a two week summer training cruise on the Great Lakes aboard the USS Gopher.
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- The USS Gopher was a two masted schooner of 840 tons displacement when launched at New York in 1871. When commissioned as a military vessel in 1891, its name at that time was The Fern. In 1906, its name was changed to the Gopher and it was turned over to the Minnesota Naval Militia. From its Duluth base, it served as a training vessel until 1917.
-
- Other water based training for the Pine City Naval Militia involved rowing a 30+ foot lifeboat on Cross Lake as part of life saving exercises.
- November 16, 1914 The Pine City Naval Militia Armory was formally dedicated with Governor A.O. Ekerhart serving as one of the main speakers. Seating capacity for the event was about 1200. A midnight supper took place on the balcony following a dance on the drill floor.

- August 15, 1915 The Third Division from Pine City and three Naval Militia Divisions from Duluth sailed on the USS Gopher for a sixteen day Great Lakes training cruise. The Gopher and eight other ships engaged in maneuvers, target practice and gun drills.
- July 1916 The Third Division from Pine City joined divisions of the Minnesota Naval Militia from Duluth and the newly formed divisions from Bemidji, Lindstrom and Crosby for a training session on the USS Rhode Island which engaged in maneuvers with other ships of the Atlantic Battleship Fleet. An eleven coach train left from Pine City to take the militiamen to Philadelphia.
- A training cruise was also taken by some members of the Pine City Naval Militia on the Great Lakes during the summer of 1916.
- January 1, 1917 The Third Division's strength consisted of 3 officers and 42 militiamen.
- March 16, 1917 War preparations were taking place throughout the United States. The USS Topeka replaced the USS Gopher as the training vessel for the Minnesota Naval Militia.
- April 6, 1917 9:00a.m. Lt. Robert Wilcox received a call instructing the Third Division to report for active duty at Duluth the following day. American flags began to appear around town as the "word got out" about the call up.
- While the members of the militia were checking their rifles at the Armory, an armed guard accidentally discharged his rifle with the bullet passing through Dewey Wilcox's right ankle and the ball of his left foot. After his wounds healed, he rejoined the Third Division in Philadelphia.
- April 7, 1917 2:00a.m. Two officers and 37 militiamen assembled at the Armory for a "sendoff" by the community that opened with a prayer by Father Lee and featured a rousing patriotic address by J. Adam Bede. Townspeople followed the militia over to the train depot and watched the train pull out for Duluth.
- August 1917 It was reported in the local newspaper that the Third Division was on the Honor Roll for its training performance.
- 1917: (at home) A Home Guard was organized and used the Armory for training. Albert Blanchard became caretaker of the Armory in the absence of the Militia. The National Guard sent 2 officers and 16 guards to keep watch over the bridge over the Kettle River near Sandstone.

- 1917 - 1918 Actual duty for members of the Pine City Naval Militia during the war years was not well documented. The members of the Minnesota Naval Militia were divided up and became part of the crews of three battleships; the USS Iowa, the USS Kansas and the USS Massachusetts. These ships spent World War I on convoy escort duty in the North Atlantic during the height of the German U Boat campaign against supply ships.
- Some of the specific assignments for Pine City Militiamen that were identified by family members include:
- .. Robert Clark was assigned to the hospital corps
 - .. Al Omen became a plumber's mate
 - .. Fred(Fritz) Johnson was assigned as machinist's mate
 - .. Oscar Dudley assigned as electrician
- April 7,1918 Pine City community held a one year anniversary of the day the Militiamen left for active duty.
- November 11,1918 ARMISTICE DAY - The conclusion of World War I
- July 4,1919 Homecoming for all military men who participated in World War I from the Pine City area. The celebration featured a parade, community singing, games and races, a military ball in the evening and fireworks.
- February 7,1920 A meeting was held at the Armory to consider reorganizing the Third Division of the Minnesota Naval Militia. No action was taken despite a prior indication of interest by nine area men in reforming the division.
- September 29,1921 SUNDAY A funeral was held at the Armory for Frank Novak of Pine City who was killed in France on October 18,1918, shortly before the Armistice. The Armory was decorated with many flags and flowers and over 2,000 persons were in attendance. Following a sermon by Rev. Parish, a former Pine City minister, a 183 car procession went to the burial site at Bohemian Cemetary.
- December 30,1921 Pine City Mayor Paul Perkins, City Treasurer James Boyle and Lt. Robert Wilcox of the Minnesota Naval Militia were appointed to oversee the vacant Armory. Community use of the building continued during the period when it had no military training activity.

THE NATIONAL GUARD PERIOD FOR THE PINE CITY ARMORY

1924 - 1977

- May 29, 1924 Sixty two recruits enrolled in Battery E of the 125th Field Artillery of the Minnesota National Guard. Drills were held regularly in the Armory on Friday nights.
- July 1924 Battery E attended summer training at Camp Custer Michigan. Calisthenics, drill, "more drill" and horse and driver training were the daily routine. In addition, some members had KP or guard duty.
- Summer Routine For Battery E Battery E trained weekly on Friday nights at the Armory throughout the year and then spent two weeks at such camps as Fort Ripley Minnesota and Fort McCoy Wisconsin. The Battery was equipped with British made 75mm guns that were brought back to the United States from World War I. Eight horses were used to draw guns and were housed at the Pine City Fair Grounds where they were cared for by two trainers.
- Community Use of The Armory The Pine City Armory had the largest indoor public space for several miles around in East Central Minnesota until the Pine City School District built a larger gymnasium in 1937. The drill floor was the obvious place for school and community dances, especially on New Year's Eve. Sometimes young men would be so excited by the dancing and refreshments that they would scale the walls of the two story portion of the Armory.
- The space was also used for indoor roller skating, poultry shows, carnivals, graduation exercises, Halloween parties, Santa Claus Days and above all, basketball. Basketball was played when the Armory was officially open and at other times as well. High school basketball games were played in the Armory by Pine City and other area schools because of the large floor and the shower room in the basement. Still, many young men could not get enough basketball and found mostly non destructive ways of entering the building during off hours, sometimes accompanied by young ladies. This tradition continued into the 1970's with only the points of entry and the participants changing. More formal basketball games were played by the town basketball team named the "Red Devils".
- 1934 First garage addition built in anticipation of switch to trucks from horses.
- 1936 Horses used to draw artillery replaced by trucks.
- 1937 Second garage addition constructed to provide additional storage space.

