




HISTORIC GROTON



A WALKING AND DRIVING
TOUR OF THE CITY OF GROTON,
SOUTH DAKOTA

PUBLISHED BY ABERDEEN/
BROWN COUNTY LANDMARKS
COMMISSION



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH (1963)

1006 North First Street

With the last service April 7, 1963 in the 1924 church on North Third Street, the congregation moved to the First Street location where they celebrated on May 12 with a cornerstone laying and dedication. Ground breaking had begun in June 1962. A distinct architectural feature is the steep gabled roof covering the rock-walled south end of the chancel contrasted to the lower incline of the gable roof over the remainder of the church. The interior features an L-shaped building which combines an educational unit, parish hall and sanctuary on one floor.



GROTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

906 North First Street

Educational Unit 1962

Sanctuary 1911-1962

Present name assumed at merger with Evangelical United Brethren Church after union of Methodist and Methodist Episcopal churches in 1939. Rev. William Hyde organized the Methodist church August 1886 and raised funds for a church on the site of the current community center. Outgrowing the old church, the congregation built a brick one on the same lot. The older building was moved to a farm. As membership grew they had to decide to remodel or build anew. They broke ground November 19, 1961 on a full city block donated by Ethel Ragels. On June 17, 1962 the educational unit was completed and used as a temporary sanctuary. Between 1966 and April 7, 1968 the sanctuary was built. Note the eye-catching signage and Christ-like figure with dove on the exterior cement pillars of the sanctuary and the cross atop a brick chimney looming skyward. As a reminder of the former church the bell from the 1911 building has been positioned on a brick base opposite the educational unit.



(1911) FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

300 North Main Street



Groton's third oldest church building was built at a cost of less than \$30,000 in 1911. This brick church has a sanctuary in the shape of a half round amphitheater with sloping floor. The basement contains eating spaces and a fellowship room. The main floor contains office, classroom and sanctuary. An elevator provides access since there are many stairs to climb in the front entrance. There are many stained glass windows with symbolic icons throughout the church. Eye-catching features are the gothic tower and gothic arched entryways.

(1998) GROTON CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH

706 North Main Street

Former Saint Johns Catholic Church

(1908-09)



One of two remaining original churches built in Groton, this 30' x 64' church was constructed in the Spring of 1907 through Fall 1908 outside the city limits south of Main Street and was moved to the present site across from city park in July 1909. Remodeled in the late 1940s, workers raised the church to install a new basement with kitchen and dining room. Member Matt Reed, who had mastered the rhythm of tolling, rang the bells until his death in 1965. Other renovations occurred in 1966 and in 1973, when electronic bells were installed. They rang at 8 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. for Angeles prayer and 5 minutes before Sunday and week-day mass. Dedication of a new addition to the north occurred February 15, 1976. Its cross-topped spire and its bell tower loom skyward and attract the eye. Its windows and entryways feature pointed arches. A stepped porch leads to double doors flanked by elongated arched windows. Additions may be seen in the rear and right side. The C & M A congregation occupied it after the Catholics moved in 1997.

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON CATHOLIC CHURCH (1997)

107 East 7th Avenue

After serving as a mission church 1908–1921 and a parish church after July 10, 1921 at the Main Street location, the congregation moved to this site for varied reasons: need for a youth educational center, a larger fellowship hall for weddings and funerals, more seating and sanctuary space, and the need to make the church handicap accessible. Planning for the new church began in February 1994 and the final move occurred in 1997. Ross and Anna Funk who had financed the bells in the old church also laid financial foundations for the new complex. Note the name change from the Main Street name to the present one.

Occupying a corner lot at the intersection of 7th Avenue and 1st St, the church features a canopy supported by brick pillars covering the main entrance which leads into a kitchen-fellowship hall to the left, educational classrooms to the rear and a sanctuary to the right. Adjacent to the entry canopy, a cross protrudes from a brick base attracting the eye and reminding the viewer that the building is a spiritual worship and educational center despite lack of spire and bell tower as in the old church.



SCHOOL GROUNDS AS SOCIAL AND LEARNING CENTERS

(1935) GROTON HIGH SCHOOL

125 East 4th Avenue

Groton High School (1935)
and Arena (2002)

Groton's brick school of 1889 was demolished in early June 1934 in order to build a new school on that site. In mid-March 1935 the new school opened for students who had been attending classes in the Methodist church. The *Independent* newspaper praised the school as a means to attract large crowds for sports and increase student enrollment: "We have elevated the biggest business in Groton to an educational service station for the surrounding countryside." PWA grants and loans helped finance this during the depression. A white Bedford stone strip, two or three feet above the foundation extended around the building. Walls above the foundation were 13 inches thick. Extensive remodeling took place in 1957, and to the west an addition was built for the shop, band and commercial department. In 1967 further remodeling occurred. In 1970, a new auditorium was built, and in 2002 an arena was added.



GROTON ICE SKATING POND AND CARNIVAL OF SILVER SKATES

Between East 4th and 5th Avenues
Behind Groton High School

One half-block to the east of the high school of 1935 is a skating pond developed as a mid-winter activity since 1938. This photo focuses on the site to enable the viewer at any season to visualize the location. The Big Tent, where 125th anniversary activities were held, helps in this visualization. It began in the winter of 1938 as a hockey and skating competition and exhibition site. In 1941 music, electric spotlights and crowning of a king and queen added to the allure and popularity of the event. Except for the war years 1943-45, this has been an annual event which in 1949 was officially termed "The Carnival of Silver Skates". In 1952 the rink was enlarged to 200' x 90'. Scenery, props and costumes enlivened the event. In 1969 a new warming house replaced one ripped down by winds. Billed as the "longest running, most colorful amateur ice skating show in the Midwest," the carnival involves community and youth from ages four to high school and strengthens parent and child relationships. In 2004, school parking lot needs for the new arena expansion required some reduction in rink size. The west side of Groton, near the soccer and baseball complex, is envisioned for the future pond. However, the site remains in use for the time being and is maintained by the city. Many memories linger with this traditional site.



UNDER THE BIG TENT;
GROTON CHAUTAUQUA
1913-1928 AND
MID-SUMMER SHOWS
1929-1930

As in viewing the ice skating site, the viewer must exercise imagination triggered by the following descriptions to visualize the big tent experience listening to speakers, actors, and musicians as a means to escape from the ordinary pace of life.

The Big Tent of 2006 on the high school grounds brought people together to celebrate the 125th anniversary. Such a tent also drew crowds in the years 1913-30 to the high school grounds. Having experienced chautauqua during Park Week at Tacoma Park since 1898, Groton's Country Club and later the Commercial Club sponsored its own chautauqua for 25 years beginning in 1913. Held in June or early July, these week-long meetings attracted hundreds to the school grounds and the Big Tent. Sale of season tickets financed this effort to improve local social life. Chautauqua's purpose during the five to six day period was to instruct, not entertain, although that became more important in 1928-30. Publicity of June 1921 urged "hitch old Dobbin to the shay, and come...come in your silk shorts, your overalls, your gingham, your best silk dress, or come in a Ford but be sure and come. Listen to men who have something to say and know how to say it, and know when to stop when they're done. Even a horse needed an occasional vacation." Chautauqua served as a temporary escape from problems, a variation of routine, a place to meet old friends and new people.

GROTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

810 North First Street

Between East 7th Avenue and East 9th Avenue a new 15-room elementary school along with high school renovations and addition were authorized by bond issue in November 1967. Built in 1968, the elementary school, designated by an attractive wooden sign on the lawn area, is of modernistic design. Its one-story, brick walls which curve over the block-long terrain are attractive and contrast to the older, multi-storied schools which require an upward look rather than a lower eye scan.



TOUR • 2

MAIN STREET

walking tour

introduction: route and map of tour blocks

The three blocks of North Main Street between Railroad Avenue and Third Avenue contain only one long block on the street's west side. This is because First Avenue stops when it joins with Main instead of proceeding to meet Second Street as Railroad Avenue and Second and Third Avenues do. In earlier times the third block had more business establishments, but in 2006 they are limited to the Dakota Press on the corner of 2nd Ave. and Main and a coffee shop on west Main. On the block's east side McGannon Plumbing and Heating represents private enterprise while the corner post office and its adjacent city library and city hall serve the public. Earlier Main Street buildings, usually those with two stories, were often referred to as blocks in that each had various offices and businesses within the one large building. The railroad tracks emerged as the division between North and South Main Street.



Loyalty Day Parade in 1917

This walking tour begins with Main Street's east side on Block 7 three buildings from the corner of Second Avenue and Main and proceeds to describe buildings and lots between Second and First Avenues in Block 6. At First Avenue a pause is made to visit the James Valley Telephone Building, a block east of Main Street. Then we return to Main, resuming a tour of Block 5 as far as Railroad Avenue before crossing to the street's west side. Moving north from Railroad Avenue, we proceed along this long block to the corner of Second Avenue. The Main Street tour ends with the two buildings at the south end of Block 7.

Note the roof lines and the architectural features distinguishing one building from another. Also note the spacing in which building heights alternate between single and two-story structures. The size, number and placement of lower level display windows also contribute to the building's character and its previous and past usage. Entryways and signage are further clues to building identity. Such impressions help create an overall street profile. Since west Main Street's fire of 1890, brick has been the chief exterior facing of Main Street buildings. Surviving buildings date from 1892 to 1995. One new building appeared in 2002. Find evidence of a blending of new and older materials and styles. Note the placement and number of lamp posts. Since 1922, from the rail station to the park, Groton has prided itself on 'a white way' of larger lights and more stress on public lighting. Note what space is provided for parking so important in the automobile era.

When the automobile revolution was in full swing in the 1920s, the widening and graveling of Groton's original dirt streets, including Main Street, took place as a means to make Groton more attractive. Paving replaced the graveled three blocks of the business section as well as the new cutoff on Highway 12 in November 1941. No more costs for watering down gravel! Less dust on store counters and shelves! The most recent Main Street repaving and replacement of below-surface infrastructure occurred in 2005.



map of Main Street

MCGANNON PLUMBING AND HEATING (1947)

211 North Main Street
Lots 11 and 12 Block 7

These lots passed through at least three owners between 1903-1947. Constructed in 1947 for Harland Clark and Lynn Bowles, this building was a base for selling farm implements until the mid-1950s. Thereafter it housed dry cleaning establishments. In January 1988 Don Hoops sold it to David McGannon for his plumbing business.



Architecturally, this Quonset-type structure with its false brick front conceals the basic metal structure. This combination appears unique to Groton as there are very few of these Quonsets surviving in an urban setting. In the post World War II era building materials were scarce and reliance on Quonset huts was one solution to scarcity. Note the signage, the center brick parapet, the large front windows and the street level entry which focus the eye on this façade.

WAGE MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND CITY HALL (1968)

201 North Main Street
Original Plat: Lots 7 and 8
Block 7

As early as the 1930s voluntary efforts of citizens and the Merifu Library and Social Club laid foundations for the present library. Over the decades the library moved frequently from one building to another until this building was constructed in 1968. The Empire Hotel at the southwest corner of Main where the present American Legion Building is located, was one site. The rear of the Brooberg building and a drugstore in the northern half of the present Tiger's Den Youth Center were also library sites. A space was found next to the 1883 Bank of Groton & Post Office building where in the past boxing and other viewing events occurred. The William Wages, in cooperation with contractors, were responsible for the present building, which was completed in October 1968 and dedicated November 12 of that year. This public building also houses city government including offices for the auditor, police station and city council chambers. In 1998 a peaked roof improved appearance and weather protection. In 1999 central air provided additional comfort. In 1968 the adjacent post office, the two-storied former Bank of Groton, loomed over this single story building. After 1990 a one-story post office next door brought similarity to this corner with two more modern, single story structures dominating the streetscape. A plaque with library name and date of construction rests on the brick façade to the right of the entryway.



(1990) U.S POST OFFICE

201 North Main Street
Original Plat: Lots 7 and 8
Block 7



Although a postal service website may substitute for a visit to the Groton Post office and patrons have been urged to “log on and step into a post office and skip the trip”, the post office has been a traditional place for locals to meet. In 1990 the current building replaced the two-story brick “Bank of Groton” building of 1883, probably Groton’s first brick building which was stuccoed by the late 1970s and demolished in 1988. With the First National Bank moving into new quarters in 1911, the post office moved into the old bank building in 1912 and remained there until replaced by the current post office building in 1990. The post office’s second story housed offices and in the late 1940s-50s the American Legion Post #39 club. Milwaukee trains delivered mail beginning July 13, 1881 and the C & N W mail service began December 15, 1887. Hauling mail by cart from the depot to the post office became a traditional activity during the 1920s until truck transport of mail began.

