



# THE MINNETONKA MILLWHEEL SPRING 2023



## CMHS President's Message

**Greetings Members and Friends,**

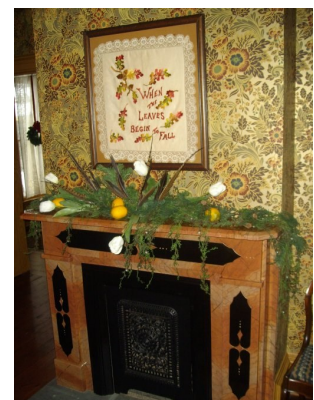
As we usher in 2023, we pause to reflect on our work last year. As always, the CMHS board focuses on our mission to discover, preserve and disseminate knowledge and information about the history of Minnetonka to its citizens.

We recently welcomed Barbara Lindgren to our board of directors. You can read about Barbara's story of discovery about her family's history below. In October, along with the Hopkins Historical Society, CMHS hosted a successful Antiques Appraisal. Last fall, CMHS arranged and coordinated several educational and entertaining presentations for the City of Minnetonka, and we plan more this spring. Look for information below as well in the Minnetonka Memo.

After a two-year hiatus due to Covid, we once again hosted the Holiday Open House. Thanks to Wayzata High School student volunteers for beautifully decorating the house for a Victorian Christmas and to those of you who attended the event. It is our primary fund raiser, and we rely on your generous contributions to sustain our organization.

As you will read in this issue, we were fortunate to receive a tapestry that once hung in the dining room of the Dana Frear House. We hope to have it restored to its former glory. Finally, take a look back in time as we examine a train wreck that occurred in 1964 just west of the Plymouth Avenue bridge.

**Sincerely,  
Jan Cook**



## Welcome to Barbara Lindgren to the CMHS board of directors!

Welcome to Barbara Lindgren to the CMHS board of directors! Being invited to serve on the board of the Minnetonka Historical Society capped off a year in which history came alive for me in some unique ways. Having grown up in SE Minneapolis in a house that was built in 1903 I have always loved old homes, so it seemed a natural fit to become a tour guide at the Burwell House last summer. As I studied the Burwell family history, the home, and the milling industry, I was at the same time doing some family history research. My great-grandfather lived in NE Minneapolis and was a miller. But I began to wonder if I could find out which mill he might have worked at. By late fall I did discover that he was a packer at the Pillsbury A Mill, a building which still stands, but has been repurposed to house artists' lofts and office space.

Having lived in Minnetonka for only 6 years I still have much to learn about not only the city's history, but of the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations who first inhabited what we now know as the City of Minnetonka. I look forward to working with the board to discover, preserve, and share the stories of its history.



## City of Minnetonka Historical Society Educational Presentations

All presentations are in the Minnetonka Community Room at the City of Minnetonka



### 'The Orphan Trains' - March 30, 1:00 pm.

View a 30-minute documentary video about a little-known chapter in American history. Heavy European immigration to America in the 1800s resulted in many orphaned and abandoned children – especially in New York City. A program – called the “orphan trains” – was created to relocate an estimated 250,000 orphaned and abandoned children from East Coast to the Midwest. Approximately 5,000-6,000 children were sent to Minnesota via the orphan trains, nearly half of whom arrived between 1882 and 1892. Presented by Jan Cook, City of Minnetonka Historical Society



### 'Snuffy's Corner' - April 24, 1:00 pm.

Take a nostalgic trip down memory lane as we present the history of Snuffy's Corner at Highways 7 and 101 in Minnetonka. In the 1950s to 70s there was a Malt Shop, drive in Movie Theatre, putt putt golf, go cart track. Many memories of teenage fun at that corner will be presented by Bill Jepson, CMHS.



