

SPRING/SUMMER 2016

Founded in 1972, the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society preserves the history of Lake Minnetonka and the communities of Deephaven, Excelsior, Greenwood, Shorewood, and Tonka Bay.

The Society's museum and archives are free and open to the public, and hold a large collection of historical artifacts and documents.

The Society regularly presents lectures and programs on topics of local historical interest.

The Society's publications and memberships are available for purchase on our website:

[www.elmhs.org](http://www.elmhs.org)

E L M H S  
P.O. Box 305  
Excelsior, MN 55331  
952 221 4766  
[info@elmhs.org](mailto:info@elmhs.org)

# The Harborage

## Museum Open for the Season

**W**e've been busy preparing our museum for its spring reopening and we're excited about the improvements you'll see when you visit this year.

In addition to giving the building a thorough post-BOO-seum cleaning and refreshing, historian Scott McGinnis has created a new exhibit highlighting the history of Water Street which will be installed soon. Many of our other exhibits have been re-focused and rearranged and we will continue to add information to them throughout the season.

Do you have a Saturday or Tuesday afternoon free to host at the museum this summer? No experience is necessary and training is provided. Contact us at [info@elmhs.org](mailto:info@elmhs.org) or 952-221-4766 or learn more at [www.elmhs.org/volunteer](http://www.elmhs.org/volunteer).



*Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society Museum is located at 305 Water Street, Excelsior.*

*Museum Hours:  
Tuesdays 2:00-6:00 PM  
Saturdays 10:00 AM—3:00 PM*

### **Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society Members' Annual Meeting**

*Monday, June 27, 2016 6:00PM  
Southshore Center  
5735 Country Club Road, Shorewood*

Food and drink will be provided. Feel free to bring a dessert to share. Dāv Kaufman will discuss his new film "Beneath Lake Minnetonka" (see page 5). We will also elect a new board of directors and officers and hear about the Society's accomplishments during the past year and plans for the future.

# Tapping History Programs

For more information contact the Society at [info@elmhs.org](mailto:info@elmhs.org), 952-221- 4766, or visit [www.elmhs.org](http://www.elmhs.org).

**Monday, June 13th, 6:45 pm**

Aboard the Steamboat *Minnehaha*

Board at Bayside Grille

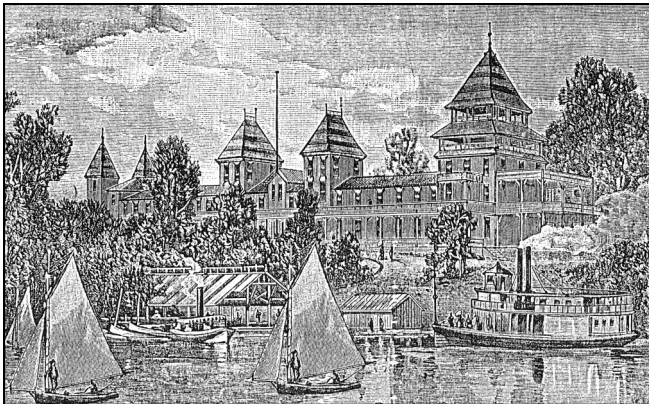
687 Excelsior Blvd., Excelsior

Purchase tickets at: [elmhs.eventbrite.com](http://elmhs.eventbrite.com)

\$20 ELMHS members / \$35 non-members

## The Lake Park Hotel

with historian Scott D. McGinnis



*Lake Park Hotel, 1881  
Courtesy Scott D. McGinnis*

Come join us in June as we cruise on the *Minnehaha* through Gideon's Bay around Sunrise Point and Tonka Bay towards West Point as Scott McGinnis discusses the history of the Lake Park Hotel. Built in 1879, Scott will speak to its early history as a non-denominational religious endeavor, how it morphed into a commercial venture, the monopolistic dream of Thomas Lowry, and its ultimate demolition.

Other interesting topics will include the businesses and pavilions associated with the hotel and the subsequent reincarnation of the Tonka Bay Hotel on a much smaller scale.