Especially in the morning, Grotonites frequented the Main Street post office with its 500 lock boxes in 1921 or its 728 boxes in 2006, and its stamp and money order windows. A morning encounter with others inside or outside the post office was for many a welcomed ritual of small town life and could lead to sharing coffee time at one of the local restaurants. To promote more efficient communication, the postal system adopted a national zip code system. Effective July 1, 1963 Groton’s was 57445.

In contrasting the new and the old post office building note the flat roof of the older one compared to the gable roof of the other. Other distinctions were more windows in the two-story building and a closer proximity to sidewalks while the current structure has less window space and has landscape inset from the street and sidewalks. The older building was 50 feet in length and 30 feet wide compared to the newer one which is 25 feet long and 33 feet wide and contains 728 lock boxes.



Historic Groton: A Walking/Driving Tour

Table of Contents

I. Salute to Groton: 125th Anniversary Year 2006.....	p. 1
A. Groton Population Profile	
B. Groton city limit expansion and trade service area	
II. Tour 1 Church and School Circuit Driving Tour.....	p. 4
A. Groton Community Center:	
Site of Former United Methodist Church	
B. Current and Former Church Buildings	
1. North Third Street churches	
2. North Second Street Churches	
3. North Second Street Churches	
4. North First Street Churches	
5. North Main Street Churches	
6. East 7th Avenue Catholic Church	
C. School Grounds as Social and Learning Centers	
1. Groton High School	
2. Skating Pond: Carnival of Silver Skates	
3. Chatauqua Big Tent	
4. Groton Elementary School	
III. Tour II: Main Street Walking Tour.....	p. 13
A. Introduction: Route and Map of Tour Blocks	
B. East Side Main: Block 7	
C. East Side Main: Block 6	
D. James River Telephone Cooperative; East First Avenue	
E. East Side Main: Block 5	
F. West Side Main: Block 11	
G. Groton City Park	



Groton's 100th Anniversary Logo

MAIN STREET EAST SIDE

walking tour

THE LOTS ON MAIN STREET'S EAST SIDE IN BLOCK 6 HOLD ONLY THREE BUILDINGS ALTERNATING WITH PARKING/DISPLAY SPACES. AS A RESULT, THIS BLOCK HAS A LESS CROWDED APPEARANCE THAN BLOCKS FURTHER SOUTH AND ACROSS THE STREET ON THE WEST SIDE OF MAIN. HOWEVER, THERE WAS A TIME WHEN BUILDINGS OCCUPIED THOSE SPACES.

PIONEER FORD SHOWROOM (1992)

**Corner 2nd Avenue and North Main Street
Lots 17 and 18 Block 6**

Former Trail Chevrolet Building (1962-1993)

Former Yellowstone Garage (1915-1920)

H. D. Cassels in 1915 acquired these lots for a garage which replaced a four-lane bowling alley that moved to the south end of east Main Street. Known as the Yellowstone Garage after the Yellowstone Trail which passed through Groton, it serviced vehicles during the automobile boom. In 1920 Groton Auto and Tractor company moved into the building. However, as a result of fires devastating most of the structure in 1921, Groton Auto moved to the Tolvsstad Building. When Herb Cassels repaired the building in the 1920s he and Edwards operated the garage there until they moved into the south addition of Cassels' Block. The garage's second floor housed offices and later apartments. In 1935 the Groton Auto and Tractor Company, now controlled by Milo Cook and Bill Rock, returned to the Yellowstone Garage and added a line of farm machinery to the auto line. In 1963 Chuck Porter purchased the business which continued under a new name: "Trail Chevrolet and Olds Company". In 1967 Porter sold his interest to Orville Schaller. After 25 years Trail Chevrolet, in which Bill Rock was involved, moved to a strategic spot at the intersection of Highways 12 and 37. After 18 months, the Post Office vacated the former Yellowstone Garage and Chevrolet building. In 1992, Pioneer Ford bought the Chevrolet Building from the Rock family. Currently that building serves as an indoor show room for Pioneer Ford which stresses its role as a downtown establishment.

At the July 2006 celebration one observer (related to previous Chevrolet building owner Milo Cook) noted that it was 'very strange' to view the old Chevrolet building as a Pioneer Ford showroom.



Former Yellowstone Garage—1916

DISPLAY AND PARKING LOTS

North Main Street
Lots 15, 16 and 14

Empty lots have a history. Between the Ford building of 1913 (lots 13-12) and lot 17 (the Chevrolet garage) three buildings occupied lots 16, 15 and 14 prior to 1921. On lot 14 stood the Jay Reeves Building (1885-ca 1920). As postmaster, Reeves moved the post office to his building where it remained until 1912. Here, the Groton Independent was published for many years until it moved to the Cassels Block across the street. About 1921 fire destroyed the buildings on lots 14, 15, and 16. Then William and Mary Meissner bought vacant lot 14 and hired Roy Richards to build the Groton Bakery. When they moved to the east side of Main in 1940, the Meissners sold the building to Fred Bowles. Pioneer Ford now utilizes the bakery building.

The two-story building of 1887 on adjacent lot 15 housed a furniture/undertaking parlor. Lot 16 adjacent to the future Chevrolet garage had been the site of Theo and Ross Funk's hardware until 1917 when they moved south into Block 5 to continue the hardware business. The fire of 1921 devastated these two buildings and damaged the corner auto garage. Years passed and in 1940 Milo Cook and Bill Rock of Groton Auto and Tractor Company bought lots 15 and 16 for auto display purposes—used by the Yellowstone Garage and later by Chevrolet dealers. While walking Main Street in September 1941, reporter Luther Falk noted display lot 16 cordoned off front and back by steel fencing. Thus, lots 15 and 16 vacated by fire have functioned as auto display lots and the bakery structure served automotive purposes. This usage symbolizes the auto age which replaced livery stables occupying this area in the 1880s and 1890s. Also, lot history reveals the Chevrolet/Ford competition as each reached out for adjacent lots and buildings to display or service their wares.



PIONEER FORD (1913)

111 North Main Street

East Lots 12 and 13 and Adjacent Lot 14
Block 6

Fred Bowles secured this lot from his brother Wesley who bought it in 1913. The Bowles previous First Avenue building had burned June 17, 1911. During 1911-13 they retrooled and built the Ford Building on this lot. Fred Bowles spent 34 years in the auto business. In 1940 Fred purchased the adjacent, one-story Meissner bakery building of 1921-22 on lot 14 when the bakery moved across the street to the Cassels Block. It functioned as an office and parts department for the Bowles and Sour Motor Company. Retiring in 1945, he sold the business to son Don and son-in-law Dale Sour. When Don left in 1947 for a business venture in Webster, Harold Sour, brother of Dale, and Jack Mahan became part owners. At that time the name changed to Pioneer Ford. In 1977 Jack Mahan and his son Tom bought out the Sour interests. Pioneer Ford still utilizes the adjacent bakery building as part of its operation.



DISPLAY AND PARKING LOTS

Lots 10 and 11

In September 1941 reporter Luther Falk walked Main noting the status of lots between First Avenue's corner First National Bank and Second Avenue's corner Chevrolet garage. The Deitz Drug store (lot 10) stood deserted as Clayton Deitz had bought the Anderson Drug and moved to the east side of Main. He also noted the empty Anderson & Frank meat market (lot 11).

In 1915 Clayton Dietz began his drug store on lease with purchase in 1919. He remained until 1941 when he purchased Anderson Drug in Block 5. Melvin Sippel purchased the building in 1946 and demolished it. Bowles and Sour Ford Motor Company eventually bought it for an auto lot. The meat market building (lot 11) was torn down after sale to Fred Bowles and Dale Sour in the early 1940s. It too is part of the large display lot adjacent to the current Pioneer Ford building.



(1997) PAINTS 'N' MORE STORE

101 North Main Street

Lot 9 Block 6

First National Bank of Groton (1911-1975)

Country Security Building (1975-1997)



This location served as an early hotel site from 1881-1906. The scene of town social life, under earlier names of the York Hotel and the Belding House, it continued that role as the Grand Central in 1889 when John and Josephine Sieh became the new owners. From 1893 to 1906 several proprietors managed it before fire damaged the entire structure in 1906. Workers demolished the shell to build the First National Bank in 1911. Personnel moved to this site from the old (1883) Bank of Groton which became the post office in 1912.



The new bank featured offices in the upper level. Ferney Farmers Cooperative Elevator's general office moved here in 1917 and remained until 1971 when that office moved to the elevator on Railroad Avenue. In 1935 Aberdeen's First National Bank purchased assets of the Groton Bank. That connection remained until Wells Fargo took over the First National system.



When the new First National Bank was built in 1975, this building served other purposes under the new name "The Country Security Building". More recently this 1911 building houses Paints N More on the first floor. Doug and Toby Doeden's renovations include restoration of classic stained glass windows, ceilings and walls. The bank vault, open to public view, serves store purposes. The upstairs as well as the main floor has been transformed into a Christmas store as is advertised by the signage and decorations over the Main Street entry. This structure is one of Main Street's most elegant buildings and continues to serve the community well.

JAMES VALLEY TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE (1913)

235 East First Avenue

Former Groton-Ferney Mutual Telephone Company (1905)

Headquarters' Building (1958)

Supporting the extensive Groton trade area is a vast coverage of telephone exchanges and lines by the James River Telephone Cooperative, headquartered in Groton. A map of July 1989 reveals that area of influence which covers five counties and 5 exchanges in an area of 1000 square miles. Since 1996 this area has doubled in size due to acquisition of five U.S. West exchanges.

This cooperative's origins go back to 1905 when the Groton-Ferney Mutual Telephone Company was organized. Even before that Aberdeen's J. L. W. Zietlow provided Groton with service about 1887 by building a line from Bath to Groton. His company was the Dakota Central Telephone Company. This was the era of non-private lines and operator assistance. On an implement dealer's lot operated by Mike Boulter 1899-1916 the Groton-Ferney company remodeled the building. Thereafter, the theme of telephone development was remodeled buildings and improved service.

The James Valley Telephone Cooperative was incorporated September 8, 1951 with purchase of majority stock. On December 31, 1951 this company became the successor of Groton-Ferney. In order to secure a REA loan James Valley had to acquire the property of Groton-Ferney Company, and with financial assistance from Northern Electric Cooperative this occurred. On Nov 9, 1953 the loan was approved and the company took over the Groton-Ferney offices. In 1955 they expanded office space using the Cassels Block while renovation occurred in the old facility.

In 1958 James Valley purchased the Berry & Werth Building one block east of Main Street. On March 21, 1959 they held an open house in the 6100 square foot facility which included a community room. In 1970 that room became office and conference room space. In 1974 a steel warehouse helped to temporarily resolve space problems. In 1981-82 the company engaged in cable TV construction requiring a new equipment room and a 100-foot tower adjacent to the headquarters. In 1996 extensive remodeling occurred to accommodate purchase of five U.S. West exchanges. Further expansion took place in 2002 and 2003, including a garage, a new generator and office space.

Great changes came to the delivery system. By 1970, eight-party aerial lines vanished. In their place were buried storm-proof, one-party lines. Thus, James Valley has brought touch tone dialing, cable and satellite TV and digital Cable TV to the Groton area and to an even wider region. Distance has been conquered in the vast spaces of the Dakotas, and an improved quality of life is associated with this Groton based firm.



(1892) THE BROOBERG BLOCK

27 North Main Street

Lots 20 and 19

Block 5

In 1892 Frank G. Brooberg purchased two lots, removed the corner building, and built a two-story brick building on an Ortonville stone foundation. For 14 years this building stood alone on that block until its neighbor, the Townsend building, was constructed in 1906. First used as a clothing store the Brooberg Mercantile Company's department store added a grocery department toward the building's rear with access through a north entrance on First Avenue. The front, divided into a north and south section, featured women and children's clothing on the north and men's wear and a tailor in the south front. Brooberg moved to Minneapolis in 1914. His name lived on, etched in the building's upper story. Three years after purchase of the Plum Line Department Store in the Cassels block, a reorganized Bradshaw and Archer Co. purchased in December 1918 the stock and fixtures of the Brooberg Mercantile Co. In spring 1919 they remodeled the Brooberg building and built a 30' x 50' First Avenue addition to the back of the building.

Over time varied stores occupied the lower floor. Offices and (after 1937) apartments occupied the second floor. The public library was housed there in the early 1930s. After two years in the Cassels Block, Sippel's market moved here in 1937; Gambles serviced customers 1941-1948 in the north section. When Gambles left, Sippel incorporated the Gamble section into a larger grocery store. Sippel leased the grocery department to Red Owl Stores about 1950 but continued their business in the back portion of the building. About 1970 Red Owl continued under new management as Jerry's Red Owl. From 1976 to 2005 Ken's Fairway Foods of Aberdeen operated a branch store here. In 2006 its floor spaces stand empty awaiting a new occupant; its upper floor rents out as a storage area—a victim of Highway 12's growing influence on Main Street. Before 1940 the Yellowstone Trail was a part of Main Street and brought business and traffic problems downtown. The cutoff curve of 1940 initiated a trend in which more Groton businesses developed along highway 12.

