

HISTORY OF MOUND

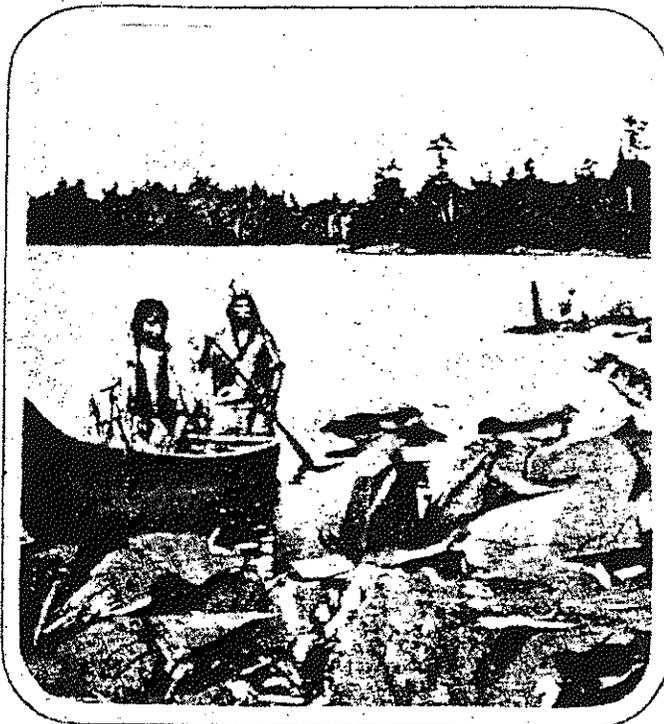
(Compiled by the Westonka Historical Society)

Written by LaVonne M. Adams

DISCOVERY OF LAKE MINNETONKA

"Early in the 19th century, Lake Minnetonka was a secret lake to all but the Indians. It was not only secret, but sacred; a place to worship the Great Spirit, and build mounds for last resting places. The 'Big Woods' offered game, the clear lake provided fish, and edible plants and herbs grew in profusion along the shore. This was the land that white men found in spite of the reticence of the Indians." (Quote from Ruth J. Heffelfinger, in the book *Picturesque Minnetonka*.)

The Indians were never permanent settlers around Lake Minnetonka. The Dakota Indians lived along the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, at Lake Calhoun, and Shakopee. They came to Lake Minnetonka often to hunt and fish and to gather wild rice, roots, and berries.



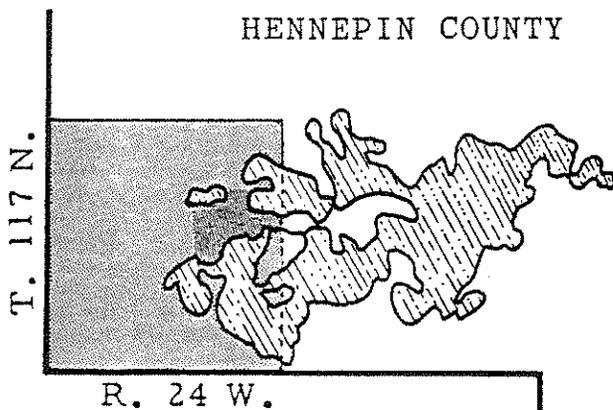
Minnehaha Creek and Minnehaha Falls is the only outlet of Lake Minnetonka, and the lake was not discovered until in the year 1822 a young drummer boy from Fort Snelling, Joseph Brown, and his young friend, John Snelling, son of the commander, went into the Indian Country down Minnehaha Creek in their canoe. They worked their canoe to the Falls, made portage, and finally came to an Indian camp on Big Island in Lake Minnetonka.

Thirty years later, a period of rapid settlement began, and crude boats went up the creek to the lake. Among the first making this trip were Governor Ramsey, Col. Stevens, and Dr. Alonzo Ames.

In 1850, Governor Ramsey wrote in his diary: "The lake was a perfect inland sea, surrounded by most beautiful timber and wherever we landed, the soil was of the richest character." He has been credited with naming the lake "Minnetonka" or, in the Indian language, "Place spread over by water."

FORMATION OF TOWNSHIPS

When the land was platted, it was laid out in townships. On April 10, 1858, Minnetrista Township was formed but was originally called "German Home." This was the extreme southwestern township of Hennepin County, Township 117 N., Range 24 West, consisting of 36 Sections, each 1 mile square.



Mound (darker area) started as a settlement called Mound City within the township of Minnetrista.

The 1857 census indicated nine families living in the township with a population of 40. The 1860 census showed 52 families and a population of 213, while the 1870 census showed 90 families and 600 population.

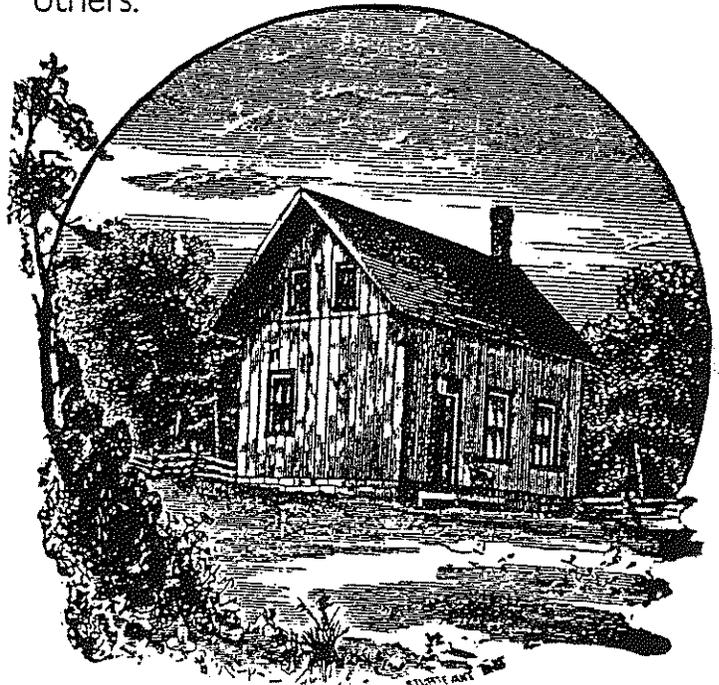
The town government of this township was organized in 1859. The first board of supervisors was Mathias S. Cook, Peter Mitchel, and Ephraim Dodley, with Robert V. Langdon as town clerk. The name "German Home" was dropped and the name of "Minnetrista" was adopted, meaning "crooked water."

BEGINNINGS OF MOUND CITY

Mound derived its name from the Indian mounds once found within the present city limits. They were not built by the Dakota Indians but were made by prehistoric Indians between 300 BC and 100 AD, or 1800 AD. A survey of these mounds was made in 1883. Much interesting information regarding these mounds is given in the book by Melvin Gimmestad, *Historical Backgrounds of Mound, Minnesota*.

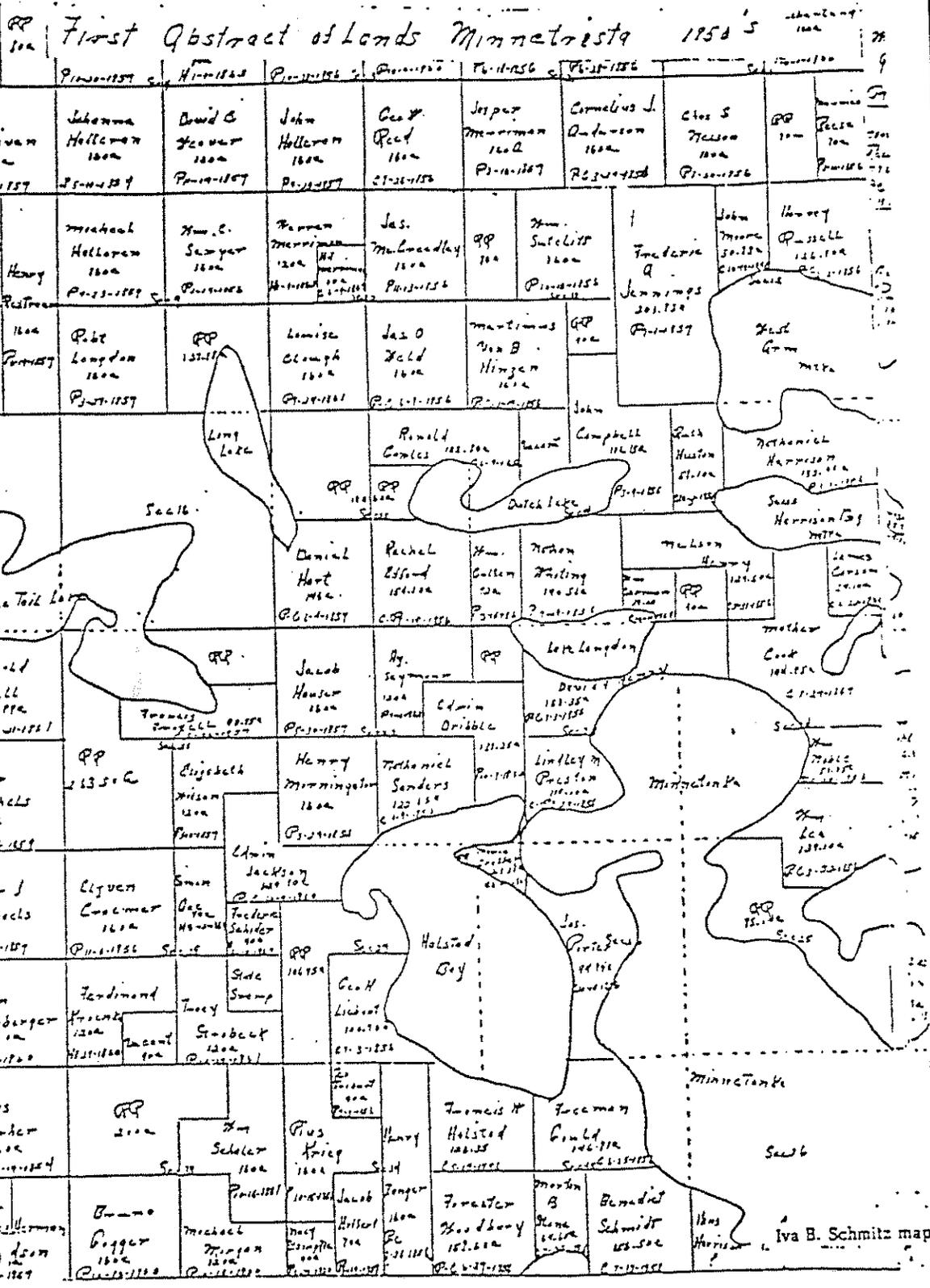
In 1854, Mathias S. Cook built the third log cabin on the Upper Lake on the north shore of the bay named after him, "Cook's Bay." The first settlement was in the northwest corner of the township in 1855.

