

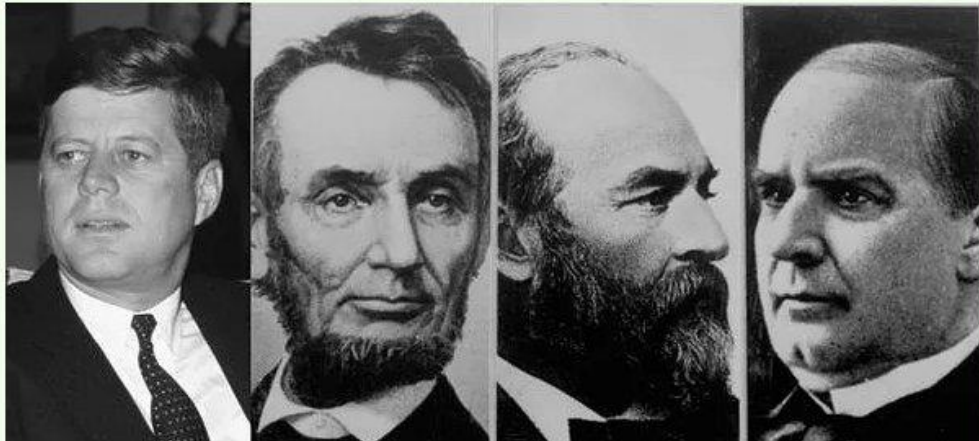


## THE MINNETONKA MILLWHEEL SPRING 2019



### Minnetonka Historical Society Spring Presentation on Tuesday May 7th

Our Spring 2019 presentation will be a little different than our usual focus on Minnetonka History. Some of our members really enjoyed this local presentation when they saw it last year. It is entitled "Seven US Presidents and the Medical Details of How they Died in Office" by Lorraine Kretchman, an expert on the topic. It will be held at the Minnetonka City Hall on Tuesday May 7th at 7PM. She will describe the medical conditions and circumstances of their passing ... four of them died by assassination, can you name them?



Kennedy, Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley.

## Minnetonka History Trivia Game

We will be hosting a trivia contest at the Unmapped Brewing Company in Glen Lake Minnetonka at 7pm on Wednesday April 17th. We will present 30 questions with accompanying photographs about Minnetonka and Glen Lake History. Join us for a fun way to learn about our interesting past while drinking their home made beer (or non alcoholic beverages if you prefer). Prizes will be awarded.

Example: What was the name of the prosperous business that occupied the same property as the Unmapped Brewing Company for over 100 years?  
(This 1940's photograph is a hint.)





## MHS Inventory Update

We finished collecting all the data from each artifact in the Burwell House last year and now we are doing the same for the items in our museum. It involves photographing each piece from all sides, measuring, determining condition, and entering a detailed description into the Past Perfect Software. We are also in the process of moving many of the items from our storage room to the museum as well. We are trying to focus our collection on those artifacts that are relevant to our mission while balancing the need to conserve space in the museum and house. And also the need to preserve resources in the society. We are looking for volunteers this spring and summer if you are interested.





## **Violent confrontation over the dam on Minnehaha Creek in 1893.**

An excerpt from Dana Frear's "History of Minnetonka Town"

With the upcoming spring floods expected on Minnehaha Creek, here is an interesting excerpt from local historian Dana Frear's "History of Minnetonka Town", published in the Deephaven Argus Feb. 15, 1952. (We recently discovered it in his notes during our Inventory Project.) He describes a violent incident on Minnehaha Creek in 1893 where there were many disagreements among the local residents about where the dam should be placed and how high the water level should be. This effected the Lake Minnetonka property owner's lakeshore levels, the local farmers wells, and flooding on Minnehaha Creek shoreline properties:

One night in 1891 the old dirt dam washed out so completely that its repair was considered in advisable, and it was abandoned. This was supposed to be an act of nature, but it was man-made. The names of the culprits is known. (But were not named in this article). In its place a wooden suspension bridge was erected to replace the dirt road over the dam, and a new dam was built under the Chapter 381 Special Laws of 1891... in order to maintain a uniform height, not to be above extreme high water mark of waters in the Lake and not less than two feet above the then present level of water which was 13 feet 3 inches below the top of the main piers of the bridge over the Narrows between the main Lake and Grays Bay. (The old dam was where Plymouth Road intersects Minnetonka Boulevard today.)

