RAMSEY COUNTY
# History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Growing Up Hmong in the Twin Cities*

**Gatherings from Before**

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*How It Started; How It's Going*

## Land O'Lakes Celebrates Ten Decades of Innovation

KAREN MELLOTT-FOSHIER, PAGE 1


Summer 2021

Volume 56 • Number 2

## By the Numbers . . .

Does Minnesota "do dairy?" You bet it does! Dairy farmers and related agribusinesses across the state are some of the nation's leading producers of butter, milk, cheese, and other dairy products. Check out the numbers below:

Fourth in total value of manufactured dairy products:
**$5 billion annually**

Sixth in cheese production:
**657 million pounds annually**

Seventh largest dairy herd:
**460,000 dairy cows**

Eighth in milk production:
**9.5 billion pounds annually**

Eighth in dairy product exports:
**$190 million annually**

Eighth in employment in dairy product manufacturing:
**5,500 people**

Number of major dairy product companies and brands:
**5***

*Dairy Queen, General Mills, Kraft Heinz, Land O'Lakes, and Schwan's.

One dairy company (a co-op actually) has been buttering our bread and putting milk (and ice cream!) and other products on our tables for over a century. To learn more about the nation's No. 1 butter company, see Karen Mellott-Foshier's article *"How It Started; How It's Going:* Land O'Lakes Celebrates Ten Decades of Innovation" on page 1.

SOURCES: "Minnesota's Dairy Industry: A Fact Sheet for Businesses," Minnesota Employment and Economic Development, 2018, accessed May 24, 2021, https://mn.gov/deed/assets/dairy-fact_tcm1045-315966.pdf.

**ON THE COVER**


A fleet of ten refrigerated trucks purchased for $15,000 in 1923 provided early marketing and distribution services to consumers around the Twin Cities. The first drivers, who sold product from their vehicles, eventually opened sales branches in cities across the state. The later model truck pictured here not only advertised butter but other Land O'Lakes products, including dry milk, which became especially popular and essential during the war years. *Courtesy of Land O'Lakes, Inc.*



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# Message from the Editorial Board

For over a year, we've been separated from one another—each of us uniquely affected by the global pandemic. But, Summer 2021 has offered a welcome respite from separation and much-needed time to reconnect and heal.

This issue of *Ramsey County History* reminds us of the many ways we connect, and how we are better together than apart—from the Minnesota farmers who pooled their resources, talents, and butter to build an innovative business model; to the traditions kept alive through family gatherings; to the 320 St. Paul bridges that transport us to points north, south, east and west; and to our shared history of conflict and violence—the connections between us are many.

First, Karen Mellott-Foshier brings us a history of Land O'Lakes, Inc., the cooperative that united dairy farmers a century ago, building a more stable market for member-owners and better products for consumers. Kao Kalia Yang shares an intimate account of Hmong traditions cemented through frequent gatherings, many generations, and the shared memories of faraway places that bring and keep families together. And then there are bridges. Whether emotional or physical, bridges offer us a way to meet one another. Christine Podas-Larson has written a loving depiction of St. Paul's exquisite South Channel and Montreal bridges. Finally, our community is tied to our shared histories, and that often includes conflict. Mary Lethert Wingerd reviews *Massacre In Minnesota* by Gary Clayton Anderson, a refreshed narrative of the 1862 US-Dakota War that offers an unflinching perspective of the damage wrought to all sides by ethnic violence.

This summer, as we finally gather again, we have much to celebrate, mourn, and contemplate as a community.

*Anne Field*
Chair, Editorial Board

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*The Aesthetics of Bridge Design*

# A Paean to Two of St. Paul's Elegant Park Bridges

CHRISTINE PODAS-LARSON

> *When Allah the Merciful and Compassionate first created this world, the earth was smooth and even as a finely engraved plate. That displeased the devil who envied man this gift of God. And while the earth was still just as it had come from God's hands, damp and soft as unbaked clay, [the devil] stole up and scratched the face of God's earth with his nails as much and as deeply as he could. . . . deep rivers and ravines were formed which divided one district from another and kept men apart . . . And Allah felt pity when he saw what the Accursed One had done . . . so he sent his angels to help men and make things easier for them. When the angels saw how unfortunate men could not pass those abysses and ravines . . . but tormented themselves and looked in vain and shouted from one side to the other, they spread their wings above those places and men were able to cross. So men learned from the angels of God how to build bridges . . .*
>
> IVO ANDRIĆ
> *THE BRIDGE ON THE DRINA*[1]

At the time of its incorporation, St. Paul was "set in panoramic beauty . . . located in an exquisite landscape setting, crowned with seven hills and encircled by the horseshoe curve of the mighty Mississippi, with its castellated bluffs, clothed with natural verdure and elements of scenery approaching mysterious grandeur."[2] As the city grew, as commerce could not be confined within natural boundaries, as people sought connections over those natural chasms and obstacles, public agencies and corporations began to build bridges. Bridges are bred into the city's DNA—the St. Paul Bridge Company and the city itself were incorporated on the same day—March 4, 1854.[3] From the beginning, bridges have captured civic imagination.