**Monday, July 11th 6:45 pm**

Aboard the Steamboat *Minnehaha*

Board at Bayside Grille

687 Excelsior Blvd., Excelsior

Purchase tickets at: [elmhs.eventbrite.com](http://elmhs.eventbrite.com)

\$20 ELMHS members / \$35 non-members

## Lake Minnetonka as a Native American Place

with historian Paul Maravelas



*A romanticized view of fur trade-era Lake Minnetonka, first published in 1893. The original caption reads: "Lake Minnetonka in 1845."*

Lake Minnetonka has been a productive hunting, fishing and gathering area for more than ten thousand years. This boat tour will take passengers past sites connected with ancient American Indian people as well as sites connected with the Dakota Indians of the 1800s. The "Minnehaha" will cruise by ancient mounds, trail, maple syrup and rice camps and prairie land the Dakota Indians historically kept open by fire. We'll also see the island where the people of Excelsior tried to hide in the first days of the 1862 Dakota Conflict, and Breezy Point—once called Spirit Knob—home of a Dakota sacred stone stolen by whites in 1852.

**Monday August 8th, 6:45 pm**Aboard the Steamboat *Minnehaha*

Board at Bayside Grille

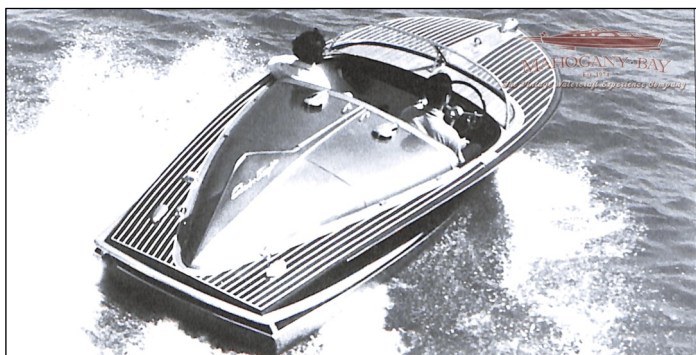
687 Excelsior Blvd., Excelsior

Purchase tickets at: [elmhs.eventbrite.com](http://elmhs.eventbrite.com)

\$20 ELMHS members / \$35 non-members

**Classic Wood Boats on  
Lake Minnetonka**

with Mahogany Bay owner, F. Todd Warner



1955 18' Chris Craft Cobra

Join F. Todd Warner, owner of Mahogany Bay, aboard the Steamboat *Minnehaha* to rediscover the beauty and significance of classic wood boats.

Todd is a leading authority in the vintage boating field and is proficient in the history and authenticity of well-known and obscure boat builders and designers. Todd frequently lectures on the historical perspective of restoration procedures for vintage watercraft and has been called upon to be an expert witness in cases involving wooden boats.

Todd will explore the stories of past and present wood boats of Lake Minnetonka. If you have a wood boat on Lake Minnetonka you would like to showcase, please contact Brianna DePauw at [brianna@elmhs.org](mailto:brianna@elmhs.org) or 952-221-4766.

**Monday, September 12th, 7:00 pm**

Excelsior Brewing Company

421 Third Street, Excelsior

Free and Open to the Public.

Doors open at 6:00pm - seating first come, first served.

**Excelsior Firefighters  
125th Celebration**

with firefighter Kellie Murphy-Ringate



Courtesy Excelsior Fire District

The Excelsior Fire Department/District is celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016. Kellie will share stories of the Fire Chiefs and firefighters, their visions of an innovative, cutting-edge, progressive fire department, and how those goals were achieved and are still part of today's fire district.

We'll travel back to 1868 to learn how fire fighting progressed from passing paper buckets of water to purchasing the department's first Aerial Ladder Truck, how fire alarms moved from word of mouth to cell phones; how cisterns were replaced by fire hydrants, and how making firefighting equipment in the village hall evolved into the two fire stations we have today. Rare images will highlight the fires that made headlines, changing how buildings are built and motivating improvements in training, equipment, and fire gear.

# 2016-2017 ELMHS Board of Directors Slate Announced

The Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society announces the candidates for the 2016-2017 Board of Directors. The Society's members will vote on this slate at the Members' Annual Meeting at 6:00 pm, Monday, June 27, at Southshore Center, 5735 Country Club Road, Shorewood. The candidates are:

**President:** Bri DePauw

**Treasurer:** Cheryl Ahlcrona

**Vice President:** Molly Anderson

**Secretary:** Open

**Board Members:** Deanna Bunkelman, Scott Dake, Drue Gisvold, Jerry Holl, Cate Honzl, Francesca Landon, Betty Peck, Tad Shaw, Lisa Stevens, F. Todd Warner, Jacob Westman, Tom Williams.

