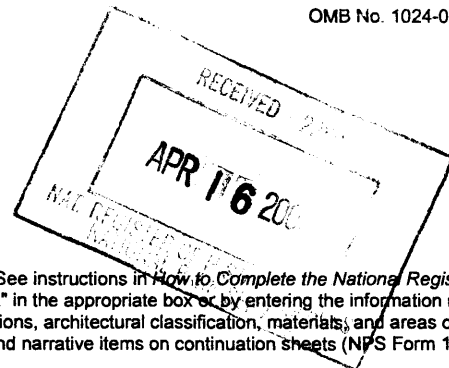


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name A.L. Cole Memorial Building
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 4285 Tower Square not for publication N/A
city or town Pequot Lakes vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county Crow Wing code 035 zip code 56472

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Nina M. Archabal 4/6/04
Signature of certifying official Date
Nina M. Archabal, Director and State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 5/26/04

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
	1	structure
	3	objects
2	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social/Meeting Hall

Government

Recreation and Culture/Theater

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social/Meeting Hall

Recreation and Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

Wood

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Social History

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1937-1953

Significant Dates

1937

1941

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bettenburg, P.C.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Nisswa, Minn., 1959
Revised 1994

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1.	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="9"/> <input type="text" value="9"/> <input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="6"/> <input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/> <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="6"/> <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="7"/> <input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="0"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>David C. Anderson</u>		
organization	<u></u>	date	<u>8/15/03</u>
street and number	<u>169 Lundy Bridge Drive</u>	telephone	<u>563/382-3079</u>
city or town	<u>Waukon</u>	state	<u>IA</u>
		zip code	<u>52172</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name	<u>City of Pequot Lakes</u>		
street & number	<u>31108 Government Drive</u>	telephone	<u>218/568-5222</u>
city or town	<u>Pequot Lakes</u>	state	<u>MN</u>
		zip code	<u>56472</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing, County, MN

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The Cole Memorial Building is in Pequot Lakes, a city with a population of 947 in Crow Wing County, located in north central Minnesota. It was built in 1937 and stands on a ca. 125 by 180 foot parcel in the city's commercial district next to Minnesota Highway 371. The property includes several large trees and a six by eight foot concrete well/pump house next to a coal bin that is attached to the building's north end.* West of the building the parcel includes a parking lot, flagpole, light pole, the bell from Pequot's first school, and a World War I Memorial. A wood handicap accessibility ramp is attached to the west side of the entrance porch.

With overall dimensions of 40 by 90 feet, the building has two full stories and small half-story attic spaces at each end that historically were used for storage (north) and a motion picture booth (south). The walls are of reinforced concrete with stucco finish except for the gable ends, which are of wood frame construction.

The south side includes two gables with a projection room extending over the main entrance porch, creating a third gable, and all three have short cornice returns. Historic photos indicate that originally there was a small "picture booth" in the lower gable but no porch. It is not known when this addition was constructed. The south gable ends are all clad in vertical wood siding featuring 10-inch-wide boards with decorative wood plugs near the bottom edge except on the projection booth where these elements are not present.

A pair of casement windows (4/4) with a three-light stationary sash above was installed on both sides of the entrance, with 3/3 double-hung units below them at the basement level. The basement units remain in place and in use, but the casement windows flanking the entrance are boarded over. The projection booth has a 4/4 double-hung window and door leading out to the porch roof. Presumably the door allowed for additional ventilation and escape in case of fire. The large 35 mm projectors that were installed in the booth until 1967 are in the museum section in the basement. There are four small windows in the attic just below the upper gable cornice.

There are also two such windows on the north gable end, which is clad in an asphalt composition sheathing. There are also 3/3 double-hung original windows at the east and west ends of the wall just below the upper gable cornice and basement windows on either side of a brick chimney. A steel coal bin is attached to the wall at the west end of the north side.

The well/pump house (contributing) has a door facing south and a six-light fixed sash window on the north side plus a brick chimney in the northwest corner.

