



Meeting Minutes
St. Louis Park Historical Society
September 15, 2015

St Louis Park Historical Society
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ANNUAL MEETING

Attending: President Ted Ekkers; Treasurer Henry Solmer; Vice President Bonnie Burton; Trustees Sue Ainsworth, Jeanne Andersen, Dale Lapakko, Paul Linnee, Jeff Liss, John Olson, and James Robbins

Members: Don Schimmel, Jane Hagstrom, Kathy Johnson, Doug Johnson, Barbara Reiss, Donald Voss, Steve Raymer, Julie Renner, Emory Anderson, Diane Steen-Hinderlie, Lucille Thornsjo, Curt Rahman, Mike and Bobbie Deeney, Steve Raymer

Guests: Del Strandberg, Marti Biegler, Michael Edlavitch

ELECTION OF OPEN BOARD SEATS

The board had five open board seats at the beginning of the meeting: Secretary, three Trustee terms ending in 2015, and one Trustee term ending in 2016.

A nominating committee was made up of Bonnie Burton, Jeanne Andersen, Paul Linnee, James Robbins, and Jason West, our liaison to the City of St. Louis Park. One applicant, Jane Hagstrom, was interviewed by the committee. The committee submitted the following slate of candidates:

Secretary: Jeanne Andersen, term ending 2017

Trustee, term ending in 2018: Jane Hagstrom, Jim Robbins

After calling for nominations from the floor and hearing none, President Ted Ekkers called for a voice vote, and the committee's candidates were elected unanimously.

Ted moved that Henry Solmer be appointed as the Board Treasurer for another year, and the Board approved the motion unanimously.

The members of the board are now:

President: Ted Ekkers (term ends in 2017)

Vice President: Bonnie Burton (term ends in 2017)

Secretary: Jeanne Andersen (term ends in 2017)

Treasurer: Henry Solmer (appointed by the Board on a year-to-year basis)

Trustees: (terms end in 2016): Sue Ainsworth, Bob Jorvig, Vacant

Trustees: (terms end in 2017): Dale Lapakko, Paul Linnee, John Olson

Trustees: (terms end in 2018): James Robbins, Jane Hagstrom, Vacant

ANNUAL REPORT

Finances: Ted reported that our bank balance was approximately \$16,500 higher now than at this time last year. 30 percent of our income has come from memberships, 7 percent from donations, and 60 percent from fundraising: primarily the Antique appraisal event and the street sign fundraiser. Funds will be used to pay rent, which will increase in January, and kick-start a capital campaign for obtaining a museum.

Membership: Bonnie reported that we currently have 275 members, up 32 percent from last year. Although membership was raised from \$20 to \$25 in January 2015, we were able to meet our membership goal by July. We also received several corporate memberships, including those from Discover St. Louis Park, Michael Mullen CPA, Miracle Mile Shopping Center, Nordic Ware, and the Roller Garden.

Communications: The second issue of the *Re-Echo* for 2015 has been mailed to members. It was redesigned by Joanna McPeck and printed on glossy paper. Bonnie Burton has taken over as editor. Bonnie will make efforts to get advertisers and sponsors to pay for the printing expense.

Ted also issues an on-line newsletter called Park History Today, which currently has 305 subscribers. This newsletter provides members and others with up-to-date information about the Society's events.

We are also active on Facebook: through the efforts of Jeff Liss, the Society's Facebook page has now hit the 1,000 mark.

Fundraising: Give to the Max Day is coming up on November 12. In 2014, ten donors pledged a total of \$650. Our goal for 2015 is to raise \$5,000 pledged by 50+ donors. We are looking for a company who will offer matching grants to donations on this day, and encourage donors to investigate matching grant possibilities from their employers. Grants are made on a random basis by GiveMN during Give to the Max Day, so we are hoping that with more donations, our chances of receiving one of those grants will improve.

Our Park's Antique Parade appraisal fundraiser raised approximately \$3,500 through donations from participants, sponsorship of Discover St. Louis Park, and other donations of funds and in-kind contributions from local businesses. Costs were kept to a minimum due to these donations and the donation of space at the High School by the School District. Over 100 items were appraised in three hours. A video of the event will be made available on Park TV soon.

Our biggest fundraiser to date has been the Street Sign event. The City donated old street signs that were replaced with reflectorized signs, and we made these available to the public for a donation of \$25 (\$20 for Society members). Of the 560 signs received from the City, approximately 350 have been sold to 215 donors, 80 percent of which are non-members. To date, \$8,300 has been raised. At this time, most of the more popular named Avenue signs have sold out, and there are mostly numbered Street signs left. We are hoping to get another shipment in the spring. Publicity from the *StarTribune*, Facebook, and the *Sun Sailor* has helped make this fundraiser very successful.

