



The Re-ECHO

St. Louis Park

A Newsletter for the members of the St. Louis Park Historical Society

Parkette Reunion

A fifty year reunion of the St. Louis Park Parkettes is scheduled for April 22, 2006 at the Downtown Marriott City Center in Minneapolis. With the encouragement of the St. Louis Park Historical Society, the reunion is being planned by a group of former Parkette members. This committee is trying to contact all former Parkettes, parents, and Parkette

Fan Club members. They are encouraged to contact:

Jennifer Davis Newell
Email JLN7550@AOL.com
Phone 952 401 0111

The Parkettes were a dance organization that began in 1956 with St. Louis Park high school girls. They were the cheerleader/dancers for the Minneapolis Lakers basketball team

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Harold Enestvedt

The Re-ECHO is published quarterly by the St. Louis park Historical Society and is written by Robert C. Reiss. Its purpose is to acquaint the members, volunteers and friends on how the activities, programs and resources of the Society are used to preserve the history of St. Louis Park. The name was inspired by the ECHO newspaper published by and for the students of St. Louis Park High School since 1917.

Robert C. Reiss

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Harold Enestvedt was the "Father of the St. Louis Park schools." He served as superintendent for 26 years from 1948 until 1974 (today the average tenure for superintendents nationwide is 31/2 years). He lead Park schools through the tremulous period of growth in the 1950's and 60's.

Harold graduated from St. Olaf where he majored in history and mathematics and took the required courses for teaching. Immediately after graduation, he started working on his Masters degree in administration at the University of Minnesota. It took him three summers of heavy course work. His first job was teaching in Watson and Comfry, Minnesota. His next eight years were spent as Superintendent at Sanford, MN. In 1939, he took a job as Superintendent at Sleepy Eye and then moved to Waseca for 31/2 years. In 1948, he began the job as Superintendent of St. Louis Park.

When Enestvedt took over, he had to prepare to meet a tremendous growth in the school population. At that time there were 96 teachers and 3300 students in the public schools. By the school year 1969/70, there were 11600 students enrolled and there were over 900 employees in the school district.

The process of building a new school building took about three years. To get sufficient space to house the students, classes were held in the libraries, cafeterias and corridors. Double shifts were held in the Junior/Senior High in 1954/55 and 1955/56.

Additions were being completed to Lenox and Brookside in 1948. By 1950, school construction was at its peak. Additions were made to Central High in 1952, 1963 and 1967. Fern Hill was built in 1950, Park Knoll in 1952, Ethel Baston in 1955, and the current senior high in 1956 (which require an addition in 1967). Aquila was built in 1957 with an addition in 1967, Cedar Manor in 1957, Westwood

Harold Enestvedt, cont'd

Junior High in 1959 with additions in 1967, Peter Hobart in 1967, and Susan Lindgren in 1968. In this period 16 separate building bond issues were enacted. Under Enestvedt the amortization schedules for paying off the bonds was completed in 1981 and at that time the school system was debt free.

Enestvedt's accomplishments were not just about class rooms and class size. He was responsible for establishing a reputation for innovation and excellence that has attracted many families to St. Louis Park. Instructional programs were standardized, and achievement testing, curriculum development and summer remedial programs were introduced. Many of these programs continue today.

Teacher contracts under Enestvedt contained a strong incentive for teachers to continue to grow and develop their areas of expertise. They were rewarded on a salary schedule for each 15 credits earned beyond their Bachelor or Masters degrees.

One of the highlights of Enestvedt's tenure was starting "The Lighted School." This program involved reaching out to every segment of the community from preschool to senior citizens to draw the community together to fulfill its needs and demands. An early version of Children First?

Harold Enestvedt left a lasting mark on St. Louis Park schools.

What ever happened to

Nate Goldstone?

Nate Goldstone was Brookside Drug Store from 1941 until 1988. The drug store was located at Excelsior Boulevard and Brookside Avenue. It had a real soda fountain. During the 1950's and 60's it served coffee to businessmen in the morning, sandwiches to the working women at lunch, and chocolate sundaes to the kids after school. Finally with the discount stores and groceries putting in prescription departments Nate decided to go out of business. He liquidated, sold the building and retired.

Nate moved to Monrovia, California and lives near his younger son, his granddaughter and grandson both of whom are in college. Rain falling in California has caused homes to fall away onto the homes below. With this he has concluded that Minnesota is not all that bad a place to live. He has joined the Lions Club out there

but still misses the friends he has in Minnesota and sends his regards.

Nate keeps in touch with St. Louis Park through the Re-Echo. He recently wrote the following memories that were triggered by the El Patio article:

"I watched Culbertson's change hands and George Faust trying his hand at running it, followed by Anchor Inn, followed by Bongiorno's. That was a good restaurant. Mr. Bongiorno, however, overextended himself when he remodeled the building. It seems he made some serious structural changes to the building that took much of his capital to bring the building up to code. The restaurant started out a winner, but David had to cut quality in order to save money.....I was there long enough to see Duggan's Steakhouse come to life."