Each long side consists of six bays, and all but one contain a pair of 6/6 double-hung sash below three-light fixed sash on the first floor level. Below these at basement level there were also pairs of double-hung sash. These were converted to single openings with glass block at an unknown date. The window bays are set back two inches from the wall surface, giving the intervening surface an appearance of piers with small capitals just below a narrow frieze. At present the windows in the two center-most bays on each side are boarded up but remain in place. The sixth bay on the west side contains a porticoed entrance, and on the east side a single 6/6 double-hung window with three-light fixed sash above and 3/3 double-hung sash at the basement level.

*Plans for the building were drawn in January 1936 by Minneapolis architect P. C. Bettenburg, and it was dedicated in June 1937. Plans for the well/pump house were commissioned in 1937 from Bettenburg, and a well was drilled the same year. An original set of plans for the building is at the Pequot Lakes City Hall. In 1941 a vertical sign ("marquee") reading "L A K E S" was placed above the main entrance. This was repositioned after the projection booth was enlarged, and the brackets are still in place. The whereabouts of the sign itself are unknown.

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A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing, County, MN

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

There is a bronze plaque on either side of the (replacement) steel and glass door flanked by vertical windows. To the left it reads

Works Progress
Administration

Project
1937

below an eagle in relief, and to the right

A. L. Cole
Memorial Building
1937

One enters the building into an eight-foot vestibule with stairs to the basement and cloakroom to the left and an office and storage space with ladder to the projection booth to the right. The vestibule corresponds to the lower gabled roof section on the exterior.

According to the plans, the basement ("Ground Floor") was divided into four principal areas with wood frame partition walls. From south to north these were 16 by 27 foot dimensioned rooms on either side of a seven-foot hall and labeled "Boy's Room" and "Girl's Room," with toilet and shower facilities including lockers. Next came a 26 by 38 foot "Dining Room," and the remaining space was divided into a kitchen, furnace room and staircase. In contrast to the other partition walls, the furnace room has concrete walls on all sides.

At present all partitions except those on the north end have been removed and the space is used as a museum. The former kitchen is now an office, and the furnace room remains as built next to the staircase in the northwest corner. The floor system is exposed, revealing 2 by 10-inch floor joists on 16-inch centers supported by two "I" beams supported by "H" beam columns, boxed and clad in metal lath and plaster set on 13-foot centers in rows 15 feet from each long side.

The main floor ("First Floor") was and remains an undivided space ("Auditorium") except for a section at the north end which originally included a stage with overall dimensions of 15 by 23 feet, flanked by stairways and a dressing room on each side. The stairs remain, but the stage, which included a proscenium arch, was replaced by a kitchen and bathrooms when the main floor was turned into a Senior Citizen's Center in 1967.

The ceiling has been lowered, and the windows in the two center-most bays on both sides are covered by murals painted by a local druggist/amateur artist in the early 1940s.

The original 66-inch-high knotty pine wainscoting that was installed along the entire perimeter remains in place along with 16 by 32-inch wallboard paneling above it. Brushed aluminum sconces dating from when the auditorium became a movie theater are in place between the window bays.

Several sets of 1940s vintage theater seats (four or five each mounted on boards but not fixed to the floor) remain in the building. The original maple flooring is extant as well as the wood paneling in the staircase leading to the top floor at the north end. The top floor now houses a library and storage space. This room has the same wainscoting as on the main floor, and the curtains hanging in front of shelving on the north wall are the original stage curtains, which were fabricated locally, according to Village Council records.

Although changes to the interior of the Cole Memorial Building have been substantial, the exterior, including key elements such as the windows and exterior fabric, are mostly present as originally constructed if not entirely visible. The building has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing County, MN

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

SIGNIFICANCE

The Cole Memorial Building is of local significance and eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion A in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation, Social History, and Politics/Government. The building provided a facility for a wide variety of social and recreational activities that included sports, motion pictures, theatrical productions, school functions, social gatherings, and a meeting place for local governments, farm groups and others. Under the aegis of the Pequot Lakes Commercial Club, the main floor was converted into a full-time movie theater in 1941, and the profits from this operation funded a variety of community betterment projects and institutions.