Note the course belt which divides the first and second floors and the bracketed cornice below the roof line. The five Main Street display windows so visible in earlier photos have been recently covered up. Three sets of paired windows mark the upper floor on Main Street and nine upper floor windows mark the First Street, second-floor façade. Compared to modern windows, those of that era were elongated to lighten the interiors as much as possible in the absence of modern, reliable lighting systems.



THE TOWNSEND BLOCK (1906)

25 North Main Street

Lots 17 and 18

Block 5

John Townsend acquired lots 17 and 18 in 1905 and in cooperation with Frank Brooberg planned the present building with Brooberg securing a half interest in the wall between the two structures. Like the Brooberg building, this was divided into lower floor north, south and center sections, and it housed varied businesses, especially drug and hardware stores. It too has a second floor, used for professional offices. Note the paired windows and a belt course separating the two floors. Its rooftop is split by a raised cornice situated between two brick pillars in a style similar to that of the 1905 Miller block across the street. In 1917 Townsend sold to another who in turn sold the building in 1919 to Theodore and Ross Funk who had occupied the site since 1917.

This building most recently contained the Volk Drug in the 1970s and 1980s and Lori's Pharmacy which moved to a First Avenue and Highway 12 location in 2006. The north section housed Groton Electric Company and about 1932 the Home Electric Company, which sold the first electric refrigerators (impacting local dependence on ice boxes). From the 1940s, the city auditor operated from this site before moving to the new library building in 1968. The south section featured an earlier café and one in the 1930s. The city liquor store operated from here in the 1950s. In the late 1960s an Appliance and Furniture and Floor Covering business began. By 1970 a western wear business – the “Saddle and Harness Shop” – occupied that section. In 1980, Hair Express, a barber shop, set up business. The Funks, in the hardware business, operated the center section and the hotel above on the second floor. Their ownership of the building ended in 1963. From 1954 to 1965 the Gullickson Hardware headquartered here. Then Ed Ackerson Hardware occupied the center section but continued the Gullickson name as Plumbing, Heating and Trenching.



(1905) SCHENKEL BLOCK

23 North Main Street
Lots 14, 15 and 16
Block 5

In 2006 this two-story brick block building stands in the middle of this block sandwiched by the 1906 Townsend Building on the north and on the south by the 1972 Jungle Lanes and Lounge, which occupies the site of the former two-story wooden Funk-Bowden harness shop that burned in 1954. Charles and Henry Schinkel purchased lot 15 in 1905 to link with lots 14 and 16 secured by Charles Schinkel in 1902. The Schinkel building, as the Brooberg and Townsend buildings, included three sections within the one building but had greater Main Street footage than the other two because it covered three lots. The middle section, lot 15, housed a barbershop 1912 to about 1962 when barber James Ellsbury retired. From the 1940s to 1955 beauty parlor services were added. In the 1950s Erdman Electric remodeled the space as part of an adjacent hardware store which had moved from the recently purchased William Funk hardware business across the street. Funk had used space in the Schenkel building for harness shop storage.

The south section, lot 14, operated as a restaurant until 1919 and served as a cigar, candy and soft drink parlor into the 1920s after which Funk and Bowden bought the south part for expanding their machinery business. In the 1950s it became Packy McFarland's tavern. In the 1960s that area became a launderette. A stairway dividing the south and center sections led to a second-story hotel, later changed to apartments. The upper floor of this building did not house offices as did the Brooberg and Townsend blocks.

The north portion had separate entrances and became a movie theater which became a reference point to nearby restaurants who used the locational guide "across from the theater". In 1914 the Cozy Theater opened to usher in the era of silent movies until 1930 when the sound era began under new management and with a new name – the State. A new canopy identified the site. Passing through a mirrored lobby, patrons walked down a single, heavily carpeted center aisle into a theater seating about 300 people. Movies drew crowds from four counties and became the pride of Main Street, adding to the town's recreational dimensions. Movie time was mostly a night-time occasion to accommodate rural farmers' working schedules.

Note the gable roof line in the center section with its ocular window and the decorative corbel bands above the windows and along the roof line. A dark course band defines the beginning of the upper level floor and highlights that floor.



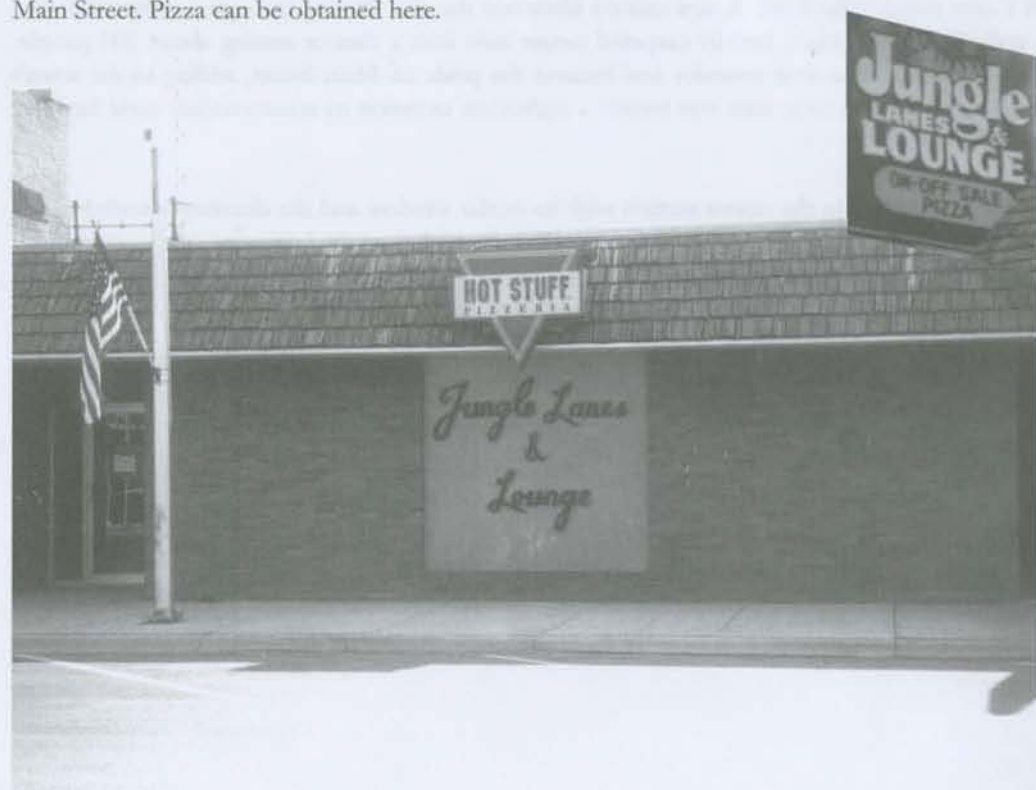
JUNGLE LANES AND LOUNGE (1972)

9 North Main Street

Lots 12 and 13

Block 5

An age and architectural difference stands out between the three previous buildings and this structure of 1972 on lots 12 and 13. A fire in 1971 burned Groton's S & A bowling alley located at the junction of Highways 12 and 37. This led to the search for a new site on lower Main Street. Lot 13 had been vacant since a fire in 1954 destroyed an old wooden building used for storage by Farmers' Hatchery. This was where Herman C. Funk managed his first harness shop 1882-1890. By 1898 his son William and Harry Bowden partnered to use this building until the early 1920s when they bought the south part of the Schinkel building. The old harness shop on lot 13 served as a repair shop until the fire. Lot 12 had been the site for the Yellowstone Trail Café (1926-1954) and Stroh's barber shop. The burning of the three wooden buildings on lots 12 and 13 left a gap in the east side of Main Street which was not filled until 1972. This single story building with a Mansard roof line gives a more modernistic tone to this end of the block. Since a sense of privacy is associated with lounges and bowling alleys, large display windows were not needed; thus only two small windows faced Main Street. Pizza can be obtained here.



(1954) WALLY FISCHER'S BARBER SHOP

7 North Main Street

Lot 11

Block 5

This lot was the site of steam laundry plant in the late 1880s and 1890s. Fay King's barbershop operated here for many years. In 1932 Gottlieb Stroh bought the shop from Fay King. Barbers used the Groton *Independent's* short ads in the depression years of the 1930s to promote business: "It pays to look well! See your barber twice a month, not twice a year. In spite of hard times, be regular with your barber. You can't succeed if you look like a sheepherder and his collie pup." Along with the neighboring Yellowstone Café, fire destroyed the wooden building on March 5, 1954. However, Stroh rebuilt the present building in 1954 and by 1955 had two chairs operating. In 1969 Wally Fischer bought the shop. Recently he was recognized for his long tenure at that site.

The barber pole to the right of the front door identifies his profession. Note the large window providing natural light and an opportunity for patrons to see passersby and prospective customers to determine how long a wait one might have. A numbers chart clues window onlookers as to the customers waiting inside. For the 125th anniversary Fisher posted his own slogan: "I need your Head To get ahead." Compared to other buildings on the street's east side, this small, gable-roofed structure's simple lines permit a narrow focus and easy viewing.



IV. Tour III: Residential Walking Tour.....	p. 38
A. Introduction: Be an Architectural Detective While Touring!	
B. North Third Street	
C. North Fourth Street	
D. East Fourth Street	
V. Tour IV: Highway 37 & Railroad Avenue Driving Tour.....	p. 47
A. Geary's Gas Station Highways 37	
B. Groton Waterworks and Power Station	
C. Railroad Avenue as Elevator Row	
D. Past and Present Businesses: South Main & Railroad Ave.	
E. North 6th St. and 5th Ave.; Country Club & Olive Grove Golf Course	
VI. Tour V: Driving Tour: U.S. Highway #12.....	p. 56
A. Introduction: From 6th Ave. and the Curve to Broadway (Highway #37)	
B. Business Sites 1 to 7	
C. Corner Lots Facing State Highway #37	
VII. Tour VI: Peripheral Sites Driving Tour.....	p. 61
A. Former Coast Guard Station	
B. Ethanol Plant	
C. Granary Rural Cultural Center	
VIII. Conclusion: The Old Home Town.....	p. 63
IX. Acknowledgements.....	p. 64



Groton's 125th Anniversary Logo

THE HOLTZ BUILDING

13 and 3 North Main Street

Lots 8 and 9

Block 5

Like the Broomberg block corner, this building was built at the junction of two roads: Main St. and Railroad Ave. In 1904 these lots sold to carpenter Henry and Minnie Holtz. Initially he built this two-story brick structure which had a large south window for the millinery shop. The upper level served as a hotel but in time became apartments. As in many of the larger buildings, this had several lower floor partitions and uses. During the automobile boom along the Yellowstone Trail when Railroad Avenue and Main Street were part of that highway, the south part of this building was converted for auto service and for a time became a Deep Rock Oil Station. When the trail was diverted from this route the site ceased as a service station. In the mid-1930s the back part of the building became a dance hall called the Green Gable.

The north portion has a persistent history of fulfilling recreational purposes—a saloon and pool hall. One proprietor—Elwin Van Riper—managed the saloon for seventeen years. In 1952 he sold the business to Forest Fulker whose recreation parlor occupied the north side while he used the south part for storage. Several other owners followed. In the 1970s Bruce Johnson manned the establishment under the name “Bruce’s Tavern” followed by Joan Blair who called it “Joan’s Place. In 1980 Glenn Cooper bought the building, remodeled extensively and called it the Tiger’s Den after the high school athletic team. In 2006 the site is called Fritz’s Place, and the Tigers Den is now on the street’s west side as a youth center. The north portion continues its role as a lounge while the south corner portion functions more as a storage and antique auction house.





MAIN STREET WEST SIDE

walking tour

THE WALKING TOUR OF MAIN STREET NOW CROSSES OVER TO THE WEST SIDE OF THE STREET TO EXAMINE THE NUMEROUS STRUCTURES ON A LONGER DOUBLE BLOCK THAN THE PREVIOUS EAST SIDE TOUR WHICH INCLUDED TWO SEPARATE BLOCKS WITH FEWER BUILDINGS PER BLOCK.



Empire Hotel

(1995) AMERICAN LEGION POST

12 North Main Street

Lots 22-25

Block 11



This southwest corner of Main Street intersecting with Railroad Avenue hosts a parking lot serving the adjacent American Legion Post #39 building. This was the site for the Empire Hotel shown in the 1930s photo of the west and east sides of Main Street. Note the difference between street lights of that day and the present lot 25 had been the site for the three-story Brunswick hotel which was built in 1884 and burned in the 1890 fire. Patrick Ringrose rebuilt the hotel. This brick building passed through several owners

one of which in 1915 named it the Empire Hotel. Proximity to the railroad stations provided business for lumber companies and hotels but with the depressed 1930s the hotel attracted fewer customers. In the late 1930s it was used for a gas station before being sold for taxes in the 1940s and demolished. Before that it served for a few years as Groton's public library which had been organized in 1932.

