

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF GUST AKERLUND AND THE AKERLUND PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO

- 1872 Born August 6, Hässjö Parish, Västernorrland, Sweden.
- 1892 Entered Swedish military service.
- 1893 Released from the Swedish military to immigrate to the United States.
- 1894 Settled in Merrill, Wisconsin; worked in local sawmill.
- 1895 Studied photography as an apprentice at the Jones Photography Studio in Merrill, Wisconsin.
- 1900 Granted American citizenship.
- 1902 Purchased Fred Hanson Photography Studio in Cokato.
- 1905 Bought a corner lot at Fourth Street and Broadway Ave.; moved Hanson building there and added the skylight.
- 1913 Sold studio to George Swedburg and entered automobile business briefly.
- 1914 Visited father and two brothers in Sweden; returned to Minnesota upon the outbreak of World War I; rented the J. J. Sundquist Studio in Dassel.
- 1918 Bought former studio in Cokato from George Swedburg.
- 1918 Original skylight damaged by hail, present skylight constructed. Original backdrop covered and a new one painted by an itinerant artisan.
- 1927 Married Esther Hanson of Dassel in Iron Mountain, Michigan.
- 1935 Theodore (Ted), their only child, was born. Added the adjoining apartment where the family lived.

- 1950s Esther ran a small gift shop out of front half of the studio.
- 1953 Akerlund practiced trade part-time almost until his death.
- 1954 Gust died January 21, Cokato, age 81; Esther lived in the apartment until 1983.
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- 1965 Photographer Dwight Barnes rents the Akerlund Studio for his photography business until 1985.
- 1976 Studio entered on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1984 Studio donated by family of Gust Akerlund for restoration.
- 1985 Esther Akerlund died, August 24, Cokato Manor.
- 1986 Grand opening of the restored studio.
- 1992 Studio damaged by tornado, building shifted on foundation by over three inches.
- 2006 Digitization of the Akerlund negative collection began. It was completed in 2016.
- 2008 Foundation replaced on the front portion of the structure.
- 2020 Studio deemed a nationally significant National Register site alongside approval of substantial updates to the Studio's original National Register form.