

A History of Greek Houses in Vermillion, South Dakota



Evelyn H. Schlenker

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By

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The cover photograph is from the 1913 *Coyote* yearbook depicting Beta Gamma members in front of their chapter house. Courtesy of the University of South Dakota Archives and Special Collections.

Pressing Matters, Vermillion, SD, 2026.

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I thank members of current and past Greek houses who graciously shared useful information about their organizations and the houses they occupied. Devine Johansen, Assistant Director for Sorority/Fraternity Life, was particularly helpful to send me information and contacts for current Greek organizations. A special thanks to Bill Dendinger, MD for his help finding information about the fraternity, Phi Kappa Theta. Finally, I would like to thank the Clay County South Dakota Office of Equalization and Office of Deeds staff for information about several houses I cited.

To obtain most of the images of the older buildings, I used University of South Dakota (USD) *Coyote* yearbook pictures illustrating early houses that first served social organizations and then sororities and fraternities. I accessed these publications in the USD I. D. Weeks Library (Main Collection and Archives and Special Collections) and in the Vermillion Public Library South Dakota Room. Other sources I used included USD class catalogues and USD alumni publications. I found pertinent information about student organizations in USD Archives and Special Collections. In addition, I used images from the USD photograph and USD digital library photographs collections. I received permission to cite information from USD archives and to publish images from the *Coyote*, and *Volante* from Archivist Ryan Burge and permission to use photographs from Sarah Hanson-Pareek (Program Director of the Digital Imaging Lab, Digital Library and Photographs). Finally, I received permission from the *Vermillion Plain Talk* editor and publisher Gary Wood to use images from that newspaper.

The Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library's digital archives of newspapers that include the *Volante*, *Dakota Republican*, *Wakonda Monitor*, *Volante*, and *Vermillion Plain Talk* provided a searchable source for information about the organizations, addresses, and people mentioned in the book from 1884 until 2018. Finally, I used Library of Congress 1923 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps to locate buildings and determine materials used to construct the buildings as well as their location and footprint. This information was especially useful when a building's appearance changed drastically, or the structure was moved or demolished.

Introduction

In Vermillion, South Dakota, fraternity, and sorority chapters affiliated with the USD occupy buildings built specifically to serve the needs of its members. These buildings are owned by corporations and pay property taxes, unlike USD's buildings which are tax exempt.ⁱ Corporations helped construct additions to and renovate the chapter houses. Moreover, several corporations built new structures on the same site occupied by the older buildings.

In the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, local social organizations initially formed at USD hoping for installation as chapters affiliated with national Greek organizations. Those transitions took years. In the latter part of the twentieth century, presumptive Greek organizations formed interest groups called colonies at universities until they received their charters. Importantly, social fraternities and sororities are different from the professional fraternities for law, medical, or engineering students that existed at USD at the same time. This book focuses on houses associated with the local social organizations and Greek houses.

A 1921 article (pages 99-102) in the October *South Dakota Alumni Quarterly* detailed the history, existence of and housing status of social and as well as professional fraternities at USD up to that time. This period was ripe for growth of these student organizations.

As part of the USD centennial celebration, Nancy McCahren (graduate of USD, instructor, and a longtime head of Greek Life at the university) wrote a history of the first one hundred years of Greek life at the University of South Dakota that was published in the 1982 October *South Dakotan*, the USD alumni newsletter. The article also contained pictures of the fraternity and sorority houses at the time. In addition, I found a summary of the history of Greek organizations and updated information about fraternities and sororities until 2002 in USD Archives and Special Collections, Student Organizations, Box 33, folder 1. Missing from Ms. McCahren's narrative were addresses and pictures of the residential houses that organizations occupied over the years as well as what transpired after 2002.

The purpose of this book was to extend the information that Ms. McCahren garnered by including the history behind and images of houses occupied by local social and Greek organizations over the years. Moreover, different Greek organizations occupied the same houses in various years. If a building is still standing, photographs illustrate what it looks like now to allow comparisons to the older images. Importantly, some Greek organizations, existed for over one hundred and twenty years, others for only 5-6 years.

Both social and Greek organizations occupied buildings owned by prominent Vermillion citizens. I present information about these individuals in the book. Moreover, many buildings cited in this book exist in four Vermillion's historic districts (University, Bluff, Forest Avenue, Jolley). The National Register of Historic Places nomination forms for each district contain information about owners and architectural characteristics of individual buildings.

My interest in this area came from my work on two publications, one on houses that served as hospitals in Vermillion prior to the construction of the Dakota Hospitalⁱⁱ and background information about Charles Prentis as part of a book celebrating the centennial of Prentis Parkⁱⁱⁱ. For structures located on Forest Avenue, I used information contained in Judith Gudger Krueger's book "The Forest Ave Historic District Vermillion, South Dakota 1873-1980"^{iv}.

In summary, this book explores the buildings that housed local social organizations, that later became Greek fraternities and sororities. In some cases, the buildings' addresses and street names changed over time. Finally, photographs of the most recent Greek chapter houses complete the story. Thus, this book is a picture-gram of Greek life at USD for more than one hundred and twenty years!

Organization of the Book

This book first focuses on sororities and then on fraternities. Since most Greek fraternities or sororities started as local social organizations, I include these entities under the heading of a particular Greek organization.

A narrative about the social organization and chapter garnered by the national Greek organization precedes the description of the houses. If a house still exists, I present a current, colored photograph and information about the building's function. In the book, I use the term "occupied" because an organization leased or rented a house. Later a corporation affiliated with the organization may have purchased the building or constructed a new chapter building.

In the appendix a spread sheet summarizes the addresses of buildings that sororities and fraternities occupied and the location of current Greek houses. A map of Vermillion helps the reader locate the site of houses using asterisks for existing structures and daggers if a building no longer exists. Red Greek letters denote the locations of current Greek organizations.

Finally, I took all the color photographs of current buildings. I cite the sources of the older photographs (mostly black and white), but I do not include my name below the color photographs.

Sororities

This section describes the houses women students lived in as local social and then Greek organizations. The first four sororities described are still in existence as of 2026. Subsequently, I present sororities that existed for several years but are no longer associated with USD. The longest lasting of these that left USD after a 70-year affiliation was Chi Omega. As the number of sorority sisters grew, organizations built additions or constructed new buildings on the same site.

Kappa Theta Alpha

The Alpha Rho chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta received national approval in 1912. The precursor to Kappa Alpha Theta was a group called T. B. D., which started at USD in 1895 (*Volante*, March 12, 1912). Shown below is the first building that Kappa Alpha Theta occupied (photographs from the 1916 *Coyote* and Dorothy L. Chaney's, Kappa Alpha Theta scrapbook part of Kappa Alpha Theta Archives). This structure was a two-story Prairie-style building that featured large overhangs and a brick enclosed porch on the first floor. The second floor had railings on the balcony that spanned the entire first floor. Please note in the photograph from the 1916 Kappa Alpha Theta archives sorority sisters are sitting on the brick porch.





Although the location of this building is not known, a building constructed in 1916 at 602 East Main Street illustrates similar Prairie-style architectural features (please see below). In comparison to the first Kappa Alpha Theta house, the building at 602 East Main Street lacks the brick façade on the first floor, but is also two-storied, with railings on the second floor balcony, a large overhang, and dormers on three sides.



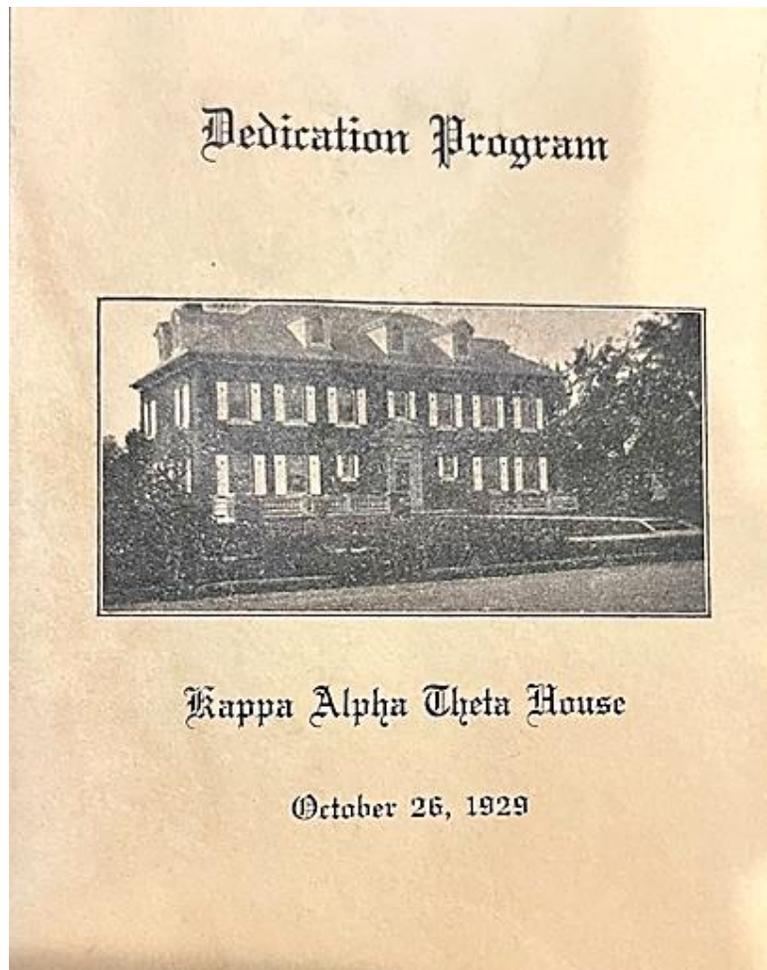
The second house that Kappa Alpha Theta occupied was constructed especially for the sorority, is located at 20 Willow Street. This building now contains apartments.