In 1904 Henry Holtz constructed on lot 24 a building which persevered into the 1980s. It served as a saloon, pool hall and later a soft drink parlor during prohibition. It became an auto-tractor repair shop in the 1940s. In January 1954 Juel Kolbo brought the building for a drive-in Dairy Bar and remodeled it in October for an egg-cream buying station which included the rear portion of the adjacent Juel's Café for the produce business.

After the 1890 fire the Kindschy mercantile rebuilt with brick on lot 23. The lot and building exchanged hands several times. Between 1911-19 Perkins and Aves grocers located here; also about 1915 a saloon and restaurant which during prohibition featured soft drinks. In the 1940s an auto and tire shop occupied the lot. In 1950 Juel and Eunice Kolbo remodeled the building as an addition their cafe. This became the Anchor Lounge when the city no longer used it for off-on sale liquor business. In 1973 Tille's Café moved here when the Cassel Block was demolished. In 1976 the café was renamed the Cozy Café.

In 1971 the Legion Post strengthened its presence on Main Street by purchasing the former Dietz and Volk drug store building on lot 12 and developed the Legion Lounge which they enlarged in 1981 by inclusion of the old Farmers State Bank building. In 1995 they moved to the present site where the Empire Hotel had dominated the corner prior to the 1940s and various cafes and shops served area people.

Compare the simple gable roof line with the decorative cornice of the adjacent older brick, flat-roofed building. Also, note the visual impact of two different colors and materials as siding for the legion building—vertical, gray siding above the brick base.

THE GROTON INDEPENDENT (1890)

16 North Main Street

Lot 21

Block 11

The Groton Independent newspaper has occupied several sites over the years. It had been on lot 14 where the Pioneer Ford Agency is located and upstairs in the Cassels Block until that structure was demolished in 1973. *The Independent* has had a long tenure on lot 21 from 1973 when it moved out of the Cassels' Block to the present. After a brief interlude of temporary relocation in 2005 at 110 Washington St. editor/owner Paul Kosel returned to the paper's old location after interior and roof renovation to the brick building which was built by Pat H. Bowler in 1890. Site history includes Bowler's Palace Saloon to 1903, Hamm Brewing Sample Store, a soft drink parlor 1918-24 and a restaurant (1924-1973) – first as the Blue Bird Café and after 1954 as Omer's Café. Through area correspondents *The Independent* has promoted Groton as a trade center, helping businesses draw rural customers to the town. From the 1880s the *Independent* (and since 1995 the Dakota Press) files provide a historical resource for the town's history and its relation to neighboring towns.



Weekly papers reflect the character, hopes and achievements of both editors and towns. Solvency depended on increased and paid-up subscriptions, advertising and job printing. The advertising columns were indicators of a living or a dying town and newspaper. Editors believed in the slogan "Advertise and Prosper!" Editor Chilton in March 1929 promoted want ads as "inexpensive...They'll do every thing but get a divorce from your wife." One ad of 17 January 1935 asked: "Would you put news of your wife's party on a window card? Use a hotel register to tell that you enlarged your store? Tack the news of your daughter's wedding on a telephone pole? Then why in the heck don't you put your advertising in the newspaper too?"

White signage on black background identifies this building with its parapets of three recessed areas separated by brick pillars. The building's façade with its entry way flanked by windows looms above the adjacent buildings. Note the lamp post fronting the building.

(1975) JACOBSON AGENCY

18 North Main Street
Lot 20
Block 11



This one-story, flat-roofed, brick building of recent vintage contrasts sharply with the older, 1890-building to the south. The Bank of Groton had been on the site before it moved to new quarters in 1883. On this site after the 1890 fire the Burns brothers built a wooden building which served business purposes until the late 1940s. Then, the State Theater billboard occupied the site and later the Garden Club's flower bed helped beautify Main Street for Groton's 75th anniversary in 1956. A rash of building demolitions in lots 17, 18 and 19 produced more modern architectural facades replacing the old. Lyle Von Wahl, who had an insurance office in the south half of the Brown Brothers' building during the 1960s and early 1970s, built an attractive office building here on Main. Richard Kolker, whose office had been in this old building 1964-74, moved to the 1911 former First National Bank offices across the street while new quarters were built on the old site. Thus, the mid 1970s saw a new surge of blending the old and the new with the demolition of buildings in lots 17, 18, and 19. The Jacobson Agency now occupies one of these newer buildings.

(1905) MILLER BLOCK

30 North Main Street
K & R Meat Processing
North Half Lot 14
Hava Steak
South Half Lot 14



Built and operated by the Miller brothers, this building served as a department store and general mercantile business throughout most of its history. Built in 1905, it had 45' frontage on Main Street, was 100 feet deep and was finished with pressed brick and Kasota stone trim. As the 1906 photo reveals, spacious display windows flanked the main entry and a narrow door to the left led to the second floor. Vance Miller was associated with the store 1926-1973. In 1946 a locker plant was added with 330 locker boxes. Today it still utilizes lockers in its role as a meat processing business in

the south half. The north half has had many tenants in recent years. Dakota Press operated for several years until the move north to the former Standard station. In 2005 it became home of Hava Steak eating establishment.

The upper floor's large "rose" room was a popular social hall used by lodges and for public dances. A ballroom with coat checkroom operated 1932 into the 1940s. In 1973 the Groton Development Corporation bought the building. It housed an IGA store in the late 1930s and from 1976 into the 1980s Ben's Red Owl grocery store occupied the site. Note the signage within the square portion of the brick façade, the center parapet and the brackets over the paired windows. The earlier Red Owl photo and the K & R photo of 2005 reveal little change in the exterior. Compare the similarity of this façade with that of the building across the street.

TIGERS DEN YOUTH CENTER

38 North Main Street

Lot 13

Block 11



Previously located across the street in the Holtz building, this youth center now resides adjacent to the Miller Block and was previously the south part of the former Legion Lounge of which Rose's creations is the north part. In 1996 the Legion vacated the lots and sold the building to Marie McClintic who used it for a wool studio. The city purchased the building from McClintic in 2002 for a youth center, and they supervise its operation. In 2006 the brick facade was covered with vertical siding which matched partial siding in the adjacent space housing Rose's Creations. The facade features two smaller and two larger windows to the right of the entry. Open from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., the center, is mainly an after-school facility containing a variety of recreational devices such as large screen TV, videos, computers, pool tables, air hockey and karaoke apparatus for youth to display their talents.



ROSE CREATIONS (1905)

28 North Main Street

Lot 12

Block 11

Druggist Charles B. Collins built this brick structure in 1905. The site changed hands twice – 1907 and 1911 – before partners Ernest Quiggle and Mr. Lawless took over. Oscar Anderson became a partner in 1915 when Lawless left. Later, Anderson assumed sole ownership until Clayton Dietz purchased it in 1942. Dietz had a drug store for 25 years across the street near the Pioneer Ford building. In January 1957 Robert Volk became the owner operating it until he left town in 1969. In 1971 the American Legion Post #39 purchased the building and began the Legion Lounge which they expanded in 1981 by incorporating to the north the adjacent Farmers State Bank building. Contrast an earlier photo with the present building's awning area. The Legion post and Coca Cola sign designates the building whereas window signage calls attention to the creative nature of today's occupant. In both, the architectural features remain with three large design patterns enclosed in a bordered area with brackets above and slash marks below. Note corbelling is just below the roof line and a distinctive recessed blank area was probably designed for the building's name. This older building catches the eye with its higher façade flanked by two newer buildings testifying further to the blend of the old and the new on Groton's Main Street.



RICHARD KOLKER AND BOB JOHNSON AGENCIES

102 North Main Street

Lots 10 and 11

Block 11

.....
Paetznick-Garness Bulding (1970)
Former Kuehnert-Rawson Building (1909)

Harness man W.J. Rawson secured lot 10 in 1893, and he eventually joined shoe man F. H. Kuehnert, who in that same year had acquired lot 11, in a corporation "The Shoe and Harness Company" formed in 1909 when they constructed this building. In 1920 the Groton Cooperative bought the building to function as a farm supply store. In the 1930s they rented the building to various businesses. The north portion housed Red Owl Groceries 1928-1949 before Red Owl moved to the Brooberg building across the street. The south section housed a Gamble's store for a time followed by a bakery in the 1940s. Finally Gambles returned to buy the building from the Groton Cooperative in 1945. The public library operated here in the 1950s-1960s. In 1950 Gambles renovated the front façade. In 1968 they closed, leaving the building vacant for a few years. In March 1970 Paetznick-Garness Furniture and Undertaking moved in to use the entire building for their floor covering and furniture operation. They recently ended their business. Attorney Richard Kolker now occupies the north section and Bob Johnson occupies the north half, operating his real estate and insurance business.

When contrasting the present photo with an earlier one differences are clear. The current building has a simpler roof line whereas previously it featured more decoration with corbels, brackets and parapets. A new window provides more natural light for the south half whereas no window is noticeable in the earlier photo. Earlier, a front sign protruded for easier viewing while presently professional names are more obscured by the window awning.



HARPER BRUSH/DAKOTA BRUSH (1907)

104 North Main Street

Lot 9 Block 11

Former Neff Hardware Store

Calvin Neff built this two-story 25' X 142' brick structure in 1907 for use as a hardware store. In 1941 reporter Luther Falk walked Main's west side and observed that one half of the old hardware building contained two tenants—Edwald Kuehnert's shoe shop and the Groton Public Library which located several times before the 1968 library was built. In 1940 to the mid 1950s this building became Pliny Miller's hardware. After that it was unused until Emil Sultz and Jack Adler used it for an antique museum which attracted locals and tourists in the 1960s and beyond. As a taxidermist, Sultz prepared hundreds of animal heads for customers throughout the nation. More recently Harper Brush occupied the site.

Note the difference of the current photo with that of the photo with the museum sign. Today an awning conceals windows which were more viewable from a distance in the earlier photo.. Present signage rests below the upper floor windows as did the single word signage earlier. A recent photo suggests a refitting of windows for the building since its role as a museum. The decorative corbelling and brackets identify the building as in the past.



SIMON INSURANCE AND AUCTION SERVICE

106 North Main Street

Lot 8 Block 11

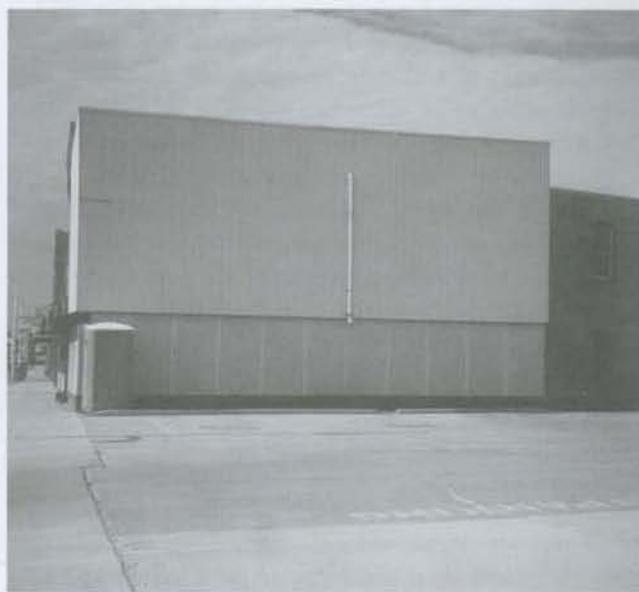
Former Farmers Bank (1887)

In 1887 this 25' x 142' two-story building was built to house the Farmers Bank. In 1889 ownership was invested in the Brown County Banking Company and in 1931 the Brown County Holding Company which in 1943 sold it to the High Grade Oil Company. In 1974 High Grade remodeled the exterior and in the ensuing year built its general offices and bulk service station at the intersection of Highways 12 and 37. Since 1975 this altered building has been used for offices --real estate and income tax services. In 1982 Aberdeen's St. Luke's Hospital established a medical clinic staffed by rotating doctors. The clinic closed and North Central Special Education Cooperative rented the building until 1991. The L & S Insurance Agency purchased the building and in 2006 shares offices with Simon's Auction Service. The only vestige of the building's banking days is a 6'x 6' vault.