As a WPA-funded construction project, the Cole building provided temporary jobs for individuals on relief and also business for local firms during the most serious economic depression in American history. The property is being nominated under the NRHP Multiple Property Documentation Form "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941," and it relates to several statewide contexts:

- Railroads and Agricultural Development 1870-1940
- Northern Minnesota Lumbering 1870-1930s
- Minnesota Tourism and Recreation in the Lake Regions 1870-1945

Introduction

The origins of Pequot Lakes, known as Pequot until changed in 1940 to encourage tourism, date to about 1894 when a logging railroad, the Minnesota & International, was run from Brainerd (Crow Wing County seat) to Hackensack in Cass County. A siding was built in Sibley Township ("Sibley Siding") and within a year a small village had grown up there. Known as Sibley, it was changed to Pequot by 1900 and incorporated in 1902. Crow Wing County is one of 14 counties known as the Minnesota Cutover Region, and after logging operations had removed most of the timber, farming was promoted. This was initially successful; an agricultural society with an annual fair was organized in 1906 and a local creamery was in operation by about 1915 (*Pequot Review*, 12-19-20; Nic Anderson, Part I, 35). By 1920 the village had grown considerably, and by 1930 the population had reached 488. Since it was within 30 miles of at least 150 lakes, tourism was already being mentioned in 1920, and eventually it replaced farming as the major local industry ("What Pequot Offers," *Pequot Review*, 12-19-20).

In December 1935, Fay Cole Andrus deeded a large parcel of land next to the Pequot commercial district to the Village of Pequot to "be used exclusively as a public park and for other public purposes" (Crow Wing County Recorder's Office; Deed Records). Mrs. Andrus was a daughter of A. L. Cole, an early Pequot merchant who also owned a large amount of land which he developed into a substantial portion of what the city is today. The donated parcel was intended as a memorial to her father.

In March 1936 the Pequot Commercial Club approached the Village Council with a proposal that it sponsor the construction of a "Recreational hall." Federal funds were available and an architect had been contacted who would take his fee over time as a percentage of the project cost (Village Council Minutes, 2-3-36). The architect was P. C. Bettenburg, and he had already drawn up plans for the building, since at least preliminary plans and specifications were required to submit a construction project proposal to the WPA and other New Deal agencies.

The building was placed on the east side of the donated parcel, with the grounds to the north and west initially used as a park, outdoor gathering place, and athletic fields. A historic photo taken shortly after the building was erected shows a baseball field to the north of the building and a park with flagpole to the west.

A water tower was built in 1960 on the portion south of the building, and everything north of the well house was sold in 1983 along with the Municipal Liquor Store, which had been located there for many years.

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A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

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Section 8 Page 2

The Works Projects Administration (WPA), Pequot Lakes, and Minnesota

The Works Progress Administration, one of several agencies created by the Roosevelt Administration to mitigate the effects of the Great Depression, was brought into being by Executive Order No. 7034 on May 6, 1935. On July 1, 1939 it was renamed the Work Projects Administration, and the agency was terminated in June 1943 as winning World War II became the nation's highest priority.*

The principal objective of the WPA was to alleviate unemployment by funding useful projects, mainly devoted to constructing buildings and public infrastructure but also via "service projects" that included such things as research and indexing public records, producing State histories and guidebooks, and funding art work, much of it to be placed in public buildings, many of which were also built as WPA or other New Deal agency projects. Among the criteria used for determining the eligibility of proposals were:

1. The projects should be useful.
2. They should be such that a considerable proportion of the money should be spent on wages for labor.
3. Funds allotted for each project should be actually and promptly spent and not held over until later years.
4. In all cases projects must be of a character to give preference to those on the relief rolls.

Projects could be sponsored by Federal or non-Federal government agencies, including counties, cities, villages and townships, and as it turned out the vast majority were initiated by local governmental units. Projects could not, however, be sponsored by clubs, societies, churches or other private organizations, although such groups could unofficially work with sponsors in the origination of a project.

Since state and local governments were responsible for their relief programs, WPA employment relieved them to some extent of this burden. Just the same, the primary incentive in applying for WPA funds was to improve local facilities and infrastructure.

Nationally the WPA paid out nearly \$8 billion during the eight years of its existence, and about 8,500,000 persons were employed at one time or another during this period. In Minnesota \$750 million was spent, affecting 600,000 people. 1,324 new public buildings were constructed, principally schools, city halls and community buildings.