Candidates who are new to the board include:

**Cheryl Ahlcrona** recently retired after working for over 30 years in IT, project management, customer relationship management, education/training guidance and leadership in professional organizations. Cheryl graduated from Minnetonka High School, attended St. Olaf College, and graduated from the University of Minnesota with degrees in Mathematics and Psychology. Her parents owned Tonka Bay Boat Works / Marine from 1947 – 1972 and her mother was the pianist at for Excelsior Elementary School and organist for Mount Calvary.

**Scott Dake** is a senior vice president for a large national banking organization. He has managed (and implemented) financial, operating and project management functions during his career. Scott and his wife, Joanne, have two daughters (the eldest, a special ed teacher and the youngest, a 1st Lieutenant in the Air Force) and have lived in the Excelsior area for 23 years. Scott's family grew up in the Excelsior area and their stories are a major reason for his interest in local history.

**Drue Gisvold** grew up in Deephaven, graduated from Minnetonka High School and then attended Gustavus Adolphus College. After she and her husband moved to Hudson, WI, Drue joined the Saint Croix County Historical Society and Octagon House Museum where she eventually served as president. Drue is now retired and works part time in retail, volunteers at the ELMHS Archives and serves on the board of the Deephaven Historical Society.

**F. Todd Warner**, owner of Mahogany Bay, is a lifetime resident of the Lake Minnetonka area. Todd is a member of numerous classic boat associations including the Land O'Lakes chapter of the Antique & Classic Boat Society, Founding Member Century Boat Club, Lyman Boat Society, Fox and Hounds, RetroModerne Yacht Design CEO, and a member of the Minnetonka Yacht Club. Todd is also a lifetime percussionist!

**Tom Williams** has lived on the western edge of Minnetonka for over 25 years and raised a family in the Minnetonka school system. He is an attorney practicing in the areas of estate planning, real estate and business law. His undergraduate degree is in history, which remains his avocation today.

## Local Filmmaker Exploring the Bottom of Lake Minnetonka for TPT Documentary

As a child growing up along the shores of Lake Minnetonka, Dāv Kaufman was captivated by his father's stories of the big boats that lie on the bottom of the lake. When Dāv grew up, he pursued a career in filmmaking and now he's combining two of his passions to produce a one-hour documentary called "Beneath Lake Minnetonka," which TPT will air, narrated by Don Shelby.

The project is about 35% complete and contributions are still needed. "Even \$100 makes a big difference," Dāv says, "All contributions are 100% tax deductible. The advertising for local businesses is enormous, as the program will be aired for five years on PBS' Minnesota Channel to a local and statewide audience in the hundreds of thousands." Local businesses wishing to make an advertising contribution can contact Dāv at [echocreekmedia@gmail.com](mailto:echocreekmedia@gmail.com).

Aside from fundraising, Dāv is also looking for people who would be willing to be interviewed on camera who have stories of the big boats, Big Island Amusement Park and the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company.



Visit [www.echocreekmedia.com](http://www.echocreekmedia.com) for more information on the documentary being filmed in Lake Minnetonka.

One of the boats Dāv is filming is the "Minneapolis" set ablaze and scuttled in the summer of 1912.



We're very excited to have Dāv joining us on June 27, 6:00 pm, at the ELMHS Members' Annual Meeting at Southshore Center. Dāv will give a sneak peak of some early film footage and will answer questions.

## Swedish Traditions & Recipes Needed

Patrice Johnson, a food and culture writer from the Twin Cities is working with the Minnesota Historical Society and the American Swedish Institute on a book about Swedish Jul in the upper Midwest. While primarily a cookbook, "Swedish Jul" will also contain short interviews and historical references that tie the recipes to the collective community: starting with ärtsoppa and Swedish pancakes, moving into baking and other Christmas prep, julbord and meatballs, and ending with aquavit, glögg and other cocktails. Patrice is interested in interviewing individuals who celebrate the holidays with Swedish traditions for this book and contributing one (or more) Swedish recipes. You can contact Patrice at: [johns388@umn.edu](mailto:johns388@umn.edu).

## MEMBERSHIP

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Members shape the Society's policies and programs, and support our work in preserving the area's history.