The remodeling of 1974 resulted in the street's most modernistic building lacking all the corbelling, brackets and architectural features of older buildings. A metal and stone type siding encloses both lower and second floors. The second story was closed off and in 1979 four elongated windows were positioned in the front façade. It has a floor area of 1,050 square feet. In 1992 workers placed a frontal awning which does not seem to be present in 2006.



front view



side view

WELLS FARGO BANK

120 North Main Street

Cassels' Block (1903-1973)

Original Plat: Block 11 Lots 1-7

Built 1974 as First National

Facing the former First National Bank, now Wells Fargo, imagine the varied buildings and businesses occupying those spaces prior to 1973-74 when this space was cleared for bank construction. The two-story, brick Cassels Block, built in 1903, occupied lots 1-3, site of the present bank. Owner Herb Cassels operated a farm machinery & auto business, a grain elevator and farmed northeast of town between 1892 and 1946 while owning a large home on 3rd St north. Due to brick deficiencies, workers have recently applied stucco to the brick façade. This key Main Street building housed many businesses over the decades in its middle, north and south first floor sections. The south portion was added years later as seen in the 1973 newspaper photo. Grocery stores were prominent occupants of the first floor. Its upper levels served as office and quarters for the Groton *Independent* 1914-1973, and a temporary hospital during the 1918 flu epidemic, lodge rooms and public dance spaces. In the 1940s the lower level housed a youth center. From 1960 to 1973 the Bob Johnson Insurance office occupied the site.

The present bank occupies a corner site at the intersection of 2nd Ave and Main St. but the Cassels Block was sandwiched in by buildings on lots 4, 5, 6 and 7 on the north. Lot 6 which served as a farm machinery business 1886-1910, by the 1950s was empty, boarded by a fence and a flower garden tended by the Groton Garden Club. They moved the garden to the Colonial Manor nursing home prior to demolition in November 1973.

In contrasting the current bank with the older Cassels Block note the arched entry way of the former building with the double-door entrances of the bank flanked by globe lights. Note also the 1903 building's proximity to sidewalks and street whereas the bank has more set back and has a landscape area. Bank signage flanks the doorway to the right while the Cassels building sign is engraved over the entrance. Both possess windows facing Main St. Both are flat roofed but the Cassels Block features a cornice and parapet atop the roof. Upper story elongated recessed windows framed by protruding brick pillars give the older building a more decorative look.



DAKOTA PRESS

205 East Second Street
Lots 11 and 12 Block 10

Former Standard Station



Kathy Sundermeyer who had gained experience working for the *Groton Independent* established a separate paper called the *Dakota Press* first housed at 30 North Main Street in the north half of the old Miller Block, then owned by Clayton Farnen who occupied the south half with his meat department. *Dakota Press* moved to the former office area of the Standard Station at 205 East Second Avenue. Standard Oil had become Amoco which urged Duane McDonald to move his station to Highway 12. In 1990 McDonald sold to Reed Grace who started a pizza and video rental shop called The Gas Station. Reed rented portions of the building to others for storage and work areas. When the Gas Station closed, *Dakota Press* moved into the office area and in 2005 celebrated its tenth year in business (1995-2005). This was a culminating event in the disappearance of gas stations from downtown Main Street. However, the building found alternative uses in the form of the *Dakota Press*.



LATTE CAFE

206 North Main Street
Lot 9 Block 10

On this 25-foot lot, a typical dimension for a Main Street lot, as early as 1902 stood a livery barn which also served as a Veterinary Hospital for a time. Eventually the barn was removed and a house moved in for rental purposes. Property changed hands in 1954, 1965 and 1971. Duane McDonald bought lot 9 in 1983, demolished the house in the process of building a car wash for the adjacent Amoco station which he later sold. Eventually, Laura Patterson of Conde purchased the property and built a two-story cabin-like structure which she opened as Laura's Latte Café in November 2002. After about two years the café closed. Since April, 2005 Pam Rix operates the shop as Latte Café which serves daily breakfast, noon meals and specialty drinks.

This building adds a note of modernity to the block. It features a railed covered front porch supported by four pillars. Windows flank the front entry. Between gable roof and porch roof is horizontal planking with a carved, arched center inset. Attractive landscaping contributes to Main Street's image as a blend of the new and the old.

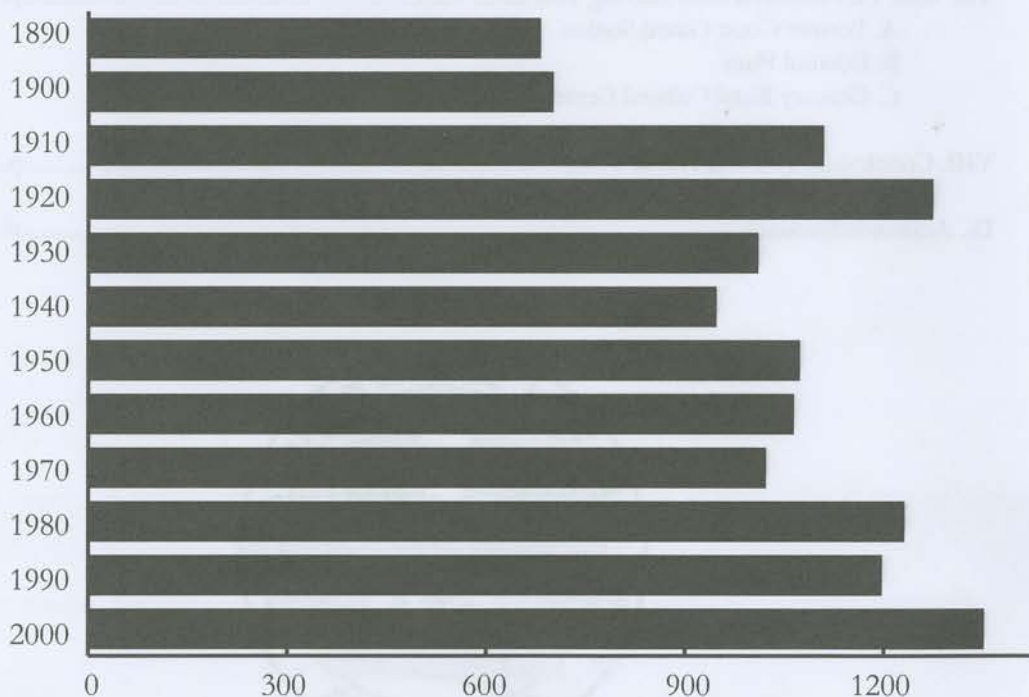
SALUTE TO GROTON: 125TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR 2006



U.S. CENSUS POPULATION FIGURES

Census figures must be accompanied by the realization that visitation by rural farmers, township residents and travelers to Groton supplemented these numbers during weekends or daily business and pleasure trips. A decrease of 53 people in the 1930's is balanced by an upward spiral in other decades. Over 300 people increase marks the 1900-1910 decade followed by over 200 in the 1970's.

The years 1910 to 1920 and 1990 to 2000 experienced over a 150 person increase. Despite not being a county seat, and having two county seats nearby, Groton's population has held steady during the past 125 years.



GROTON CITY PARK (1892)

Between 7th and 9th Avenues
and Main Street and Third Street

Groton City Park, located between Main Street and 3rd Street, and seven blocks north of the downtown and four blocks south of Highway 12, is a landscape treasure and historical anchor. Lot purchases occurred in 1892 and irrigation of tree seedlings began. During the 1890s hundreds of trees were planted, followed by more planting in 1905-06 and grass seeding in 1915. Since 1958 memorial trees have been planted for the recently deceased. In 1913, town and park were viewed as a potential tourist camp site along the emerging Yellowstone Trail, later to become Highway 12. In summer 1920 the Commercial Club placed tourist welcome signs at both the east and west sides of town inviting travelers to camp overnight at city park. In 1984 on the park's west or Main Street side a large wooden sign signaled park identity. In 2006 the sign remains as the chief park signage. Also at the intersection of Main and 9th Avenue stands a pole and aluminum sign labeled: "City Park: Picnic Grounds; Camping".

Integrity of park boundaries has been maintained despite residential, commercial and school site development pressures. Eye-appealing flowers contribute to park landscape. The circular park wading pool, which irregularly had served for at least three decades, became a flower bed in 1957. Groton's Garden Club became primary caretaker of that flower bed. A bandstand disappeared decades ago but park concerts continued into the 1950s. The park serves as a children's playground, a site for church and community picnics, family reunions and a temporary rest site for tourists.





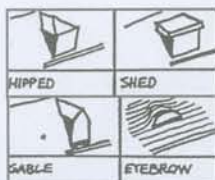
TOUR 3

RESIDENTIAL TOUR

walking | driving tour

Older homes, such as the one built in 1907 on 400 North Broadway, are significant because of their occupants or architectural features. Although many older homes are scattered throughout town, many are concentrated within the original plat on North Third and Fourth Streets within walking distance of Main Street. North Third and Fourth streets have a heavy concentration of architecturally interesting homes occupied by significant business leaders. On the west side of the 500 block of North Third, for example, are two sizable homes—the Basom home of 1907 and the McKenzie/Cassels home of 1898. On North Fourth Street is the W.B. Miller home of 1900 and the John E. Townsend house of 1904.

Be an architectural detective while touring!



dormers

1. What is the shape and makeup of roofing?

- Gable
- Hip
- Pyramid

2. What is the pattern of window distribution? Any different shapes?

- Oval
- Diamond
- Rectangular

3. How are these windows aligned?

- Ribbon
- Paired
- Solo



paladian windows

4. How many paladian windows can you spot? (These windows consist of three parts. The center tall window has a semi-circular arch and the lower side windows are rectangular.) How many bay windows can you spot?

5. Are there porches? How many are wrap-around porches? What features mark entryways? Are there any columns or pediments? What different ornamentation can you find above the doors?



6. What building materials were used, and where? Which seem to be functional? Decorative? Is there any bargeboard? (Decorative wooden trim filling the peak of a gable.)

ANDERSON-ESKE HOUSE (Ca. 1903)

503 North Third Street

This small, two-story, cube-shaped house displays an interesting pattern book design. Its steep, cross-gabled roof sports a bargeboard design surrounding a large semi-circle in each gable. The bargeboard is made even more elaborate by the use of wooden fish-scale shingles. A similar semi-circular arch is found in the gable above the entry. Besides the bargeboard treatment, which is similar to the large gables of the roof, this smaller gable also includes an attractive sunburst design. The entry gable is supported by pillars. There are two projecting bay windows. Oval windows are found on each façade and in the front door. Several windows include stained-glass. Granite blocks make up the foundation.



ANDERSON HOUSE (Late 1880's)

505 North Third Street

One of the older dwellings on the two tour streets, this single-story rectangular house has a very simple, symmetrical, vernacular design. Its foundation is a combination of rock and poured concrete. Pediment-shaped lintels above the windows and the front door illustrate a very early attempt at Neo-Classicism. The house is capped by a truncated pyramidal roof. Its hipped roof rear addition was constructed early.



This is the first house built in Groton by Anton Anderson. Anderson was a butcher and had his own meat market on Main Street. In 1905, he built a larger house next to the first.

(1907) N.A. BASOM HOUSE

502 North Third Street



The west side of this 500 block holds only two homes, both corner homes with spacious grounds. Lawyer Basom was also active in the real estate and insurance business. Later this home served as a funeral home when funeral director Helmut Paetznick bought this house after which it functioned in this capacity until he secured another site in 1964 at the former Emmanuel Lutheran Church on the same street.

This large Queen Anne, with its many Neo-Classical features and other period appointments is an architectural jewel. Its foundation is of granite block masonry with some poured concrete. An open porch supported by Doric columns wraps around the front and on one side. A pediment with an elaborate festoon motif marks the main entry which is flanked by sidelights. A Palladian window pierces the upper level of the east façade. The roof features wide overhanging eaves with supporting brackets. When the owners installed metal siding, they took great care to mimic the original, narrow wood siding and maintain the historical and architectural character of the house. The elaborate interior displays extensive woodwork, leaded windows, a tile fireplace, and an oil-paint wall mural.

(1898) MCKENZIE-CASSELS HOUSE

508 North Third Street



Kenneth McKenzie, the first owner, was a lawyer and a real estate agent with an office in the Cassels Block before he left Groton in 1905 and sold the house to Cassels who had an implement dealership, farming operation, auto business, and served for years on the Groton City Council.

This house is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on 13 February 1986. Features include its granite block foundation, thin horizontal siding, wood shingles above the second story, and a wrap-around porch with two different sized Doric columns resting on brick pylons. The irregular roof line dominated by a large corner tower attracts the eye. The frame carriage house has been replaced by a modern garage. The interior retains many of the original features although plumbing and kitchen fixtures have been modernized.

FUNK HOUSE (1910)

509 North Third Street

This two-story Queen Anne has several Neo-Classical treatments including Ionic columns which support the front porch, detailed scroll work in the pediment above the porch entry, and a second floor balcony with doric half-columns and doric pilasters. A corbelled cornice marks the roof line. In addition, semi-circular windows are found in the gables on the northern and western facades. A Palladian window is also found on the north side, while a small triangular window is visible in the roof from the front. The house rises from a granite block foundation.



The original owner of this house was Ross Funk. Ross and his brother, Theodore, had a well-drilling business and a harness store.