Summer Depot Hours

The St. Louis Park Historical Society is opening The Depot for public visits on Saturday afternoons throughout the summer. Beginning Saturday, June 4, 2005, and continuing through September 3, 2005, The Depot will be open from 1:00 PM through 4:00 PM.

The Depot is the home of the St. Louis Park Historical Society and is located in Jorvig Park at 36th Street and Brunswick Avenue. Hikers and bikers from the Southwest trail are welcome.

Our other site is in the Lenox Community Center. This site is open to the public from 10:00 AM until 12:00 noon on Mondays and Thursdays, other times by appointment.

The Depot and Lenox are the archival locations of the Historical Society's historic documents. Members of the Society will be available during the open hours to help anyone interested in researching an event or time in St. Louis Park history.

This and That

Ten copies of Don Swenson's book, "Something in the Water" have been purchased by the St. Louis Park Junior High School for use in the yearly segment on St. Louis Park History. The book is in its fourth reprinting and will continue to be available. The book can be obtained through the St. Louis Park Historical Society from Bob Reiss at 952 470 1762 or Rcreiss@Aol.com.

New York Times author and former St. Louis Parkite, Thomas Friedman, has written a new book entitled

"The World is Flat, A Brief History of the 21st Century."

The St. Louis Park Historical Society has acquired a new computer to catalog our collection. Past Perfect software, donated by two of our members, is a program specifically designed for organizations such as ours. Kathy Johnson has started the very long process of cataloging and data entry,

Beehive Parks Update

The upgrade of Highway 100 from Highway 394 to 36th Street in St. Louis Park had been tentatively scheduled for 2008, but recent action by the 2005 legislature means that it might be delayed until 2014. The Twin West Chamber of Commerce have been meeting with the City of St. Louis Park to encourage the legislature to rethink this date. In addition there has been discussion about temporarily adding additional lanes instead of a complete update.

The Historical Society has been attending meetings with MnDOT for years. These meetings have been mostly informational, but based upon this information gleaned the Society is making some suggestions about what it thinks could be done. Current plans for the upgrade do not include any change to the park located on Highway 7, but the Minnetonka Blvd. site cannot be saved.

The Highway 7 site borders the Southwest hiking/biking trail and could be made accessible from the trail. It could be a resting place for the users particularly if a well and water were made available. This park originally included a well but one

does not currently exist. Under the upgrade plans for Highway 100, there would be little benefit to MnDOT to maintain this park. This would be better handled be Hennepin County or the city.

The two parks are on the National Register of Historic Places, which must to be considered in any changes that are made. The Historical Society would like to see the few remaining structures at the Minnetonka site moved to the Highway 7 site. This would be more significant than moving them to some other site such as Wolfe or Jorvig park.

The disposition of the park problem is really insignificant in the overall Highway 100 plan. MnDOT would probably be happy if the problem could be solved before the main work starts. It has people and departments to just work on problems like this. It also has funds allocated for highway beautification and projects. The Historical Society would like to see some civic or neighborhood organization take on this project and see if they could push the right buttons at MnDOT.

Membership Application\ Renewal

Clip this form. Make sure the mailing address on the back is correct. Add a winter/summer address if applicable.

Select the membership category that is best for you.

Family \$25.00
Senior \$15.00
Student \$ 5.00
Business Donation

Please send your check and 2005 membership application/renewal to:

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

Parkettes Cont'ed

until the team moved to Los Angeles in 1960. From 1963 to 1983 they were the cheerleaders for the Minnesota Vikings.

The Parkettes consisted of up to forty girls each year between the ages of fifteen and seventeen. Each year trials were held to replace the older girls.

The Parkettes were an independent organization separate from the high school. They practiced in and around the school and in smaller groups performed as the high school cheerleaders.

The Parkette organization was paid by the Vikings for its cheer leading services, but the young women received no payment. Each year the money

financed a trip for the Parkettes somewhere in the world. There were several trips to Hawaii, and other places including Greece, Italy, Spain, Venezuela, Mexico, the Bahama's and Panama. In many cases they performed for foreign audiences. They were accompanied by parents, and members of the Parkette Fan Club. To supplement the payment from the Vikings, parents sold programs at the games.

The Parkette program was a unique program. At the time it was begun there were few opportunities for high school girls to participate in activities. This program provided them with the opportunity to develop self confidence, discipline and the ability to present themselves well.

Website WWW.Parkette.org

The St. Louis Park Historical Society meets at 7:00 PM on the first Tuesday of every month. The next meetings will be held on:

**August 2, 2005 @ Depot
September 6, 2005 @ Depot
October 4, 2005 @ Lenox
You are invited to attend.**

Mark your Calendar

St. Louis Park Historical Society's Annual

Ice Cream Social September 17, 2005

At Jorvig Park

During World War II the citizens were asked to give up some of their "rights." To prevent "loose lips from sinking ships," each service-man's letters to home were censored. The June 11, 1943 St. Louis Park Dispatch printed this letter sent home by Dan Justad which passed the censor.

"After leaving where we were before we left for here and not knowing we were coming here from there, we could not tell whether we left or not. Never the less, we are now here and not there."