Note below that in a black and white picture of this building from the 1918 *Coyote* there is a second-floor walkout and railing which is no longer present in the current structure. Moreover, the steps and banisters are quite different from the more recent color photograph that follows.



The last chapter house that Kappa Theta Alpha occupied and does so today is located at 725 Clark Street. Dedication of the new Kappa Alpha Theta chapter house occurred on October 26, 1929, with a formal program (Dorothy L. Chaney's scrapbook, Kappa Alpha Theta Archives).

Over the years, the red brick building doubled in size to the west to accommodate a modern kitchen and eating facility on the first floor and sleeping quarters on the second floor. A color photograph shows the building as it looks today. The large addition to the building's west side is evident.



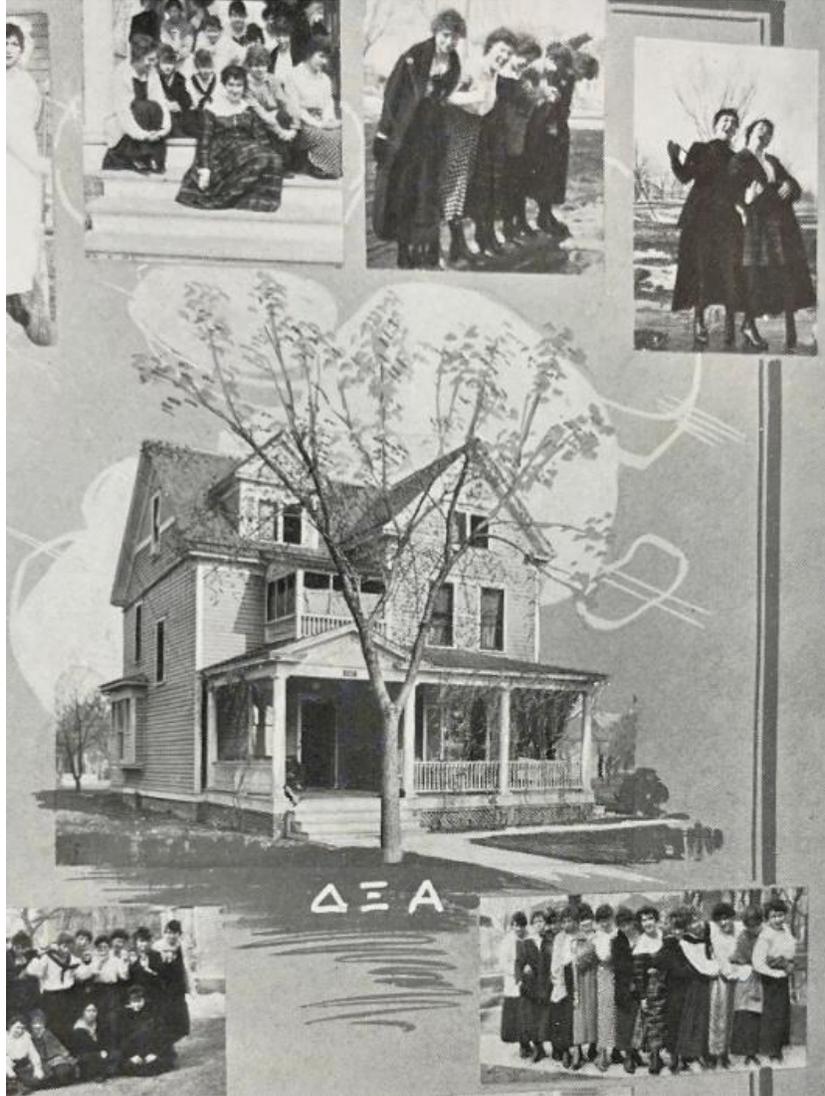


Alpha Xi Delta

A June 13, 1903, a *Dakota Republican* article announced that the local social sorority R. Q. became the Epsilon chapter of the national Alpha Xi Delta sorority making it the first national Greek organization at USD. Over the years, Alpha Xi Delta occupied many houses prior to settling on their current home at 214 North Plum Street. In fact, an April 15, 1986, *Volante* article by James Pratt mentions that for the first 26 years of its existence, Alpha Xi Delta members rented eleven houses, living out of suitcases. Although I was able to verify most of the houses in the article, some are unknown.

The first house that Alpha Xi Delta occupied belonged to Vermillion native and surveyor Carl Gunderson, who went on to serve as South Dakota's Lieutenant Governor, and eleventh governor from 1925-1927. The building, located at 315 Forest Avenue, was one of the last houses on the west side of Forest Avenue. Alpha Xi Delta rented the house for years.

In 1936 Earl Lein purchased the building, tore it down, and constructed another house on the same lot. According to Lynne Day, the current owner of that building, Lein incorporated parts of Gunderson's house into the new structure. This 1918 Coyote image shows the earlier building.



Another house built in 1905 that the sorority rented was located at 217 North University. The large building is close to the USD campus.



Below is a photograph of the building as it appears today. There are changes to the porch posts and railings as well as the size of the steps leading up to the entrance of the house. However, many architectural features of the building are well preserved.



Subsequently, the Alpha Xi Delta sorority inhabited a house located at 111 South University Avenue. An image from the 1920 *Coyote* shows sorority sisters lined up in front of the building.



Prominent Vermillion lawyer Peter Olson and then later his friend, law partner, and USD law professor, Jason Payne occupied this house. Currently the building is a single-family dwelling (please see below) that retains most of the architectural features seen in the 1920 image.



The next chapter house that Alpha Xi Delta lived in was located at 123 Forest Avenue. According to Judith Krueger's book about the Forest Avenue Historical District, John Wesley Grange, an early Vermillion entrepreneur, constructed the house in 1902. The 1922 Coyote shows the Alpha Xi Delta chapter house and sorority members in a variety of costumes and poses.



Below is a more recent photograph of the building. Note that much of the architectural features coincide with those in the early photograph. The only difference is the addition of northwest side entrance to the building.



Subsequently, Alpha Xi Deltas occupied 20 Willow Street, detailed in the preceding Kappa Theta Alpha sorority section. The April 15, 1986, *Volante* article mentions several other buildings that the members rented for very short periods of time, and I have not included these.

In 1936, Alpha Xi Delta occupied their first chapter house located at 214 North Plum Street (*Volante*, January 21, 1936). The image of the three-story house designed by Beuttler and Arnold from Sioux City in the English style of clinker brick is from the 1947 *Coyote*.



Unfortunately, on April 1, 1958, disaster struck when the house suffered two fires (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, April 2, 1958). The firefighters believed that they had stopped the first fire by removing a burning mattress from the house. However, later that day the firefighters came back to find a fire engulfing the third floor to the structure causing extensive damage due in part to high winds. According to the article, help from male students and neighbors salvaged many items from the house. There were no reports about the extent and cost of the damage from the fire.

A December 24, 1958, *Vermillion Plain Talk* article mentions that the city gave Alpha Xi Delta a permit to revamp the building. The following year, a *Vermillion Plain Talk* article detailed the changes to the building including a new façade and an entire renovation of the interior. The picture below from the 1967 *Coyote* shows the new façade as well as parts of the older building in the back. The resulting building looks nothing like the original 1936 chapter house.



Structural problems and outdated facilities prompted the organization to demolish this building and construct a new chapter house. According to a May 5, 2017, *Vermillion Plain Talk* article, in the process of demolishing the building, charred beams near the roof presented evidence of the 1958 fire.

While the building was demolished and a new one constructed, Alpha Xi Delts occupied 104 North University. More about this building later. The new chapter house was ready for occupancy in August 2018.

Below is a photograph of the current Alpha Xi Delta chapter house.



Alpha Phi

In 1914 Mrs. Gertrude Slagle, wife of USD President Robert Slagle, founded the local social organization called Kappa Phi Alpha. According to March 16, 1920, *Volante* article, Mrs. Slagle was eager to have this group accepted as a chapter of the national Alpha Phi organization since it was a sorority she belonged to as a student at Cornell University.

Kappa Phi Alpha members occupied 18 Forest Avenue according to the photograph from the 1920 *Coyote*. A similar photograph is in Judith Krueger's book on page 147.

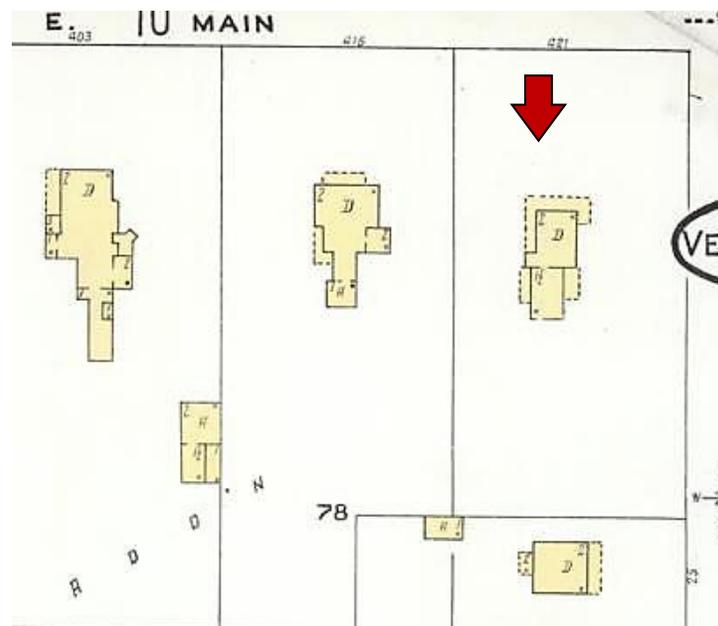


Below is a current photograph of the single-family house. An addition to the south includes a connecting portion and a garage, not evident in the older photograph.