That same year, Captain Frank Halstead, the town's first justice of the peace, built his log cabin on the southwest shore of Halstead's Bay. Robert Langdon arrived in 1857, and Langdon's Bay is named for him. Harrison's Bay was named for Nathaniel Harrison who settled there in 1856. Others who came before the Civil War were Frank Carman, Andrew and Joseph Boll and many others.



The Hermitage, Lake Minnetonka

MINNETRISTA IN THE 1850's (Map from Picturesque Minnetonka,
1976 Commemorative Issue, published by the Excelsior-
Lake Minnetonka Historical Society)



THE HERMITS OF MINNETONKA

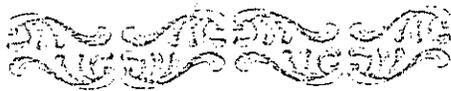
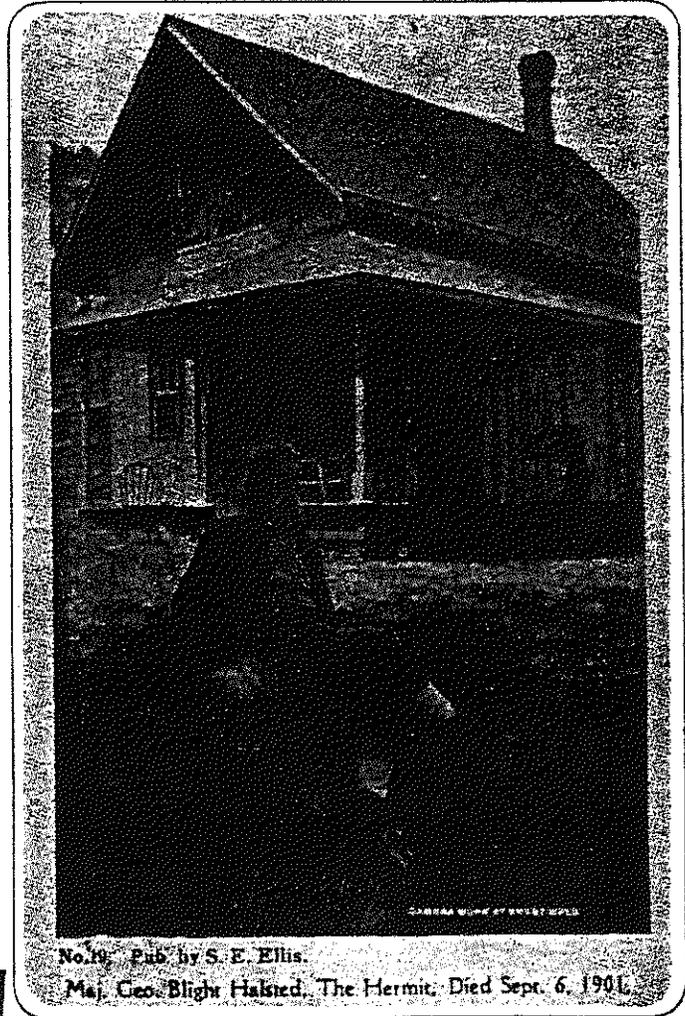
In 1855 Captain Frank Halstead purchased 30 acres of land on what is now known as Halstead's Bay and built his log cabin there. During the Civil War he served as a commander on the flagship "Minnesota," with his brother, Major George Halstead.

After the war, he returned to the Lake and built a larger cabin on the west shore of Cook's Bay known as the "Hermitage."

In the winter of 1875 and 1876 he built the steamer "Mary," but the day before the boat was to be launched, his body was found near Crane Island. He was buried in front of the "Hermitage."

Major George Halstead, Frank's brother, came to the lake to settle his brother's estate. He launched the "Mary" and operated it as captain until he retired in 1883.

The Major died in 1901 when the "Hermitage" burned, and he was buried beside his brother under a large maple tree.



Interior of Hermitage.



GROWTH OF THE CITY

On April 3, 1861, Mound was divided into three subschool districts, and John Carman of Cook's Bay was appointed Superintendent of Schools. At that time there were three log school houses in Minnetrista: District 83, known as Jackson School; District 85, the Mound City School on Lake Langdon; and District 84, the Lee School.

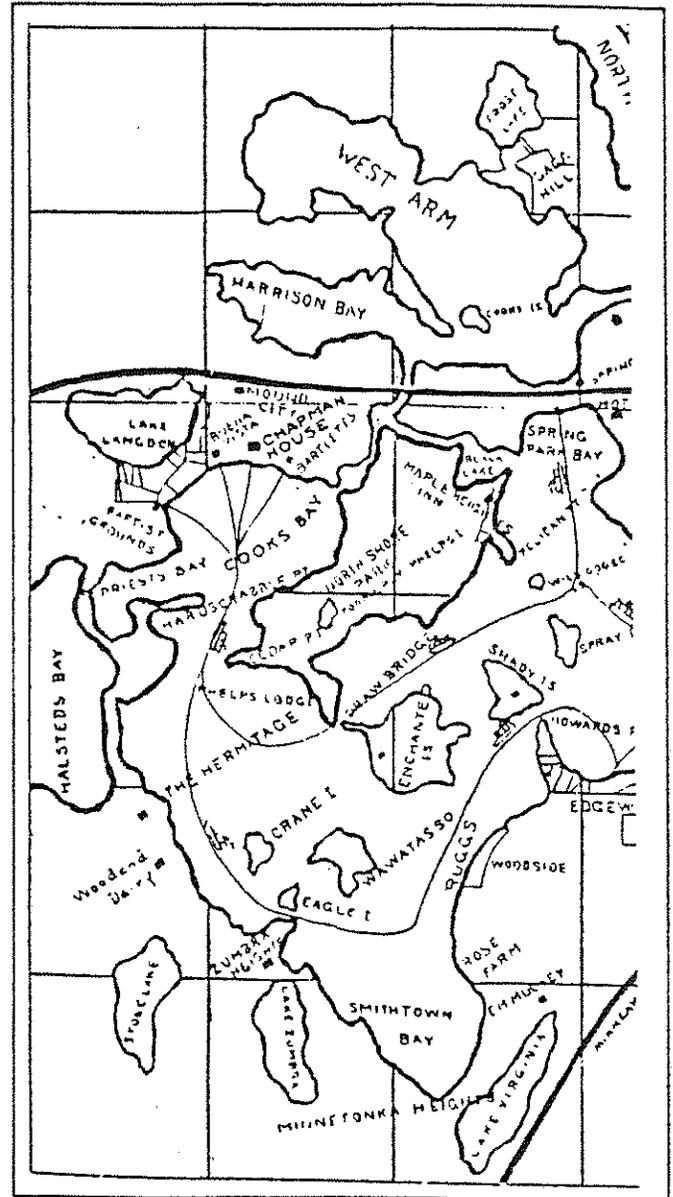
The first blacksmith shop built in 1866 was run by Allen W. Clark and in 1867 Mr. and Mrs. Levi Bowers settled on a farm near there, and their son Elijah later became Mound's blacksmith.

In the 1870's, the community around the Mound City area was located in parts of Sections 10-15 of the township and in Sections 22-27.

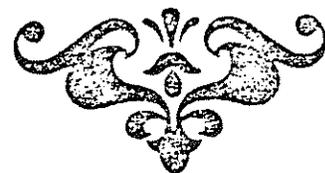
In 1884, Mound City was the terminus of the steamer trips on Upper Lake Minnetonka and had three hotels: the Chapman House, Bartlett Place, and Mound City House.

The Chapman House had a boat fleet and billiard room among other features. The Chapman House was located on Cook's Bay, with the Bartlett Place on the east and Mound City House on the west.

