Celebrating 150 years: 1858-2008

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROSEMOUNT

From township to village to city

On April 6, 1858, Dakota County established Rosemount as one of its first 17 townships. On May 11, Rosemount organized. The original township included 24 sections measuring in total four miles north/south and six miles east/west in the heart of the county.

Settlement before organization

After the county opened to settlement in 1853, William Strathern made the first Rosemount claim in today's Rich Valley area. In 1854, C.H. Carr opened a public house and stagecoach station nearby on the Mendota-Wabasha Road.

In early 1854 James Diffley made western Rosemount's first claim in section 21. That spring Andrew Keegan staked a claim on the east shore of today's Keegan Lake. Keegan moved to Rosemount Village in 1866.

By 1855 a wave of new settlers sought and filed claims and created homes, farms, and families. Pioneer life wasn't easy but it offered promise.

Township organization

When Rosemount organized on May 11, 1858, J.H. Flannegan, the meeting's moderator, was elected board chairman; Strathern, assessor; and Keegan, justice of the peace. The name Rosemount was selected for the township over Saratoga. By 1860 the population totaled 295. The Civil War's call to arms saw 39 men enlist, close to 50% of Rosemount's eligible males. A village within the township, also called Rosemount, formed in 1866 on the Minnesota Central Railway line. By 1880 the township's population totaled 848 and the village 116.

Mary Morrison's Prairie House Hotel opened in a log cabin in 1855, three years before the township was established. The frame home shown here served as the hotel beginning in 1857.

Adding eastern sections

In 1871, 12 sections of Inver Grove Township were attached, extending Rosemount Township to the Mississippi River. The addition included portions of what once was Chief Medicine Bottle's village at Pine Bend.

Rosemount Village incorporates

In 1875 Rosemount Village received state approval to incorporate. The first elected officers were James Farquhar, president; Fred Kloepping, Gottlieb Schmidt, Frank Garry, council; John C. Geraghty, treasurer; Andrew Keegan, justice of the peace; and Philip Caren, constable.

Rich Valley community

A community called Rich Valley formed near the Chicago Great Western depot at today's 140th Street. It had eight postmasters from 1858 to 1935.

The Gopher Ordnance Works

Dominating Rosemount's modern history were land acquisitions for construction of a World War II powder plant and its legacy. The acquisition totaled 15% of Rosemount's land.

The Village of Rosemount

On January 21, 1971, the village and township merged as the Village of Rosemount. Three years later, the village became a city by state statute.

Historic Sites in the Old Village of Rosemount

A – 1855 site of Mary Morrison's Prairie House log cabin on Dodd Road (see drawing on previous page)
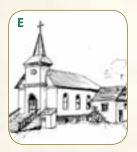
B- 1866 home of Andrew Keegan, first house in village

C – 1867 grain elevator, still in use

D – 1868 St. Joseph's Temperance Hall; later moved to village as seed grain shop, auto parts store, Post Office, beauty parlor, and barber shop

E – 1874 site of United Methodist Church, built for $1,900 and gifts of materials and labor

F – 1881 Church of St. Joseph; original church in Lakeville destroyed by 1880 cyclone

G – 1881 Geraghty Building; mercantile store with meeting hall on second floor

H – 1855 St. Croix Lumber, sold to builder Andrew Ward in 1902

I – 1890s Lynch's bar; later Village Inn and municipal bar

J – 1896 brick school; later "Sunshine Flats" and home and office of Dr. Miquel Flores

K – 1903 first Rosemount Post Office in its own building

L – 1898 Hagemeister Meat Market; first of three market buildings

M – 1907 Gibson's Barber shop, opened by Dennis and closed in 1964 by son Frank

N – 1918 Rosemount School for grades 1-12; now part of Rosemount Middle School

More Sites of Interest
(see map below)

O – 1909 State Bank of Rosemount

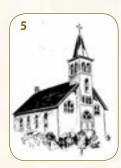**P** – 1873 Merrill Hardware; later Kloepping and Warweg store

Q – 1938 St. John's ALC Lutheran Church; moved from Eagan; acquired by First Baptist Church in 1959 when St. John's moved

R – 1887 Hynes Livery and Hotel; later Al's Cafe

1 – Site of Chief Medicine Bottle's Mdewakanton Pine Bend Village

2 – 1853 claim by Rosemount's first settler William Strathern

3 – 1854 James Diffley's claim

4 – Keegan Lake, site of 1854 claim by Andrew Keegan

5 – St. John's Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, formed in 1911 in Rich Valley