## The Minnetonka Historical Society Board

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**Bill Jepson, Barb Lindgren, Ian Baxter, Stephanie Herrick,  
Jan Cook, Lisa Fowler, Rick Krueger, (not pictured [Jim Whisler](#) see profile)**

**Jan Cook - President - [jbcook220@gmail.com](mailto:jbcook220@gmail.com)  
Lisa Fowler - Vice President - [lisaannfowler01@gmail.com](mailto:lisaannfowler01@gmail.com)  
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Ian Baxter - Technology - [iankbaxter@live.com](mailto:iankbaxter@live.com)  
Barb Lindgren - Collections - [barbara.lindgren@yahoo.com](mailto:barbara.lindgren@yahoo.com)**

### **CMHS 2023 Calendar**

**CMHS Presentation - The Orphan Trains March 30, 1:00 pm. Mtka City Hall  
CMHS Presentation - Snuffy's Corner April 24, 1:00 pm. Mtka City Hall**

**Burwell House Tours - June through September  
Tuesday, Saturday, Sundays 1-4 PM**

## China Set donation and Frear Tapestry Restoration

Last fall, the City of Minnetonka Historical Society received a generous donation from **Peter and Cherie Hill** of Minnetonka of a china set and a mural that had originally belonged to the Frear family. CMHS collections volunteers are currently working to clean, catalog, and store the fifty or so pieces of china in the set. As for the mural, it is in slightly more delicate shape, having been rolled up and stored for the last forty years. In fact, we do not even know what the mural depicts, as it is too delicate to unroll (though a quick peek at the corner suggests it is a landscape scene). All we know is that it measures about four feet long and used to hang in the Frear family's dining room.

For help with the mural, we have reached out to our friends at the Midwest Art Conservation Center (MACC). Their art conservators will help us to treat and restore the mural. First, they will partially unroll the mural and formulate a plan for fully unrolling it, consolidating any flaking paint, and re-rolling it for safer long-term storage. This initial step is currently underway - we dropped the mural off with MACC staff at their lab in Minneapolis in early January. MACC staff will also provide us with a proposal for a full treatment/restoration of the mural. Once we have the proposals from MACC, we will then apply for grant funding to cover the cost of these treatments. The process of treating the mural is sure to be an interesting one, and we will continue to share updates on it. Ultimately, of course, our goal is to get the mural in stable enough condition that we may display it for all to enjoy.

As always, if you have an object you are interested in donating to the City of Minnetonka Historical Society, please contact Stephanie Herrick via email at [stephanie.herrick@cityofminnetonkahistory.org](mailto:stephanie.herrick@cityofminnetonkahistory.org).  
By Stephanie Herrick



## The History of Minnetonka Mills Book

Our book; *Minnetonka Mills: A Historical Profile in Pictures and Stories of a Community in Minnetonka, Minnesota*, incorporates stories, photos and historical information about the Minnetonka Mills area from 1852 on. The proceeds help us to preserve the heritage of Minnetonka. To order, please call the Minnetonka Historical Society at 952-930-3962 or visit our website at [www.minnetonka-history.org](http://www.minnetonka-history.org),

Dana Frear Minnetonka History manuscript update:

The Frear manuscript is almost finished being prepared for submission to be published. This summer we will be applying for another MNHS Grant for publishing it as a book.



## 1964 Train Wreck in Minnetonka: No one killed, 32 injured.

With train wrecks being in the national news we thought we should revisit an interesting and tragic Minnetonka story that made the headlines of the Mpls Star paper on Saturday May 2, 1964. Fortunately no one died, but 32 people were injured when their passenger train was heading west at 60 MPH from Minneapolis at 9:45AM.

Just to the west of the Plymouth Road bridge, north of the Burwell House, some of the cars in the middle of an east-bound freight train, going 15 miles per hour, left the track and the passenger train slammed into them. 26 passenger cars and 12 freight cars were strewn around the swampy area as 16 ambulances pulled people out of the wreckage, and brought most of them to Methodist Hospital.