John S. Chapman was the proprietor of the Chapman House situated on Cook's Bay at the extreme upper end of the most picturesque shore of the lake. The grounds of this hotel were more than 50 feet above the lake and covered by great sugar maples, oak and other magnificent trees.



Steamboats regularly left from this point to meet all incoming and departing trains of the Great Northern Railway at Spring Park Station, and at Excelsior to meet the Minneapolis & St. Louis trains, besides carriages that also ran to the nearest railway stations.



ERA OF THE LARGE HOTELS

In 1869, Frank and Benton Carman operated a freight boat between Mound City and Wayzata.

The Chapman House was built in 1875 by Seymour and Sumner Chapman, and for many years was the Mecca for those visiting this area.

In 1876, Mound City was located near Cook's Bay, which was called "Busy Corners." Bartlett Boulevard was then known as Lake Avenue, and Commerce Boulevard was called Central Avenue.

Mathias Cook, who had built a small hotel 20 years earlier, replaced his log structure with a 3-story Lake View House.

In September of 1876, Mound City had a general store, post office, saw mill, boat works, several homes, two hotels and two boat fleets.

When Sumner Chapman died in 1884, the two younger Chapman brothers, Arthur and John, were in charge of the Chapman House.

Seymour Chapman was then operating the new Mound City House on the hill between Lake Langdon and Cook's Bay. When Seymour died in 1887, John Chapman became proprietor of the Mound City House.



THE CHAPMAN HOUSE.

In the spring of 1876, Seymour and Sumner Chapman built a 3-story addition on their hotel.

THE CHAPMAN HOUSE,

SUMNER M. CHAPMAN, PROPRIETOR,

MOUND CITY,

Upper Lake Minnetonka, Minn.

Steamers to and from Railroad Stations to Meet Regular Trains.

1884 advertisement from the Lake Minnetonka Directory, reprinted in 1983 by E. Wright of Minnetonka, Minnesota.

BARTLETT PLACE,

MOUND CITY, MINN.,

UPPER LAKE MINNETONKA.

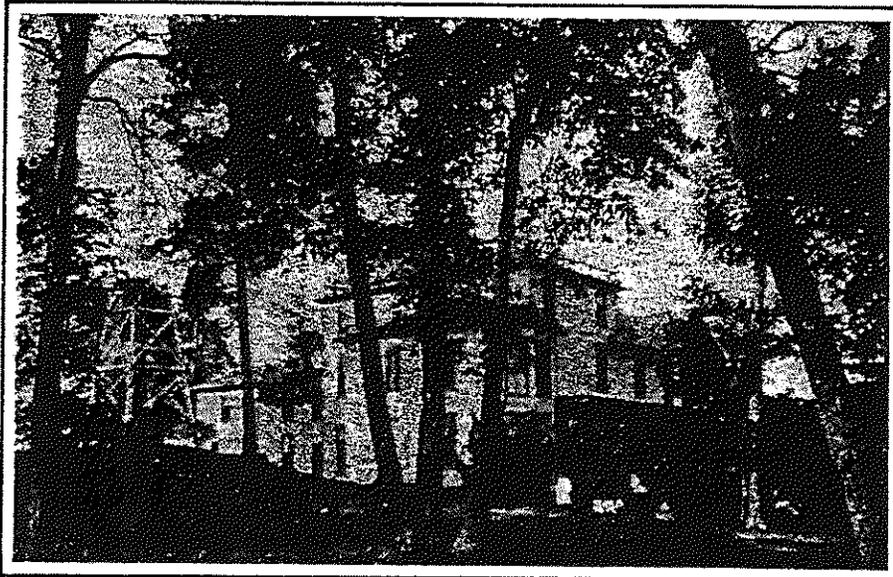
The Bartlett Place is located at the extreme upper end of Lake Minnetonka, in a magnificent grove of large forest trees, and only a few rods east of the Chapman House. The largest steamers stop there two hours every noon to allow passengers and picnic parties to dine, and one steamer remains there over night. The place is easily accessible by either boat or train, as it requires but 20 minutes to drive to the Spring Park station of the St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railroad, where six trains run to Minneapolis and St. Paul daily. Good bath house, sail and rowboats belong to the Place.

ED. D. BARTLETT, MOUND CITY.

In 1884 Ed Bartlett operated a boarding house called the "Bartlett Place" at the extreme upper end of Cook's Bay on the west side of the Lost Lake channel.

All the hotels in Mound City were classed as moderately priced family hotels that offered good food and comfortable rooms.

The following is from the Lake Minnetonka Directory of 1884:

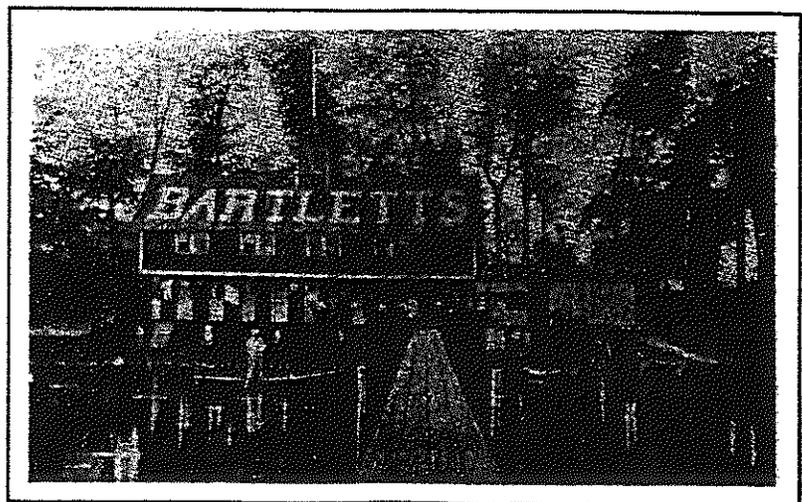


FRONT VIEW, BARTLETT'S HOTEL.

MOUND CITY.
UPPER LAKE.
BARTLETT PLACE, E. D. Bartlett Proprietor.
Bartlett, S. H.
Byers, Mrs. C. J.
CARMAN, F. M. General Store and Postmaster.
Capel, Geo. Gardener.
CHAPMAN HOUSE, S. M. Chapman Prop.
CHAPMAN JOHN, Prop. Boat Fleet.
KOELHER, A. P. Halsted's Bay.
MOUND CITY HOUSE, Seymour A. Chapman Proprietor.
Shuck, A. W. M. D.

BOAT FLEETS.
Bartlett, E. D., Mound City; 4 row and 3 sailboats.
Chapman, John S., Mound City; 25 row-boats and 1 sailboat.

The Bartlett Place was located a short distance from their picturesque docks, where a number of steamboats and launches carried passengers to all points of the lake and arrived and left on the departure of all trains.



BARTLETT'S LANDING, LAKE MINNETONKA.

HOTELS ON UPPER LAKE MINNETONKA.

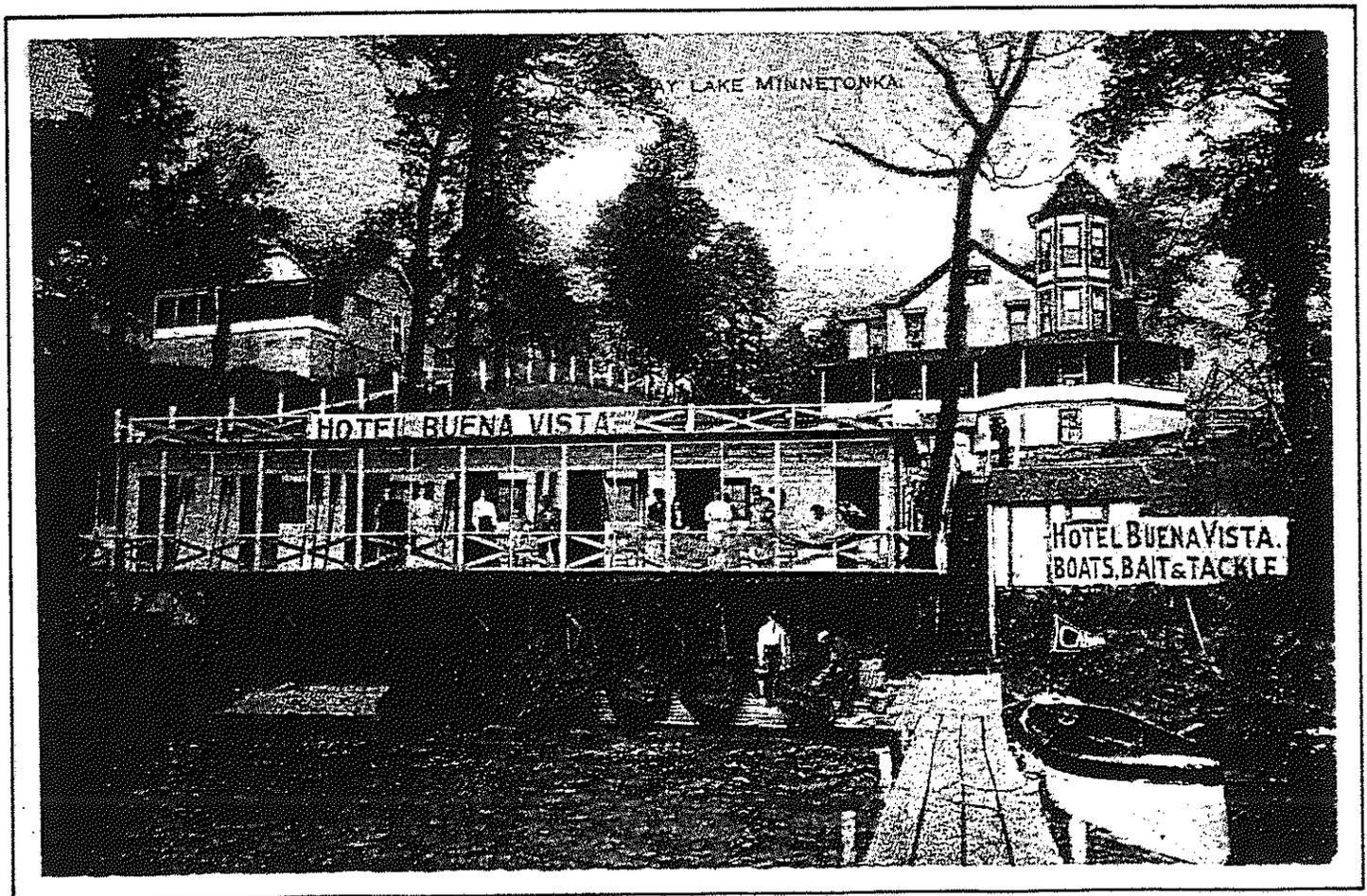
Reached Via Great Northern Railway.