The first chapter house that the Alpha Phi sorority occupied was the Lewis house at 421 East Main Street. Selden James Lewis, an early Vermillion settler, a lawyer, alderman, and insurance salesman (<https://www.genealogytrails.com/sdak/clay/vermillion.html>) constructed the house in the late 1890s. He died in 1912. Subsequently, his widow rented the building.

No pictures of the building exist from that time, but a 1923 Sanborn fire map the red arrow shows Lewis' house was directly east of the Inman House (415 East Main Street, now known as the USD President's house). Today the site is home to the Concordia Lutheran Church constructed in the 1950s.



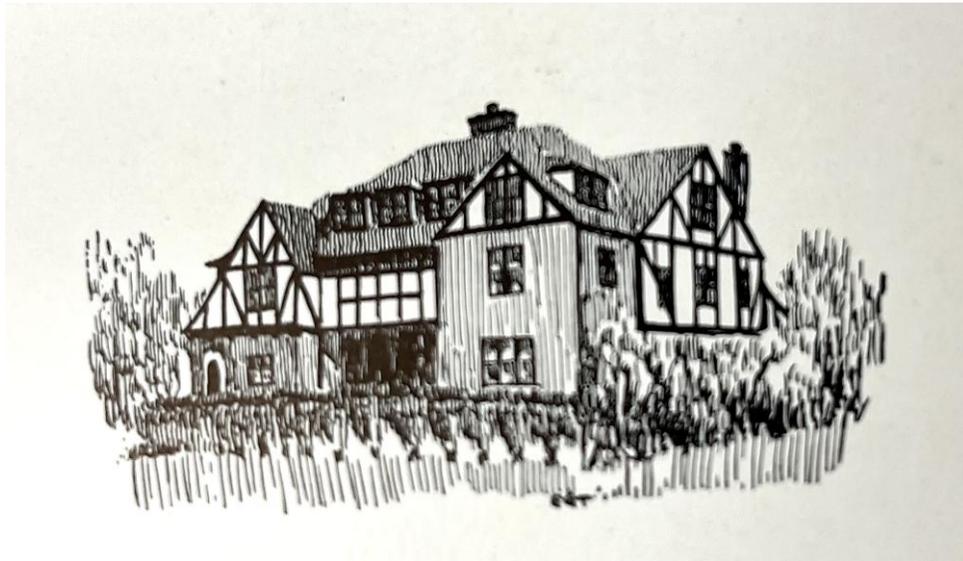
According to the June 14, 1925, *Dakota Republican*, Alpha Phi's next chapter house was located at 104 North University Street. According to the 1913 *Coyote*, this large Queen Anne-style house, constructed in 1902, was the home of George W. Woodworth, an early Clay County pioneer. The photograph below from the 1930 *Coyote* yearbook shows the extensive porches on the first and second floors. Alpha Phi occupied this building until 1931.



Below is a recent photograph of this building. Most evident is the absence of extensive porches around the tower on both floors, making the tower more prominent.



According to the Vermillion Plain Talk article (May 19, 1932), the sorority built another chapter house at 327 North Pine Street on three lots that Dr. Robert Slagle donated to the sorority in his estate (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, May 19, 1932). It is likely that Slagle's wife, a staunch supporter of the sorority, may have influenced the donation. Below is an image of the building from the 1932 *Coyote*.



In 1937, the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity purchased the building. More about this building is discussed under the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity section.

The October 1, 1940, a *Volante* article describes the next chapter house specifically constructed for Alpha Phi, built for \$40,000, on North Pine and Cedar Streets. The article details the architectural characteristics of the interior and exterior of the house. Below is a photograph from the 1941 *Coyote*.



Over the years alterations to the building reflected the greater need to serve more members. Below is a picture of the front view of the current the Alpha Phi chapter house at 707 East Cedar Street.





The older remodeled house connected to the main structure is located east of the new addition.

Pi Beta Phi

In 1920 the local social sorority Zeta Chi Delta formed and petitioned Pi Beta Phi for a charter at USD (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, July 28, 1921). By late 1923 the organization occupied 215 Court Street (*Volante*, December 8, 1923).

Charles Prentis constructed this 1903 house on the bluff on the west side of Court Street (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, March 26, 1903). Prentis partnered with his friend Andrew E. Lee to form a business selling merchandise, stock, and land that lasted 50 years. In addition, Prentis served as alderman and mayor of Vermillion. When Prentis' second wife died in 1923, Charles Prentis donated the building to the University of South Dakota Foundation.

By 1927 Zeta Chi Delta received notice that it would become the South Dakota Alpha chapter of Pi Beta Phi (*Dakota Republican*, July 7, 1927). Pi Beta Phi occupied 215 Court Street for many years. The photograph is from the 1928 Coyote.



Below is a current photograph of the building. Aside from a change in material of the second story railing, the architecture of current structure has changed little in the past century.



The Pi Beta Phi's current chapter house, shown below, is located at 118 North Plum Street.



Chi Omega

The precursor to the Upsilon Gamma chapter of Chi Omega was the local social organization Gamma Sigma Rho, formed in 1921 (*Volante*, April 8, 1924). The Gamma Sigma Rho's house was located at 123 Forest Avenue. (I have detailed information about this building in the section about the Alpha Xi Delta sorority.)

The 123 Forest Avenue building served as Chi Omega's home until 1937, when it moved into 408 East Main Street, built before the turn of the twentieth century. Many prominent people owned the house, starting with Martin J. Lewis, brother of Adele Inman and Anna Thompson, who lived in two large houses across the street to the south. The next long-time owner was Elon C. Barton, a successful merchant and business partner of the Thompsons.' From 1937 to 1954, the house was Chi Omega's chapter house. Below is a photograph of the Chi Omega chapter house from the 1954 *Coyote*.



Below is a recent photograph of the single-family owned building. The owner, Claude Garlik, graciously showed me their extensive renovations to the house that helped preserve it. One change from the 1954 photograph is that the second-story railing is no longer present.



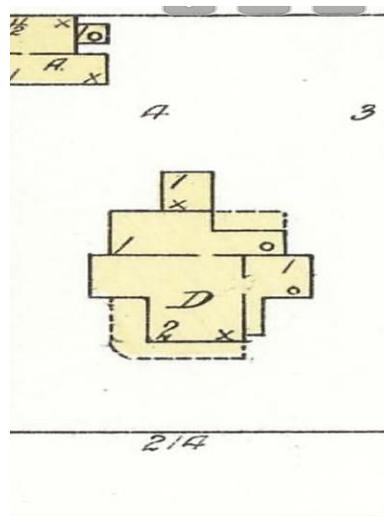
In 1957, Chi Omega built a new, modern chapter house at 206 North Plum Street. This image of the building is from the 1967 *Coyote*. The sorority left USD in 1991.



Delta Delta Delta or Tri Delta

Beta Alpha was a local social sorority for nine years from 1924 until 1933, when the Theta Chi chapter of Tri Delta came into existence at USD (*The Volante*, April 18, 1933). However, Tri Delta only lasted five years before leaving USD (*Volante*, May 9, 1939). Before then, Beta Alpha occupied three Vermillion houses. The last one became the chapter house of Tri Delta. According to the December 12, 1924, *Dakota Republican*, the first house was located on 214 East Main Street.

No photograph exists of the two-story, wood-frame house at that time, but the 1923 Library of Congress Sandborn Fire Insurance image below presents a footprint of the structure. The dashed lines indicate that two porches existed, one in the front of the building, the other in the structure's northeast section.



About 15 years ago, building's owners sold it. The new owners moved the building to another lot; a year later they razed the building. The photograph below thanks to Greg Card when he owned the building illustrates that former owners enclosed porches on the front and back of the building for additional apartments.



The second house Beta Alpha occupied was located at 115 North Harvard Street was built in 1905 (*Dakota Republican*, February 17, 1927). Below is a photograph of the house from the 1929 *Coyote*.



A recent photograph of 115 North Harvard shows that the large porch spanning the front of the building is gone with a small porch constructed in its

place. The steps to the entrance of the current building are wooden and were brick in the earlier picture.



In June 1928, the Beta Alphas purchased a house at 122 North Yale from prominent businessman M. J. Chaney who built it in 1915. The Beta Alphas occupied the renovated building in September 1928 (*Dakota Republican*, June 7, 1928). Located on the western corner of North Yale and Cedar Streets, the building is a classic Queen Anne-style house with a large wrap around porch on two sides. An article in the April 18, 1929, *Vermillion Plain Talk* describes an oil burner fire starting in the basement. Fortunately, Vermillion volunteer firefighters put the fire out before there was much damage to the house.

The 122 North Yale Street house was the Tri Deltas home from 1933 until the sorority disbanded in 1938. The image below is from the 1930 *Coyote*. Following is a photograph of the current single owner building who has maintained the unique architectural features of the house.



Alpha Gamma Delta

Unlike the local social organizations that preceded sororities started in the early part of the twentieth century, the Beta Lambda chapter of Alpha Gamma Delta came to USD in 1966 and stayed until 1970. During that time, it occupied a house at 222 North Pine Street (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, September 8, 1966). Currently, the building seen in the colored photograph is a private residence.



Coyote, 1967



Gamma Phi Beta

The Epsilon Upsilon chapter of Gamma Phi Beta existed at USD from 1991 until 1996. It occupied a chapter house that the fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon built following a devastating fire in their previous chapter house located at 505 East Main Street. More about Tau Kappa Epsilon under “Fraternities”.

