



RE-ECHO

Volume 13, No. 3

Newsletter of the St. Louis Park Historical Society

Issue No. 53

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES!!

If there ever was a time when challenges lead to opportunities, this is it! The Historical Society is at a turning point, and we are very excited about what the future holds. Despite the loss of several board members and potentially our office space at Lenox, we're confident that we can not only compensate but move forward and better serve our city.

BOARD MEMBERS

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 2, 2014, at 7:00 pm at the Milwaukee Road Depot, Jorvig Park, 37th and Brunswick. At that meeting, 9 of our 13 board positions will be up for election. They are:

President:	3 year term	Two Trustees with one year terms
Vice President:	3 year term	One Trustee with a two year term
Secretary:	3 year term	Three Trustees with three year terms

Position descriptions can be found in our bylaws, which are posted on our website at www.slphistory.org/about/bylaws.asp

We are actively seeking people to fill these vacancies – dynamic, motivated people who will bring their skills, experience, and talents and provide great ideas about how to move the Society forward. The kinds of activities that the new board will undertake may include:

- Marketing the Society, including creating a brand
- Organizing events
- Fundraising/Grant writing
- Recruiting members and volunteers
- Coordinating with other organizations such as Friend of the Arts, theater groups, schools, churches, and synagogues
- Public Speaking, both for providing historical information on the Park and raising funds
- Coordinating with civic organizations such as the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis
- Planning for the future

This last one, planning, may be the most important. We may need to find at least a temporary spot to replace Lenox and perhaps funds to pay rent. Ultimately, our goal is to have a Museum that befits the fascinating and unique history of St. Louis Park.

CHANGES, Continued

Because there are so many openings on the board, we have taken the advice of our liaison at the Minnesota Historical Society, David Grabitske, and instituted a nominating process. Anyone interested in serving on the board, including any current board member whose term is ending, is asked to complete a one-page form and submit it and a cover letter to the nominating committee. The committee will meet with each candidate, and then come up with a slate that will be voted on at our September 2 Annual Meeting. The form is available at www.slphistory.org/about/boardmembersneeded.asp We are confident that we will be able to find great people to fill these openings. Board members do not need to reside in St. Louis Park, but they must be members of the Historical Society.

VOLUNTEERS

Even if you are not able to commit to serving on the board, the Society is in need of volunteers who have ideas, skills, and the willingness to work with us to carry out our goals. It may be one of those activities listed on Page 1, or you may have your own project in mind. There are so many great ideas out there, just waiting for someone to pick them up and run with them. This newsletter, for example – surely someone with a little graphic design experience can do better than this! Even something simple like taking on the job of writing thank you letters for donations would be a tremendous help. We can even use a volunteer to be our volunteer coordinator!

MEMBERS

Most of all, if you are NOT a member of the Society, please join us. The cost is only \$20 per calendar year, tax-deductible. Yes, we need the dues, as they are now our only source of funding, but more than that we need the support for our work that your membership endorses. With an increased membership we can show potential funders that the community cares about the preservation of our city's history. Information on how to join is at the top of our home page at www.slphistory.org Dues can be paid by check, credit card, or Paypal.

While you're on our home page, check out the link to our nifty new Membership Brochure! It was designed and printed by hometown company Gleason Printing, and paid for with funds from a grant from American Legion Post 282. Our special thanks to Bill MacMillan and Bill Gleason! The brochures are available at several places around town, and will appear in many homeowners' utility bills as well.

ABOUT OUR SPACE

For many years the St. Louis Park Independent School District has given us the free use of a lounge area on the first floor of the Lenox Community Center, for which we are extremely grateful. The building is about to be reconfigured, however, and we will definitely have to move. We don't know if there will be alternate space available from the School District, but we are assuming at this point that there will not. The search is on for some temporary space, whether it be donated or rented. If the latter, we will have to raise funds for the expense for the first time. This may be a blessing in disguise – although our Lenox space has served us well, it is not open on weekends, has no door, and does not have room for displays. With a larger, more accessible and secure space, we could hold events, mount displays, and create our own presence with a sign on the door! At this point we don't know what will happen, but we are confident that we will find at least a temporary space that will be a good fit.

