

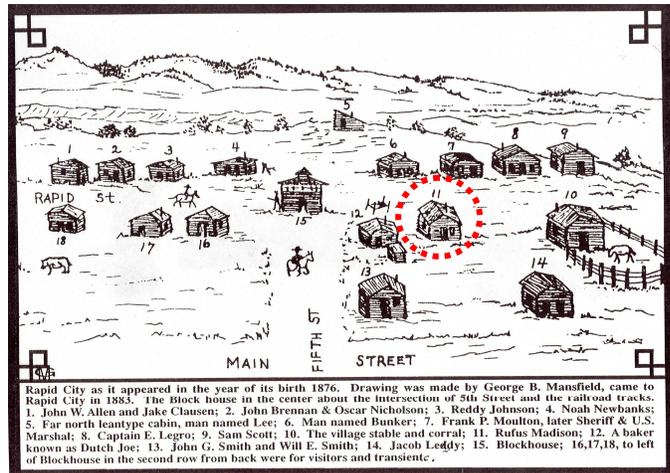
THE JOURNEY MUSEUM

To: Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission

RE: Proposal to Move Rapid City's "Pap" Madison Cabin

Background

The "Pap" Madison cabin is and has been for quite some time, the oldest known structure in Rapid City. It is certainly among the oldest standing structures in the Black Hills, dating back to the city's founding in 1876. Rufus or "Pap" Madison built the cabin (#11 in the historic sketch) at the corner of Fifth and Rapid Streets (the center of original six-block town site). Madison came to the area in late 1875 or early 1876 and was present when the town site was laid out on February 25, 1876. The Lakota in the area regularly raided the settlement and in one such raid killed Madison's dog and demolished his wagon. By August the raids had increased, resulting in the loss of considerable stock, other property and settlers lives. On the 25th all but 19 of the 200 settlers left for Ft. Pierre. The 19 that stayed, including Pap and town founder John Brennan, built a blockhouse for protection just west of Madison's cabin. After the initial conflict of the late seventies, Pap and Henry Bliss located a claim of 160 acres southwest of the original town site and began farming. Hap sold his farm in 1889 and in 1892 moved to Everett, WA. John Brennan acquired the cabin and the lot on which it stood from Pap – he would later pass it on to his wife.



The Fortnightly club focused its attention on the cabin in 1926, intending to convert it from an "eyesore" to a point of pride for the community and memorial to the city's founding and "the old days". The well known club (represented by Alice Gossage) went before the City Commissioners and obtained approval to move the cabin to the city-owned Halley Park. Mrs. John Brennan donated the cabin to the city. The Lion's Club then stepped in and spearheaded the project to move the cabin. It arrived in Halley Park later that year, badly dilapidated and neglected owing to its use as a barn. Among other repairs, it immediately required a roof as it was practically without one. It was refurbished by a volunteer that "understood the construction of log cabins" using materials donated by local hardware stores and was described at the time as "a complete model of the early days, shake roof, home made door with latchstring fastening, flat limestone fireplace (the original did not have a fireplace) and flagstone walk. R.B. Hughes, teacher, historian, writer, entrepreneur and editor among other occupations and avocations wrote the inscription memorialized in a plaque at the cabins base:

*I was built in the olden golden days,
when this was an unknown land:
My timbers were hewn by a pioneer,
with his rifle near at hand.
I stand as a relic of 'seventy-six,
our nation's centennial year,
That all may see as they enter the hills
The home of a pioneer.*

R.B.H

The cabin was used as a museum for many years by the Historical Association but increased vandalism made it necessary to remove the valuable artifacts and furnishings. These items are now in the Minnilusa Collection and on display in the Journey Museum. The Association continued to work for another building in Halley Park to house an historical museum and by 1938 had succeeded in getting the parks other structure built as a WPA project with private support. This building, with several additions, housed both the Minnilusa and Sioux Indian Museum Collections side-by side up until the construction of the Journey Museum. This building is now in use as the Higher Education Center, West River.

The cabin was again renovated in 1990 by the Boy Scouts of troop 55 under the supervision of David Hanson in fulfillment of his project requirement for the rank of Eagle Scout. Materials were provided by the Rapid City Parks Department with historical assistance by Minnilusa's Bob Pressler and Fern Crouch.

Minnilusa's Association with the Madison Cabin

The Minnilusa Historical Association (dba Pennington County Historical Association and West River Historical Association) has long had an association with the Madison Cabin. The Brennan families, the cabin's last private owners, were supporters and benefactors of the Association. John Brennan's granddaughter, Helen Wrede, serves as a Director on the Association's board. R.B. Hughes, the writer of the cabins 1926 inscription, also was an early supporter and benefactor of the Association. His grandson, Dr. W. H. Hughes, PhD., also served on Minnilusa's board until his death earlier this year. In fact, most of Rapid City's notable families, founders and early personalities have connections to Minnilusa.