Today, the property is an apartment building.



Fraternities

Over the years, many more fraternities than sororities affiliated with the University of South Dakota. As noted in the section about sororities, precursor local social fraternity organizations formed in the early decades of the twentieth century. The first five fraternities that started early in the twentieth century still exist today. Others affiliated with USD for varying lengths of time. Some fraternities occupied houses that either belonged to sororities or fraternities that either left USD or built chapter houses at another locations.

Phi Delta Theta

The earliest local fraternal social organization at USD was Tridentia. Members called Tridents stood for three prongs: literary, social and athletic. Tridentia split from the Jasparian literacy society in 1899. This organization occupied few Vermillion houses over time.

A photograph below shows Tridents in 1899.

Tridentia, 3423, Series 4, USD Photograph Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University Libraries, University of South Dakota.

<https://explore.digitalsd.org/digital/collection/photograph/id/997/rec/1>

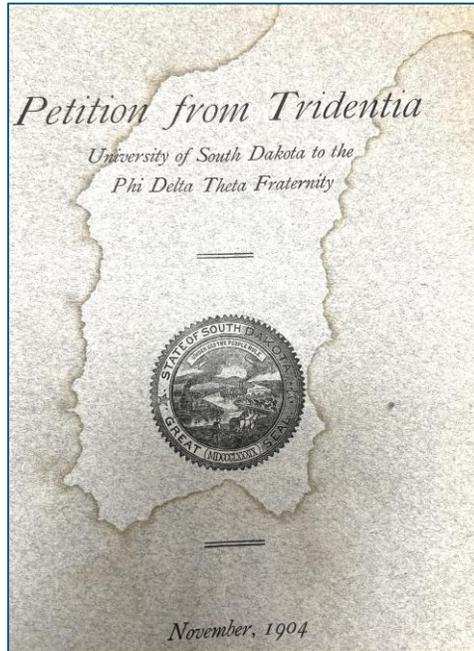


The first house the Tridents rented from 1902 until 1903 is shown below from an unclassified scrapbook at Archives and Special Collections. According to publications at the time, the location of the house is unknown.



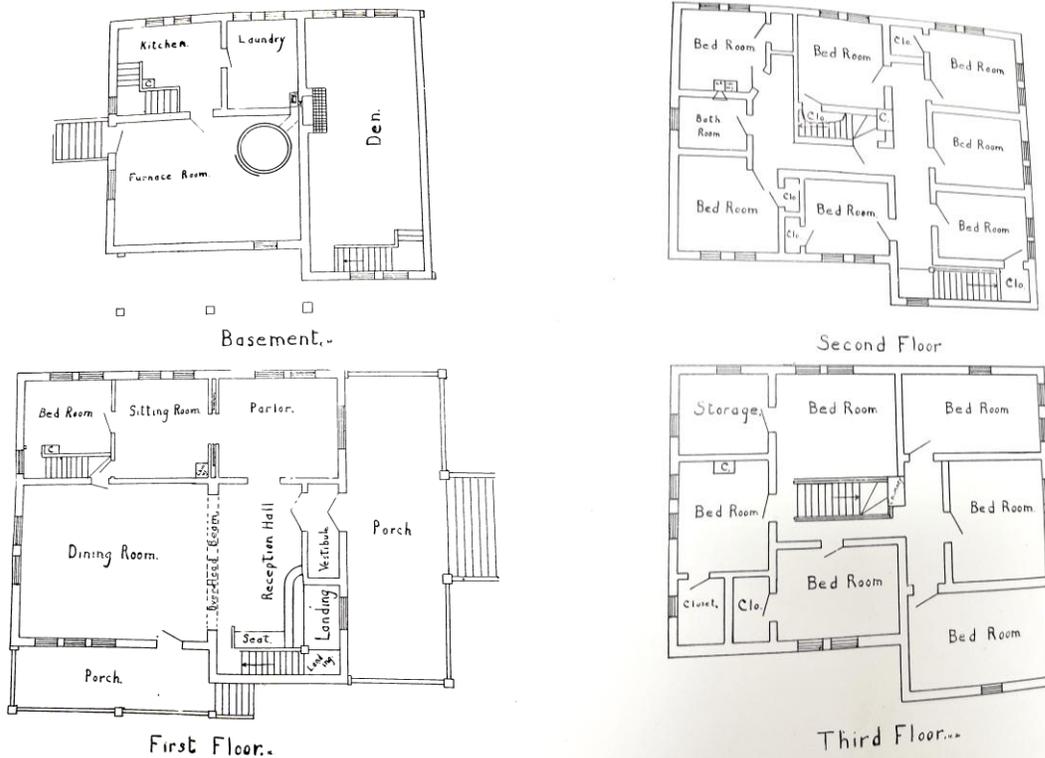
Subsequently, the Tridents raised funds to construct a new house at 202 East Clark Street. In November 1904, Tridentia petitioned for installation as Phi Delta Theta Fraternity chapter (USD Archives and Special Collections, Student Organizations, Box 2 , Folder entitled “Petition for Charter Phi Delta Theta”). A small pamphlet in the folder presents the history of Tridentia and makes the argument for the installation of Tridentia as a chapter of Phi Delta Theta. In addition, the pamphlet contains a photograph of the newly constructed house as well as floor plans of the three stories. Another source for a picture of the new house and the floor plans, as well as the history of Tridentia was published in the December 1, 1906, *Dakota Republican*.

Cover of the pamphlet.



The new Tridentia house and floor plans follow.





According to a December 15, 1904, *Vermillion Plain Talk* article, the house was formally dedicated with eight hundred people in attendance. This house was the first building constructed as a fraternity chapter house in the Dakotas. Two years later, Tridentia was accepted as the Dakota Alpha chapter of Phi Delta Theta (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, December 13, 1906).

Unlike other fraternities that occupied houses at different locations, the Phi Delta Theta fraternity always had their chapter house on the same site. In 1938 a new house was built (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, August 25, 1938) and fifty-four years later a large addition was added. Below are recent photographs of the fraternity building, showing the front and side of the building showing the extension.



The front of the building.

View of the east side of the chapter house showing the addition that almost doubled building's size.



Beta Theta Pi

Two local social organizations existed prior to the installation of the Gamma Alpha chapter of Beta Theta Pi. The first, Kappa Theta, lasted from 1902 until 1904 when it became Beta Gamma. Before occupying the 25 Prospect Street building, Beta Gamma members lived in rooms over the Nissen Millinery store on Main and Prospect Streets (*Volante*, February 28, 1905) and leased Dr. Charles Maxon's residence on Dakota Avenue (now Dakota Street, *Dakota Republican*, July 4, 1910).

By 1911, Beta Gammas lived in Samuel M. Totten's house on 25 Prospect Street. According to an article in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* from November 2, 1911, Mr. Totten enlarged the house to accommodate the fraternity's needs. Samuel Totten was an early Vermillion pioneer and postmaster (<https://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/toth-towns.html#957.11.23>). He also developed a patent for improvements of funeral briers, owned a furniture store on Main Street, and had extensive real estate holdings.

Totten's two-story wood-frame building had a large front first-floor porch, a second-floor porch, and an attic with dormers. The photograph below is from the 1913 *Coyote*. When Beta Gamma was accepted as the Gamma Alpha chapter of Beta Theta Pi (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, September 12, 1912), the fraternity continued to occupy 25 Prospect Street.



According to the *Vermillion Plain Talk* article from September 12, 1912, Beta Gamma owned fourteen lots in Vermillion. Where these lots were located was not explained.

Subsequently, 25 Prospect was occupied by another fraternity, Delta Tau Delta. Dr. Eugene Stansbury acquired the property in 1923 and built the Vermillion Hospital which existed until 1931. Subsequently, he had clinics in the building and later altered the building for apartments. Today the house is still an apartment building.

The current structure, shown below, is very different from when it was a fraternity house. Note that the extensive first story and second-story porches were enclosed with a new entrance. Several additions to the north, south and east of the building resulted in significant changes to the building's architecture.



In the early 1920s Beta Theta Phi purchased three lots from the Andrew J. Charrlin estate to build a chapter house. According to the Forest Avenue book (pages 9-10), Charrlin, a blacksmith, came to Vermillion, Dakota Territory in 1871. After the 1881 flood, he moved above the bluff and bought real estate. That year he constructed a house at 15 Forest Avenue not far from his blacksmith and wagon repair shop on Forest Avenue and Main Street. The land that the fraternity purchased (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, January 3, 1924) was located about two blocks to the east of his shop.

While the new fraternity building was being constructed, the fraternity lived in McVicker's house on 315 East Main Street. Robert McVicker arrived in Vermillion in 1894 was an alderman and a successful Vermillion businessman who owned buildings for his mercantile enterprise at 2, 4 and 6 East Main Street.

No picture exists of the building when the Beta Theta Phis occupied it, but a 1929 Coyote photograph shows the building when it housed Phi Chi, a medical fraternity.



A recent photograph of the building below shows some architectural changes, especially to the front porch and windows.



In 1925 Beta Theta Pi fraternity owned and occupied a house at 221 East Main Street. Below is a 1929 Coyote image of the building.



The current building is completely renovated. Several architectural features are preserved compared to the 1929 photograph. Major changes are evident in the structure and placement of windows, and addition of a second entrance to the building that serves as a private home in the east wing. The rest of the building is used as a bed and breakfast inn.