In 1849, James Goodhue, editor of the *Minnesota Pioneer* (the territory's first newspaper), wrote with passion of the vital and immediate importance of building a bridge over the Mississippi River from the middle of the city to Dakota territory on the west side, supported, in part, by the midriver Raspberry Island. He saw this point as a convergence of east and west; a bridge serving commerce and agriculture and throngs of new immigrants. This, he wrote, must be a "national bridge . . . a gateway between two oceans"[4] in the heart of America. The Wabasha Bridge opened in 1859.

Goodhue's vision for St. Paul's first bridge spoke of the power of bridges to define the character of the city. As the city grew, so too did the need for more bridges. St. Paul began by spanning natural chasms and grew to span those created by humankind. In the nineteenth century, railroad companies constructed mighty bridges of wood, iron, and steel. In doing so, they created their own gulfs of track. In the twentieth century, national highway systems thrusting coast to coast through the city opened new voids, severing neighborhoods that have cried out ever since for some remnant of connection lost.[5] Today after 167 years, St. Paul's 320 bridges carry vehicular traffic, trains, bicycles, and pedestrians.

This is the story of two of those bridges—the South Channel Bridge in Phalen Park and the Montreal Bridge in Highland Park.[6] They trace the arc of cityscape from northeast to southwest. Both are pedestrian bridges—one spans a waterway; the other a wide roadway. Built early in the last century, they arose at the

A group of young people gather for an afternoon outing, sitting for a bit on Phalen Park's South Channel Bridge in 1918. *(L-R):* Milton Kenny, Alice Wyman, Al Brown, Margaret Walsh, Ruth Swanson, and Charles Yoruso. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

intersection of vision, opportunity, and engineering innovation.

These bridges are beautiful—intentionally so—for beauty is fundamental to their social value. Their very forms draw attention from afar and enchant while crossing above and traversing below in an experience that becomes more intimate while in the hold of the structures themselves. The Phalen South Channel Bridge was key to a new park entry associated with trolley lines and vehicular access that would ultimately bring hundreds of thousands to this haven in an urban landscape. The Montreal Bridge was the first structure completed in the development of Highland Park, grandly built to join two picnic grounds. These are not the bridges of commerce. They are places where those who cross tend to dwell for a time.

## The Visionaries

Great bridges arise from underpinnings of broad civic vision and the leadership to support and realize bold ideas. Such was the case for the bridges in Phalen and Highland. Both were constructed in the context of enlightened park development and from a conviction that parks are essential vessels of civic life.

### Horace William Shaler Cleveland (1814-1900)

In February 1872, something extraordinary happened in the Twin Cities: Horace William Shaler (H. W. S.) Cleveland visited Minnesota and spoke to civic leaders, opening before them an enlightened view of the essence of public parks to the health and future of cities and citizens. He repeated his presentation to the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce and expanded upon his ideas through that spring. In a June 24 address to the Common Council, he exhorted his audience to lay the foundation for a park system by purchasing key sites for civic use before they were claimed for private development and forever lost. From that year forward, St. Paul's landscape changed utterly. "The provision which nature has made in your vicinity of several beautiful lakes would seem to determine the position" of such parks. Lake Phalen should be preserved as a public possession . . . Lake Como offers similar advantages for artistic use, as a striking and beautiful feature in a public park."[7]

Cleveland believed parks should preserve and develop natural features to bring forth their innate grandeur and beauty. Steeped in transcendental philosophy, he saw parks as a natural

respite from city life, offering healthful benefits and "recuperation of soul and body from the exhausting effects of the wear and tear of life in the crowded marts of commerce."[8]

The visionary encouraged a long view of the city's growth and prosperity and its burgeoning population. ". . . [Y]ou should regard it as a sacred duty to preserve this gift which the wealth of the world could not purchase and transmit it as a heritage of beauty to your successors forever."[9] Cleveland's audience heeded his clarion call. That summer, an act of the Minnesota Legislature provided St. Paul up to $100,000 for a new commission to acquire land for a major public park; the following year, the commission purchased 257 acres on the north and west sides of Como Lake.[10]