In 1899, the Dewey House, operated by Jerome Dewey, was located on Cook's Bay on the east side of the Lost Lake channel.

In 1901, Captain Jack Hart erected the Hotel Buena Vista, directly across the bay from Bartlett's, and a few hundred yards up the shore from Chapman's.



THERE IS NO USE TALKING, IF YOU WANT TO CATCH FISH, YOU MUST GO TO DEWEY'S.



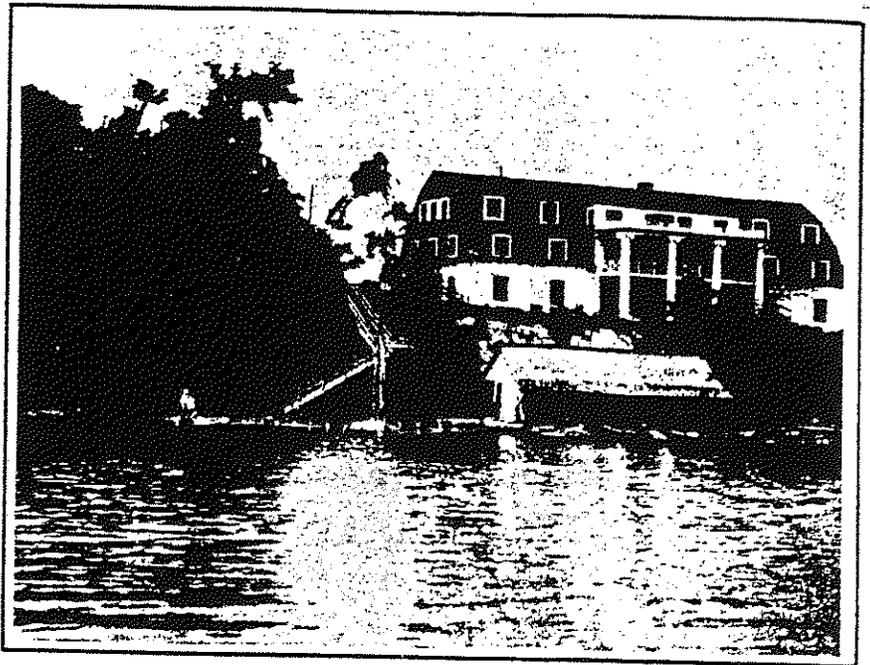
HOTELS ON UPPER LAKE IN 1905
 (From Picturesque Minnetonka)

Maple Heights Inn,
 Near Spring Park.
 On Phelps Island. J. H. Woolnough, Prop.
 Per day, \$2.00.

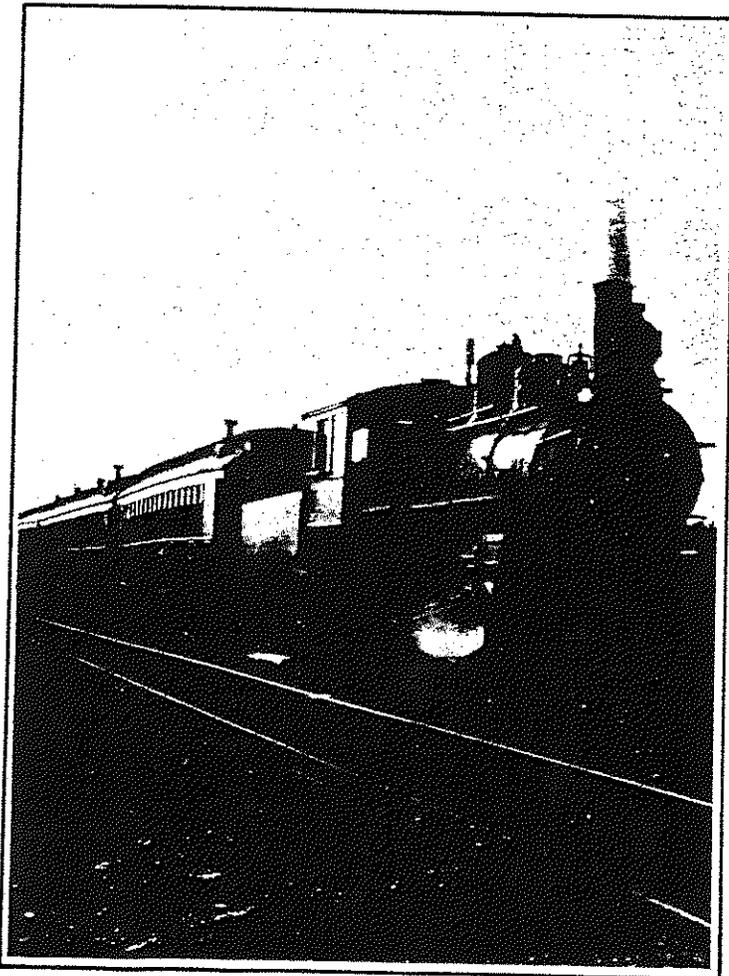
Chapman House,
 Mound. John A. Pearson, Prop.
 Per day, \$2.00.

Hotel Buena Vista,
 Mound. E. A. Hart, Prop.
 Per day, \$2.00.

Bartlett Hotel,
 Mound. Ed. D. Bartlett, Prop.
 Per day, \$2.00.



Maple Heights Inn, North Shore Park, J. H. Woolnough, Prop. Near Spring Park.



Great Northern train at Mound 1907, from a glass negative

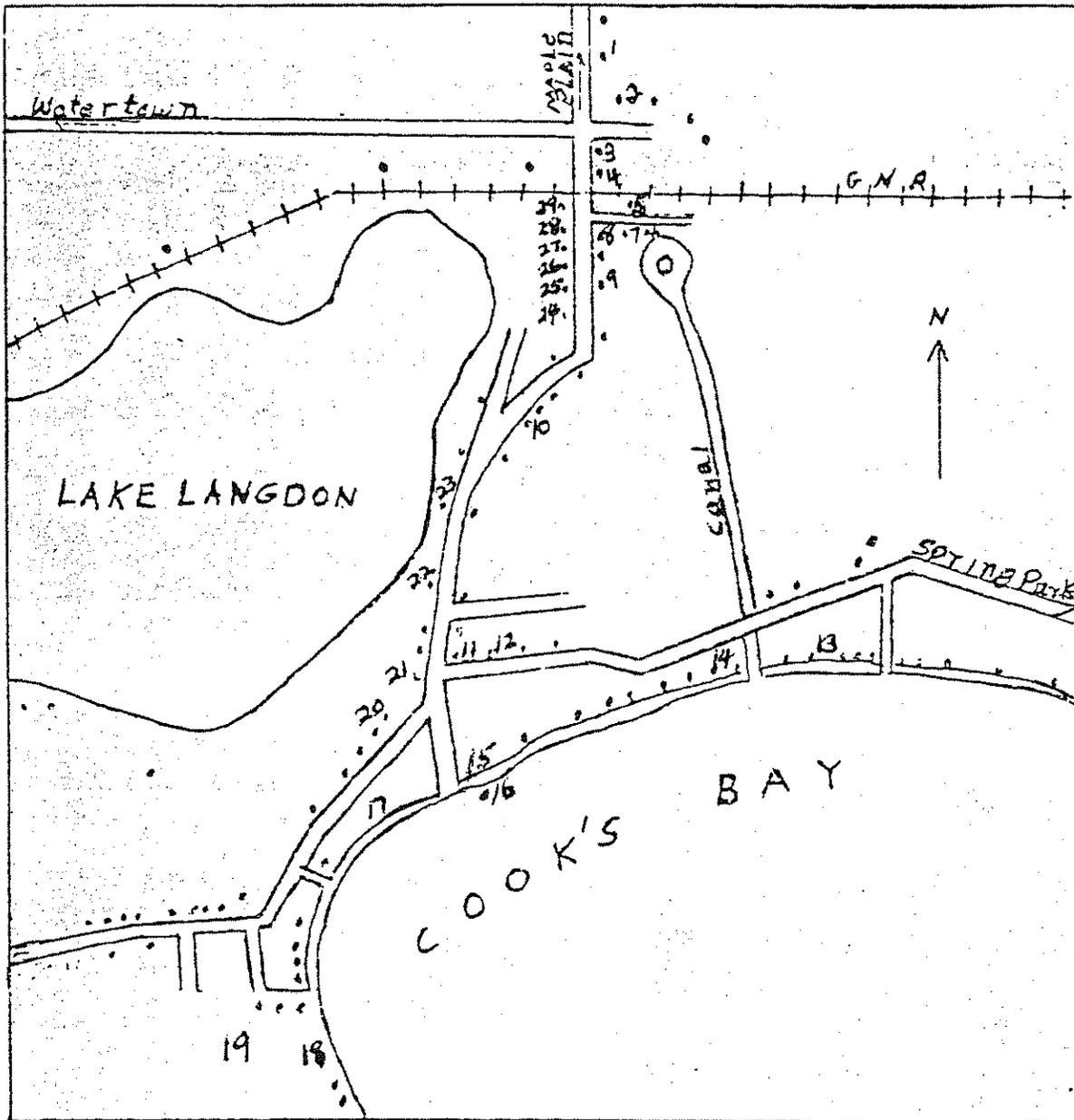
When the railroad tracks were extended to Mound in 1900, the large steamboats were being replaced by the yellow Street-car Boats, but the majority of the tourists came by train.