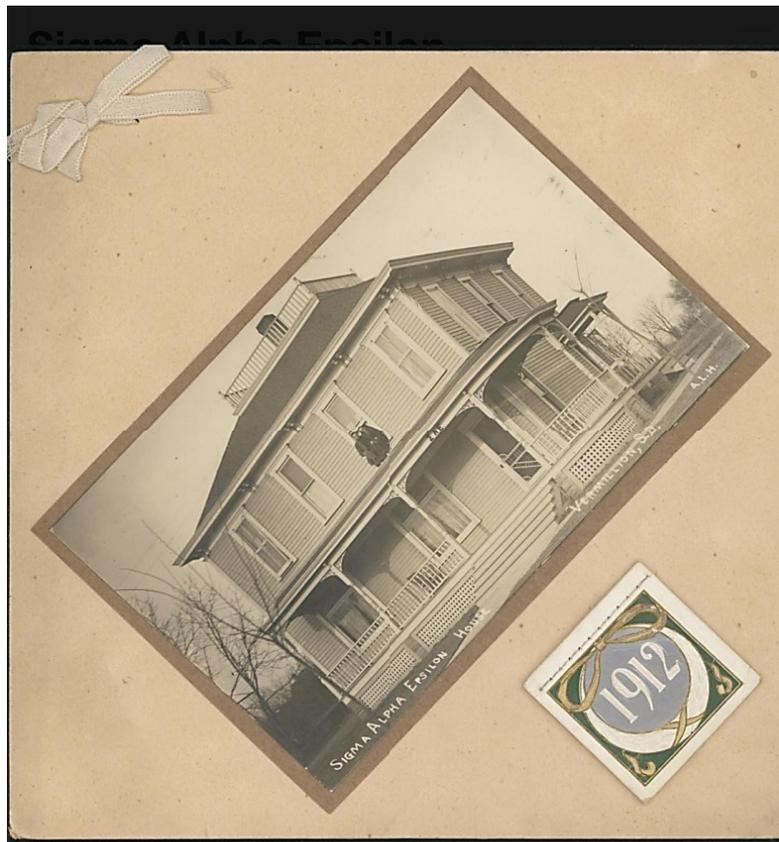
The 1962 *Coyote* noted that Beta Theta Pi began the process of constructing a new house at 429 North Plum Street, but the building wasn't completed until

the late 1963. Subsequently, the fraternity sold 221 East Main Street to a new fraternity at USD, Sigma Nu. Below is a 1977 photograph (USD Photographs, Series 10, negative 12573.6) of the new Beta Theta Pi house followed by a recent photograph.



Sigma Alpha Epsilon

The predecessor of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity was the PHP Society founded in 1908 (*Volante*, January 31, 1911). In 1909 the PHP Society leased a house one block west of the Episcopal Church (where Akeley-Lawrence Science Hall now stands). An article in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* from February 2, 1911, shows a picture of the house. The article also discusses the dissolution of the PHP Society, and the formation of the Sigma chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. The new fraternity took over the house. The photograph shows two fraternity men on the porch roof. Today there is no comparable house at that location.

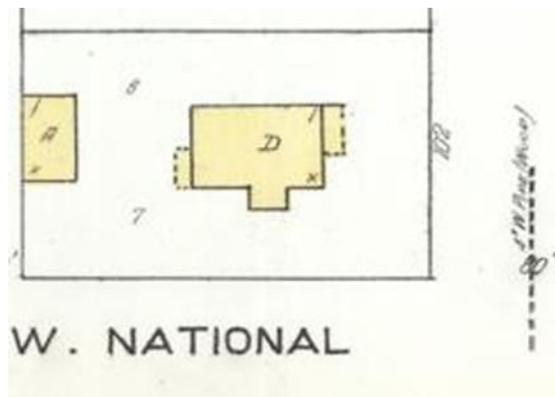


Sigma Alpha Epsilon, 9067, Series 4, USD Photograph Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University Libraries, University of South Dakota

<https://explore.digitalsd.org/digital/collection/photograph/id/957/rec/10>

From 1916 until the early 1920s, Sigma Alpha Epsilon occupied a house at 102 Prospect Street. The house was built by Andrew E. Lee according to the “The Illustrated Historical Clay County, SD Atlas” published by E. Frank Peterson in 1901. Andrew E. Lee was a prominent businessman, mayor of Vermillion, and the third Governor of South Dakota. On October 2, 1913, Lee put ads in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* and the *Dakota Republican* newspapers to sell the large two-story wood frame house.

Below is a 1917 Coyote photograph of 102 Prospect Street showing the fraternity members lined up in front of the house. This building no longer exists, but its footprint is evident in the Vermillion 1923 Sanborn fire map below the photograph.



In 1926, the fraternity started the construction of a new chapter house at 505 East Main Street on the east corner of South University Street. The building would be Sigma Alpha Epsilon's home for the next 30 years.



The photograph is from the 1930 *Coyote*.

In the early 1960s, the fraternity decided to build a new house. According to the 1961 *Coyote*, some members occupied a house on 520 East Main Street in the interim. More about this house in the Alpha Tau Omega section.



The new chapter house at 855 Madison Avenue was completed in 1963. A 1977 photograph (USD Photographs, Series 10, negative 12573.3) of the building is below.

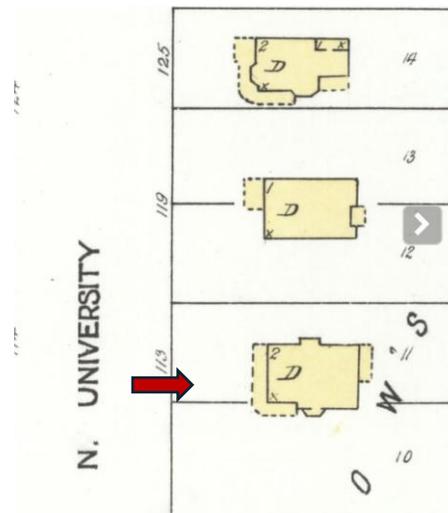


Forty years later, Sigma Alpha Epsilon built a new chapter house on the same site.



Lambda Chi Alpha

The local social organization, Sigma Delta Upsilon formed in 1913, was the predecessor of Lambda Chi Alpha. According to a September 29, 1914, *Volante* article, Sigma Delta Upsilon members occupied a house at 113 North University Avenue built in 1896. A 1923 Sanborn Fire map of the wooden building shows its location, footprint, entrance, and porches on the front and back of the house.



Below is a photograph of the building today. Note the similarity of this structure to the Trident's house.



In 1916 Sigma Delta Upsilon ceased to exist and the group was accepted as the Alpha Gamma Zeta chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha. For several years, the fraternity leased the house located at 105 Prospect Street, owned by Christian Christianson (*The Volante* , January 6, 1924). Christianson came to Clay County, Dakota Territory in 1871 and was engaged in business including as manager of a canning factory and as member and vice president of the Citizens Bank board of directors (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, May 22, 1940).

The building originally belonged to Christian Lommen, the first dean of the two-year USD medical school that started in 1907. Current records indicate the address is now 101 Prospect Street. Below is a 1926 *Coyote* image of the house with the fraternity members lined up to the south of the building.



The 1924 *Volante* article also mentions that a roof fire occurred in the building causing \$600 damage. *Coyote* photographs indicate that Lambda Chi Alpha occupied the building during 1929. Below is a photograph of the current structure that is an apartment building.



Note that the building owners enclosed the porches and added a section to the east side of the building. What remains of the older house is the architecture of the roof, the placement of windows, and the tower on the southwest corner of the building.

According to an *Alpha Gamma News* article from the March 14, 1963, issue, the next house the fraternity occupied was located on the bluff at 401 Park Avenue (now Park Lane). The fraternity purchased the building from R. G. Wellington, a long-time USD history professor.

The article mentions the house's eight-foot-long bathtubs, its seven-block distance from campus, and large front lawn available for social gatherings. When the fraternity occupied the building, it was enlarged to twice its original size. The fraternity lived in the building from 1929 until 1940. The image below is from the 1941 *Coyote*.



Moreover, the 1963 *Alpha Gamma News* article reports that the fraternity sold the building to Robert Oden, a Vermillion implement dealer, who reduced its size as seen in the photograph below. The entire east wing of the building was removed leaving a garage and connecting section to the main house. Currently Jeanette Williams owns the property.



In 1940, Lambda Chi Alpha purchased Alpha Phi's house at 327 North Pine Street. Before moving in, the fraternity renovated the building. The 1977 image below is from the USD Photograph collection, Series 10, negative 12570.3.



According to the summer 2023 *Alpha Gamma Fellowship* newsletter, the fraternity decided to build a new building on the same site. In the process of razing the structure, the Alpha Phi letters were exposed when the Lambda Chi Alpha sign was removed. Lambda Chia Alpha presented the Alpha Phi sign to the sorority during the 2024 Dakota Days.



*Alpha Phi letters uncovered at 327 N. Pine –
Lambda Chi Alpha Alumni Association*

The new building retains some architectural features of the older building while updating heating, cooling, and adding other amenities.



Delta Tau Delta

The predecessor organization to Delta Tau Delta was Alpha Tau organized in 1920 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, March 13, 1924). A *Volante* article from October 19, 1922, mentions that Alpha Tau fraternity members lived at 312 North Elm Street, built in 1887. The Sanborn fire map from 1923 shows the location and footprint of the building. Currently, the bungalow at 314 North Elm Street is a residential one-story, four-bedroom structure.



In 1921 Alpha Tau went into the history books for stealing a Civil War cannon from the Elk Point courthouse grounds and bringing it back to Vermillion. Below is a summary of the November 24, 1921 *Vermillion Plain Talk* article.

Alpha Tau and The Cannon Caper

The Civil War cannon on the old Elk Point courthouse grounds was tempting. So much so that members of the local social organization Alpha Tau thought the cannon should reside in Vermillion.