Programming: The Society has had a presence at many community events and programs:

- Jeanne made an informal presentation to the Board of the Hopkins Historical Society.
- Ted gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Bronx Park Neighborhood Association
- Ted spoke to the noon Rotary Club
- Ted made a presentation to a pack of Cub Scouts

- Ted spoke to seniors at the TowerLight senior community
- Ted participated in a (treasure hunt?) for St. Louis Park Ambassador candidates.
- Dale led a tour of the City at the behest of Discover St. Louis Park
- Ted presented a Century Plaque to St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church.
- Ted, Jeanne, and Sue set up a table at the Minikahda Vista Neighborhood's National Night Out event. Neighbors were very interested in aerial maps and other artifacts.
- Ted and Kathy Johnson represented the Society at a Park the Street event in September 2014.
- The Society hosted an informative talk on how to research family trees in April.
- The Society was represented at Parktacular by walking in the parade and having a table at the Expo in Wolfe Park.
- A railroad-themed event at the Depot in August drew approximately 150 people; thanks to publicity in the *StarTribune*, people came from all over the area.

Upcoming Programming:

- On October 13, 2015, the Society will host its first "Historic Connections" event, with the theme "How Development Shapes Our City." The event will take place at the High School and will be moderated by Mayor Jeff Jacobs. Participants will include Robb Bader of Bader Development; Brad Bakken, CEO of Citizens Independent Bank; Greg Hunt, the City's Economic Development Coordinator; and a representative of the City's Planning Commission.
- On November 14 there will be a program aimed at how to archive family photographs and artifacts.
- On December 5 the Society will hold a Depot Lighting Ceremony and Open House.
- In January 2016 the Society will host the second session of its "Historic Connections" program.

Marketing and Public Relations: We have had extraordinary assistance in publicizing events and fundraisers from the *StarTribune's* John Reinan and the *Sun Sailor's* Seth Rowe.

We are also increasing our number of items for sale through our online store; in addition to the book *Something in the Water*, Ted has created notecards and ordered notepads and mousepads with our logo.

Collection Report: Jeanne reported on the many additions to the Society in the last year.

The City has donated:

- Eight banks of flat files, aerial photos, and plat maps, all from the Engineering Department. Five of the files are in the office to hold the photos and plats, and the rest are at the Depot, protecting fragile documents.
- 385 slides from the Community Development Department, with incredible shots of places around the City from the 1970s, including many that are not there anymore. The slides were scanned at Costco, and Emory Anderson has been making them look great and posting them to Facebook. They will eventually be added to our website.
- Black and white photos of Excelsior Blvd. taken in 1981 were donated by the City's Planning Department. Many of the buildings pictured were demolished to make way for Excelsior and Grand, so they are great point-in-time shots. Emory has also worked to retouch these.

Private donors include:

- Fred Mutchler, a Park resident and antique dealer, who donated an amazing 371 artifacts pertaining to St. Louis Park, ranging from tiny Lions Club pins to a 200-lb. manhole cover. These will be highlights of displays in our new museum!

- Two showcases donated by Manny Camilon, recently retired City inspector and antique dealer. Kathy Johnson used many pieces of the Mutchler collection to make displays in these cases: one with a business theme and one relating to schools.
- Margaret Fornell Maunder sent in some wonderful photos that she took in the 1930s, many from the top of the City's first water tower. Margaret was from the Class of 1937, and is a cousin of Society board members Paul Linnee and Bob Jorvig. One of these photos was featured in the "Last Glance" portion of the St. Louis Park Magazine. Other photos were posted to Facebook and greatly appreciated.
- Out of the blue we received a set of senior photographs, with no year or explanation of where they had come from. After some investigation it turned out to be the Class of 1933; this was one of the two classes that did not issue an *Echowen* yearbook, to our knowledge, which made these photos that much more valuable.
- Tim Bailey donated many materials related to the Ambassador Hotel, including two scrapbooks that his mother rescued from the trash when the hotel closed. Also included were many photographs of the hotel and its famous domed pool.

Microfilm Reader: Jeanne was also successful in writing a Minnesota Legacy grant application for \$10,000 to obtain a digital microfilm reader. We also obtained a \$3,000 grant to purchase 87 reels of microfilm of City newspapers that we have no copies of. She will be applying for another grant for microfilm of papers we have stored in the Depot, and a third grant for reels of microfilm of the papers we have bound copies of in the office. We have already obtained a free microfilm cabinet from the Sherburne County Historical Society. The machine is digital, and allows the user to either print out a selection or save it to a thumb drive.

Volunteer Recognition: Ted thanked the many volunteers who have worked with the Board through the year:

- Emory Anderson, our go-to photographer, who has retouched and posted many, many photos on Facebook over the years
- Doug Johnson, whose expertise on railroads kept the participants of our Depot Open House rapt for three hours
- Kathy Johnson, who restored the Depot to its railroad roots with photos and artifacts, and put together the displays of artifacts in the office. Kathy also organized the genealogy event
- Kate Langley, who worked with Ted to design the Park History Today e-newsletter
- Joanna McPeck, who worked with Bonnie to redesign the Re-Echo and is a member of the Programming Committee.
- Tony Notermann, who redesigned our website and transferred it to a web-based program
- Rick Sewall, whose knowledge of the Park is helpful to the Board and people who come to office hours seeking information.
- Mark Toretzky, who designed our new logo and created St. Louis Park-themed coloring pages for kids

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and Marti Biegler became our newest member.

Next meeting is Tuesday, October 6, 2015, at the Society office at 3546 Dakoka Ave., Suite C.