DONATIONS

We've had so many great donations coming in – thanks so much to everyone who has given St. Louis Park-related items to the Historical Society. Remember, your trash could be our treasure, so if in doubt, don't throw it out! Give us a call and we'll be glad to relieve you of your relics!

The family of LeRoy DeBoom donated boxes of items that LeRoy had saved over the years. LeRoy passed away at the age of 79 after living all but 18 of those years in almost total paralysis as a result of polio he contracted in 1952. His effects included his *Echowans*, school photos, awards, correspondence with friends, *Echo* newspapers (for which he was Editor), Boy Scout items, *Life Magazines* from 1964, and newsletters of the Minneapolis Chapter of the Indoor Sports Club. The newsletters were given to the Hennepin County Library, Special Collections at the downtown library. We have posted LeRoy's courageous story at www.slphistory.org/history/deboom.asp

Will DuBois at D&D Auto Works allowed us to borrow and scan photos of Christy's Gas Station, which stood at the spot on Lake Street and Dakota for decades. The story of Christy's and some of the photos are at www.slphistory.org/history/lake6401.asp

Scott Smith, your genial host of Park Update on the city's cable channel, loaned us his Little League photo to scan, and gave us a page from the *Dispatch* that had some great team photos. Our Little League page has lots of holes, so if you have photos or just remember who your sponsor was in a given summer, please let us know! The page is at www.slphistory.org/history/littleleague.asp

Ron Thingvold also donated Little League materials from 1966 to 1968. What's especially great is the Treasurer's report from 1966 that lists all of the companies that sponsored signs at Lion's Field! Beek's Pizza and Bohn Welding are still going strong!

Delores Cordes brought in some news articles, and a sweet charm bracelet with charms that spelled out S T L O U I S P A R K H . Well, there was probably an S at the end of that at one time, but it is a fabulous artifact!

Joel Swanson was able to retrieve some remembrances from Reformation Church before it closed, including a sign from before the building was built, a directory from 1961, a first-day program from 1957, a 20th Anniversary program from 1977, a final service program from 2014, and a *Lutheran Book of Worship*.

Thomas Ross was also able to save some artifacts, this time from Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church. They included two framed portions of an altar banner, a plaque placed by parishioners, and a piece of a marble altar. Most Holy Trinity was demolished on July 17-18, 2014. There was apparently a time capsule buried on the property, and hopefully the contractors will find it. Photos of the demo are at www.slphistory.org/history/mostholyltrinity.asp

Randy Kirihara was able to get into Eliot School as the final salvaging was being done, and snapped 23 photos of classrooms, bathrooms, the gym, etc. The photos are sad, but at least we have a record of the building before it comes down. See some of them at www.slphistory.org/history/eliotschool.asp

Ted Meland donated a 1999-2000 SLP Phone directory.

DONATIONS, Continued

Lisa Pannell, chair of the Brooklawns Neighborhood Association, donated a batch of papers she inherited from the previous chair. Most of them pertained to negotiations between Methodist Hospital and the neighborhood over the hospital's expansion plans.

Mark Lapakko comes by office hours at Lenox with fun things: his 1977 graduation tassel, a popcorn can from Citizens Independent Bank, some mugs from Shakey's Pizza, and a Boy Scout patch from the 1958 Minnesota Centennial. What will he come up with next?

Peter and Mary Lorvick donated a map of St. Louis Park that was made by or for realtor Herbert Carleton in about 1914. It's great that the map is framed so it's easy to look at without worrying about harming it!