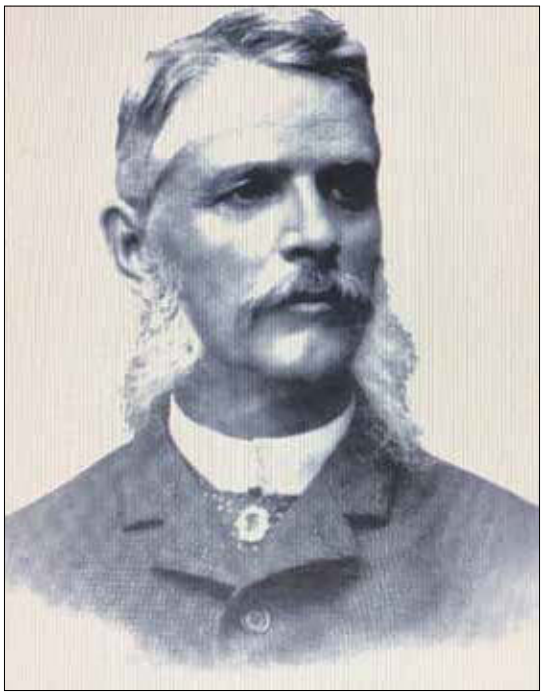
In 1888, the city formally engaged Cleveland to prepare designs for its parks and parkways.[11] Land acquisition for Phalen and Como Parks took many years, but by the early twentieth century, these two new venues welcomed visitors who delighted in glorious gardens, concerts, and the beauties of the water and wild.

Horace Cleveland recommended that the city secure the shores of both Lake Phalen and Como Lake and connect them by boulevards. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

## Joseph Wheelock (1831-1906)

Speaking on the "History of the Parks and Public Grounds in St. Paul" in a 1913 address to the Minnesota Historical Society, Lloyd Peabody, a local attorney, noted:

> Of the few whose prophetic vision in the early years of the history of this city swept over our river bluffs and alternating hills and valleys and saw there, ready to our fashioning, a combined park system unequaled in its setting, Joseph A. Wheelock was easily first . . . [T]here is no other man who can be set beside him as a founder of our parks.[12]



Joseph Wheelock's knowledge of the city's parks and their distinct characteristics was profound. He championed Cleveland's concept of a system connected through parkways—from Mounds to Phalen, from Phalen to Como, and beyond. *In* Men of Minnesota, *1902.*

Wheelock arrived in early St. Paul from Nova Scotia in 1850. He founded the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* in 1861 and remained its editor in chief for forty-five years. As a civic leader, he was most surely present at Cleveland's early presentations to the city. Wheelock served as president of the Board of Park Commissioners from 1893 until his death in 1906.[13]

Wheelock was a powerful writer and speaker and did not suffer fools lightly. "He had handsome eyes of a peculiar electric hue whose piercing gaze could paralyze and make a little hell for the unworthy."[14] Whether for the paper or public presentations, "he wrote with a fullness of information and a richness of diction that commanded applause while it persuaded and convinced."[15] His ardor came through in his stirring annual

reports of the Board of Park Commissioners as he expounded on a great shining vision, admitted challenges, proposed strategies, and cajoled and wooed partners in this great civic enterprise. He advocated tirelessly to extend the streetcar into Como and Phalen and for completion of the channel that would connect Phalen to the chain of lakes to the north.[16]

Wheelock treasured the natural beauty of the parks and cared deeply about the aesthetic quality of park improvements. In 1903, he led passage of a board resolution that stated:

> Before leave shall be given to erect any monument, statue, or other work of art . . . or any permanent structures such as buildings or bridges in any of the parks . . . the design for the same and a plot of the situation and surroundings shall be first submitted to the judgment of an advisory expert . . . and [the report] shall be . . . duly considered by the board before final action shall be taken in the matter.[17]

In response, nationally acclaimed architect Cass Gilbert was appointed official advisory architect of the board. One might say that, through Wheelock's efforts, elegance was a stated intention in the design of park bridges.

