

## How We Started

The "Old Settlers Association", the original name of our organization, was first a loosely knit group that met at Fort Snelling annually at harvest time to exchange experiences with the elements, locusts, and interactions with the local tribes. The back room of Henry Jackson's store became their meeting place at irregular intervals until 1850. They then decided they would meet annually at the State Fair. From that time on, they met informally at a picnic held on a certain day during Fair time, there were no dues collected, nor were permanent officers elected. This continued for some time.

On May 11, 1897, one hundred territorial pioneers gathered at the Merchants Hotel in St. Paul, Minnesota and formed the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers. The names of the people elected as officers of the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers reads now as a "Who's Who" in early Minnesota history. By 1899, over one thousand people had joined.

Our founding purpose was to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the early settlers in Minnesota Territory through the collection of artifacts, portraits and records pertaining to life in Minnesota prior to Statehood

One of our initial goals was to establish a permanent headquarters. In 1900, we started building the first Pioneer log cabin on the Minnesota State Fair Grounds in St. Paul. In 1907, the State Fair Board granted us use of Institute Hall to display our extensive portraits of the early settlers. By 1957, the Log Cabin and Portrait Hall had to be demolished but were replaced with the current Log Cabin.

Pioneer Portrait Hall has since been converted by the Fair for another use but the Log Cabin is still our home.

## Our State Flower

A brightly-colored orchid that has one or sometimes two blossoms on a single stem. White petals sit on top of a white pouch (slipper) streaked with pink. Hairy oval leaves clasp the stem.



The lady's slipper blooms from early June to mid-July. It flowers best in bright sunlight, although it will grow in semi-shaded areas. In its first year, this orchid grows only as tall as a pencil point. Each year, the lady's slipper may produce a half million seeds, which are as fine as flour dust. This flower has a long life span; some may be 100 years old.

The lady's slipper grows in spruce and tamarack bogs, swamps, wet meadows, wet prairies, and cool, damp woods. It may be found anywhere in Minnesota where these habitats exist.

## Minnesota Symbols

- Bird:** Common Loon
- Muffin:** Blueberry
- Gemstone:** Lake Superior Agate
- Butterfly:** Monarch
- Photograph:** "Grace"
- Grain:** Wild Rice
- Tree:** Norway Pine
- Drink:** Milk
- Mushroom:** Morel
- Song:** "Hail Minnesota"
- Fish:** Walleye Pike
- Soil:** Lester
- Fruit:** Honey Crisp Apple
- Sport:** Ice Hockey



# The Minnesota Territorial Pioneers

Preserving and Promoting Awareness of the Heritage and History of Territorial Minnesota Through Educational Outreach



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# The Minnesota Territorial Pioneers

Established May 11, 1897 — Incorporated 1924

## Our Mission

To preserve and promote awareness of the heritage and history of territorial Minnesota through educational outreach.

## Our Vision

Be the definitive resource of the names, histories, and stories of the people of the Minnesota territory.

## **Fun Fact: Minnesota's Original Flag**

The description of our original state flag is as follows:

The background is of white silk and the reverse side is of blue silk, bordered with bullion fringe. In the center is the state seal, wreathed with white moccasin flowers, on a blue background. The red ribbon of the seal bearing the motto is continued throughout the wreath, entwining the blossoms and floating carelessly over the lower portion of the flag. It bears, in gold, the dates of 1819, the time of settlement in Minnesota, and 1893. Above, also in gold, is the date 1858, the time of the admission of Minnesota to the Union. Below the design, in gold letters is wrought "Minnesota". Grouped around the seal are nineteen stars with the North Star, significant of the North Star State, in a group of 3 at the top. The nineteen stars represent Minnesota being the 19th state admitted to the Union after the original 13.



In 1957, the design for a new flag was approved, simplifying the overall design while still preserving the symbolism.

In 2024, a new simplified flag design was adopted.

## **Who May Join**

Any descendant and/or spouse and children whose ancestors were in Minnesota Territory prior to Statehood on May 11, 1858, is eligible for membership.



To apply, applicants submit a brief family history/family tree, tracing back from themselves to the original settler, including documents/copies of documents proving their ancestor was here during the territorial era. The 1857 Territorial Census (accessible online at the Minnesota Historical Society and Ancestry.com), is just one of many possible sources for those documents. Research assistance is also available through the Pioneers.

Current annual membership starts at \$50.

For more information, and to download application forms, please visit our website:

**[www.mnterritorialpioneers.org](http://www.mnterritorialpioneers.org)**

## **Help Us Preserve the History of the Pioneers Who Made Minnesota**

Minnesota Territorial Pioneers, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit organization that is dependent upon member dues, their donations, and the generous financial support of the general public. Donations are tax deductible and go directly towards the support of the MTP, including the operations of our Log Cabin at the state fair, educational outreach programs, and the safe archiving and storage of pioneer artifacts entrusted to our care, including our pioneer portrait collection.



OLD MTP LOG CABIN, MINNESOTA STATE FAIR C. 1907-1910

## **Come and visit us at the Minnesota State Fair**

We continue remembering and preserving the memories of our territorial ancestors who made this state what it has become today. We've been at the same location, 1261 Underwood St. next to the golden Pioneer Lady, since 1897!

Our members are vital to our continuation at the MN State Fair. Volunteers are welcomed and appreciated to help up continue our Fair presence.

If you have further questions or are interested in joining this great organization, please contact us through the information on this brochure.



THE MTP LOG CABIN TODAY, MINNESOTA STATE FAIR