Gary Roelich, General Manager of Knollwood Mall, gave us the bound copy of the 1955 St. Louis Park *Dispatch* newspaper, which we didn't have in our collection. In return, we scanned all of the Knollwood-related articles and ads in the book and gave them to him on a CD. That was quite a task, since Knollwood was one of the biggest news items of the year in 1955! Our Knollwood page, with a list of over 300 stores, is at www.slphistory.org/history/knollwoodplaza.asp

Between the raindrops at the Parktacular Share Fair, the Meadowbrook Collaborative gave us a copy of Adam Turman's St. Louis Park print, numbered and signed. The Collaborative is selling these for \$25 as a fundraiser; if you would like one, or to find out more about the work of the Meadowbrook Collaborative, visit their site at www.meadowbrookcollaborative.org

Beverly Johnson gave us a 1953 cookbook put out by the Rebekah Lodge, a card from Union Congregational Church, and a business card from the dear departed Palm Bakery.

Paul Pegors gave us a framed diploma from St. Louis Park High School for his mother, Adeline A. Fischer, from 1918. Paul grew up on the North Side; his family moved to 1358 Kentucky Ave. in 1928, the year he was born. The North Side was very sparsely populated in the years before World War II, and Paul is interested in collecting stories from those who grew up there. We recently discovered a tape of a North Side reunion that was held in 1992 at Eliot School, but most of the audio is subpar. Our page on the North Side, with lots of links, is www.slphistory.org/history/northside.asp

Barb Reiss found a great old photo of a football team and some articles from various newspapers about the Park.

Mark Toretsky donated materials from Parktacular, and continues to scour microfilm for ads from Park businesses. He is now researching the history of Cub Foods.

Daniel Johnson donated a prototype of Evelyn Raymond's sculpture "The Family," which was created in 1959 for the MSI Insurance Company at 1919 University Ave. in St. Paul. The actual sculpture weighed 1.5 tons. When the company moved to Arden Hills in 1983, it was donated to the University of St. Thomas and mounted on the east wall of the University's Coughlan Field House. Evelyn Raymond lived and worked in St. Louis Park; read about her here: www.slphistory.org/history/raymondevelyn.asp

EVEN MORE DONATIONS!

Peter Georgas is the son of Ted Georgas, who owned Lilac Way Candies from 1948 to 1965. Ted Georgas was born in Greece in 1890, learned to make candy in Turkey in 1905, and came to the U.S. in 1910. After 26 years in Waseca and some time in South Carolina he came to St. Louis Park in 1946. He hand made and dipped all of his candy in the basement of his shop. Peter donated an authentic Lilac Way Candies box! One additional benefit of meeting Peter is finding out that he owned the mystery house at 2355 Highway 100. We found a photo of this house at the tax assessor's office, and it looked like an Alpine ski resort! And then it vanished. It turns out that Peter bought the house in 1960 and kept adding to it, and it even had an indoor swimming pool! But it and the house next door, which were both just north of Benilde, were in the way of the expanded Highway 100/394 interchange; Peter sold his house to a man who moved it to Anoka, and the house next door was demolished. Peter's house is the first one on this page:

www.slphistory.org/history/vernonave.asp

Gary Quinn is the son of ... Mr. Q! Donald Quinn, that is, who owned and operated Mr. Q's Restaurant from 1958 to 1970. In 1970 he became the managing partner of the Swiss Chalet Buffet in Miracle Mile and worked there until he died in 1975. Gary came in and gifted us with a Swiss Chalet postcard, with three magnificent views of the restaurant. Our Mr. Q's page is www.slphistory.org/history/eb4920.asp and the Swiss Chalet Buffet is listed under Becky's Cafeteria on the Miracle Mile page: www.slphistory.org/history/miraclemiletendants.asp

Francis Schmit donated a sack full of *Echowans* from 1940 to 1944, including two from 1943, the only one we were missing! He also brought us a 1941 phone directory and two books on how to play the ukulele...