## Herman C. Wenzel (1887-1969)

In 1914, St. Paul amended its city charter and moved to a commission form of government. An elected city councilmember led Parks, Playgrounds, and Public Buildings and served as parks commissioner. From 1922 to 1937, Herman Wenzel served in that capacity and led the charge to create Highland Park. Wenzel was first elected to the council in 1920, initially serving as public works commissioner; he later became Minnesota's commissioner of conservation.[18]

As early as 1890, some were casting an eye to the forest of Reserve Township (later Highland Park) for parkland. In reports from 1914 to 1919, longtime Park Superintendent Frederick Nussbaumer repeatedly recommended acquisition of land in the city's southwest corner for a park. He bemoaned the loss of prime parkland along the Edgcumbe bluff to private development: "It does not embrace and preserve any of the beautiful and prominent scenic features through which it passes for public use and when built up will almost entirely shut out the picturesque landscape of the river valley."[19] Nussbaumer urged that action be taken before all of the high vistas in the area were forever lost to public purpose. Wenzel was paying attention.

By 1920, the St. Paul Water Department had secured forty acres off Snelling Avenue, and a fringe of parkland had been zoned. But the bulk of what became Highland Park (mostly farmland and swamp) was fair game for private development. City plans of the early 1920s had zoned much of it for housing. The impending opening of the Ford Plant in 1925 ratcheted up pressure on area real estate.[20] The window of opportunity for parkland was fast closing.

In August 1924, Wenzel made his move, unveiling a plan for a grand park covering 204 acres in addition to the water department's forty and including most of the land from Snelling to West Seventh and from Montreal to Highland

Herman Wenzel understood the value of land in southwest St. Paul and was worried about impending development. He urged that action be taken before potential parkland was forever lost to public purpose. *Courtesy of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation.*

Parkway. Echoing Cleveland, he proclaimed that acquisition of land for Highland Park was the last opportunity the city would have to create a public space before bursting residential development claimed it for private use.[21]

He pursed his goal through all angles, unbent in his resolve. The appraised value of the land was $479,760. Wenzel explored using city funds for purchase and the sale of other parkland. In the end, he played his ace: assessment, arguing that assessments alone would pay the price as properties served by this park would increase in value. In 1924, the district's population was 42,500. Each piece would be assessed strictly in accordance with its proximity to the park. Most property owners and residential developers agreed with him, recognizing the benefit that would accrue to their holdings through park development.[22]

The plan was not without naysayers. On March 19, 1925, a local paper reported the drama of a public meeting where, "those against resorted to all sorts of verbal fireworks and verbal abuse," directed mostly at Wenzel. For example, a Rev. Joseph Harkness vowed that "I'll never pay one dollar, so help me God, till the Supreme court says I shall. This is a gigantic injustice. It is a golf course for the rich for which the widows will pay." Wenzel calmly responded that the reverend was one of those who came to him originally and urged acquisition of the park. "He speaks for the widows, but doesn't say that he owns five acres near the park which are being assessed. Certainly they are high as they should be for a farm within the city limits."[23] By the end of 1925, Wenzel did achieve his goal—the land was secured.

## Reinforced Concrete: Material Revolution

The arch bridges in Phalen and Highland parks were made of reinforced concrete—the cutting edge of bridge technology for their times. Both qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, in part, because they exemplify experimental/unstandardized arch bridges built in the early twentieth century using this method of construction.

"Just as the nineteenth century was an age of iron, so the twentieth century has become an age of concrete," wrote noted civil engineering scholar David Billington.[24] The Romans had mixed cement, sand, stone, and water to make this artificial stone called concrete. Use of iron in building also dates to antiquity. What was new in the twentieth century was the combination of the two ancient materials to make a composite with extraordinary properties. "In 1849 a French gardener, Joseph Monier, stumbled upon a radical invention when using iron mesh in concrete to make flower pots. His combination of the tensile strength of iron with the compressive strength of concrete revolutionized the construction industry."[25] Monier later applied the idea to buildings and bridges. In bridges, the iron or steel reinforcement allowed greater span length of concrete beams and arches. Monier's work was expanded upon by others, who patented their methods.

The technology appeared in America in the late 1880s. Many early reinforced concrete bridges used ideas of Josef Melan, a Viennese engineer whose design incorporated parallel metal I-beams bent in the shape of an arch—essentially metal-ribbed arch structures encased in concrete. The first Melan arch bridge in America was built under the supervision of William S. Hewett at Rock Rapids, Iowa, in 1894. Hewett, who later founded the Security Bridge Company, built a number of bridges for the Twin City Rapid Transit Company, including the Como Park Footbridge.[26]