6 – 1942 Gopher Ordnance Works, built to produce gunpowder for World War II; occupied nearly five township sections, displacing more than 90 farms; included 858 buildings; within six months, hired 19,428 workers, 18 times Rosemount's population; closed in 1945

7 – Gopher Village housing area for Ordnance Works management staff

8 – University of Minnesota Research Center opened in 1947; now UMore Park

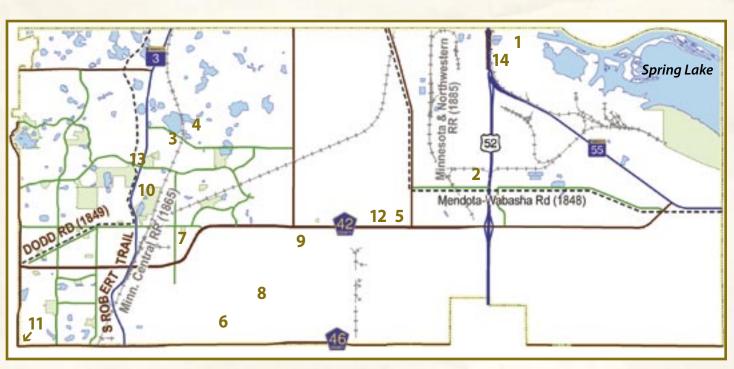**9** – 1971 Dakota County Technical College

Rosemount cemeteries
10 – St. Joseph's Catholic
11 – Highland, St. Joseph's
12 – St. John's Lutheran
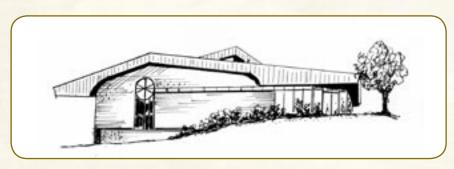**13** – Rosemount Cemetery
14 – Pine Bend

ROSEMOUNT TIMELINE

1848 – Chief Medicine Bottle's Dakota Village at Pine Bend

1853 (April) – William Strathern becomes first settler in area

1854 – C.H. Carr opens public house and stage station on Mendota-Wabasha Road

1854 – James Diffley becomes first west Rosemount settler

1855 – Mary Morrison opens Prairie House Hotel

1858 (May 11) – organized as Rosemount Township

1858 – first one-room schoolhouse

1865 – Minnesota Central RR crosses north-south

1866 – Village of Rosemount founded; platted by James A. Case

1867 – Grain elevators built by railroad

1868 – St. Joseph Temperance Society opens

1873 – G. Merrill Hardware opens; sold in 1875 to Fred Kloepping and Louis P. Warweg

1875 (February 16) – Village of Rosemount incorporates

1881 – Geraghty Building opens

1881 – Catholic Church of St. Joseph moves to Rosemount from Lakeville

1885 – St. Croix Lumber Co. opens

1887 – Hynes Livery and Hotel opens

1896 – First multi-classroom school

1903 – Postmaster Thomas E. Devitt establishes Rosemount RFD routes

1909 – State Bank of Rosemount chartered

1911 – St. John's Missouri Synod Lutheran Church organized in Rich Valley

1918 – Rosemount consolidated school; now part of Rosemount Middle School

1921 – Scenes for silent movie "Fresh Air" based on Sinclair Lewis story filmed in Rosemount

1938 – St. John's ALC Lutheran moved from Eagan to Hyland Avenue (now Cameo Avenue)

1942 (May 4) – Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW) construction begins

1945 (August 11) – GOW contract termination notice; land later sold to U. of Minnesota (now UMore Park)

1954 – Great Northern Oil Co. refinery built

1961 – Brockway Glass plant #8 opened; major area employer that pioneered glass recycling; closed in 1984, now Harmony residential area

1963 – Navy breaks ground for satellite dish facility used for navigation; decommissioned in 1997

1969 – Koch Refining Co. (now Flint Hills Resources) acquires Great Northern Oil

1971 (January 21) – Rosemount Village and Township merge

1974 – State statute changes Village to City of Rosemount

1979 - First celebration of Leprechaun Days

1994 – National Guard Armory and Rosemount Community Center built

1995 – Rosemount Business Park opens

2000 – Census puts population at 14,619

2000 – Plans approved for Evermoor residential area

2004 – City buys St. Joseph campus and gives land south of 1924 church building to Dakota County for library opening in 2009

2008 – Groundbreaking for Downtown revitalization project

Rosemount City Hall: The current City Hall was built in 1987 and expanded in 2001. The building houses the departments of Administration, Community Development, Finance, Police, and Public Works/Engineering.