Athletic fields, parks and playgrounds were also either built or improved under the WPA. Typically the agency paid the labor costs and the sponsor paid for materials, equipment, tools and skilled labor and supervision.

The Cole Memorial Building project fits this pattern and reflects the aims and accomplishments of the WPA in other ways as well. Records of the Work Projects Administration in the U. S. National Archives indicate that a five-page Project Proposal (WPA Form 301) was filed on January 26, 1937 for "Construction of Community Center Building including incidental improvement of grounds."* Dollar amounts requested were \$6,026 for labor, \$400 for superintendence, and \$1,217 for material, equipment and other costs. As sponsor, the Village of Pequot was to contribute \$1,136 for material and supplies. Total project costs came to \$8,779. The largest appropriation for labor went to unskilled workers: 60 man/months, with 20 man/months for intermediate (carpenter helpers, etc.) and 30 man/months for skilled labor: carpenters, cement finishers, plumbers and electricians.

Total paid labor came to 12,726 man/hours, with non-relief labor being performed by certain necessary skilled tradesmen. Work on the building began on April 3, and it was completed by July 1, 1937. The figures above calculate to about 24 men working five eight-hour days per week for three months. The population of Pequot was close to 500 at the time.

*The general contextual material outlined here is drawn from Rolf T. Anderson, "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941," Section E, Part V, the Works Progress Administration.

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Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing County, MN

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An additional WPA appropriation was sought in April 1938 for landscaping and a fence around the tennis courts on Village property that was part of the donation of A. L. Cole's daughter. Whether this was north or south of the Cole Memorial Building is not clear. The Commercial Club co-sponsored this project with the Village, but no other documentation was found concerning it (Village Council Minutes, 4-18-38; Nic Anderson, Part I, 53). Pequot also received funding for a WPA construction project in 1938, an addition to the local high school (Nic Anderson, 13).

Putting 24 unemployed men to work full-time for three months (or the equivalent) was a short-term but significant mitigation of hardships caused by the Depression in Pequot, and presumably most of the money stayed in the local economy. Material and incidental costs, mostly paid by the Village and documented in Council Minute records, indicate that most of these expenditures went to local suppliers, including the local lumber yard, hardware and electric supply merchants, the Everhart & Goodman department store, plus the local dray line for hauling dirt and other material to the site. Cement mixers and other tools and equipment were rented locally, and a local nurseryman provided trees and shrubs. Some of these are visible on historic photos, and the large spruce trees on the south end are among them.

The Cole Memorial Building was dedicated on July 1, 1937, in an event presided over by the Pequot Commercial Club President. Guests included State and Regional WPA officials, and the "Dedicatory Address" was given by Victor Christgau of St. Paul, the WPA State Administrator (Dedication Program in the Pequot Lakes Area Historical Society Collection). Upon its completion, the Cole Memorial Building made facilities available that either did not exist or were inadequate for the wide range of educational, governmental, civic and social groups and functions that eventually used the building. Within a few months the building was in regular use by the Boy Scouts, 4-H Club, and local creamery and Sibley Township Board meetings. The Village Council also held its meetings there.

By February 1939 the Council had appointed a "recreational director" who scheduled and managed activities at the building. The weekly schedule he proposed to the Council gives a partial indication of the kinds of activities that were held there:

Monday Evening – Volleyball at the school (It must have had a better court.)

Tuesday – 1:30 to 4: Home Crafts

7:30 to 11: Chess and Checkers

Wednesday Evening – Boys and Girls night, also archery club

Thursday Evening – The Open Forum (when citizens could come to discuss various issues)

Friday Evening – Community Card Party

It is not clear how much of this was new in the community, that is, organized by the Recreation Director to put the building to use and enhance the social life of the area. Council records also show that the auditorium was made available to the school for plays, speech contests and graduation exercises. It was used for Memorial Day programs and by the American Legion and Grange as well, but there was no consistent rental policy – some groups were charged and others were not. By October 1939 it was calculated that the building was costing the Village \$80/month to operate, and the Council considered closing it for the winter. Rent for the auditorium was fixed at \$10 per day.