If you have any more information about this that you would like to discuss, please visit our CMHS Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/cityofminnetonkahistory](http://www.facebook.com/cityofminnetonkahistory)

**MINNEAPOLIS TEMPERATURES**

Midnight .51	5 a.m. ....42	10 a.m. ...53
1 a.m. ....50	6 a.m. ....46	11 a.m. ...55
2 a.m. ....48	7 a.m. ....46	Noon ....61
3 a.m. ....46	8 a.m. ....46	1 p.m. ....61
4 a.m. ....44	9 a.m. ....49	

Precip. Midnight-1 p.m., 0. Forecast: Little Change.

# THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR

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Saturday, May 2, 1964

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## 32 Injured in Tonka Rail Wreck



### Passenger Train Rams Pile-up

*Partial list of injured passengers: Page 2A*

At least 32 persons were injured, one critically, when a Great Northern Railway mail and passenger train ran into a freight derailment about 12 miles west of Minneapolis at 9:45 a.m. today.

The accident occurred near McGinty Road a mile east of Crosby Road in Minnetonka.

Crewmen of the west-bound passenger train and the east-bound freight train said the wreck was caused when cars in the middle of the 135-car freight jumped the track and one overturned in front of the other train.

Emergency equipment and 15 ambulances dispatched to the scene plowed through swampy ground to reach the scene where 24 of the 26 cars and the five diesel units of the passenger train were piled up with about a dozen freight cars.

Twenty-seven of the injured were taken to Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park and five to North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale. A railroad spokesman said it was believed the most seriously injured were among crewmen of the passenger train.

A spokesman said there were 65 passengers in the coaches and "a few" in sleeping cars.

Arrangements were being made to bring the uninjured passengers to Minneapolis by bus and send another train to the west coast via the St. Cloud branch of the Great Northern.

Wrecking derricks were being brought to the scene from Minneapolis and Fargo.

Most of the freight train was detached from its wrecked cars and pulled back to Willmar, Minn., where its run to Minneapolis had started.

"We were moving along at 15 miles an hour when one of our cars derailed and skidded over onto the westbound track," said Gene Wicklund, 43, engineer of eastbound freight. "About three or four cars followed the first car onto the westbound track."

"We immediately radioed to No. 27 (the Great Northern passenger train moving west on the other track)

"No. 27 was coming around a curve at about the back. They carried him out same time and hit the first later."

Train wreckage strewn right of way in Minnetonka after freight-passenger pile-up 12 miles west of Minneapolis

## THE MILLWHEEL

### Greetings from the **City of Minnetonka Historical Society**

The City of Minnetonka Historical Society is an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1970 as the successor to the Minnetonka History Commission. We are a non-profit dedicated to preserving Minnetonka's past. Our mission is to protect, preserve and promote our unique history for generations to come. In order to fulfil our mission, we are dependent on member support and appreciate your continued help.

#### **Benefits of membership**

- **Voting privileges.** You'll have a "voice" in preserving Minnetonka's past.
- **Subscription to *The Millwheel*,** our semi-annual newsletter.
- **Discounts on Society events.**
- **Invitations to our community education programs.**
- **Support the maintenance and operation of the CMHS Museum**
- **Support the preservation of CMHS's ever-growing archival collection.**

#### **Levels of membership**

- **\$15.00 Youth (ages 25 and under)**
- **\$25.00 Individual**
- **\$40.00 Family**
- **\$75.00 Small Business Sponsor**
- **I would like to provide additional assistance in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_**

\*The City of Minnetonka Historical Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit; your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.

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Name\* \_\_\_\_\_

Address\* \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \* \_\_\_\_\_

Email\* \_\_\_\_\_ \*Required

#### **Membership Level (check below)**

Individual \_\_\_\_

Youth \_\_\_\_

Family \_\_\_\_

Small Business Sponsor \_\_\_\_

**City of Minnetonka Historical Society**

**c/o City of Minnetonka**

**14600 Minnetonka Blvd.**

**Minnetonka, MN 55345**

**Website: [minnetonka-history.org](http://minnetonka-history.org)**

**Thank you for your continued interest and support!**