Tom Hurwitz found a business card for Lydia Rogers in his mother's things, and when he found our Lydia on our website he sent it in. Lydia was a legend in St. Louis Park history; read about her here: www.slphistory.org/history/rogerslydia.asp

Nobody can beat Manny Camilon when it comes to donations! The list would take up this entire page, but the highlight is the original krumkake iron made by Nordic Ware, probably dating from the 1950s. Manny is always finding wonderful artifacts for us and it's always fun to see what he comes up with!

Emory Anderson continues to donate his time and his photography skills to the Society – at his own peril! While taking photos of old houses one fine afternoon with a certain *Re-Echo* Editor who shall remain nameless, not only was Emory almost killed by a crazy kid driver, but the pair was pulled over by a member of St. Louis Park's Finest for cruising Minnetonka Blvd. well below the speed limit. We escaped incarceration and instant death, and Emory said it was the most fun he'd had in a long time! The photos are great but haven't been posted to our website yet. Many thanks to Emory for all of the fine photography he has done for us.

Another Andersen, with an EN, has donated some photos as well. Gordon K. Andersen built his house on Highway 100 in 1961 and lives there still. When the four lane portion of Lilac Way south of Excelsior Blvd. was turned into six lanes and the Vernon Avenue service road, Gordon took slides of the progress, sometimes right out his picture window. Two of those photos are posted at www.slphistory.org/history/highway100road.asp

HERE AND NOW

CLASS REUNIONS: We strive to post all class reunions on our website; if you have any to report, please contact us at history@slphis.org The link is www.slphistory.org/about/reunions.asp Thanks!

SALUTE TO THE MUSIC OF BOB DYLAN: The St. Louis Park show is coming up QUICK! Billy Hallquist and his cadre of fabulous musicians are coming to the Veteran's Amphitheater on **August 9** with another free show featuring the music of Minnesota's own Mr. Zimmy. Some of the participants from Park include Dr. Matt Fink, Arne "Bing" Fogel, and Dan Israel. An extra special treat will be the appearance of Scarlet Rivera, rock 'n' roll violin player extraordinaire, who played with Dylan in the movie "Renaldo and Clara" and was a member of 1975's Rolling Thunder Revue tour. Scarlet will also be appearing at the Dakota on Sunday August 10. See Billy's interview with Park TV's Jane Kim on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZ3vHnkmZdI&feature=em-share_video_user

PINS FOR PARKINSON'S: Mark Toretzky is a name seen often in these pages – he has spent countless hours in the library looking at microfilm, searching for information on Park businesses. On February 12, 2010, Mark was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. He is organizing a fundraiser to benefit the Park Nicollet Sturthers Parkinson's Center research activities. Mark says, "I came up with the idea of Pins for Parkinson's because not only do I have Parkinson's and wanted to be proactive in the fight against Parkinson's but I have enjoyed bowling since I was a child." The event is scheduled for **August 17**, 2014, from noon to 4 pm at Tuttle's, 107 Shady Oak Road in Hopkins. The price is \$25 per person or \$100 per team of five, which pays for two hours of bowling, shoe rental, and food. More information is available at www.pinsforparkinsons.org

BASS LAKE TO COME BACK? Preliminary studies are being done to determine the feasibility of restoring Bass Lake. Project goals are to create open water areas, improve aesthetics, manage flooding, and manage vegetation. As a wetland it is protected, but if it can be shown that it was originally a traditional lake, the case could be made that restoration is true to its history. Old maps indicate that the lake was much bigger than its present 56 acres, and there is even a (sub)urban myth that it had a resort hotel on its shores, but there is no verification of that.

Little by little the area has been filled in or drained. In about 1908, County Ditch 14 drained Bass Lake into Lake Calhoun; some say it was to raise the level of Lake Calhoun and provide water to irrigate Minikahda Golf Course. The Milwaukee Road completed the Bass Lake yard in 1913, with 27 tracks and a capacity for 2,000 rail cars. Fill from the construction of bridges in Minneapolis was used. The yard existed until the 1970s, and is now the Park Glen area south of the tracks.