Phelp's Island (Island Park) was unsettled for many years, but was finally platted and put on the market. In 1905, it was called North Shore Park.

Mrs. J.H. Woolnough operated the Maple Heights Inn on Phelps Island on Spring Park Bay at that time, with several cottages that were always filled from early May to October. Nearby were some famous bass fishing haunts. Women and children would take their rowboats into the quiet waters of Black Lake with its countless water lilies. Mrs. Woolnough also built a pagoda summer house partway down the high bluff shore.

The tourist trade was still increasing after 1900. In the 1880's they came by steamboat, but after the railroad was extended to Spring Park in 1890, many came by train.

The Mound Depot was then located at the intersection of County Road 15 and Commerce Blvd., where the Minnesota Federal Bank was built after the depot was moved.



MOUND, MINNESOTA 1912

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Methodist Church | 16. Boat dock |
| 2. School | 17. Picnic grounds |
| 3. Hardware and feed store | 18. Buena Vista Hotel |
| 4. Lumber yard | 19. Baptist Assembly grounds |
| 5. Great Northern depot | 20. Mound City House |
| 6. Roundhouse | 21. Sunset View Hotel |
| 7. Cafe | 22. Blacksmith shop |
| 8. Hotel | 23. Meat market |
| 9. Catholic Church | 24. Livery and ice house |
| 10. Telephone exchange | 25. Bank |
| 11. General store | 26. Livery barn |
| 12. Boat works | 27. Switzerland Hotel |
| 13. Dewey House | 28. General store |
| 14. Bartlett Place | 29. Drug store and post office |
| 15. Pavilion | 30. *(dots) represent homes |

From Historical Backgrounds of Mound, Minnesota by Melvin Gimmestad

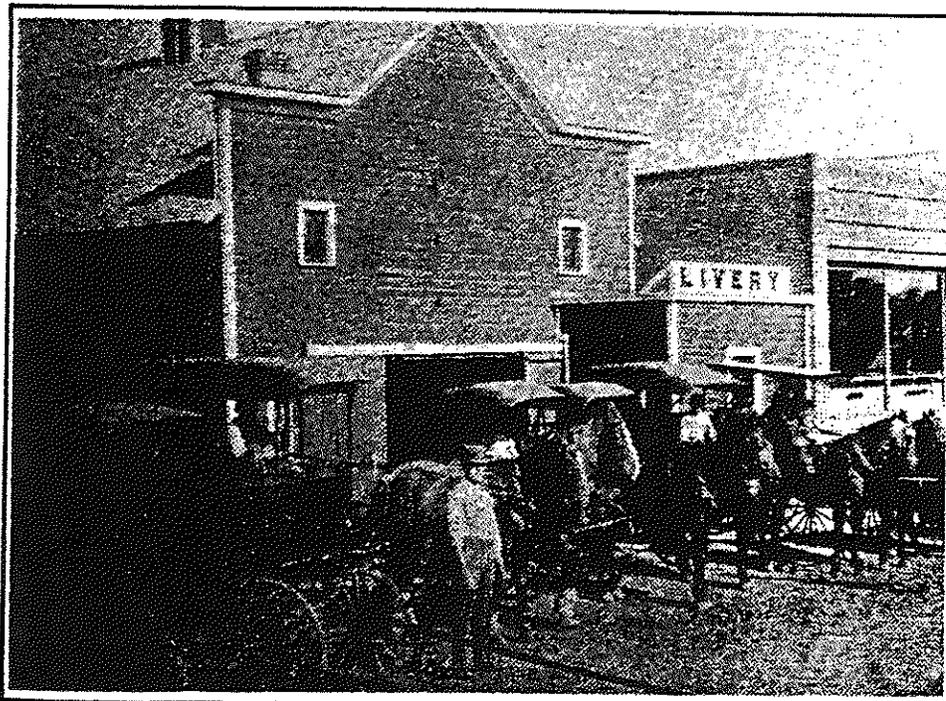
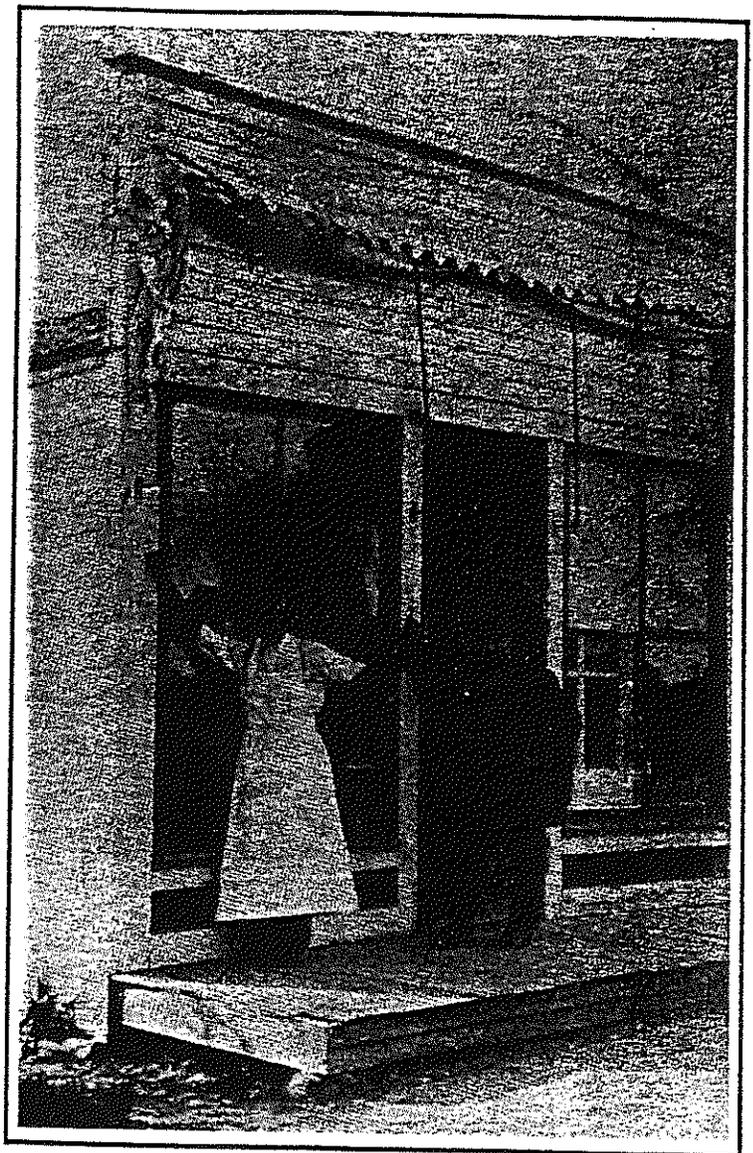
MOUND AFTER 1912

Mound City was incorporated in 1912 as the Village of Mound. The business center of the city was moving from Busy Corners to a new location at the intersection of Commerce Boulevard and County Road 15, as the railroad tracks had been extended to that location.

The tourist trade reached its peak in 1912. Busy Corners still had the Bartlett Place and Chapman's Mound City House, but the old Chapman House was gone. The Casino had been built in 1900 by Mrs. John Chapman and later was known as the Surf-side.

The Baptist Assembly Grounds were located in the Highlands and attracted many visitors, church officials, and preachers such as Billy Sunday.

On the west side of Commerce Boulevard at Busy Corners was George Broeckert and Frank Weiland's meat market. South of the meat market was Elijah Bower's blacksmith shop. Next to it on Lake Langdon was the Sollie Brothers' Store which closed in 1964 when Edward Sollie died.



Mound livery stable

Across the street from the Depot where Longpre's is now was a hotel and Edward Koehler's post office and ice cream parlor. South of this was the livery purchased in 1910 by Joseph Krause.

Three Points, north of Mound, was annexed to Mound in 1959, Island Park and Halstead Heights in 1960, and Shadywood Point in 1963.