*Annual member benefits include:*

- Members-only special events
- Discounts on certain events
- Newsletter and Society mailings
- Voting privileges

### Membership Levels

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Senior     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Silver   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Gold     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Bronze     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Platinum |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to ELMHS, Box 305, Excelsior M. 55331. Make checks payable to ELMHS. You can also join online at [www.elmhs.org](http://www.elmhs.org).

### This membership is a gift for:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

The recipient of your gift membership will receive a hand-written card acknowledging your gift. You will also receive an acknowledgement.

## Membership makes a nice gift

Looking for a meaningful & unique gift? Why not give the gift of an Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society membership so that your friends and family can enjoy our newsletters, programs, and special events all year long! When you buy a gift membership, the recipient will receive a hand-written note to acknowledge your gift, along with a full year of membership in the Society. For more information about Gift Memberships contact Membership Chair Molly Loomis at [molly@elmhs.org](mailto:molly@elmhs.org) or fill out the form at left.

### Volunteers Needed:

Love history and like to meet people? We're looking for volunteers to assist visitors and work with the collection in our Museum and our Archives.

We need hosts in our museum on Tuesdays, 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM and Saturdays, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (two shifts) from May until September.

The Archives needs volunteers every Wednesday and the second Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

The more volunteers we have, the more hours we can be open. Training is provided.

Contact us at [info@elmhs.org](mailto:info@elmhs.org) or 952-221-4766 to learn more or visit our website at [www.elmhs.org/volunteer](http://www.elmhs.org/volunteer).

# Thanks for your support!

*New and Renewed Members, and Contributors*

*December 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016*

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## MEMBERSHIPS

### Gold Level

Scott & Joey Dake

### Silver Level

Cheryl Ahlcrona & Carl Floren

Jane Cox

Jean Gray

C. Duffy Larsen-Abramson

Beckie & Larry Lembrich

Bill & Steph Naegele

Debby & Doug Schmidt

Kyle Uittenbogaard

### Bronze Level

Susan & Jim Berdahl

Deanna Bunkelman

Kelly & Loretta Dunn

Ron & Marcia McDaniel

Leone & Patrick McGlone

Julia Sherf

Tom Skramstadt

Pat Smith

Pam & Tom Stovern

### Individual Level

Linda Bean

Terry Bolin

Sue Brakke

David Carroll

Nancy Christianson

Frances Dranginis

Bob & Judy Evans

Michael Goertel

Pamela Honzl

F.G. "Woody" Jewett, III

Jeffrey Larson

Thomas McCarthy

Pam McDavitt

Judith Mueller

Michelle Mullenbach

Bruce & Jodi Noll

Nancy Smith

Jake & Cari Sturgis

Alan Tollefson

F. Todd Warner

Josh & Maggie Winter

Stephanie Winter

### Senior Level

Michael Burnett

Maureen Burns

Max Green

Lyle & Mary Hathaway

Susan Hocker

Don Hullsiek

Joyce Bakko Hummel

Bruce & Barbara Jensen

Lin & Mike Maki

Pamela Horton &

Michael Mason

Martha Mayer

Grace Norris

Bob Nygaard

Linda Putnam

Dales Rostad

Staney Rostad

Deanne Gray Straka

Kathy Suddendorf

Leona Toussaint

### Business Membership

Mahogany Bay

### CONTRIBUTIONS

Bruce & Barbara Jensen

Tom & Carol Knowlton

PEO Chapter CT

Debby & Doug Schmidt

Leona Toussaint

Tom & Barbara Warner

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## ACCESSIONS

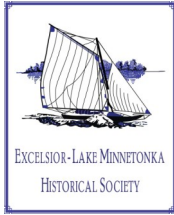
*December 2, 2015—March 31, 2016*

Paula Johnson, Photographs: Excelsior High School Class of 1931 and 1934

Kevin Wehrman, Photographs: Carmichael Property, Shorewood

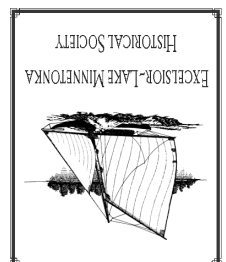
# Visit Our New Exhibit at the ELMHS Museum

The ELMHS Museum (next to the Excelsior Library) hosts a new exhibit this summer entitled: "A Classic American Main Street: Water Street Through the Years." View the ELMHS archival photograph collection showing the evolution of Water Street.



*Earliest known image of Water Street, Excelsior*

Excelsior MN 55331  
PO Box 305



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