

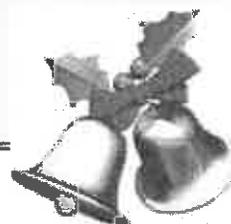


*Deephaven Historical Society Newsletter*  
*Fall Report 2009*

**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:**

The History  
of St. Louis  
Bay, Final  
Excerpt —by  
Barb Sykora

**DHS HOLIDAY PARTY!**  
**December 5th**  
**1:00 PM**



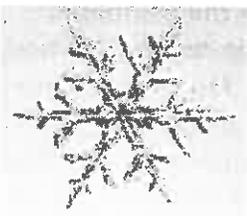
The Deephaven Historical Society will hold their annual Holiday Party on **Saturday, December 5th at 1:00 PM** in the Deephaven City Council Chambers.

We would like residents who have experienced the tornado of May, 1965, to come and share their “tornado experience”. We will have some short visuals of the aftermath.

We would love to have you come and share that experience with other residents! Please call one of the following members and let them know. Thank You!

Bob Gerlicher      952-474-7248, [bookbob@aol.com](mailto:bookbob@aol.com)

Tom Anderson      952-474-3515, [deephaventom@ix.netcom.com](mailto:deephaventom@ix.netcom.com)



**Final Excerpt of The History of St. Louis Bay by Barb Sykora**

On March 1, 1888, Bay of St. Louis Syndicate was incorporated in Ramsey County. The purpose of the Syndicate was to buy, own, improve, plat and sub-divide, sell and deal with land tenements and real mixed and personal estate and property. The main office was to be in St. Paul with a president, vice president and treasurer. Stock was issued and each share was \$100. Charles Gibson and his wife established the Bay of St. Louis Syndicate. There was a \$95,000 mortgage taken out by the Syndicate on May 4, 1888. The mortgage was to be paid, as lots of hotel land would be sold.

*Continued on page 2....*

All lots sold would have to be paid in full in five years with an interest rate of six percent. The first twenty percent of the profits would go to the Syndicate and fifty percent of the sale would go to Gibson. All purchasers of land would have to build a suitable home. The lots that were platted out ran from a modest \$600 to the most expensive lake front property for \$2500, except for the right of way that was given to the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. It was not notarized until June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1889.

The financial woes of the hotel did not end. H. A. Spooner was a contractor and he and his men spent many days on the hotel repairing it during the summer of 1888. Repairs were done all over the hotel. Water closets and washstands were repaired. Barstools and bar furniture and the wine room were repaired. Sixteen days of labor were used to repair the roof. Two dormer windows were replaced. A new vault was dug for the privy and a new privy was built. A new refrigerator replaced an icebox. The stone footing under the laundry was replaced and built up. The janitor's house and the storehouse were moved to a different part of the property and placed on a new foundation together and a door was replaced. A new addition of 4 x 30 feet was added to the laundry room. The engine house was extended and that took 5 days of labor to do. Also, 28 days were spent on a new wing on the Cookhouse with two flights of stairs and the chimney was made larger in the kitchen. The dining room floor foundation was replaced. It took 45 days to build and three days to paint a bandstand at the pavilion. All this was for the cost of \$3728.22! The hotel syndicate paid \$2434.56 but owed a balance of \$1290.66 for which Mr. H. A. Spooner put a lien on the property on August 20, 1888.

Charles Gibson died in St. Louis, Missouri in 1899. His wife, Virginia, age 69, was executrix of his will and she petitioned the probate court of Hennepin County. The document stated that Charles Gibson owned property in the state of Minnesota that did not exceed \$40,000 on June 16, 1900.