MOVING THE DEPOT

In 1966 the Great Northern Railway sold the Depot to the Minnetonka Museum Association for \$1 with the understanding that it be moved to a different site. During the night of March 16, 1967, the Depot was moved to its present location. Members celebrating the move that night with coffee and cookies were: Kenneth Plant, Bill Anderson, Leonard Kopp, Abe Brazeman, Gordon Tulberg, Rock Lindlan, Bernie and Katie Lister, Ruth Kopp,

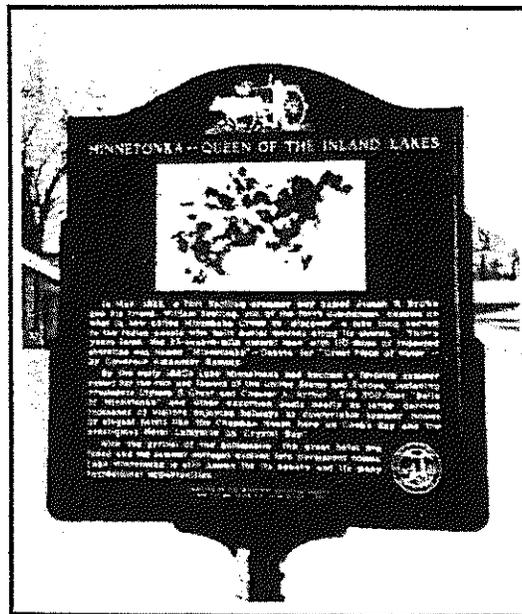


and others. In 1972, the Minnetonka Museum Association was disbanded for lack of funds, and the Depot was turned over to the Village of Mound to be used as a community center.

WESTONKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In 1975 the Westonka Historical Society was formed, with Eugene Hodge as President. In 1982, the book, **Historical Backgrounds of Mound, Minnesota**, by Melvin Gimmestad, was reproduced by the Historical Society, and is available to the public for \$3.75 each.

In 1984, at a meeting with Russell Fridley, Director of the State Historical Society, it was decided to install a historical marker near the Depot commemorating the discovery of Lake Minnetonka. Those present at this meeting, pictured below, were: John Burger, Butch Essig, Steve Smith, Leonard Kopp (with Kevin Magnuson and Russell Fridley), Gen Olson, Lavonne Adams, Mary Jane Burger, Bernie and Katie Lister, Mildred Banks, Judge and Mrs. Herb Wolner, and Buzz Sycks, current President. This marker was installed and dedicated on Saturday, January 12, 1985.

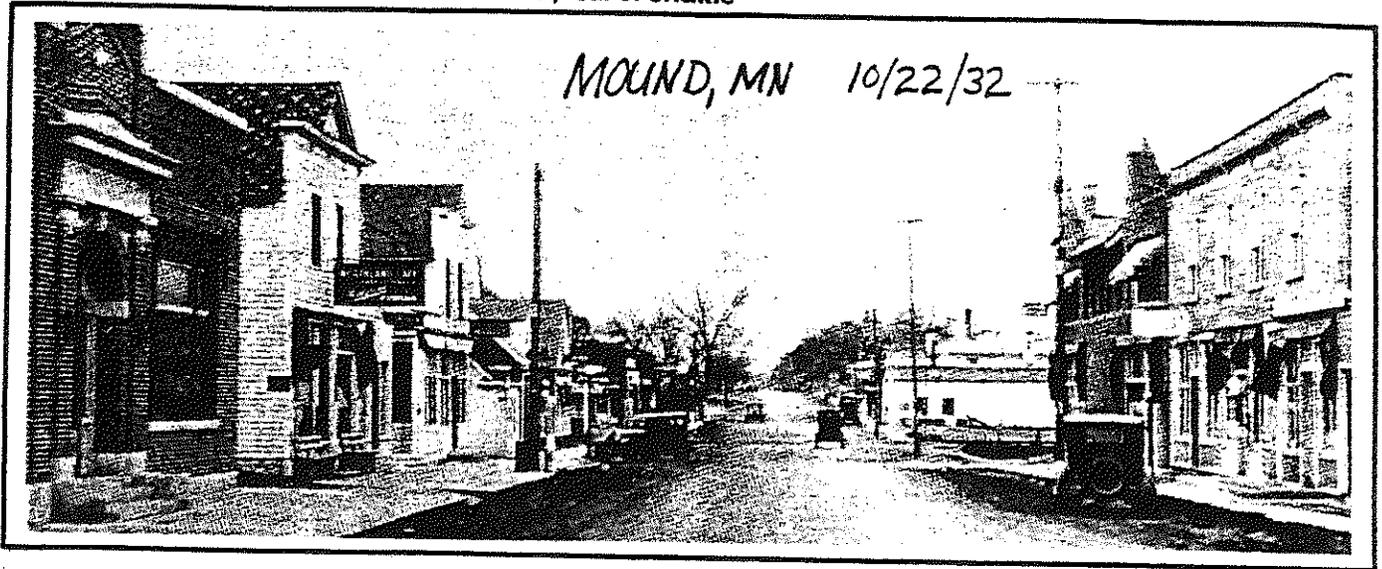


The wording on this marker was researched and written by Mildred I. Banks. The map was drawn by Eileen Bovard.



A HISTORY OF MOUND - 1930's TO PRESENT

By Carol Shukie



Scenic Lake Minnetonka, and the recreational opportunities it provides, have drawn people to Mound for more than a century. The hotel and tourist trades had their heyday in the late 19th century and early years of the 20th century, but by the 1930s and during the pre-World War II years, most visitors were summer residents who had privately-owned lake cottages, according to a pair of long-time community residents.

Glenn Rogers, the last mayor of Island Park, and Bert Larson, a former mayor of Mound, have each lived in the city since about the age of 10. Both recall a time when their own families, as year-round residents of the community, were in the minority.

Rogers was born in Minneapolis, but his parents had a summer cottage on the island. In the late 1920s, when he was about 10 years old, they moved out as permanent residents. About that time the island, which, like Mound, had been part of Minnetrista Township, incorporated as the Village of Island Park.

Larson was born in Sweden in 1921. When he was two years old his family immigrated to the United States under the sponsorship of an uncle who lived in St. Paul. The uncle had a summer cottage on the south shore of Harrison's Bay, which he loaned to the family the first week.

Larson's family moved around as his father found work, returning to Mound

permanently in 1931. They rented the cottage again for a time before finding a place of their own. Then, he said, only two families actually lived on the south shore of Harrison's Bay. The rest of the homes were summer cottages.

Rogers remembers that after Labor Day, no one lived on Enchanted or Shady Islands. In the winter he had all of Island Park as a paper route and delivered to 27 homes.

"Minnetonka was almost a virgin lake then," he said. "The people who knew how to catch fish caught them, same as now."

Rogers said he can faintly remember a time when Tuxedo Road on the island was not yet cut through. Island Park was divided into half a dozen or so neighborhood associations which maintained their areas and were responsible for making improvements. He lived in the Whipple neighborhood. The Whipple Improvement Association put in a well for the area, but residents had to carry water from the well to their homes. The going rate for kids to haul a pail of water was five cents, Rogers said.

The neighborhood associations also had festivals to raise money for street lights. Whipple was the first neighborhood in Island Park to have them. The cost to each household was \$1.35 per month, and they were controlled by a switch in the closest house, which happened to be the Rogers' home. If they weren't home, Rogers said,

the street lights didn't go on. But, as he was one of six children, there was usually someone home.

Streetcar boats served the lake and made several stops around Island Park. In the summer, to go to Mound, they would take a boat from the Island to what is now Mound Bay Park. Rogers picked up his newspapers for his paper route at what is now the location of Shirley Hills School. In the winter he walked right across the ice as a shortcut, holding a cardboard box over his head to protect himself from the wind, he recalled.

Other than the neighborhoods and summer cottages, the community was still mainly rural agricultural in the 1930s, Rogers and Larson said. Both remember the downtown area as geared to the needs of a farming community, with a blacksmith, livery, feed store and hardware store. There was also a movie theater, bank, drugstore, doctor's office, Ford garage, and, in the present Longpre's building, a dry goods store.

According to Larson, the biggest change he has seen take place in Mound during the more than five decades he has lived here has been the change from a summer community to a year-round community where perhaps 75 percent of the people who live here work elsewhere.

STREATER LUMBER CO.

Larson credits a former employer of his, Ed Streater, with playing a major role in the development of the Mound community for several decades. Streater, according to a newspaper clipping at the time of his retirement, came to Mound in 1926 to work at his father's firm, the L.E. Streater Lumber Co. It was located at what is now the parking lot in front of Coast to Coast. He became manager in 1929.

With his background in mechanical engineering, Streater expanded the lumber yard to include a cabinet shop and metal shop. Eventually the company built movie theaters and manufactured bar and restaurant fixtures. By 1943, it had become the E.C. Streater Co., also according to published reports, and was occupying a two-story, four-room former school lo-

cated about where the old medical clinic stood along Commerce Blvd. During World War II, the company made ammunition boxes in the old school, and after the war, it became an upholstery and cabinet-making shop. He also made wooden toy blocks and metal toy dump trucks and steam shovels.

In the early '40s, Larson said, Streater built homes in the area and purchased a nine-hole golf course and did some subdividing of the land. Now standing on the former golf course are Shirley Hills School, the city hall, and Mount Olive Church. Streater also platted the area around Avon Park and built some of the homes.