CAMPBELL-DRESBACH HOUSE (1908)

410 North Third Street

This one-story cube-shaped house has a rusticated concrete block foundation. Its simple pattern book design is highlighted by pedimental lintels over the side windows and a leaded glass overlight above the front picture window. Its hipped roof is broken up by hipped roof dormers. A small extended hood supported by triangular brackets covers the front entry. The garage is also a contributing building and is a good example of the early automobile garages in Groton. Its hipped roof resembles that of the house. It features an original small sliding door.



The first resident of this house, Campbell, was an attorney.

(1910) O. MILLER HOUSE

408 North Third Street



This American Foursquare includes several outstanding Neo-Classical features. Large, overhanging eaves are supported by modillion blocks with brackets located at the corners of the house. The upper front façade also features small pendants hanging from the corner eaves. Corners of the front façade are accentuated by large pilasters. On the north side, an overlight is located above the landing window. The house is capped with a truncated pyramidal roof with a balustrade surrounding a central chimney. Gable and hip roof dormers extend from the attic.

(1905) RENNER HOUSE

306 North Third Street



A slightly rectangular, two and one-half story building with a hip roof and gabled dormers, this residence includes several Neo-Classical treatments common to these streets. A porch supported by Doric columns extends across the front of the house. In addition, the pediment located above the porch entry exhibits a swag motif. A bay window projects out onto the front porch and a second bay window extends to the south from the living room. The front dormer has a broken pediment outlining a Palladian window. Although additions have been made to the rear of the building, these do not detract from its original appearance when viewed from the street.

THEDE HOUSE (1905)

302 North Third Street

This is one of several good examples of an American Foursquare found in this residential area. A large enclosed sun porch wraps around the eastern and southern sides of the house, while the rear entry is covered by a hood supported with large triangular brackets. Original interior woodwork features hard wood floors, a built-in hutch, and French doors.

Thede was involved in the real estate business and was the first to live here.



CHARLES ADAMS HOUSE (1910)

206 North Third Street

This bungalow displays a characteristic broad gable facing the street and two shed roof dormers which allow for more room in the upper level. A bay window projects from the dining room. The front façade features a band of four windows. According to early Sanborn maps, it appears that there was originally a front porch, but this has since been removed.

Charles Adams was the first resident of this house. He was the manager of the Groton Telephone company from 1923 to 1949.



(1900) W.B. MILLER HOUSE

210 North Fourth Street



President of the Bank of Groton, Miller oversaw the building of Groton's First National Bank in 1911. This home is an outstanding example of an American Foursquare with neo-Classical features. Large doric columns support a porch which runs across the front of the house. Dentils are used under the cornice of the porch and in a small pediment above the porch entry. A second pediment is found above an enclosed rear porch. There are two projecting bay windows. With the exception of the rear façade, each side features an oval window on the second story. Three sides of the attic area, except the rear, display a hipped-roof dormer with a Palladian window. The home rests on a granite block foundation.

(1904) TOWNSEND HOUSE

306 North Fourth Street



John E. Townsend, hotelman, bank director, builder of the downtown Townsend block, constructed this larger home next to his first house in 1904. This Queen Anne has some strong Neo-Classical and Neo-Colonial treatments. The full-length front porch sports Doric columns and a balustrade on the second story. Gabled dormers extend from the attic on all sides except the rear façade. The front dormer features a palladian window. There are two bay windows that project onto the front porch, and a bay window projects from the dining room on the south side. A free-form window also projects from the stairway landing on the north side. The house rises from a granite block foundation.

SUNDSTROM HOUSE (1914)

305 North Fourth Street

This rectangular, one-and-one half story bungalow has a broad gable facing the street. Other Bungalow style features include an enclosed front porch with its own broad gable and the use of several bands of windows. Vertical muntins are found in the upper sashes of the windows. Overall, this is a good unaltered example of a style which contributed to the later stages of this period of significance.

The garage (about 1900) is also a contributing building. According to a 1904 Sanborn map, this one and one-half story building pre-dates the house by at least ten years. It is a narrow rectangular building with interlocked wood siding and a gable roof. The foundation is a combination of rock, concrete slabs, and brick. There are wooden swing-out doors at each end of the building. This is a good example of an early garage in the Groton community.



STRONG HOUSE (1904)

229 East Fourth Avenue

This Queen Anne features a wrap-around porch with doric columns. It has a granite block foundation. Projecting bay windows extend to the south on the first floor and to the east on the second floor. The second floor bay window is a large picture window capped by a semi-circular overlight. The smaller gables of the house each have a diamond-shaped window surrounded by fish-scale shingles. From the attic, freeform two-sided oriels project to the front and the rear of the house.

The original owner of this house was Lyman Strong. Strong was an area farmer who had this house built and then moved into Groton upon his retirement.



(1922) OLSON-CHILTON HOME

315 East Fourth Avenue



This is a one-and-one half story, rectangular bungalow with a broad gable facing the street. Large brackets support wide overhanging eaves on the front and rear of the house, while exposed rafter ends support the eaves on the sides. The bands of windows across the front porch are characteristic of the bungalow style. Vertical muntins in the upper sashes are typical for the period in which this house was built. A unique feature of the house is a piano window on the east side.

This is the second house built and owned by Dr. C. O. Olson, a local physician. Olson owned the house until the 1950s. It was then owned by Norma Chilton until her death and then by Jack Chilton.



GROTON



SOUTH DAKOTA

GROTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

On the eastern edge of Brown County, about six miles from the western border of Day County, Groton claimed a trade territory encompassing about eleven Brown County townships and in southwestern Day County Andover and Bristol townships along with the towns of Andover, Bristol and Pierpont in northwest Day County. Groton, 18 miles east of Aberdeen and the second largest town in Brown County, has successfully survived in competition with the larger Aberdeen and its many attractions with the exception of movie theaters. Proximity to Aberdeen has had a positive impact as well as negative in that Aberdeen provides jobs for those who prefer the small town environment. One Groton editor referred to his town as a service station for a large trade area despite competition from two county seat communities: Brown County's Aberdeen to the west and Day County's Webster to the east. Groton has increased in population from 681 in 1890 and 700 of 1900 to 1350 in 2000. The census chart (located on page one) reveals trends. The shaded map (on the next page) reveals the gradual extension of city boundaries. In 1974 came the largest annexation including the northern area as far as the cemetery, a section south of the tracks and an eastern extension to the border of the golf course. The city added a small western area along Highway 12 in 1989, the golf course as far as the intersection of old and new Highway 12 in 1993, and in 1999 an area southwest of Garfield Street to Dakota Street.

The Aberdeen/Brown County Landmarks Commission salutes Groton and its citizens on their 125th anniversary and hopes this tour guide publication will be useful to area residents as well as tourists and visitors.



TOUR · 4

RAILROAD AVENUE AND HIGHWAY 12

driving tour

The second phase of the driving tours includes an inspection of varied sites between Highway 37 and Highway 12 along a route once part of the Yellowstone Trail after the trail was rerouted from Main Street by way of Railroad Avenue until 1940 when the Highway 12 curve was opened. Beginning at the intersection of Highway 37 and Railroad Avenue are city infrastructure sites: the city shop, the waterworks (reservoir and water tower), south sub-power station, surviving grain elevators serving alternative uses, sites of the former Milwaukee and Chicago & Northwestern depots, and south Main street businesses. Rather than continuing directly east to Highway 12 on a gravel road, the motorist should turn northward on North 6th Street until reaching the Olive Grove Golf Course at the intersection of 700 East 5th Ave. and North 6th Street. After viewing that site proceed to Highway 12 for that part of the driving tour.



Photo of Groton Elevators (1914-1920)

(1931) W.A. GEARY'S GAS STATION

South Highway #37 (Broadway Street)



This photo represents the appearance of older gas stations during the earlier automobile era when roadside cabins and gas stations aided travelers. Contrast the simplicity of this station with present day stations with their numerous pumps and often combined with convenience stores and even casinos. This was later Hiram Kolbo's lot. This station contracted with White Eagle oil in 1933, then Standard oil until 1941. John Kolb acquired the lot in 1945. As a reminder of the earlier auto era when stations dotted Main and Railroad Ave. on the Yellowstone Trail route, this block close to the intersection of Highway 37 and Railroad Avenue was a strategic location until the curve rerouted traffic along Highway 12. Photos here were taken many years apart. The most recent, in 2006, indicates a paint change from yellow to white and a removal of pumps situated between the two front roof pillars. The earlier photo reveals slabs of fire wood aligned in front possibly for heat in the garage section which may serve as a storage or work shop area.



GROTON WATERWORKS

Railroad Avenue and First Street

The Groton water tower, pump house, domed water reservoir, the Light and Power Building and the south sub-station may be the starting point or the concluding site of your driving tour of Railroad Avenue and elevator row depending on which end of the avenue you begin your tour. Groton's first water tower was built in 1891. The present tower was erected in 1921. In May 1922 construction began on a new waterworks. Concrete work began on a huge reservoir which had been excavated.

Workers installed new iron pipe mains. Wells were the source of water pumped to the tower but more recently WEB (Missouri River water) is a water source. In addition to the tower's role in water distribution, the tower serves as a town identity symbol just as ground-level welcome signs at the town's edges. From miles away one can see the tower looming skyward. Also, the tower is a tribute to Groton's sports team, the Tigers. Upon a white background a tiger's head, in yellow and black colors, is emblazoned on two sides of the tower which serves as a town and team promotional icon.

In July 1940 the *Independent's* news reporter noticed that the water tower "is now painted white and topped by a weather-vane and an electric light for benefit of night sky riders." White persists to this day.

GROTON SOUTH POWER SUB-STATION

Railroad Avenue and First Street

This site and the north sub-station provide the city's electricity advertised as the "best servant on earth." A daytime tour requires imagination of what a lighted Groton may look like at night as well as to appreciate day-time business and residential uses.

Until 1916 Groton depended on the "moonlight schedule" as there would be no street lights at night during a full or half moon. Even in daytime electric usage was undependable. This was a flicker and fade era of electric lighting. Jay Reeves' editorial of March 30, 1915 urged construction of 26 posts in three blocks of downtown Main... "as it is now, those on the night train would scarcely know that we were on the map." Street lights advertised the town and increased safety and security. Spring 1916 saw four globe poles on most of the city's principal corners. Five nitrogen lights later replaced old arc lights. By November 1, 1921 the city took over the light plant of the Groton Power Company.

1922 became the year of the "white way effect". Four electric street lights with tripled-candle power lighted upper Main. A change over from 220 to 110 current was finally implemented as war time conditions had delayed this improvement. In the past, power had been drained for private residential use to the detriment of public streets. No more "blackeye" of Saturday nights without street lights! The idea of a high line from an outside source, rather than a local plant, received more attention. With the coming of the highline Grotonites focused more attention on improved Main street lighting and envisioned not only three or four blocks of lights but a lighted city park for night recreation, even a lighted school grounds.

Aberdeen Light, Power Company in 1921-22, contracted to build a "highline" from Aberdeen to the corporate limits of Groton. After February 1924 Northwest Public Service provided electric service. Power lines were rebuilt in 1936. After 1939 Groton enjoyed night football due to field lighting. In January 1941 Luther Falk's sidewalk glimpses of Groton at night refers to a lighted Main: "The finger of Groton lights reaches out to the junction of Main Street with US.12." When Groton participated in an area wartime blackout 14 December 1942 at 10 p.m. Main Street businesses went dark creating a powerful impression on those who were accustomed to an electrified town.

On November 7, 1953 the city contracted with the Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation for electric service. New sub-stations were built in 1969 and in 1979.

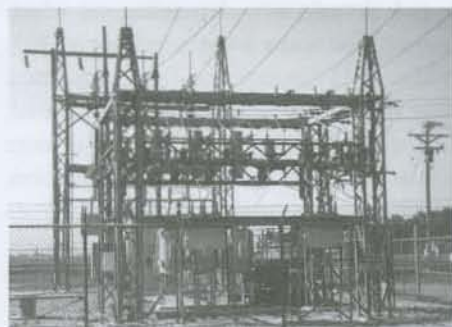


Photo of power sub-station



Photo of Groton Waterworks (continued from page 51)

RAILROAD AVENUE AS ELEVATOR ROW

When approaching Groton from the east on Highway #12 the motorist can recognize the community some miles away by the elevators towering above the town. Even from the west and other directions they serve as a town identifier. Along the north side of the Milwaukee railroad tracks as early as the 1880s wagons and later trucks of area farmers unloaded grain to be processed by the elevator companies and shipped by rail to national markets. Elevators are icons of the railroad era and of the James River Valley's rural agriculture. Arrival of the Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad in 1881 triggered an elevator boom north of the Milwaukee tracks. With the coming of the C & NW rail service in 1887 more elevators were located south of the C&NW tracks. Over time fires, declines in rail service and agricultural conditions decreased their number. Today, having passed through several ownerships, three structures survive and serve varied purposes.