According to the detailed account of the “cannon caper” in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* article, the heist was well planned. On October 11th a surveillance group photographed the cannon to determine its location and moorings. The following night, other men determined the night watchman’s activities to time the heist.

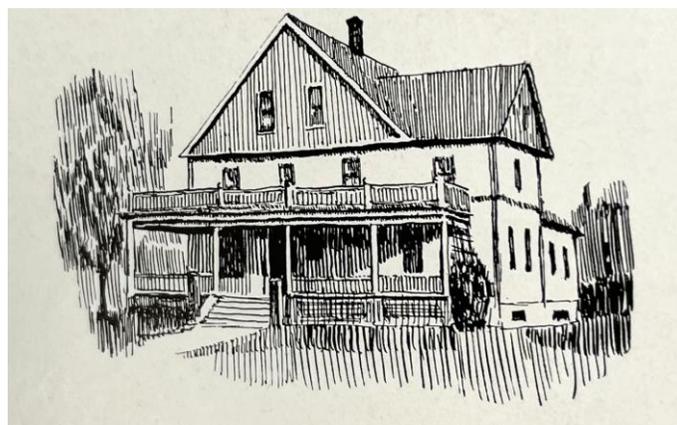
Finally, the event took place on October 13th. Four men stood guard on the four corners of the courthouse grounds. Lighting a cigar would be the signal “All’s Well” and the cannon removal could go forward. In the meantime, an Oldsmobile truck arrived. The eleven truck passengers drifted in pairs into Elk Point. Others stood at the ready to drive the truck near the cannon. When the four guards lit their cigars, the heist commenced. With some difficulty, the heavy cast iron cannon, support, and wheels were hoisted onto the truck and whisked away to Vermillion.

Before the cannon was delivered to the University Museum located on the third floor of Science Hall on the USD campus, the Alpha Tau men and their prize cannon posed for this picture in front of their chapter house. When Science Hall was demolished in 1962, the cannon was moved to various locations around the USD campus. Today it is part of a prominent Civil War exhibit at the W. H. Over Museum which is located east of DakotaDome.

The photograph below from the 1983 *Coyote* shows the proud Alpha Tau's surrounding the cannon. Note the "AT" sign denoting "Alpha Tau" on the house behind the gentleman wearing the light-colored sweater.



According to the May 22, 1924, *Vermillion Plain Talk*, Alpha Tau transitioned to the Delta Gamma chapter of Delta Tau Delta in 1924. The next house the group occupied for several years was at 25 Prospect Street. In 1931 a fire gutted the kitchen to the tune of \$1000 in damage (*Dakota Republican*, November 12, 1931). The following illustration of the building is from the 1930 *Coyote*.



As early as 1931 the Delta Tau Delta intended to construct a chapter house at 114 North Pine Street, but the building was not completed until 1938. To commemorate the new structure, Delta Tau Deltas held an open house in the spring of 1939 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, April 20, 1939). Below is a photograph from the 1941 Coyote that shows the large three-story brick structure.



Several years later the building boasted a large addition on the north of the structure. The recent photograph shows the extent of the addition.



Alpha Tau Omega

Prior to establishing the Delta Upsilon chapter of Alpha Tau Omega at USD, the local social fraternity Kappa Pi Alpha organized in 1922 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, February 18, 1926). Neither the newspapers nor the *Coyote* state a specific address associated with Kappa Pi Alpha house. Below is a photograph of the building in the 1929 *Coyote*.



From 1932 until 1940, Alpha Tau Omega occupied 221 North Harvard Street built in 1907. The large wood frame, two- and- a- half story house was located close to USD and featured extensive porches on the west and south sides of the building. Below is an image of the building from the 1932 *Coyote*.



A photograph of the same house from the 1940 Coyote provides better details of the type of windows, extensive porch, and entrance to the building.



A current photograph shows while many of the building's architectural features such as the placement window and entrance on the northwest part of the building remain, but the porches are gone. Moreover, many of the windows are altered.



The third chapter house, the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity inhabited for about 18 years is located at 520 East Main Street. The large house built in 1906, went through extensive renovations during the time Alpha Tau Omega lived there.

Below is a postcard of the building in 1940 (courtesy of Jeanette Williams). Note the large two-story house with porches on the first and second floors.



In the 1953 Coyote photograph below the western portion of the house which had contained a porch, was closed in.



In the last years of Alpha Tau Omega's tenure in the building, most of the porches on the first and second floors were enclosed in to provide more space for the fraternity.

A current photograph of the apartment building highlights the changes to the building. Porches on both floors are enclosed. The distinctive front dormer with three windows remains. Moreover, an addition to the north enlarges the building further.



The last house occupied by Alpha Tau Omega was constructed specifically for the fraternity. In the University of South Dakota Archives and Special Collections, Richardson Collection, Kent Scribner's papers (MS-270), folder 4, an architect's rendering of the proposed building in 1958 is depicted. The fraternity took occupancy of 309 North Pine Street in 1960 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, September 15, 1960). The 1977 image below is from the USD Photograph Collection, Series 10, negative 12570.1.



Subsequently, Alpha Tau Omega remained a fraternity at the university for over 40 years. However, financial difficulties, low recruitment numbers, and underage alcohol consumption charges forced the house to be sold, and the Alpha Tau Omega's charter to be removed in February of 2002. (USD Archives and Special Collections, Richardson Collection, Kent Scribner papers, Box 1, folder 4 letter from Wynn R. Smiley, CEO of the national Alpha Tau Omega fraternity to Delta Upsilon alumnus). Although there was hope that the fraternity would return, it never did. The building was sold and later purchased by a new fraternity, Phi Kappa Alpha.

Kappa Sigma

In 1923 a new local fraternity formed known as Delta Nu Omega (*Volante*, March 20, 1923). According to a *Dakota Republican* article from August 28, 1924, the group occupied a house on Cottage Avenue. Neither a photograph of the building, nor an address was provided.

In 1926, after 3 years of petitioning the national fraternity, Delta Nu Omega obtained the Delta Iota charter of the Kappa Sigma fraternity (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, March 11, 1926). By the end of 1928, Kappa Sigma purchased a house at 102 Prospect Street from Thomas Jordan's estate on Block 43, Lots 5 and 6 and part of lot 7. Thomas Jordan came to Vermillion in 1865 at age 30 years and farmed for several years prior to moving into town so his children could go to school in Vermillion (*Dakota Republican*, December 24, 1925).

Kappa Sigma purchased the house for \$5,000 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, December 27, 1928) and lived there until the fraternity disbanded in 1942. Below is a picture from the 1929 *Coyote* of the house when Kappa Sigma occupied it.



Please remember that prior to Thomas Jordan owning this house, Andrew E. Lee owned it since the early years of the twentieth century and for a short time Sigma Alpha Epsilon inhabited the house. It no longer exists.

The location of the last house Kappa Sigma occupied was reported in the December 2, 1940, *Wakonda Monitor*. Using that information and a picture of the house from the 1941 *Coyote* shown below, the building was located at 20 Willow Street. As I mentioned, two sororities, Kappa Alpha Theta and Alpha Xi, occupied the building in the 1920s.



One major difference between an older picture in 1920 and the 1941 picture is that the porch was not screened in. A recent photograph shows the changes to the building since 1941 especially with the entrance to the porch, and windows. By 1943, the chapter no longer existed at the university.



Theta Xi

Unlike previous fraternities that were preceded by local social organizations, the Alpha Phi chapter of Theta Xi started a couple of years after the group organized on May 14, 1949 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, October 2, 1952). Built in 1917, the first chapter house was located at 125 North University Street. *Vermillion Plain Talk* articles from 1956 and 1957 mention that during two months of the summer, the building served as a dormitory for disabled children (June 28, 1956, and July 25, 1957). The photograph below is from the 1953 *Coyote*.



A recent image of the house shows that most of the architectural features remain except for the second-floor railing over the entrance of the house is gone. Today the house is owned by a retired USD professor.



Subsequently, the 1962 *Coyote* indicates that Theta Xi lived at 408 East Main Street.



Of interest is that in 1962 the building still retained its second-floor railing, which is no longer present in the current house (Please see Chi Omega). By 1962, Theta Xi left the university.

Tau Kappa Epsilon

Unlike USD's all other Greek organizations, Tau Kappa Epsilon resided at the university over two periods: from 1960 until 1992 and from 2002 until the present. It also has the sad distinction of its chapter house catching fire in 1961 and burning down completely in 1982.

On June 3-4, 1960, the organization received the designation of the Theta-Eta chapter of Tau Kappa Epsilon (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, June 16, 1960). For its chapter house, Tau Kappa Epsilon purchased the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house located at 505 East Main Street. The 1977 image below is from the USD Photograph Collection, Series 10, negative 12571.2.



Unfortunately, in February of 1961, a fire started in the laundry room of the house and spread to the west side of the building. Damage to contents and the house totaled \$2,800 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, February 9, 1961). Several inhabitants of the house suffered from smoke inhalation. While the damage

was repaired, fraternity members lived in the vacated Alpha Tau Omega house.

On January 1, 1982, a fire started because of a faulty fireplace, that never should have been used. Extensive reports in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* (January 6, 1982) and the *Volante* (January 19, 1982) mention that forty fire fighters from Vermillion and surrounding towns fought the engulfing inferno from 6:00 am until 4:00 pm. When the firefighters arrived at the scene, the first floor was already burning, indicating that the fire had been active for some time. The frigid weather further impeded firefighting activities.

Regarding the cause of the fire, Deputy Fire Marshall Pat Harrington was quoted as follows. "The fire started because the house's east chimney cracked. Heat from the boiler built up between the ceiling of the first level and the floor of the second level until the floor joists ignited." (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, January 6, 1982).

