A NEW ADVENTURE:
Encouraging people to go out to discover American history through architecture and the environment that surrounds it

There are towns and historical places all over the country that currently do not have a space that allows for historical learning. Without these places of learning the history and knowledge tends to die off disappearing as time goes on. A place of historical learning would be able to help with this problem. It would give a chance to tell stories that happened in the past.

When visitors visit a historical site, they need to learn about the history and culture of that place. Today's technology has helped people to learn about history and see artifacts across the world at the touch of a button. But it is still important to see the real thing because then you can see details that a photo can't provide. You can see depth, shade and shadows and get an idea of how it was made. Telling the visitor all about you or understanding of the fine detail and such.

But the problem with this that there needs to be a place where those artifacts can be stored and put on display for people to see and enjoy. These buildings often require a lot of space to display large artifacts and many different sizes that require storage.

This project will focus on a historical and cultural center located at one of Minnesota's State parks to increase the number of visitors to the park. State parks are known for their natural beauty but what most people don't learn about is the history and what makes that site a state park. This building will promote the history of the site creating a positive learning experience while serving as a place for visitors to enjoy all of the year.

As a result of this project I will answer "How can architectural building draw people in; in order to promote historical learning for all ages.”

The area of Crow Wing was first inhabited by the Dakota Native Americans for its use of the travel routes and ease of hunting. One day the Dakota War Party raided the Ojibwe Village and took many women and canoes. The Ojibwe men went to high ground and dug shallow pits in the ground. When the Dakota passed below them they were able to ambush them. The Dakota regrouped and tried another attach on the Ojibwe but the Ojibwe pushed the Dakota out of the area, taking control of the land and Mississippi Valley.

The first European fur traders began settling the area in 1767. Trappers would make camp on the banks of the river in the fall months and trap until winter began before heading back down the river till spring. It was not till 1823 when a permanent trading post opened on the banks of the river. Allen Morrison operated the post and later in the 1840’s he also ran the ferry, that was north of town, that crosses the Crow Wing River. Many trappers in the area used the rivers as their main source of navigation traveling up and down until the Red River Trails came about.

In 1844 the Woods Trail made a stop in Old Crow Wing, which helped the town grow very rapidly. The Red River Trails were a series of Ox Cart trails that connected the Red River Colony to Fort Garry in British North America. In 1847 Clement H. Beaulieu took over operations of the American Fur Company. He eventually built a mansion in the village, and it is the only structure that remains of the town. During the 1860’s the town reached its peak population of about 600 people, but of those 600 people there were only seven families that were permanent residents.

But the town's population soon declined rapidly. In 1871 the Northern Pacific Railroad decided to cross the Mississippi at what is now Brainerd, which is just 10 miles to the east. By 1880 most of the residents of Old Crow Wing had moved to Brainerd. It was then in 1959 when the park was recognized as a site that was important to Minnesota's history.