1940 Additional garage unit started but not completed until 1943 because of the shortage of materials due to the war effort.

February 10, 1941 Battery E, 2nd Battalion 125th Field Artillery was mobilized for federal service.

March 3, 1941 Battery E departed from Minnesota for Camp Clairborne Louisiana for training with other elements of Minnesota's "Red Bull" Division.

January 1943 Battery E was shipped to Fort Bragg North Carolina where it was redesignated Battery B, 194th Field Artillery and was provided with American eight inch howitzers. This was the replacement for the World War I British 75mm guns and made the Battery one of the first to receive the new howitzer.

February 8, 1943 The Battery was redesignated Battery B, 995th Field Artillery.

August 21, 1943 The Battery left aboard the SS Monterey from Stanton Island New York at Dock 1000.

September 2, 1943 The Battery disembarked in Algeria North Africa.

November 13, 1943 The Battery arrived in Italy after sailing from Tunisia.

September 7, 1944 After several months of fighting in Italy, the Battery sailed from Naples for France.

September 9, 1944 Battery arrived in St. Tropez France.

March 21, 1945 As part of "Big Push", Battery entered Germany in the vicinity of Germanshof.

April 17, 1945 Battery reached Wefternaok Germany.

May 7, 1945 GERMANY UNCONDITIONALLY SURRENDERED. A total of 30 men from Pine City were killed in World War II.

November 4, 1946 BATTERY C, 257th Anti Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion assigned to Pine City Armory and equipped with 40 mm anti-aircraft guns.

1950's The 40mm anti-aircraft guns were replaced by newer 90mm guns

February 11, 1959 The Battery was redesignated Battery B, 4th Howitzer Battalion, 216th Combat Arms Regiment. The anti-aircraft guns were replaced by 105mm howitzers.

February 1, 1960 The Battery was redesignated Battery B, 2nd Howitzer Battalion 125th Field Artillery. The 105mm howitzers were replaced by 155 howitzers.

March 1963

The Battery's 155mm howitzers were replaced by the eight inch "Honest John" rocket.

1973

The Battery was redesignated as Service Battery 151.A.Bn. This turned the Battery from a fighting unit to a service unit for the first time in its history.

Post World War
II Community
Use of Armory

The Armory continued to be a popular place for community recreational and meeting activities, especially dances. Its large drill floor space was popular for meetings of all sizes. The Pine City Co-op rented the Armory(\$20 fee) for its annual meeting for several years. Benches were assembled from wooden Coke bottle boxes and long wooden planks borrowed from the lumber yard.

High school proms were held in the Armory for several years with students typically spending several days in advance of the "big event" decorating the entire building. Junior high dances were held in the Armory beginning in the 1970's.

The basement shooting range was used by the National Guard, the County Sheriff's Department, the Minnesota Highway Patrol and instructors in youth rifle shooting programs.

The Armory began to take on an educational nature when the newly organized Pine Technical Institute used the building in the 1965-67 time period for drafting, secretarial and shop classes. Informal basketball games continued of course and at all hours. As Pine City schools began to experience a space shortage, the elementary school used the Armory for 5th and 6th grade classes.

..A Former 5th Grade Student Remembers...

"A bus would pick us up at the main school each morning and take us over for classes, pick us up for lunch, take us back for afternoon classes and retrieve us once again to catch the bus for the ride home. I don't know how we had time to learn anything. I remember the large entryway where the bus would drop us off and the heavy steel double doors.... Upstairs where the classrooms were, things were much brighter. My classroom was located in the northwest corner and from what I remember was quite large with a riser and a blackboard. ... Outside our classroom, there was another classroom that was actually a balcony over the gymnasium. ... Our recess time was generally spent in the gymnasium. There were days however when this area was off limits due to National Guard "going ons". Every once in a while you'd hear the big trucks being started up and moved around. Sometimes, the big garage doors off from the gymnasium would be open and we'd see the guys performing maintenance on the military vehicles."

- 1970's A special commemorative ceremony was held in the Armory in the 1970's to celebrate the opening of the freeway. A dinner for 700 was served as part of this program.
- 1970's Decision made to replace 1914 Armory with a larger facility which was completed in 1976.
- June 30,1976 The National Guard Battery moved directly into its new armory upon returning from summer field training.
- October 5,1976 The City of Pine City purchased the 1914 Armory for \$19,000.
- January 6,1977 The Pine City School District purchased the 1914 Armory from the City (and later sold it back).
- 1977 - Present Use of Armory The 1914 Naval Militia Armory served as overflow classroom and community activity space for several years. A day care center was conducted in the original office space for seven years. In more recent years, the Armory has been closed to public use and has served as storage space for the City of Pine city.

NOTE: This 1st edition of a CHRONOLOGY OF THE NAVAL MILITIA ARMORY OF PINE CITY MINNESOTA was based upon research conducted by Ann Vach, Harold Kick and Earl Foster of Pine city. This chronology only begins to tell the story of Pine City's most distinctive building and additions and corrections are welcomed.