For the first time the new Vermillion aerial ladder fire truck was used to fight the fire. According to the January 6th article, about 150,000 gallons of water were needed to put the flames out.

Several pictures of the firefighting efforts and the aftermath of the fire were posted in the papers. The *Vermillion Plain Talk* even sold photographs of the event. The photograph below from the January 6th article shows the firefighting efforts and the devastating aftermath of the TKE house fire.



The March 31, 1982, *Vermillion Plain Talk* article noted that the building sustained a total loss of \$300,000. This sum did not include the personal losses the fraternity members sustained who inhabited the building.

Planning for a new fraternity building occupying the same site started immediately. The Tau Kappa Epsilon members salvaged 28,000 building bricks used to construct a six-plex (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, March 31, 1982).

An important outcome of the disaster was that the Vermillion Fire Marshall examined all Greek houses yearly for possible deficiencies that could lead to a fire. Later that year, the fraternity members moved into the new brick house. The recent picture shows the triangular pedestal to the northwest of the building where the TKE sign once stood.



Members of the Tau Kappa Epsilon lived in the new building for about 10 years before leaving USD in 1992. In 2002 the fraternity returned to USD and purchased the vacant Chi Omega chapter house at 206 North Plum Street.



Sigma Nu

According to the December 10, 1968, *Volante* article, Sigma Nu colonized USD in the fall of 1966 and received a charter to form the Theta Beta chapter in 1968. In 1970, the organization purchased the house on 221 East Main Street, that belonged to Beta Theta Pi after they moved into a newly constructed chapter house. The 1977 image below is from the USD Photograph Collection, Series 10, negative 12571.5. Please note the “ΣΝ” letters on the chimney.



The fraternity lived in this house until its charter was revoked in 2012 due to low recruitment numbers, hazing, underage alcohol consumption, and financial difficulties (*The Volante*, January 14, 2013). In 2013 the building was sold to Greek Living LLC (Clay County Office of Equalization records). The fraternity Phi Kappa Theta lived in it for one year. In 2018 Courney and Carson Merkwan made plans to buy and renovate the building in part as a home and

the rest as a bed and breakfast inn (*The Volante*, April 3, 2018). Currently the building is used as a home and inn.



Delta Upsilon

According to the February 18, 1969, *Volante*, Alpha Delta Upsilon colonized USD in the late 1960s. To petition the national fraternity, Delta Upsilon, the group needed to incorporate an alumni association, increase members, and develop bylaws confirming with the national organization. The group also needed to find housing, since its members lived in different places. In 1971, the colony received its charter to form the Alpha Delta chapter of Delta Upsilon (*Volante*, April 27, 1971).

The group purchased a house at 204 North University. The photograph below from 1977 can be found in the USD Photograph Collection, Series 10, negative 12572.2. Members lived there until they left the university in 2001 (*Volante*, September 18, 2002).



Constructed in 1915, the building was originally owned by William Cullen (W. C.) Bryant who arrived in Vermillion in 1897. According to his obituary, Bryant was a successful businessman who owned and sold real estate and had a car distributorship. Bryant was also mayor of Vermillion from 1903-1904, and a two-term representative to the South Dakota legislature from 1918-1922 (*Vermillion Plain Talk*, June 29, 1939).

Below is a recent picture of the house. Many of the original architectural features of the house are preserved. The building is now an apartment house.



Pi Kappa Alpha (PIKE)

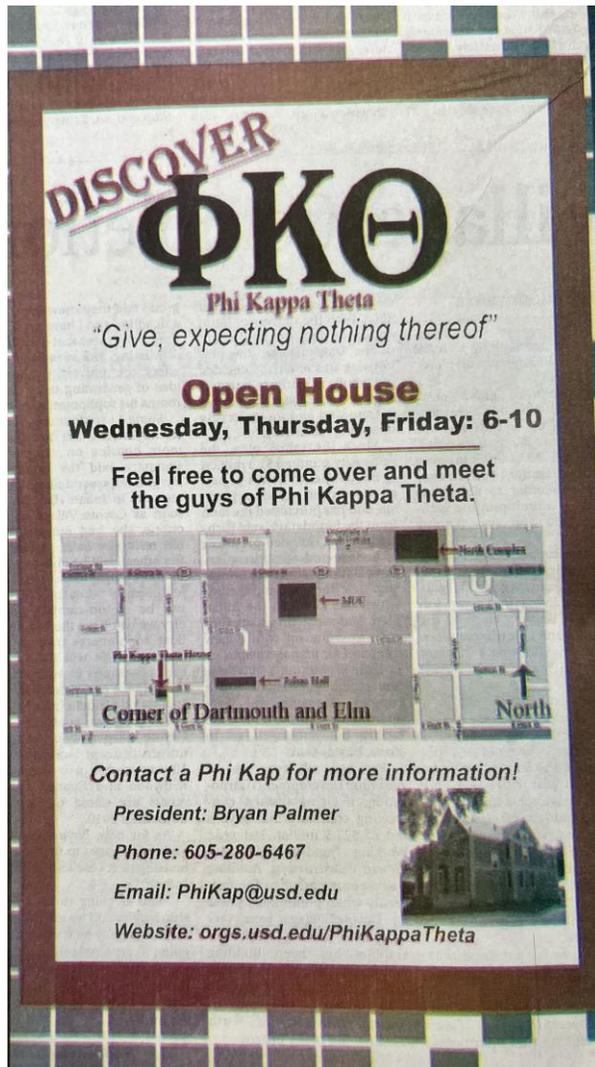
PIKE colonized USD in 1995 and received its charter as the Kappa Pi chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha in 1997 (*Volante*, April 16, 1997). In 2001, PIKE purchased and renovated the former Alpha Tau Omega house at 309 North Pine Street. PIKE has occupied the building since then.



Phi Kappa Theta

Phi Kappa Theta, USD's only Catholic fraternity, formed as an interest group with help from the Iowa's Xi chapter of Phi Kappa Theta and the Newman Center at USD (*Volante*, November 25, 2008). The following year the group rented a house and recruited members. They were successful in all aspects and became the Alpha Xi chapter of Phi Kappa Theta.

Below is an "Open House" advertisement in the September 16, 2009, *Volante*. The ad contains contact information about Phi Kappa Theta, as well as a photograph of their house (324 Elm Street) and a map to locate it on the corner of Dartmouth and Elm Streets.



DISCOVER
ΦΚΘ
Phi Kappa Theta
"Give, expecting nothing thereof"

Open House
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 6-10

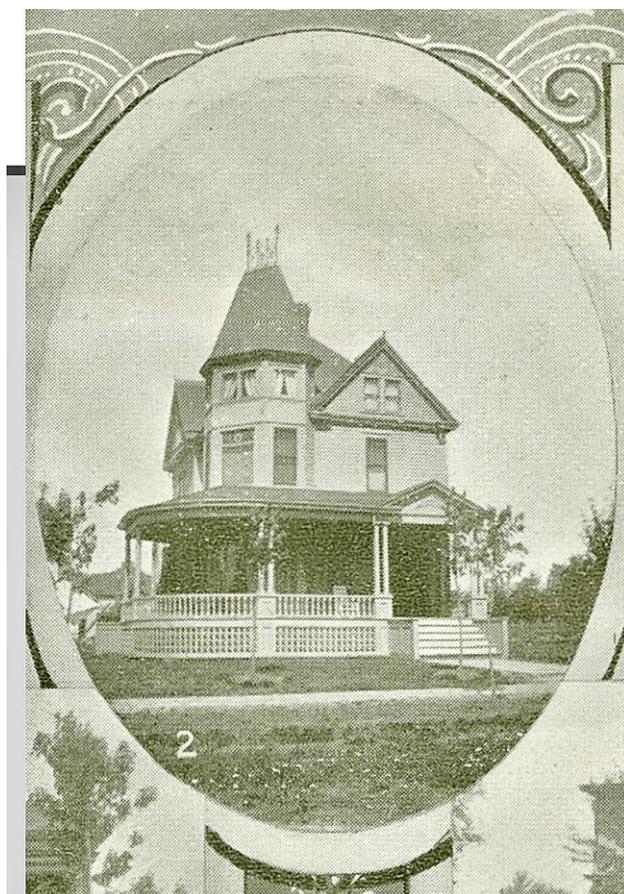
Feel free to come over and meet
the guys of Phi Kappa Theta.

Corner of Dartmouth and Elm

Contact a Phi Kap for more information!
President: Bryan Palmer
Phone: 605-280-6467
Email: PhiKap@usd.edu
Website: orgs.usd.edu/PhiKappaTheta

Located at 324 Elm Street, the building was constructed in 1905 (according to the Clay County Office of Equalization), although the Office of Deeds and Jim Wilson’s book on architects and contractors suggest an earlier date of 1889 when Clay County pioneer G. J. Peterson and his wife owned the land.^v Eric Maston, an architect and contractor, built the structure.

When the Peterson’s moved to Texas, they sold the house to Postmaster and entrepreneur Dalton Arvine (D. A.) Brosius. An article in the October 3, *Vermillion Plain Talk* describes a wedding held at the Brosius’ spacious house on the corner of Elm and Dartmouth. In addition, a 1901 photograph of the D. A. Brosius house is featured in the digital booklet “Vermillion and Vicinity” (<https://explore.digitalsd.org/digital/collection/richardson/id/7813/rec/1>)^{vi}.



The large two and a half story wood frame house had a prominent tower on the south side and a large wrap-around porch that spanned the front of the building and the tower.