The petitioners also included Gibson's children and spouses: Louise Conn, 47 and her husband, Luther, 57, Virginia Hannas, 27, Victor Gibson, 45, Preston Gibson, 41, Charles E. Gibson, 39, Elizabeth Perry, 37 and her husband, Richard Perry, 39 and son, Charles G. Perry, 13, Gerolt Gibson, 35, and Easton R. Gibson, 26. The Probate Court of Hennepin County appraised the hotel and grounds. The grounds, out buildings and hotel were valued at \$19,130. There was virtually no furniture in the hotel! The list was very short: seven pictures, an elk head, parlor table, dining room table, eight other tables, eight lamps, six rocking chairs, one sofa and settee, one arm chair, four heating stoves, one kitchen stove, three wash stands, one writing desk, one sideboard, 34 bed sheets, 10 bedspreads and the rest of the contents were dishes, linens and cooking utensils. The value was appraised at \$250. By this evidence, the hotel was not in running condition. There were no beds listed in the inventory! Virginia Gibson received one third of all property and the children were to receive one seventh each of the property.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1900, Deephaven was incorporated as a village. A census was taken in May 1900 which showed a population of 332 people. The petition for incorporation state that a large portion of the lands of Deephaven had been platted into lots and was filed at the Hennepin County Register of Deeds. As the century turned, the hotel continued to struggle. Most of the hotel business and tourists did not come to this part of the lake. It was too out of the way even with the depot of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad in front of the hotel. Few steamers stopped at its pier. Its usefulness as a summer hotel came to an end when the last hotel manager, Mr. Timberlake, tried in vain to fill it with guests during the 1903 summer season. In the July 24<sup>th</sup> issue of the "Minnetonka Record" was a short article about the lack of southern patrons arriving for the summer season because of the unusually cool weather they were having in the south. All hoped they would arrive by August 1, 1903. There was immense competition with other bigger and grander hotels on the lake.

*Continued on page 3 ...*

Competition among the hotels was so intense that the Hotel St. Louis accused the Minneapolis and St. Louis and the Great Northern Railroads from turning tourists away from the hotel. Railroad employees who were not friendly to the Milwaukee Railroad, which ran in front of the St. Louis Hotel, misdirected customers with reservations. Even the hotels that remained open had a hard time filling up with tourists.

Lake Minnetonka was becoming an area of permanent homes for local Minnesotans. To make matters worse for the hotel and the surrounding area, the Minnetonka Yacht Club burned down on January 14, 1904. It was a total loss. The building and contents were valued at \$25,000. It took the owner, Theodore Wetmore, all summer to finally remove the burned out remains of the club, had the burned trees removed and the grounds leveled off. The "Minnetonka Record" called the island a "desolate spot". It definitely was not a view summer tourists would have wanted to look at out their hotel window. For the summer seasons of 1904 and 1905, the Hotel St. Louis was practically untenanted.



*Minnetonka Ice Yacht Clubhouse founded in 1899,  
burned down in 1904.*

The Gibson heirs were busy selling off property. By the end of 1905, the Gibson's had nearly sold off all the lake front property owned by their late father. The rush for the property by wealthy Minneapolitans was because of the speculation of the trolley service coming to this part of Deephaven for 1906.

In the February 16<sup>th</sup> issue of "The Minnetonka Record", there was speculation that Thomas Lowry, who owned the Tonka Bay Hotel, Big Island Amusement Park and the trolley line, was considering refurbishing the St. Louis Hotel. It was an idea Thomas Lowry had considered when his trolley company had purchased the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul's tracks that ran in front of the hotel's lakefront. The hotel never opened for the 1906 summer season. Charles Gibson's sons, Victor and Charles, made the decision to sell the hotel and property for residential lakefront homes. Dismantling at the hotel had already begun with the out-buildings. Gibson's sons already had platted out the land surrounding the hotel for development. It was thought that the trolley line now in place in Deephaven, as the area was now called, would be a popular place to reside.

In 1907, the Hotel St. Louis was torn down by the Northwestern Lumber and Wrecking Company of Minneapolis. It was an end to an era that had changed Deephaven from a wilderness to a tourist destination to a suburb of Minneapolis in less than forty years.

***This concludes our History of St. Louis Bay series. Thank you to Barb Sykora for her donation of this very interesting look back!***

### ***Renewed Memberships***

Thanks to all who sent in their renewals for DHS membership! If you have friends that are interested in participation in the DHS please refer them to any officer of the DHS and we will make sure they get an enrollment form. We appreciate your patronage!

*Happy Holidays*

# DHS

**Acknowledgements –  
Current members  
Thank You!**

John Ahern  
Harry Allen  
Tim & Pat Alt  
Tom & Nancy Anderson  
Steven & Leah Barnacle  
Marty Baskerville  
John & Nan Beard  
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**Take advantage of the books that are available for sale at  
City Hall!**

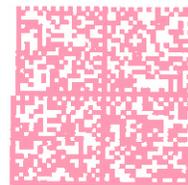
Picturesque Deephaven	\$15.95
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Tim Alt 952-470-8889  
Mark Read 952-474-4091  
**Newsletter**  
Bill Robinson 952-473-3130

Meetings held the last Saturday of each month at 8.30 AM in the Deephaven City Council Chambers.  
All Members Welcome!

**DEEPAVEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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DEEPAVEN, MN 55331**



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