The Commercial Club and the Cole Memorial Building

The Pequot Lakes Commercial Club was a key player in the history of the Cole building, and its origins go back to 1909. It had a rather sporadic life for several years and was reorganized twice, in 1916 and 1933, after which it was active until 1967 when it became the Chamber of Commerce. In 1916 the stated purpose of the club was "to bring the town people and country people together in a social way," and already at that time there was some discussion about purchasing a motion picture machine (Nic Anderson, 16). It will be recalled that the club brought the proposal to the Village Council to build the

*Record Group 69, Records of the Work Projects Administration, Microfilmed Project Files, Minnesota, Box 600, Roll 574. Other material at this location includes a single-page Project Application and a Project Financial Status Report.

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A.L. Cole Memorial Building

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Cole building, and it was behind other initiatives that had significant local impact. These include changing the name of Pequot to Pequot Lakes, organizing community auctions twice a year and an annual flea market, said to have drawn sellers from many miles around to the Village. They also organized July Fourth and Christmas events (Nic Anderson, 18).

Newspaper reports indicate that by early 1939 operating costs of the Cole building were becoming a burden to the Village (Nic Anderson, 54). A solution was proposed by the Commercial Club, namely that they turn the auditorium space into a movie theater. The first recorded instance of a motion picture having been shown there was when the Council agreed on February 19, 1939 to rent the auditorium to the local German Lutheran Church to show a film on church history.

On November 11 a deal was struck with the club that it be given "complete charge of the Cole Memorial until April 1, 1940 with the supervision of the council's building committee." In exchange the club would pay all outstanding bills and ongoing operational and maintenance costs (Council Minutes, 11-21-39). The club began showing free films in the building in early 1940, and in 1941, with the support of the Council, it upgraded the auditorium into a first-class movie theater. The club financed installing a floor on top of the existing one that sloped toward the stage, new seats (purchased by the Council), and new projection equipment (*Crow Wing County Review*, 1-13-49). This arrangement remained in force until 1967 when the theater discontinued operation.

The Lakes Theater opened on 12-9-41, and the first film shown was "One Foot in Heaven" starring Fredric March, followed by "The Maltese Falcon" with Humphrey Bogart on December 13. Since WW II was on, men in uniform would be admitted free during its duration (Nic Anderson, 17). An ad in the *Crow Wing County Review* (1-11-45) indicates that films were being shown daily at 7:15 and 9:00 p.m. with matinees on Saturday and Sunday and with new pictures every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. Tickets cost from 5¢ to 12¢ for children and 16¢ to 35¢ for adults.

Under Commercial Club management the theater generated a substantial fund of excess profits that was spent on a variety of community needs. By mid-1953, \$25,000 had been dispersed to "improvements" that included a medical clinic, paving a street in the Village, and cash donations to the Fire Department and local schools (*Crow Wing County Review*, 10-13-49; Nic Anderson, 17). As of January 1949 the club had also spent over \$4,000 on maintaining and upgrading the building and paid all costs of its operation. The Cole building continued to be a meeting place for the several community groups that had been served from the beginning, but at no charge (*Crow Wing County Review*, 1-13-49). 1951 was the first year that high school graduation was not held there, and this was because the school had built an auditorium of its own. By 1952 the county fair was a thing of the past, but the Pequot Lakes Flower Show continued to be held at the Cole building.

On September 14, 1966 the Pequot Lakes Senior Citizens Club was organized at the Cole building in the youth center (basement). At the end of August 1967 the Lakes Theater showed its final picture, after having limited its operation to the summer months for several years. "T.V. and the accompanying lack of attendance finally brought about its demise" (Nic Anderson, entry for August 1967). Meanwhile, the seniors had decided to initiate a project to convert the theater into a Senior Citizens Center, which saw the removal of the sloping floor and the conversion of the stage area into a kitchen and washrooms. More recently the basement level has been made into a museum by the Pequot Lakes Area Historical Society, which also maintains the building.