Below is a 2012 *Coyote* photograph of the building when Phi Kappa Theta occupied it. Note the major changes in its architecture, especially removal of the front and wrap around porch, the addition of a large two-story porch, and the stuccoed exterior.



A recent photograph of the five bed-room large building is shown below. Observe that the foundation of the added on the porch is constructed of concrete block, whereas the house's foundation is constructed of stone. This photograph also shows that the tower is intact and stained-glass transoms in the two tower windows on the tower's first and second floor windows.



The fraternity lived in the house for about 3-4 years. An undated MapQuest website (<https://www.mapquest.com/us/south-dakota/phi-kappa-theta-441233627>) indicates that it occupied 221 East Main Street for one year after Sigma Nu left. Phi Kappa Theta ended its charter at USD in August of 2020. According to Hans Tvedt (personal communication), former president of Phi Kappa Theta, the reasons that the fraternity left USD in 2020 included, low membership numbers, lack of a chapter house, and no legacy compared to fraternities that occupied USD for a hundred years.

Conclusion

This book focused on houses that local social organizations and then Greek chapters occupied. The buildings helped the need for housing students, especially prior to construction of USD dormitories in the 1950s and 1960s. Greek houses also aided in social and networking functions for its members. Two fraternities, Alpha Tau Omega and Sigma Nu, were relieved of their charters and ended their stay. Others left after a few years or many years. Only Tau Kappa Epsilon left for ten years and returned. By contrast, several fraternities and sororities celebrated well over 100 years of existence at USD.

Because so many of the buildings exist, you can tour Willow Street, East Main Street, North and South University Streets, North Yale Street, North Harvard Street, Park Lane, Prospect Street, Elm Street, Forest Avenue, and Court Street to appreciate buildings still standing and what their architectural features looked like decades ago.

To guide in the process of finding a building, I've constructed spreadsheets containing the names of each organization and the addresses of each known house fraternities and sororities occupied. Finally, a stylized map of Vermillion indicates in red letters the location of all current Greek houses. Asterisks denote the locations of houses that still exist and daggers represent locations of houses that are no longer present. Because Tau Kappa Epsilon's first chapter house was destroyed by fire, but they rebuilt on the same site, that address is denoted by a dagger and an asterisk.

Appendices

- Street addresses of sororities in Vermillion, South Dakota.
- Street addresses of fraternities in Vermillion, South Dakota.
- Selected street map of Vermillion, South Dakota indicating the location of houses occupied by Greek organizations. Current Greek houses are denoted in red letters. Please look at the map for additional information.

Street Addresses of Sororities in Vermillion, South Dakota

Kappa Alpha Theta (KAΘ)

20 Willow Street
725 East Clark Street

Alpha Xi Delta (AΞΔ)

315 Forest Avenue †
217 North University Street
111 South University Street
123 Forest Avenue
20 Willow Street
214 North Plum Street

Alpha Phi (AΦ)

18 Forest Avenue
421 East Main Street †
104 North University Street
327 North Pine Street
707 East Cedar Street

Pi Beta Phi (ΠΒΦ)

215 Court Street
118 North Plum Street

Chi Omega (ΧΩ)

123 Forest Avenue
408 East Main Street
206 North Plum Street

Delta Delta Delta (ΔΔΔ)

214 East Main Street
115 North Harvard Street
122 North Yale Street

Alpha Gamma Delta (ΑΓΔ)

222 North Pine

Gamma Phi Beta (ΓΦΒ)

505 East Main Street

Street Addresses of Fraternities in Vermillion, South Dakota

Phi Delta Theta (ΦΔΠ)

202 East Clark Street

Beta Theta Pi (ΒΘΠ)

315 East Main Street †

221 East Main Street

429 North Plum Street

Sigma Alpha Epsilon (ΣΑΕ)

102 Prospect Street †

505 East Main Street

520 East Main Street

855 Madison Avenue

Lambda Chi Alpha (ΛΣΑ)

113 North University Street

101 Prospect Street

401 Park Avenue

327 North Pine Street

Delta Tau Delta (ΔΤΔ)

314 Elm Street

25 Prospect Street

114 North Pine Street

Alpha Tau Omega (ΑΤΩ)

221 North Harvard Street

520 East Main Street

309 North Pine Street

Kappa Sigma (ΚΣ)

102 Prospect Street

20 Willow Street

25 Prospect Street

Theta Xi (ΘΞ)

125 North University Street

408 East Main Street

Tau Kappa Epsilon (ΤΚΕ)

505 East Main Street †

206 North Plum Street

Sigma Nu (ΣΝ)

221 East Main Street

Delta Upsilon (ΔΥ)

204 North University Street

Phi Kappa Alpha (ΦΚΑ)

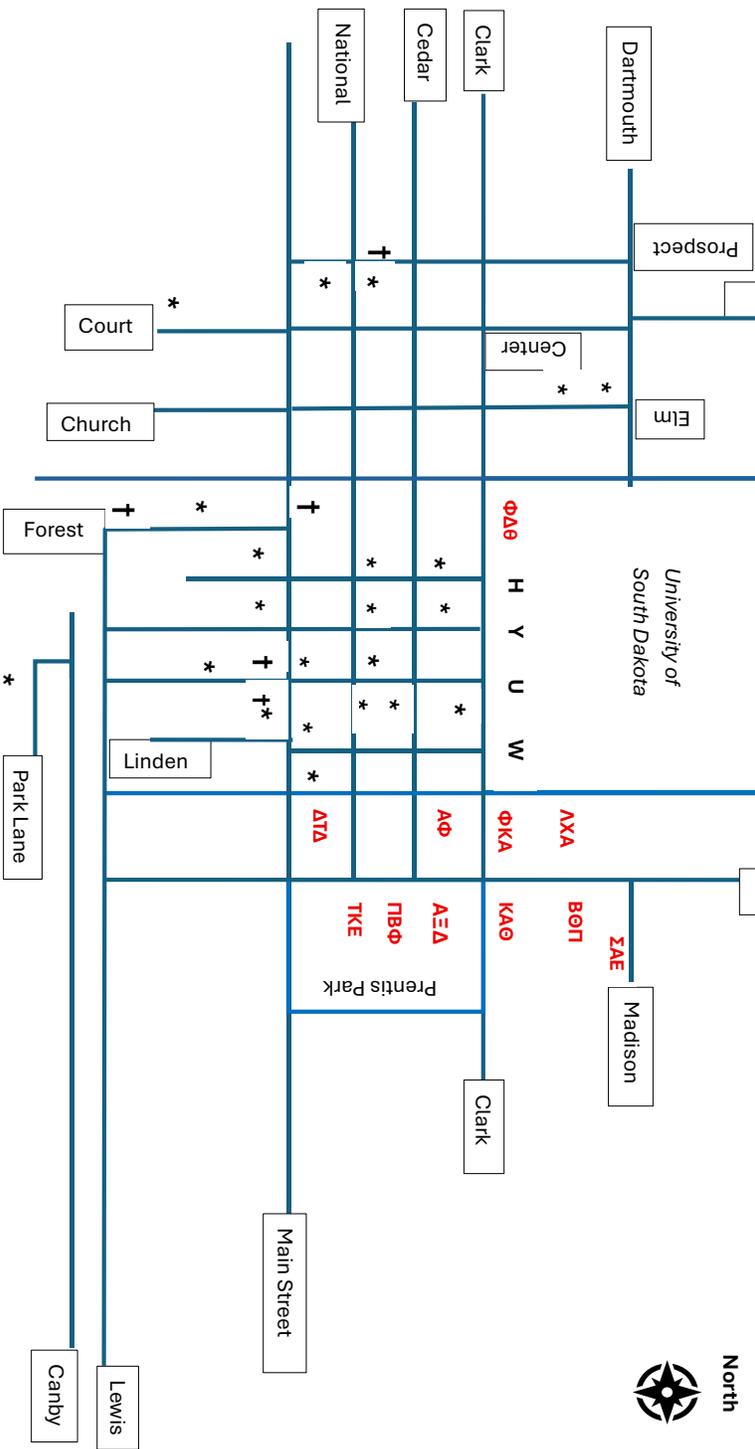
309 North Pine Street

Phi Kappa Theta (ΦΚΘ)

324 Elm Street

221 East Main Street

Schematic of Streets in Vermillion, South Dakota Showing Locations of Sorority & Fraternity Houses



H = Harvard, Y = Yale, U = University, W = Willow Streets.

Main Street divides north and south streets & Center Street divides east and west streets.

The * denotes a house that still exists. The † indicates that the house is gone. Abbreviations in red show where Greek houses are currently

Endnotes

ⁱ Kelli L. Susemihi. Building a Reciprocal Partnership: A Case Study of the Relationship Between the University of South Dakota and Its Privately Owned Sorority and Fraternity Housing. (<https://red.library.usd.edu/diss-thesis/227>) 2024.

ⁱⁱ Evelyn H. Schlenker. The Dakota Hospital Association and the Maintenance of the Dakota Hospital in Vermillion, SD., Pressing Matters, Vermillion, SD. 2017.

ⁱⁱⁱ Evelyn H. Schlenker. Prentis Park: A Jewel in Vermillion, SD 1923-2023 Pressing Matters, Vermillion, SD. 2023.

^{iv} Judith Gudfer Krueger. The Forest Avenue Historic District. Vermillion, SD: 1873-1980. The Broadcaster Press, Inc. Vermillion, SD. 1982.

^v Jim Wilson. Vermillion Architects and Contractors: 1870-Present. Pressing Matters, Vermillion, SD. 2013.

^{vi} Jordan, George T. Vermillion and Vicinity, 1901. Vermillion, South Dakota, Richardson Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University Libraries University of South Dakota.