(1908) FORMER GROTON FARMERS ELEVATOR

102 East Railroad Ave
Intersections of East 2nd Street and
west of the present Pioneer Seed
Building at 10 South Main Street

The Groton Farmers Elevator was organized by farmers in October 1908. In the 1980s Farmers sold to Harvest States who later sold to S.D. Wheat Growers. In 1990 Rix Farms secured it for farm storage and grain cleaning under the name Groton Seed and Grain Storage. Modern white silos contrast with the older, gray elevator surrounded by smaller storage bins and office buildings.



FORMER BAGLEY ELEVATOR (1889)

300 East Railroad Ave.

Intersection of North Fourth Street

Now L.W. Seed Sales

Division of Northern Prairie Seed and Mustang Seed

Established in 1889, this elevator is located on the north side of the Milwaukee Railroad tracks. It was closed during the early 1930s. Between 1967 and February 1981 Valley Farmers Elevator operated it before selling to Midwest Grain and Seed Inc. which managed it until the late 1980s when it was sold to Groton Farmers Elevator and put into limited use. Larry and John Wheeling later bought it for an office and operations building for Mustang Seeds – their bird seed and seed cleaning business. The older gray colors predominate on the elevator buildings and smaller bins with a yellow office/work building nearby. Signage denotes the Bagley name in white letters on black background.



(1903) FERNEY FARMERS COOPERATIVE ELEVATOR

103 North 6th Street
Intersection of Railroad Ave.

.....

This elevator had a close association with the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad which arrived in Groton in 1887 and the town of Ferney six miles south of Groton. The Ferney co-op organized in 1900 and in August 1903 approved an elevator to be built at Groton. Chartered with a name change in 1911 as Ferney Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company, the company in 1917 moved its headquarters to the upper floor of Groton's First National Bank. There they remained until 1973 when the company remodeled its Groton plant to accommodate the headquarters office. Since the Atlas elevator burned, in the early 1940s, this is the only surviving elevator along the C&NW tracks. Some improvements preceded the 1973 remodeling. In 1953 and 1954 additions were built and in 1969 a flax cleaning mill was secured for the plant. In 1980 the company constructed a sunflower pit and auger system as the market for that product increased. In 1990 this elevator company merged with the Groton Farmers Elevator which became the James Valley Farmers Elevator. This operated until sold to Harvest States. Later it was resold to South Dakota Wheat Growers who continued operations until 2004 when they sold to Jerry Johnson. The newer, white elevator is flanked by three quonset bins on one side and an older, gray elevator on the other. The contrast forces the eye to focus on the white structure.



PAST & PRESENT BUSINESSES

INTERSECTION OF NORTH MAIN AND RAILROAD AVE.

Between the Milwaukee tracks and Main Street varied businesses served the community. Lumber companies often sought proximity to the railroad tracks to simplify unloading shipments. Even the American Legion building site on the corner of Railroad Avenue and North Main housed D.B. Johns Lumber Co. from 1881-1890. Until 1885 St. Croix Lumber Company was situated in the middle of Main St. on, or near, the present site of Ron's Body Shop. In 1985 Ron Belden bought Valley Gas which operated here from 1975 to 1984 and which previously had been Eddy's Mobile Service. Earlier implement dealers had utilized the site. Guy Herron in 1920 built a new showroom and office here and operated it to 1955 followed by the Groton Farm Store about 1958.

Pioneer Seed at 10 South Main currently is located south of Ron's shop. In 1959 this was the site of Hayes Lucas Lumber company followed by UBC and S & S Lumber Company from 1973-2002 when that business moved to Highway 12. In 2003 Larry Harry bought the building for seed storage and has remodeled it also for entertaining and lodging hunters and others.



Ron's Body Shop



Pioneer Seed

GROTON'S TWO DEPOTS

Photos of the vanished Milwaukee and Chicago Northwestern Depots may assist the imagination when viewing spaces along the tracks occupied by other buildings in 2006. Aside from highways 12 and 37, the two depots strengthened Groton's ties with the outside world. The Milwaukee's east-west line tracks reached Groton June 28, 1881. By 23 September 1881 workers had completed a one-story depot. By 1900 photos testify that a two-story addition had been added to the one-story Milwaukee depot. By 1910 Groton claimed 3 lumber yards, 7 grain elevators and 3 farm implement dealers who utilized railroad service for their bulk products. Farmers hauled wheat as far as 40 miles to Groton, sometimes waiting a day or two to unload. The number of elevators peaked to 9 in 1913, decreased to 4 by 1940 and 1950 and to 3 by 1964. After 1909 the Milwaukee west coast extension traffic increased. Four Olympian passenger trains in each direction from May 1911 to June 1944 increased use of the passenger depot and platform. This east-end, two-story section was moved to a farm site southwest of the city and the depot returned to its original one-story status before operations ended June 30, 1980. The tracks are still used by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe which provides freight service along former Milwaukee and C&NW tracks. From the south the C&NW served Groton by its Watertown branch from the town of Doland through Verdon and to its terminus Groton. In 1887 the C&NW entrance into Groton triggered a rush of people. The three-story 27-room Brunswick Hotel registered 3500 guests over ten months as of May 1889. Grain elevators soon appeared along C&NW tracks. By the 1950s the depot was gone and Groton had to depend on the Milwaukee for train service.



Milwaukee Depot



Chicago Northwestern Depot



Photo showing the relationship between the Milwaukee Depot and the city of Groton (1914-1920)

COUNTRY CLUB AND OLIVE GROVE GOLF COURSE

700 5th Avenue and North 6th Street

(1989)

The first golf course and country club is located east of the C&NW rails and Ferney Farmers Elevator on William Blair's homestead land. The course operated prior to World War I and the club house served as a dance site prior to 1970. The course was neglected after World War II. Popularity of golf skyrocketed in the 1980s and Groton looked to the previous country club site. Robert Wehde bought land and donated 112 acres to the city which leased the land back to a non-profit golf course association for 99 years. Olive Grove Golf Course Inc. was formed October 27, 1988. Over \$100,000 in pledges by April 1986 plus donated labor and a lease purchase agreement with the Groton Development Partnership enabled completion of the clubhouse. By April 1991 one cart shed was ready and another built in June 2000. A concrete block bathroom was completed by June 2002. In spring, summer and fall as one rounds the curve on Highway 12 the eye focuses on green stretches where golfers stroll the land. That greenery and the clubhouse testify to what community teamwork can accomplish. Here the past and present blend as Grotonites return to a popular recreational and social center on the town's edge.





GROTON DRIVING TOUR: HIGHWAY # 12 6TH AVENUE AND THE CURVE TO BROADWAY (HIGHWAY #37)

In tracing sites along Highways #12 and #37 an interesting fact should be noted. The official numbering system for highways revolved around odd and even numbers. Those which ran south and north were to be odd numbered—thus 37, and those running east- to-west received even numbers—thus 12.

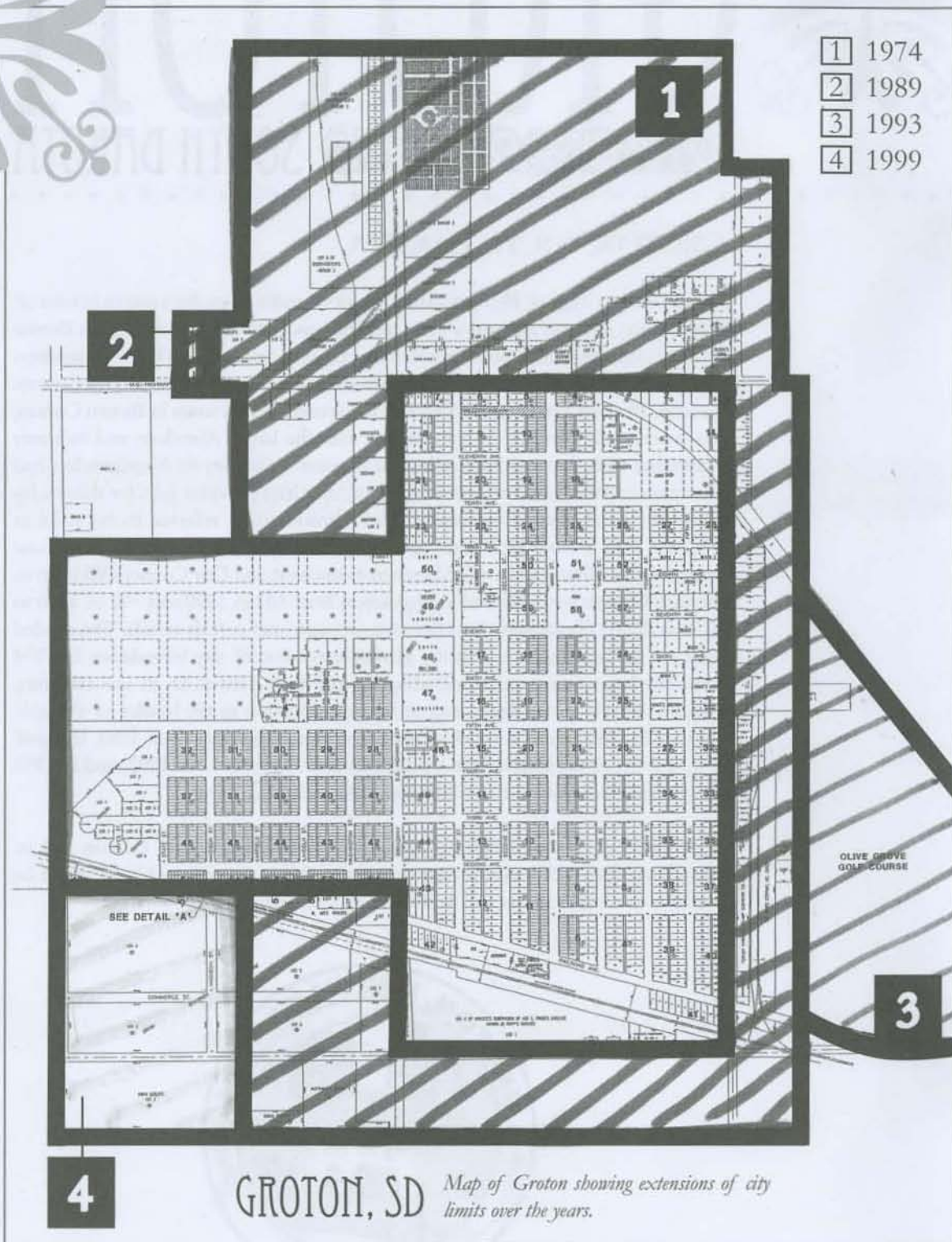
Groton in 2006 has experienced, as many other towns, a move of business from Main Street to a nearby more strategic trade corridor which is the old Yellowstone Trail, now Highway 12. That trail, which had traversed downtown's Main street, had been rerouted from downtown to Railroad Avenue and finally in 1940 bypassed Groton's downtown and the Railroad avenue route through a curved highway 12 which cut across Groton's northern edge. However, downtown was but a two-minute drive down Main Street from Highway 12. The curve took some farm and golf course land but left considerable acreage to the southwest for future golf course development.

(1990) DARREL'S BP STATION Railroad Avenue and First Street

One of the first Main street businesses to move to a Highway 12 location was the Standard station at the corner of North Main and East Second Avenue (Block 10, lots 11 and 12) where the Dakota Press is presently located. That move occurred in November 1990. The former Amoco station is now a British Petroleum station offering full service including a convenience food store.



- 1 1974
- 2 1989
- 3 1993
- 4 1999



S & S LUMBER (2001)

201 East Highway 12

S & S Lumber located at 10 South Main followed suit a decade later in 2001 locating east of Duane's gas station in a new building which also features Hardware Hank.

In 2005 two additional Main Street businesses moved to Highway 12 locations.



LORI'S PHARMACY AND GROTON CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC (2005)

1205 North First Street
and Intersection with Highway 12

Lori's Pharmacy at 25 North Main Street in the Townsend building relocated to the highway corner and First Street which had been the site of a fast food and ice cream Kream store between 1964 and 1984 and after that a seasonal greenhouse and potting shed operation.



DAIRY QUEEN (1980)

11 East Highway 12

Along with the Circle Pines Motel, Dairy Queen served customers for 20 years before several Main Street businesses and one Claremont bank joined them in highway service.



(2002) FIRST STATE BANK

East Highway 12
with a landscaped lot facing Highway 37



The First State Bank of Claremont, a century old institution, opened in 1903 and established a branch office in Columbia (1953). Jeffrey Stohr purchased the Circle Pines Motel site and constructed a new building which opened in October 2002. With its charter officially transferred to Groton, the main office is now headquartered here with branches in Claremont and Columbia still functioning.