Streater's company, by then called Store Fixtures, Inc., was sold to Litton in 1964. He retired in 1967. "In the years he was here, he was a backer of everything in the community, but quietly," Larson said. "He was behind many improvements, but he would just stand up at a hearing and say, 'I'm for it'."

TONKA TOYS

In 1946, Streater sold his four-room school building to L.E. Baker who, with Avery Crouse and Al Tesch, incorporated Mound Metalcraft, making household products in the building. In the meantime, Streater took his toy truck designs to a toy fair in New York. Disappointed by the fair's response to his products, he sold his dump truck and steam shovel designs to Mound Metalcraft in 1947. Streater's toy designer, Charlie Croschen, also went to work for the new company.

The new products were called "Tonka Toys by Mound Metalcraft," recalled Gordy Batdorf, who joined the firm in 1947 and eventually became president and chief officer. During the 1950s, the firm's name officially became "Tonka Toys."

Tonka added on at the school site, but eventually even that space became too small. The company wanted to stay in Mound, Larson said, and the rest of the business community was eager to keep it here. Tonka was interested in property just up the road along County Road 15, where it later did build a larger plant.

Before the new factory became a reality,

however, a group of Mound businessmen in 1954 legally formed Greater Mound, Inc. Each put in some money, and together they raised \$1,200 as a downpayment on the land Tonka Toys wanted, according to Larson. Within a few months, Tonka was able to put together its financing package to buy the land. The new Tonka Toys factory was built in six or eight expansions over a 10-year period, Batdorf said.

Tonka Toys grew from a small local business to a nationally-known toy manufacturer. "We prided ourselves on the quality of our labor force," Batdorf said.

The \$1,200 was repaid to Greater Mound, Inc., Larson said, but after that, "Greater Mound didn't do much of anything." The money continued to earn interest and years later, when the corporation decided to dissolve, there was approximately \$2,000. The participants solved the problem of what to do with the money by donating it for Mound's first senior citizen van.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENTS

In 1946, Larson and two other former Streater employees started their own heating and air conditioning contracting company in Mound. They owned and operated the Markson Co. until 1979. It was located in the building which is now the House of Moy restaurant.

Larson became the second president of the business association in 1947. He also became active in the effort to have Mound adopt the "Plan B" form of government in which a mayor and council serve a policy-making function in the government, and hire a full-time manager to conduct the day-to-day affairs of the city. The Plan B form of government was adopted by Mound citizens in 1948 by a 165 to 77 vote on Oct. 29, 1949. Larson said Mound was the first community in Minnesota to adopt the plan.

Prior to the adoption of the council-manager plan, Larson said, each member of the village council had to take administrative responsibility for different areas of village affairs. "It wasn't working. We wanted to have someone at the helm and operate the city more on a corporate

structure."

However, even after a manager was hired, Larson said, the council members in office at the time still tended to want to operate the village government just as it was before the Plan B form was adopted. "Some of the businessmen and a lot of citizens became disgusted with that."

It was then that Larson ran for village council and was elected in 1957. On July 1, 1959, he was appointed mayor to fill out the term of the previous mayor, who had resigned. Larson later was elected to two mayoral terms of his own, serving through 1963, when he did not seek reelection.

It was during Larson's tenure as mayor that Mound's sanitary sewer system was started and first streetlight project installed, and Mound grew in size as a result of several annexations or mergers. These included the Village of Island Park in 1960 and the neighborhoods of Three Points (1959), Halstead Heights (1960), and Shadywood Point (1963).

ISLAND PARK MERGER

Because Island Park was an incorporated village, its merger with Mound was more complicated than the annexation of Three Points the year before, Larson said. Island Park had to apply to the state Municipal Commission for approval of the merger and hold a referendum of its own citizens, and the city councils of the two villages had to approve it, he explained.

Glenn Rogers, a founder and then president of the Island Park Fire Department, was elected mayor in November, 1959, to take office Jan. 1, 1960. He defeated an incumbent mayor. The same issue of the "Minnetonka Pilot" that announced his election also reported that more than 300 residents of the community had signed a petition seeking to have Island Park merge with the Village of Mound. The petition would be presented to the Municipal Commission the next week.

Both Larson and Rogers cited financial problems for Island Park as the motivation for the merger. According to the local newspaper, the Island Park Village Council met on Feb. 29, 1960, and as its last official

action, signed the village's property over to Mound. In a ceremony that followed, Island Park Mayor Rogers handed the key to the village to Mound Mayor Larson.

There was a vacancy on the Mound Council, and a member of the Island Park Council was appointed to fill it. Island Park's records were turned over to Mound's clerk, and all Village of Island Park departments except for the fire department immediately ceased to function.

Merger of the two fire departments took until 1963. "You had two independent and blustery volunteer organizations which had much 'esprit de corps' among themselves," Larson explained. After the merger Rogers, an engineer for the Milwaukee Railroad, started to have longer "runs" and did not remain politically active.

Leonard Kopp became Mound's fourth city manager in 1960. He did not start until July, several months after the Island Park merger; however, he shed some additional light on the financial conditions that led to the move.

When talk of a merger began, Kopp said, Island Park's mill rate was not supporting its debt, even though it was the equivalent of twice what the rate is today. The Municipal Commission had ruled that each village, even after the merger, had to be taxed to pay off its own debt.

Kopp hired a public examiner to determine the debts of the two towns. Mound's was found to be \$9,675, and Island Park's \$16,856.36. For four years, until the debts were erased, each area was taxed at a different mill rate. The village clerk identified the taxing districts as Mound I for Mound and Mound II for Island Park. After four years, the finances of the two parts of the community no longer had to be kept separate, and Mound operated with only one mill rate.

PROGRESS IN THE 1960s

When he arrived in 1960, Kopp said, the Mound Village Council was already committed to installing a sanitary sewer system. The type of soil and small lot sizes made private septic systems a real problem, according to Kopp, and the result was

raw sewage spilling into Lake Minnetonka.

The first dirt was moved on Jan. 9, 1962, for construction of the \$5 million sanitary sewer system and treatment plant. The project also called for the extension of water service to the newly-annexed portions of the community, including Three Points and Island Park.

The sewage treatment plant, recognized at the time as one of the most efficient in the country, was dedicated in September, 1964. The plant turned sewage into clean, treated effluent that was then discharged into Lake Minnetonka.

The plant was only in operation four or five years, Larson said, before the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission was begun and a central sewage treatment system for the entire metro area was constructed. The result is that sewage from Mound now goes into the metro system and effluent is no longer discharged into Lake Minnetonka. Although Mound's plant no longer functioned for sewage treatment, the rest of the sanitary sewer system Mound had built was needed for the community to tie into the metro system.

Even though the sewer plant itself was used for treatment for a relatively short period of time, Larson said, he never regretted the money that was spent on it. Area communities which waited until the metro system was initiated to put in sanitary sewer spent just as much then as Mound had spent five years earlier, he explained.

Street lighting was installed in the downtown area in 1962 and was paid for 25 percent from the village's general fund and 75 percent by assessment of property owners. Larson told "Street and Highway Lighting" magazine at the time that the Chamber of Commerce had been one of the prime movers in obtaining better street lighting. There had been several injury accidents due to dark streets, and a woman had been killed crossing the street in front of her home. The driver of the car had also been a Mound resident.

By the time Kopp arrived as manager, most of the community's summer cot-

tages had been converted to year-round residences. Most of this was done after World War II, when veterans returned and began raising families, creating a housing shortage.

Some cottages remained, however, and on Palm Sunday, 1961, Kopp and the part-time building inspector went out to Three Points and condemned 120 cabins, declaring that they had to either be brought up to code or torn down. This process was repeated in other parts of the village later.

Don Ulrick, another nearly life-long resident of the community, was very active during the 1960s in the Mound Jaycee chapter. He said the Jaycees aggressively supported the village council in pursuing the sanitary sewer system and helped replace the community library lost when the high school burned on Labor Day, 1964.

Also during the '60s, Ulrick said, the Jaycees took on the project of renaming Mound's streets and numbering houses, subject to the approval of the village council. The new street identification system was an important help in emergency situations and improved other types of services, such as department store deliveries, as well, he said.

THE 70s:

CONSTRUCTION AND PAVED STREETS

The Village of Mound became the City of Mound on Jan. 1, 1974—the effective date of a Minnesota statute which gave that designation to all communities that had been termed villages.

Don Ulrick served on the city council from 1972 through 1974, then as mayor from 1974 through 1976. He returned to the council from 1979 to 1982. He remembers the 1970s as a time of growth and modernization in Mound.

The newly-established Mound Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) opened Indian Knoll Manor, its elderly housing units at 2020 Commerce, in about 1971, Ulrick said. The Woodcrest and Bluffs neighborhoods in Mound were built during the 1970s, as well as Lakewinds on the Island.

The city also built the new city hall from funds on hand, without the need for a referendum or a bond issue to pay for it. It was dedicated in May, 1974.

There was a thrust for greater development of parks, Ulrick said, and an effort to combine small lots for the purpose of creating buildable lots. After "much pressure" from the planning commission, he added, the city council passed an ordinance that anyone who builds in Mound has to have a land survey.

The possibility of merging with Spring Park to form a single municipality became a "hot topic" at that time, Ulrick said. The two city councils favored the idea, "but it never got beyond the conversation stage."