In 1893, the county erected a new dam 100 feet above the old dam at a cost of \$2,000. The new dam was constructed of 4x12 inch planks on a foundation of timber cribs allowing the water to flow over the top of the dam. Then the stream below the dam became a rushing rapids and quite deep and swift, with many good swimming holes along the way. These gates, used to regulate the flow of water, were chained and locked down to prevent their being opened by unauthorized persons when the water was needed to maintain the Lake at the required level.

Soon after being built, the chain was broken and the gates were opened, so the county sent a deputy sheriff to guard the gates. Peter Schussler, who needed the water to run the Globe Flour Mill that he owned on Minnehaha Creek just east of Hopkins, and Arthur Boyce, a nearby farmer who needed the water for his livestock, went to Minnetonka Mills to open the gates. They found the deputy on guard with a gun. He refused to permit them to open the gates. They maneuvered around and grabbed the deputy and took his gun away from him. While Boyce held him, Schussler opened the gates and threw the gun into the rushing stream flowing through the sluice-way several feet deep. The deputy jerked away from Boyce and jumped into the water to rescue his gun. Not being able to find it, he climbed into his buggy soaking wet and drove back to town. The gates were then closed to recover the gun, which was turned over to the county auditor when the sheriff refused to accept it. No further attempt was made by the county to guard the gates.

There followed many lawsuits for property damage, (detailed in Dana Frear's History), after the dam was rebuilt in 1893 until it rotted away over the next five years. In 1897 the county was authorized by the Minn. Supreme Court, (83 Minn. 464), to construct a dam at Grays Bay to maintain the water in the Lake at a uniform height. Over a dozen property owners on the Creek between Grays Bay and Edina filed claims for damages, contending that the dam so lowered the water in the Creek as to greatly injure their property. Damages totaling \$13,800 were allowed for them, including \$1500 for C. H. Burwell.

Editors note:

We hope to print more excerpts from Dana Frears 300 page history of Minnetonka in the future.

## MHS Calendar: Spring 2019

**April 17** Wed. at 7pm - First Minnetonka History Trivia Contest  
At The Unmapped Brewery in Glen Lake on Excelsior Boulevard and Eden Prairie Road

**May 7** - Tues. at 7pm - Presentation about the deaths in office of 7 US Presidents - At the Minnetonka City Hall

**Burwell House Tours: June through August:**  
Tues., Sat., and Sun. Noon to 3 PM

**June 22** - Sat. 10am to 4pm - Annual Summer Festival - Tours of the Burwell House, activities for children, arts and crafts, live music, food!

## The MHS Monthly Magazine

Petey Ellis, our board member, publishes an interesting newsletter each month to keep you apprised of Minnetonka History events and topics. They are free and are sent out by email to our member list. You can access the latest issue on the tab link above "Monthly Magazine"

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## Minnetonka Historical Society Board

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**THE MILLWHEEL**

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**MHS Membership**

All of us in the Minnetonka Historical Society would like to invite you to become a member. With your membership, you will receive this semi-annual Historical Society Newsletter, "The Millwheel." You will be kept up to date with Society events and happenings in and around Minnetonka and have a 'voice' in preserving Minnetonka's past. We all greatly appreciate the support you have given us, so that we can continue with our vital projects and activities that preserve Minnetonka's heritage.

Individual: \$15.00, Family: \$15.00, Student: \$10.00, Senior: \$10.00

Contributor: \$25.00, Sponsor: \$50.00, Benefactor: \$100.00

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a new membership \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help the Minnetonka Historical Society by: \_\_\_\_\_