(2005) KEN'S FOOD FAIR AND SHELL EXPRESS

4 East U.S. Highway 12



This grocery store moved in December 2005 from the Brooberg building on Main Street to the southeast corner lot where highways 37 and 12 intersected. This had been the site of Darrel's Sinclair gas station and coffee shop from the 1980s to 2004, and previous to that in 1975 the High Grade Oil Co. general headquarters and service station. Ken's FoodFair façade features a full length, blue metal panel below the roof line, a stone block foundation and between the two a stucco paneling. Ken's Shell Express service station faces Highway 37 on that corner. Eastward, adjacent to Ken's a newly constructed Crossroads Mall awaits future businesses.



CORNER LOTS FACING STATE HIGHWAY #37

COCO'S RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE

Corner of Highway 12 and 37

This southwest corner has had a service station since about 1935 starting with a Mobil station. Breaking with tradition, the site housed a bowling alley which fire destroyed at the end of 1971. A new building—the Red Horse Inn, combining a service station and restaurant, opened October 1, 1972. In mid-1980 when pumps were removed, it ceased as a gas station. The building's north end was enlarged to provide café service. A new owner Marc Hanson, remodeled and opened it as Coco's. It now has new owners — Darren and Lisa Locke.



Amos' Corner (above)



TRAIL CHEVROLET AND OLDS (1989)

Junction of Highway 12 and 37

The northwest corner had been a farmers field but in 1948 became the site for a service station and restaurant called Amos Corner. Fire destroyed the station in 1973. In 1979 Merle Hanson bought the Groton Truck Center which was established on that site in June 1970. After 10 years Hanson bought Trail Chevrolet and Olds from Orville Schaller and moved it from Main Street to this corner lot. In 2005 he sold the business to Loel Lust Chevrolet of Aberdeen. The building fronts Highway 37 with a huge auto lot stretching to highway 12.



(1986) GROTON UNION CEMETERY

East Side of North Highway 37

On the edge of Groton about 1/2 mile north of the junction are the combined Catholic and Union cemeteries. Due to financial problems the original cemetery association turned over records to the city and the city now administers the site. Stone pillars mark the entry way with iron fencing demarking the site from the highway. A short distance within stands a veterans memorial circle with large marker and flags.

State and national highway designations were made in 1925. According to the *Groton Independent* of January 1 and 22 1925 Spink County visualized a county road from Doland to Groton which linked with the Brown County cemetery road northward as a continuation of future highway.



GROTON

PERIPHERAL SITES

FORMER COAST GUARD STATION (1946)

5 Miles North of Groton
East Side of Highway 37

This T-shaped brick building with a front 125' x 35' and its landscaped lawn and brick utility or guard house at the highway entrance is a unique landmark. The first floor front wing is a classic Georgian façade. Built in 1946, it was a high-frequency direction find station positioned on the flat prairie where radio signals could be more easily picked up from coastal areas. Later, it served as a dinner club and a nursing home. After that it lay vacant for 20 years and the Groton city council planed to demolish it. Through the research of Jack Chilton and leadership of Peg Lamont the Landmark Commission overcame the many restrictive conditions government had placed on this property. Nearby farm land serves as Groton city airport and emergency landing field. In 1992 a buyer was found who is working to restore the building as a private home.



JAMES VALLEY ETHANOL

West Highway 12



West of Groton on Highway 12 sits the James Valley Ethanol complex. Roadside signs identify the 138-acre site. Its silo-like structures and tanks rising skyward attract the eye immediately much like elevators and water tower within Groton itself. This 16th plant of the Broin companies began operations May 2003, after a six month construction period. The facility consumes over 16 million bushels of corn producing high grade livestock feed as well as ethanol for mixture with gasoline. Its impact on nearby Groton and area farmers has been beneficial for school attendance, job market, city business, farm production, and city image. The signature name James Valley, so well represented by the James Valley Telephone and Communication system, is strengthened by this plant bearing the name of this significant river valley.

GRANARY RURAL CULTURAL CENTER

40161 128th Street



East of the James River and northwest of Groton, this site in the May to September months has much to offer. It is in the middle of prime farm land and features farmer William Sieh's 1929 granary, operative 1929 to mid 1940s. Its interior has been converted to a multi room art gallery. The complex also features the 1916 Putney Township Hall which is used for performing arts and workshops, an interpretive landscape sculpture garden, a gazebo and a meditation maze. This site is built around the theme "Respect for the land and the people who live on it." The center hosts the All Dakota High School Fine Arts gathering in May and the Prairie States Fine Arts Festive in mid-summer. Other events extend into September. Here, the work of artists, photographers and sculptors may be seen. Exhibitions are open to new, upcoming and established artists. Groton has strong ties to this area close to the James River as evidenced by its earlier relationship to the Tacoma Park recreational center of 1898-1960s.

GROTON

THE OLD HOME TOWN

concluding thoughts

Whether visitor or local resident, we all have hometown roots and associations. For 125 years Groton has pursued spirited boosterism in town and trade territory development. Groton's Quasquicentennial is the latest event in its promotional spirit and awakening of historical conscientiousness. In 1906 the town celebrated its 25th birthday, in 1931 its 50th anniversary, in 1956 its 75th and in 1981 its 100th year commemoration.

Aside from these special anniversaries, a variety of promotions marked Groton's history: Jungle Days, Bargain and Value Days, Friendship and Frolic Days, Circus Days and Mid-Summer Festival Days, Free Farmer Days, Merchant Trade Days, Appreciation and Thrift Days, Chautauqua, Water Mellon Days, Moonlight Madness, and in July 2006 a night-time Eclipse Street Dance! All promoted the local trade area, provided opportunities for merchants to thank people for their patronage and demonstrated community pride. Of all these special occasions what could equal in our orderly mathematical minds those dates commemorating every 25 years – all watersheds culminating in the 125th anniversary.

Such occasions, with their school reunions, elicit judgments about the home town, its streets, buildings and people. A member of the class of 1937 described the Main Street parade of July 8, 2006 as "a complete picture of small town America at its best" and noted that area towns participated in "this historic event" to honor Groton. Parades especially trigger thoughts about the small town as a special place where a sense of belonging is nurtured and an enduring connection strengthened. One observer exclaimed that parades always reveal community pride and the one of 2006 "certainly keeps that tradition." Participants of the 2006 event noted renovations, newly painted surfaces that demonstrated pride in town appearance: "to see houses that we used to play in and live in as youngsters, looking as good, if not better, than they did in the 40's and 50's, was heart warming."

In July 2006 one former Grotonite remarked, "You may not be able to go back physically to the town, but mentally, I think I will always be a Groton citizen." While there is a balance between old and new structures which identify Groton, returnees as well as residents recognize and value the older town buildings- their former and present uses- as well as appreciate progress in the form of modern, newer buildings fulfilling community services. Groton's 125th Anniversary utilized several activity centers: park, baseball diamond, high school, skating site and Main Street. Visitors observed that several stores had moved from Main Street to the highway or close to it but they recognized that innovative new businesses now occupy those Main Street buildings and that Main Street had not lost its magic touch and still functions as a key player in the town's economy and government. Thus, as all reunions and celebrations end, so does this walking/driving tour.

FUNDING AND SOURCE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication has been partially financed with federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior through the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Program, Pierre, SD and local matching funds from the Aberdeen/Brown County Landmarks Commission.

Numerous sources were helpful in researching this guide. The Groton newspapers—The Groton *Independent* on microfilm in the Northern State University library and recent editions of the *Dakota Press* as well as the 1981 Groton Centennial History by Mary Alice Jensen and Anita Lowary's updated version of 2006 were useful sources, especially for older photos of vanished buildings. The Sanborn Insurance Maps available on the internet provide insight into Groton's streets and infrastructure. While the 1930 maps were relied on for this publication, other maps are available for the years 1884, 1892, 1893, 1898, 1904, 1910 and 1921. This online data base reveals building size, dimensions, materials used, function and locations of windows and doors and is useful in comparing changes over time.

Groton city hall provided useful maps of the city's various expansions 1974-1999 as well as advice on certain structures. The U.S. Census listed Groton's population over the decades. The Polk City Directory of 1919, as did other such directories, supplied insight on rural Brown County and the city of Groton. Peg Lamont's paper on "Coast Guard Station on the Prairie-Saved from the Wrecking Ball" (1992) provided an inside story about the salvation of that structure. John Sieh and the Granary were sources of information

on that facility. The Landmarks Historic Preservation survey of 1988 conducted by Brad Tennant supplied some slides and data on businesses and homes as they appeared in that year. Most current photos were taken by Dr. Art Buntin. The Brown County Assessor's vaults contained records of Groton buildings. The Landmark booklet "Exploring Brown County" (1989) was helpful.

Useful were Dr. Art Buntin's previous essays on Groton: "Popular Culture: Groton's Two C's In Transition: Cozy Theater: Indoor Culture and Chautauqua: Outdoor Culture" (1978); "Knockers and Boosters: Dakota Midland Editors and their Weekly Newspapers" (1981); "The Great White Way: Main Street Electrified" (1982); "Prairie Parks: Landscape Treasures of Brown County, SD" and "Groton and Frederick City Parks" (1997); "Living Legacies: Railroad Stations of Brown County, SD" (2002); "Relief and Recovery: The New Deal in Brown County" (2005), coauthored with Brad Tennant.

This project received federal financial assistance from the National Park Service. Under title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 the U.S. Department of Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap in its federally assisted program. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire more information please write to the office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior.



HISTORIC
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ABERDEEN/
BROWN COUNTY
LANDMARKS
COMMISSION



TOUR • 1

CHURCHES & SCHOOLS

circuit driving tour

Churches are a testimony to the variety of worship centers and the spiritual values of the pioneer and succeeding generations. They served as social centers, and for that reason we include the current community center which is on a former church lot. Former and current churches were located on corner lots. Surviving buildings represent a blend of the old and the new as well as decreasing and increasing memberships. Amongst the older churches is one without a congregation but maintained for occasional use and historical purposes and one now used as a funeral home. These earlier buildings range from 1883-84, 1908-09, to 1911 and 1924, and were within Groton's original plat boundaries. The newer church buildings appear after 1950; one in 1951, three in the 1960s and one in 1997. There is a notable difference between the older and newer churches in architectural style.

In spring and summer 1932 Methodist Pastor Luther C. Benson launched a promotion campaign to increase church attendance at a time when the automobile encouraged Sunday drives. His message, no doubt, was shared by other pastors, "All roads lead to church on Sunday. Start on time, and head the car in the right direction. We will miss you if you are not in church, and you will miss something too."

GROTON COMMUNITY CENTER (1979)

109 North Third Street

Site of former First Methodist Churches
of 1887 and 1911-1968

With ample parking space on the corner of North Third Street and Third Avenue North, this elongated hall provides a social center for clubs and individuals. It replaced Main Street spaces no longer available and the old Methodist church of 1911 which had served as a community center from 1962-1979 after the congregation moved elsewhere. Town benefactor Roy Richards bought the 1911 church for use as a community center in 1962.



Groton Community Center front entrance



Groton Community Center back view

PAETZNICK-GARNESS FUNERAL CHAPEL (1967)

112 North Third Street

Site of former Emmanuel Lutheran Church
(1924-April 7, 1963)

In 1922, H. W. Cassels sold these lots to the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church whose building was dedicated September 8, 1929. In 1961, the name changed to Emanuel Lutheran Church, and on April 7, 1963 the last service was held in the old church as part of a move to a new church at a 2nd street location. In 1964 from his home at 210 North 4th Street Helmuth Paetznick moved his long-lived funeral business to this former church, which still serves the community in a different capacity and is a good example of alternative use for an older building. Note the gothic square tower characteristic of many churches in the 1920's.



(1883-84) TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Third Avenue E. and
Third Street North
Lots 1 and 2 Block 7



Groton's first church building, begun in July 1883 and completed in June 1884, contains stained glass windows made in Connecticut and uses Gothic church design. The church is located on its original site and its basic design was unaltered through the years. The exterior is sheathed with board and batten which was repainted in 2005. The windows form lancet arches framed with Tudor label molds. The small windows have etched colored glass while the large three-part window behind the altar is leaded and stained. In 1974 it was deeded to the Brown County Historical Society which maintains the building and holds occasional programs here. The church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 27, 1983 as it is the single remaining example of a rural board-and-batten Episcopal Church in South Dakota.

(1951) SAINT JOHNS LUTHERAN CHURCH

308 North Second Street



This is one of two churches on North 2nd St. In 1951 this building replaced the previous church building purchased in 1893 and which had served as a chapel of the former Groton College. A growing congregation needed more space. In 1963 the education unit provided sixteen more classrooms and a pastor's study. Interior renovations of 1977 included a redwood ceiling and new lighting fixtures. Note the front entrance with its double doors framed by pillars and an overhead engraved with the church name and topped by a cross. Note also the siding between roof and brick facade and the brick bell tower to the right which rises above the building's roofline.