The 1970s was also a time of purchasing a great deal of updated fire equipment, which raised the town's fire rating and reduced homeowner's insurance premiums for city residents, Ulrick recalled. The city also got out of the on-sale liquor business by selling the Island Park municipal liquor store.

Ulrick believes the passage of the commons dock ordinance in 1975 was an important event of the decade. The ordinance makes dock space on publicly-owned lakeshore available for rent to the public. "It was a benchmark in utilization of the commons area by the citizens, not just the abutting property owners."

Both Ulrick and Bob Polston, who served on the city council from 1977 to 1983 and as mayor from 1983 through 1986, agreed, however, that the hottest issue of the late 1970s was the paving of the city's gravel streets.

Each year, Ulrick said, the city had to budget for sand and gravel for the streets, most of which ended up being washed into the storm sewers and ultimately, Lake Minnetonka. It was a difficult question, Polston said, because in a given area, as many people were opposed to paving streets as were in favor of it.

Finally, he said, the council decided installing concrete curb and gutter and blacktopped streets was the "economical and aesthetic thing to do." What started out as a five-year plan ended up as a three-

year, \$6 million street improvement program that went on from 1978 to 1981. Most of the objection to the project, both former mayors said, was based on cost, although a few property owners maintained they had moved away from the city to Mound in search of a rural atmosphere.

Polston views negotiations of plans for improving County Road 15 as one of the major accomplishments he was involved with during his years as mayor. Plans for upgrading the road had been bogged down for years over environmental issues and disagreement between the cities of Mound, Spring Park and Orono, and everyone involved had given up seeking a solution, Polston said.

However, when he became mayor of Mound and Mary Butler became mayor of Orono, they were able to work out an agreement. The plan then had to be sold to all three city councils and Hennepin County, and a variance received from the state.

"We had to sell the county board on the uniqueness of the lake area," Polston said. "There were places where it was just not wide enough to do what they wanted to do, with the uniqueness of the road going right by the lake. The result is that construction will begin next year on a two-lane road with two continuous turn lanes that will be about 10 feet narrower than originally proposed by the county."

A large task faced by the city in the first half of the 1980s was dealing with the departure of Tonka Toys, according to Polston. The announcement that the city's largest industry was closing came in 1982. The city pulled together a variety of resources to help plant employees who would be losing their jobs through a committee that included Tonka employees and management, city and school personnel and the County Jobs Service. The committee met for over a year to deal with the issues of job training and placement.

Jon Elam, who became city manager when Leonard Kopp retired in 1981, said the city pioneered a modern way for a community to deal with a plant closing, and before they were finished, had a 90 percent job replacement rate.

When the task of assisting displaced workers was nearly complete, the city turned its interest to finding new tenants for the vacant building. "It was a different strategy, but equally interesting," Elam said, and another committee was involved. The city worked closely with Balboa when that company decided to buy the building, Polston and Elam said, encouraging Balboa to turn away from its initial plan to use the space for storage, and to develop it as a condominium for a number of smaller factories and firms. The building now houses five firms with a total of more than 450 employees.

Mound is very lucky, Elam said, that in only four years the vacant Tonka building went from being the community's "major, major liability to its major, major asset."

Elam resigned as city manager in 1985 and Edward J. Shukle, Jr., became the new city manager on Jan. 1, 1986. Bob Polston did not seek reelection in 1986. A council member, Steve Smith, was elected mayor that fall and took office in January, 1987.

The face of downtown Mound saw major changes during 1986. A number of buildings on the east side of Commerce Blvd. at Lynwood Blvd. were torn down, including a vacant garage; a bakery; a laundry and dry cleaners; Brickley's Market; Mueller Pharmacy; the Mound Medical Clinic and Mound Opticians; and a private home.

The removal of these buildings made way for the development of Commerce Square, to which the Mound Medical Clinic, the Snyder Drug Store and V & S Jewelry have relocated. The State Bank of Mound will move during the summer of 1987 to a new building under construction at the same site. The Mound HRA issued tax increment financing bonds for the construction of Commerce Square.

Also during 1986, a former food store on the south side of Lynwood Blvd. was remodeled as a shopping center which now houses Brickley's Market, Lake-West Pharmacy (the former Mueller Pharmacy), and Home Laundry, Inc.





All that remained of an Island Park home where an elderly couple died.



A woman lends a hand at the wreckage of a neighbor's Island Park home.

The Devastating May 6th Tornado Hit Mound and Other Lake Minnetonka Communities

by Carol Shukle from an interview with Leonard Kopp.

Leonard Kopp, then Mound City Manager, remembers 1965 as "the year I learned about disaster in administration." The Mound community was hit three times that spring—a March blizzard, then April flooding and finally, Mother Nature dealt her cruelest blow with the devastating May 6 tornado.

The St. Patrick's Day blizzard was actually a three-day snowstorm. "We had to hire front-end equipment to get into the narrow streets—the graders couldn't get in," Kopp recalled. That cost \$20,000 in 1965 dollars. "The weather didn't warm up until Palm Sunday."

Then came the floods, and the village had to hire equipment to clear ice-clogged ditches so they could carry water to the lake. On Easter Sunday afternoon, Kopp called a special council meeting to deal with the problem. The city council authorized digging ditches in the streets to get the water to the lake, Kopp said. The village also requested and received permission from a property owner on Saunders Lake to build a dike to keep the water from washing out the town's new "state-of-the-art" sewer plant.

This crisis had scarcely passed when, the Thursday before Mother's Day, multiple tornados hit various parts of the Twin Cities, including Mound and the surrounding communities. The storm came without warning. Kopp was listening to the radio. There were warnings for other communities, but the Mound area was not mentioned. He remembers looking out the window and seeing a big, black form. He didn't immediately recognize it as a funnel cloud. The village had no civil defense sirens. After the tornado hit, the fire sirens were sounded.

According to Kopp, the tornado came in Cook's Bay and through Island Park, leveling a cluster of four homes and damaging neighboring ones. It continued across the island, damaging more homes and destroying the Evangelical Free Church. The funnel turned and crossed a swamp, hitting a few more houses. Just before the Spring Park bridge, the tornado took a house and set it right out in the lake. It crossed Casco Point and then hit the intersection of Highways 19 and 15 in Navarre, inflicting severe damage.

In Mound alone, 20 homes were destroyed, 18 were damaged beyond repair, seven were questionable for repair and 66 others were damaged, not including roofs and windows. Also damaged were six village lift stations.

Killed were an elderly couple whose home was completely demolished, and their neighbor, a woman in her 80s, who suffered a heart attack as the storm hit. Nearly 20 persons were injured, several disabled for life.

The first thing Kopp did after the funnel passed was call an emergency meeting of the city council at city hall. He asked to have an elected official with him at all times to witness his decisions. In the first days after the disaster, he explained to them, decisions would have to be made quickly, and some things would be done that were not strictly legal.

The clean-up job began immediately. With some help from the outside, the Mound community reached out to aid its own. Kopp knew someone at Channel 11, and was able to put out a plea asking for volunteers. People responded from other parts of the metro area. The Air National Guard sent a unit and the cities of Hopkins and Edina, as well as Hennepin County, loaned public works employees.

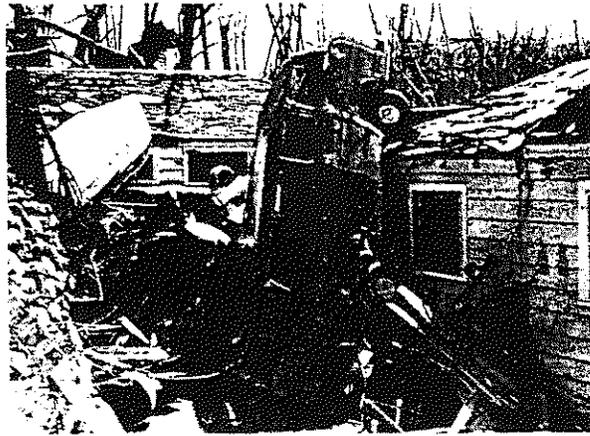
The Mound Fire Department Auxillary opened the fire station and kept the volunteers fed. The Red Cross provided relief to the victims, and the community collected canned goods and delivered food to people in damaged but habitable homes.

Tonka Toys, the village's largest industry, committed \$3,000 to provide victims of the disaster with food and clothes, specifically offering to replace any prom outfits that had been lost. The Saturday after the tornado was prom night. Northern Contracting, the firm installing sewer and water in Island Park at the time, also offered money for public assistance, Kopp said.

Island Park was sealed off and a pass was needed to get in. Although it was Mother's Day weekend, Al and Alma's Supper Club had to be closed. But, Kopp noted, the owners never complained.

"Within 72 hours, all electricity was back on, which I thought was remarkable, because they (NSP) had to string high lines. We had all the streets cleared by Sunday night," Kopp continued. "We finally got funds from the federal government because of the floods and the tornado, or I don't know what we would have done."

"It (the tornado) was the first one I ever saw and the last one I ever want to see."



Vans and cars tossed around like child's toys.



Air National Guard... helps out with the massive clean-up.



Bernard F. Winkle cleans up after the awful mess left by the massive damage.



A Mound volunteer fireman in front of a condemned home that had one wall ripped off, opening it up like a dollhouse.