Summary and Conclusion

The history of the Cole Memorial Building is an example of how local government and a civic group with the aid of the WPA worked together in building a community facility that "improved" the Village, aided local social and educational groups, enhanced the well-being of many individuals and families, and supported local businesses by providing employment and purchasing building materials and services at a time of severe economic depression. During its Lakes Theater period the building enabled the local population and seasonal visitors to view the same Hollywood movie productions that were being shown in the nation's largest cities.

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Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing County, MN

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With an auditorium seating capacity of 400, when it opened in 1937 nearly the entire village could be accommodated at one sitting, and while it was expected that people in the surrounding area and tourists would be drawn into town to attend various events and take part in a range of activities there, the large size of the building created challenges for the Village in terms of the cost of its operation and upkeep. Fortunately, the Commercial Club saw these issues as an opportunity to serve the goals it had set out already in 1916, namely to draw Village, Township and County together at a time when farming was the major local industry. Later, as tourism became more important to the local economy, the club took steps to enhance the appeal of the area by creating a first-rate movie theater and putting the proceeds to work in a multitude of ways that served the common good. This particular WPA project produced an impressive return on the public monies invested and affected the lives of virtually the entire local population in ways not fully anticipated during the crisis years of economic depression that made it possible.

The Cole Memorial Building meets pertinent registration requirements listed in the NRHP MPDF "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941" for social and recreational facilities in that it represents "a significant contribution to the community by providing a new and modern facility which offered programs, amenities, recreational activities, or community services which were previously unavailable. . . ." (Section F, 27-28). The Cole Memorial Building meets pertinent registration requirements listed in the NRHP MPDF "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941" for social and recreational facilities in that it represents "a significant contribution to the community by providing a new and modern facility which offered programs, amenities, recreational activities, or community services which were previously unavailable. . . ." (Section F, 27-28).

It also meets the historic integrity standards for such properties:

A social or recreational facility should possess integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association, and prominent features should remain intact, and any alterations should be modest in scale without impacting or obscuring major facades, elements, or design features. (Section F, 29)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing County, MN

County and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

A.L. Cole Memorial Building

Name of property

Crow Wing County, MN

County and State

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 27-31 inclusive and the west 25 feet of Lots 1-5 inclusive including vacated alley, all in Block 1 of Cole's Section Addition to the Cole Plat of Pequot.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes that portion of Faye Cole Andrus' donation to the Village of Pequot that is historically most closely associated with the Cole Memorial Building and that retains historic integrity. The remaining segments of the donation no longer possess historic integrity and are not included in the nomination.

Front Street

○-----flag pole

light pole---○

---World War I
Memorial

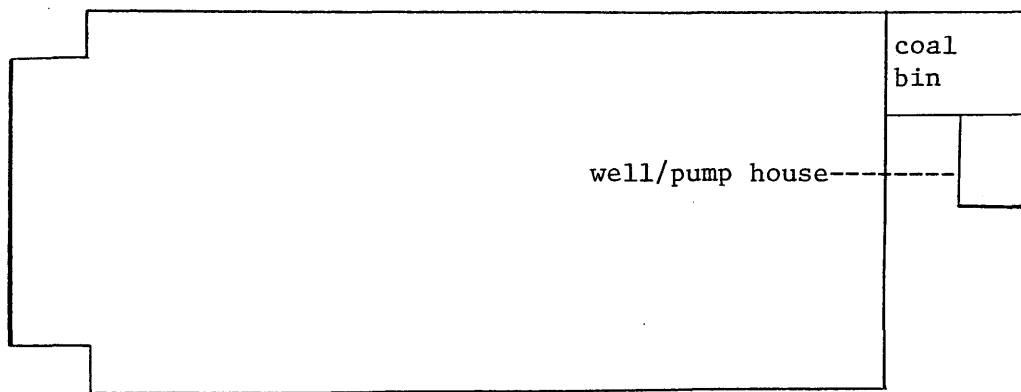
NORTH →

---school bell and shelter

SITE PLAN

A. L. Cole Memorial Building
Crow Wing County, MN
May 2, 2003
Scale: 1" = 20'

Tower
Square



Minnesota Highway 371



Cole Memorial 1939/1940

The property on which the Cole Memorial Building was constructed was donated to the Village of Pequot in 1935 by Faye Cole Andrus. The Deed stipulated that the property must be used for "public purposes".