Souvenir Program
Dedication of the Historical Marker
“ROCKY RIDGE”

MINNEHAHA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State of South Dakota
Founded 1927

April 22, 2006
Dakota Conference
Center for Western Studies
Augustana College
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

MINNEHAHA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ROCKY RIDGE

The geological history of Minnehaha County includes at least five distinct glacial episodes: three Pre-Illinoian in age, one of probable Illinoian age, and the most recent occurring during the Late Wisconsin stage. Some 14,000 years ago, the James Lobe of the Late Wisconsin flowed into the county from the northwest along the west side of Prairies des Coteau.

The leading edge of the Late Wisconsin ice advanced east to the area now occupied by Skunk Creek. A massive block of ice broke off the active ice and became stagnant. The active ice continued to act as a conveyor dumping sediment, including many boulders, onto the stagnant ice.

As the climate warmed, the volume of stagnant ice decreased and a long crevasse developed with sediment and boulders being washed into it. When the ice eventually melted, the crevasse fill was left behind as a northwest to southeast trending ridge. This unusual boulder-strewn Ice Age remnant is 4 miles long, 30 feet high, and 65 feet wide. Rocky Ridge is unlike any other landform in Minnehaha County.

DEDICATED IN 2006 BY THE MINNEHAHA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Text authors: Dennis Tomhave & Bruce Blake

Marker location: Rural Hartford
The northern end of Rocky Ridge is located five miles south and five miles west of the town of Hartford. Rocky Ridge extends approximately four miles to the southeast. A good perspective of it may be obtained by driving three or four of the east—west section line roads that intersect with and cross over Rocky Ridge. It is a narrow boulder-strew glacial moraine unlike any other in Minnehaha County.
This shaded relief map produced by EROS graphically displays the two most outstanding geological features in eastern South Dakota. On the extreme east side of the map, the flatiron shaped Coteau des Prairies stretches from the North Dakota state line to the boundary between Minnehaha and Lincoln counties. On the west side of the coteau, the broad swath plowed by the James Lobe of the Late Wisconsin glacier is distinctive and unmistakable. Image owner: U.S. Geological Survey
Dennis W. Tomhave

Dennis is a graduate of Fergus Falls (MN) Community College and St. Cloud (MN) State University where he earned a degree in Earth Science. He is a geologist with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Geological Survey program, in Vermillion, SD. The ROCKY RIDGE historical marker is the eighth in a series of geologic markers dedicated by the Society in which Dennis has provided expert technical assistance. Thanks, Dennis!
MCHS Geological Historical Markers

With the additions of the VOLCANIC ASHFALL and ROCKY RIDGE markers, the MCHS will have compiled a total of nine Earth history markers. Geologists generally agree that the Earth assumed its present form about 4.6 billion B.P. (years Before Present) when it solidified and ceased to be molten. It is interesting to compare the dates of the geologic events described in the MCHS nine historical markers with the date of the Earth's beginning.

The nine marker titles, the dates of the geologic events, and the location of the marker sites are as follows:

1. **THE SIOUX QUARTZITE**, 1.63 to 1.76 billion B.P., Falls Park;
2. **MAGMA**, 1.42 to 1.52 billion B.P., Lien Park;
3. **INLAND SEAS**, 65 to 135 million B.P., Falls Park;
4. **VOLCANIC ASHFALL**, 610,000 B.P. rural Hartford;
5. **CACTUS HILLS**, 300,000 to 610,000 B.P., Great Bear Recreation Park;
6. **TWIN MOUNDS**, 135,000 to 300,000 B.P., rural Garretson;
7. **EARTHQUAKE**, 68 to 14,000 B.P., rural Renner;
8. **THE GREAT BEND**, 13,500 B.P., Yankton Trails Park; and
9. **ROCKY RIDGE**, 13,000 B.P., rural Hartford.
PROGRAM

Thirty-eighth Annual Dakota Conference
Center for Western Studies
Augustana College
April 22, 2006

Rocky Ridge, a Minnehaha County Ice Age Remnant
Dennis Tomhave

CEREMONIAL DANCE CIRCLE
Historical Marker

On Thursday, April 27, at 1:30 p.m., the MCHS and the students of eighth grade teacher Jane Leonhardt will dedicate the CEREMONIAL DANCE CIRCLE historical marker at Patrick Henry Middle School.

In the 1920s pioneer archeologist Dr. W. H. Over sketched a map of upper Sherman Park in Sioux Falls. Over made note of a circle 51-feet in diameter, which had been used for ceremonial dancing by Omaha Native Americans during the 1600s. He also drew a second map of two Omaha earth-hut villages located in lower Sherman Park. These two villages are the only known prehistoric Omaha villages in Minnehaha County.

A family of Native American drummers and dancers will participate in several traditional ceremonial dances as part of the dedication program. Their moderator will introduce and explain the historical significance of each dance.

The program is free and the general public is welcome.