CELEBRATE THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORT JUELSON

June 21, 2026

By Heather Rule

Fort Juelson marks the most remarkable Indian scare to happen in western Minnesota. A band of Tordenskjold farmers got together and built a fort on a hill, giving a commanding view of the territory.

Fort Juelson, located about two miles east of Underwood on Highway 210, was built in 1876 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In celebration of the 150th anniversary, the Friends of Fort Juelson have planned a celebration for June 26, 2026.

To kick things off on the celebration day, the historic Underwood shuttle tour – covered shuttles pulled by tractors – will start at the Underwood School and make about 20 stops along the way. Some scheduled stops include: The Foss Log Cabin, Bass Lake, Bicentennial Park, the Underwood Veterans Memorial, Knud Pederson Farm, and Sverdrup Lutheran Church. The Foss Log Cabin was built in 1869 and was the beginning of Underwood. It is also on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic tour costs $10 per person, and will run from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The program at Fort Juelson is also scheduled to include music from Underwood High School and speakers, including the Friends of Fort Juelson President Ron Shebeck, Otter Tail County Historical Society Executive Director Chris Schuelke, Friends of Fort Juelson members Cliff Knutson and Stan Rudsenske, and County Commissioner Kurt Mortensen.

After the program, everyone can feast on Underwood Lions pork chops as the finale to the celebration day.

To help commemorate the event, a historical Fort Juelson brass coin is being designed and will be available to purchase for $10.

Visitors can also stop by Fort Juelson at other times of the year to see the historic site right off Highway 210. A flag flies on the site from Memorial Day through Labor Day. There's signage marking where to turn onto a gravel road to get to Fort Juelson. Visitors can view historical information displayed at the site.

For more information, Author Clifford S. Knutson wrote a book called "Fort Juelson and the Indian Scare of 1876," which details the events.

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