The lake has had a long history of abuse, used as a garbage dump for decades. Local residents now volunteer their time and effort to clean it up, pulling up buckthorn and every kind of refuse. If the lake is dredged, it will be interesting to see exactly what is in there. Stay tuned!

SPEAKING OF LAKES.... Have you seen Meadowbrook Golf Course lately? The heavy rains we had in late June and early July have failed to drain, and the course is dreadfully under water, forcing its closure for the rest of the season. Meadowbrook is actually owned by the Minneapolis Park Board. Rick Sewall took some photos of the much-expanded Meadowbrook Lake, which can be seen here: www.slphistory.org/history/meadowbrookgolf.asp

THIS 'N' THAT

DEPOT HOURS: Each summer Historical Society volunteers open the Milwaukee Road Depot for the public to come and see this 1887 historic building. Hours this summer will not only include Saturdays from 1 to 4 pm, but we've added one Wednesday evening each month from 7 to 8:30 pm for those who can't make it on Saturdays. Come and visit us to do research, see some artifacts, or just talk Park history. The Depot is located at 37th and Brunswick Ave.

The remaining dates are:

- August 6, 9, 16, 23, 30
- September 3, 6, 13

PARK PROJECT: We have a new volunteer, 15-year-old Jesse, who is very interested in our City's parks. Some time ago the city's Parks and Rec Department gave us binders full of slides of the various parks, so we decided to get them scanned. 880 of them. When they come back, Jesse has agreed to attempt the Herculean task of identifying and labeling each scan, which means he'll have to match them to the slides. When that is done, if Jesse can still see, he will do some research on some of our more noteworthy parks, and perhaps we can obtain grant funds to put informational historic markers in some of the parks – with the advice and consent of the city, of course.

VIDEO TRANSFERS: Another big job is transferring our VHS tapes to DVD. Don Schimmel has done quite a few of them, Jeanne Andersen has done some, and Jeff Kleinbaum has volunteered to do some. Once they are all done we will finalize and inventory. Some of the more interesting ones are the video yearbooks that were done in the 1980s under the tutelage of Park High teacher Carolyn Charles. They show such fun things as Homecoming pie eating contests, pep rally shows, Prom, and final shots of seniors picking up their graduation gowns. Eventually we hope to have the funds to support a YouTube or Vimeo addition to our website. In the meantime, we continue to make the transfers, and have purchased a portable hard drive on which to store them.

THE NOVARTIS PLANT is vacant and up for redevelopment. The address is on 23rd Street, just west of Highway 100 and north of the VW dealership. Don't drive on the property or you will be yelled at! The tall building was apparently originally an International Harvester dealership. County records show that the buildings were built in 1981, but there may have been some combination so it's hard to tell. One of the buildings will be demolished, and the others are all connected. Hillcrest Development plans to close on the property in August, and has obtained a grant from the Metropolitan Council to abate asbestos. Tenants, mostly in the food service line, are already in line to occupy the space. The plant provided many jobs in its day, and produced a waft of chocolate in the air.

IF IT'S NOT WINTER IT'S ROAD CONSTRUCTION: The Highway 7/Louisiana Ave. overpass project is moving forward, with traffic patterns changing as the work progresses. Between the construction and flooding on Louisiana, getting around was a little dicey in that direction. Construction has not yet begun on Highway 100, but when it does it will mean the closure of the highway on weekends. With few north/south through roads in our fair city, things could get interesting! All of these projects mean progress, though, and we are doing our best to document the changes for the future, which is another part of our mission. Please feel free to send us your photographs!

The Re-Echo
St. Louis Park Historical Society
3700 Monterey Drive
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

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The St. Louis Park Historical Society was founded in 1971 to collect, preserve, and share the history of the City of St. Louis Park, Minnesota. The archives of the Society are located in the Historic Depot in Jorvig Park (37th and Brunswick) and at the Lenox Community Center (6715 Minnetonka Blvd.). Office hours at the Lenox site are Thursdays from 10 to noon, and by appointment.

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