The first museum in the cabin was established, furnished and run by the early Association. The very items displayed in that cabin are now in Minnilusa's collection at the Journey Museum. For almost sixty years, the association operated the Pioneer Museum in the WPA building in Halley Park, right alongside the Madison Cabin.

Inspection, Move and Preservation Plan

Prior to moving the cabin a detailed inspection of the cabin will be conducted by the Minnilusa, Journey Museum and contracted mover. The cabin will be thoroughly photographed and documented as a matter of record and to ensure that after the move the cabin can be returned to its current configuration. The following general areas will be inspected:

- Foundation, if there has been no settling it is unlikely that structural damage will be present in logs and roof system.
- Logs to be inspected for structural integrity and general condition.
- Roof to be inspected for structural integrity, weather tightness and overall condition.

Dakota Hills House Moving, Inc. has offered to donate their house moving services to move the Madison Cabin from its current location at the west end of Halley Park to a location at the Journey Museum. They are fully insured against public liability, workers' compensation, and any damage to the house that may occur during the move. Dakota Hills House Moving will secure all necessary building permits (for the original site as well as for the new site). Dakota Hills House Moving will also obtain all necessary moving permits from state and local highway departments. If necessary, Dakota Hills House Moving will arrange for police escorts and the temporary removal of road obstructions such as signs and lights. The museum staff has recommended a location (subject to board approval) at the front of the museum to the north of the flag pole and south of the Elm trees. This location would be prepared with a slab and curb foundation and provided with power to provide lighting for security and evening programming. Power (50 amps) is currently available on the parking lot light pole adjacent to the proposed location. The location is out of the 100-year flood plain and in a highly visible location at the front of the museum.

Benefits to the Community

The Rapid City Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has considered the move of the “Pap” Madison Cabin to the Journey Museum during their August 2 meeting and passed a resolution endorsing the move. The benefits of moving the Madison Cabin to the Journey Museum location are manifold. Specifically, the move would:

- Provide a place of focus for Rapid City and Black Hills History by once again establishing the Madison Cabin as a part of our community’s museum system;
- Enable the cabin to be used for living history displays, and workshops;
- Create an excellent area for many youth programs now lacking space in the Journey Museum;
- Create space for the display of Minnilusa Pioneer items, appropriate for the setting and time period, now in storage;
- Provide safe and easy access to Rapid City’s oldest building, ensuring that the cabin would be seen and experienced by more people;
- Ensure its long term preservation and security;
- Allow the appearance of cabin to be upgraded while maintaining its historic accuracy;
- Create signage for the Journey Museum – conveying the building’s intent and use without the objectionable aspects of “more signage” and;
- Generate Publicity for Rapid City historic preservation efforts.

Other Considerations:

Funding for the move will be entirely from private funds and in-kind services raised from within the community. No public funds are requested. Every effort will be made to use volunteer help and secure donated professional services where possible. The proposed fundraising effort will consist of selling paving bricks for a 5’ x 38’ walkway leading to the cabin. Selling 855 bricks will net \$27,875.

<u>Service</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Dakota Hills House Moving, Inc.	In-kind donation
Footings & slab	\$4,675
Excavation (Parks & Rec. Dept.)	In-kind donation
Electrical service	\$750
Strip & treat logs (material)	\$500
Stabilize roof (estimate, pending inspection)	\$1,500
Estimated initial costs	<u>\$7,425</u>

Recommendation:

The City of Rapid City approve proposal to move “Pap” Madison Cabin from Halley Park to Journey Museum; if approved, the Journey Museum Staff and Minnilusa Historical Association will pursue evaluation, moving, preservation and interpretation of this community asset. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Raymond D. Summers
Executive Director

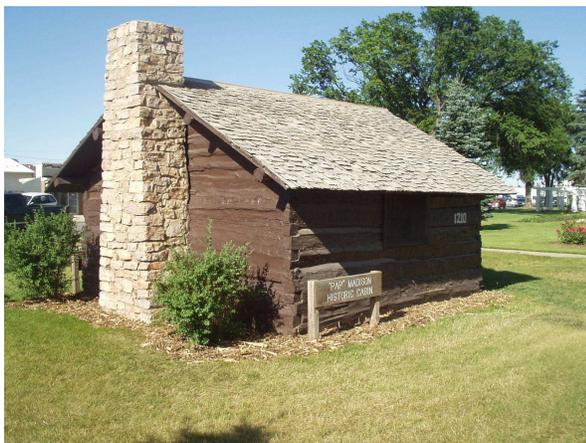
Appendix A, Photographs



Cabin as it appeared shortly after it was moved in 1926 to Halley Park



Cabin in use as a Museum, 1928



Cabin as it appears today