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“Fort Abraham Lincoln was the first park in North Dakota signed over to the state in 1907,” said Stork, “but it didn’t get a lot of development or infrastructure despite being an important historical site. That’s where the CCC came in. They built many of our structures, made the stone markers for important areas, and helped construct the majority of On-A-Slant Village from the bridges to the earth lodges. The first reconstructed lodges and blockhouses are their work, too, so they did a lot of historical preservation as well.”

In honor of the group’s impact on Fort Abraham Lincoln, Stork and other historic reenactors hosted an event designed to help bring these historical routines to life. On Saturday, May 2, they assumed the roles of corps volunteers, whom park visitors could interact with as they went about their typical schedule. Several displays and speaking programs themed to the history and daily life of these men were present from a flag raising at 9:00 a.m. to a formal dismissal at 5:00 p.m.

“These men did a lot of great work,” said Stork, “but a lot of that has fallen to the wayside of historical memory in recent years. Sometimes, we take amenities like these at state parks for granted. It’s easy to come in here and like the museum. But the effort that went into creating it, and what the CCC was trying to do during a difficult period of time, deserves to be remembered and appreciated as much as any other. One of the ways we can do that is by showing people what their members went through, to the best of our ability.”

Although there has never been a CCC historical reenactment before, Stork’s group is no stranger to similar ideas. As the Vice President of a separate living history organization, his position as a park interpreter allows him to serve as a liaison between them and the Fort Abraham Lincoln. A combination of historical documents from the North Dakota State



TWO REENACTORS, in the role of CCC volunteers, patch holes in Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park’s earth lodges. photo | Brendan DeLuca-Rodenburg

Archives and the park’s own records allows the resulting program to be as accurate as possible.

“My team and I are from the 164th Infantry Remembrance Association,” said Stork, “which is usually focused on talking about the North Dakota National Guard. But the corps was run by multiple government branches, including the War Department. Like in any historical reenactment we’ve done before, our props and uniforms are as period-accurate if not direct relics from the time, to help give people a visual image of something that might not make as much sense if you just read about it.”

The day’s happenings, however were far from performative. Like the volunteers before them,

Volunteers spent their time performing work for the park, namely helping to repair the earth lodges in On-A-Slant Village by covering holes with fresh dirt. These repairs, while not as lengthy or grueling as the original construction, serve as both a tribute to the original workers and a way to give back to the hosting venue.

“We wanted to honor the old work by doing things that will leave an actual impact on the park,” said Stork. We’ll mostly be patching up the earth lodges and weeding the garden. It’s work that both honors the people who came before us, and helps showcase the labor that goes into these projects.”

In many cases, a volunteer’s service to the US extended both before and after their time with the CCC: many of the young men in the corps (especially those

involved with Fort Abraham Lincoln’s projects) were veterans of World War I, and would later join the army once again to fight in WWII. This lifetime commitment to service, Stork states, makes them a group truly worthy of being remembered- not just for their buildings, but for the enduring beauty and freedom that every man involved helped to create.

“I hope that people who see the event walk away with a better understanding of what it takes to make places like Fort Abraham Lincoln possible,” said Stork. “Learning about history is one thing, but actually seeing, smelling, and hearing it is another entirely. It’s a cliché statement, but not everyone can get a lot from a history book- they may need to step back in time entirely. This is an entertaining and interesting way to do just that.”

While the CCC day has since ended, Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park still features many of their original construction efforts, and hosts a myriad of events focused on the history of its residents. Details on these are available at parkrec.nd.gov. More information about the Civilian Conservation Corps, meanwhile, can be found on the National Park Service website at nps.gov.

Along the Red Trail- North Dakota’s most Historic Highway

New Salem Dedicates the City Auditorium- April 2026

By Bennett Kubischta

Friend of the Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway

The New Salem City Auditorium is approaching its centennial. In the early 1920s the people of this community began planning, raising money, and constructing this building. Its formal opening was on May 18, 1927.

Governor Sorlie was in attendance at the celebration and the Bismarck Tribune reported he expressed praise for the cooperation and civic spirit which led residents of this city to erect this new auditorium. He went on to say what a remarkable achievement it was to have a fine building in a city the size of New Salem. In his dedication speech the Governor said “Such a community building is a wonderful means of solidifying community spirit and cooperation and will stand as a monument to the New Salem citizens for years to come.”

Entertainment was provided by singers from New Salem, Almont, Hazen, Judson, and Mandan. Bands from New Salem, Center, and Bismarck, provided instrumental music. The days festivities ended with a public dance.

The Tribune ended their May 21, 1927 editorial about this building with “New Salem is one of the few cities in the state that has built such a pretentious community building, a valuable adjunct to rural life. The residents of this community are to be congratulated upon their vision. It is such enterprises as this that make



photo | State Historical Society Archives

NEW SALEM AUDITORIUM in the mid 1950s. The Auditorium will be 100 years old in 2027.

life more pleasant in a rural community, and go a long way in making young people satisfied with farm life.”

The building was dedicated and it has hosted many users across the years; but, how did the idea for this building begin. The Bismarck Tribune edition of November 18, 1927 reported on the “Play Day” that was held in the auditorium. Students from 30 rural schools came to put on theatrical plays, which was sponsored by the New Salem Commercial Club. A crowd of 1,200 people watched the children perform on the stage.

The Tribune stated that the story of this building “dates back some 18 years (1909) when Professor J. H. Sheppard (who in 1927 was the head of the animal husbandry department at the Agricultural College in Fargo) conceived the idea of a breeding circuit” in the New Salem area.

“That germ of an idea, coupled with hard work, soon developed into what is known as the New Salem Cooperative Breeding circuit. For years this circuit, usually composed of

two dozen or more farm families, has cooperated in livestock and general farming operations. Out of the original idea came cooperation among the New Salem folks to build a central auditorium where everyone can assemble and play.”

The North Dakota Coat of Arms, which was adopted in 1957, bears the inscription “Strength from the Soil” which honors our agricultural community. Over 30 years before, it was the strength from the soil that led the people of New Salem to construct their auditorium.

Goodbye for now. Remember, promoting the Old Red Old Ten promotes our towns, and always take time to talk to the cows.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CAVALIER COUNTY, STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

In the matter of the petition for name change of Shayne Elise Maribelle Summerfield, a minor child

NOTICE OF PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE

1. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a petition will be filed by the Petitioner with the above-entitled court requesting an Order changing the name of Shayne Elise Maribelle Summerfield to Shayne Elise Maribelle Pederson.

2. NOTICE IT FUTHER GIVEN that thirty days after publication, the Petitioner intends to file a petition requesting entry of the Court’s Order changing the name of the minor child. Any objection to granting this name change must be given in writing to the address listed below within 30 days of the date of this publication. The written objection must also be filed with the Court. If no objections are given, the Court may respond to the Petition without further hearing.

Dated 4-27-2026
Amber Darlyne Pederson
Petitioner
523 2nd St
Langdon, ND 58249

Published May 6, 2026

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