Serendipitously, just as landscape architects Cleveland and Frederick Law Olmsted[27] were evangelizing about the need for urban park systems, the reinforced concrete technology opened new aesthetic possibilities for bridges in those parks. Social historian Alan Trachtenberg observed that, as envisioned by Olmsted, a park was meant to be a refuge from, and thus a contrast with, both the commercial and industrial center and the immigrant-crowded neighborhoods of worker housing. Historian Robert Frame notes that the urban park was "all pastoral picture, composed views, nature artfully framed as spectacle. Within the park, the bridge was not merely an expected necessity, but it emerged as an opportunity for . . . a special bridge design, in harmony with the grand park scheme."[28]

## The Phalen South Channel Bridge

*Bridge #L8560*

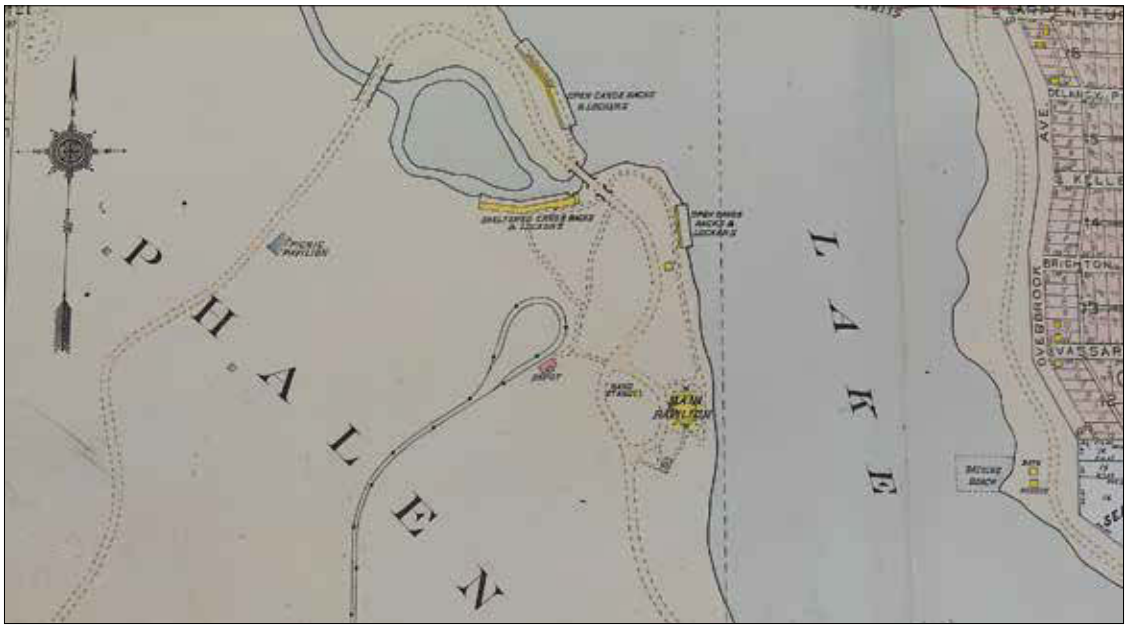
From the beginning, Phalen was envisioned as an aquatic park. Lake Phalen was the last link in a chain that meandered from Gervais Lake in the north through Keller, Spoon, and Round Lakes and emptied into Phalen Creek at its south end. Promotion of a canal to connect the lakes was the steady drumbeat propelling news of Phalen in commission reports beginning in the late 1880s. Boats had been on the lake before park development, including a ferry with a landing on the east side. The commissioners had grander ideas—motor barges and a fleet of rowboats and canoes would course through the canals. "Illuminated by electric lights at night, the effect will be magical."[29]

Though Cleveland highlighted Lake Phalen in his 1872 address as a prime opportunity for parkland, it took the city twenty years to take action. Land was acquired beginning in 1892. Laid out by the local civil engineering firm Hawley and Newell in 1897, Phalen Park opened to the public in 1899. Land acquisition continued through 1904, when the park had expanded to include over 246 acres of land plus the 222 acres of the lake itself.[30]

Phalen was also dubbed "a forest park, for the primeval woods which clothe its western border."[31] With the water and surrounding woodland, it evoked Cleveland's ideal as a natural place of refuge. Its pastoral setting was further enhanced as the city added a flock of sheep to graze and maintain the grounds, guided by both a shepherd and sheepdog. This ovine experiment was part of the park economy, with annual financial reports detailing the costs of caring for this flock (which grew to 652 by 1909) as well as the income derived from sale of wool.[32]

Long seen as critical to park accessibility, the streetcar arrived in 1905. It ran from Forest Street into the park itself on a private right-of-way to a depot with a loop for return. Amenities such as a pavilion, bandstand, and picnic shelters fanned out along the west shore from the streetcar depot. Initially, a swimming beach and beach houses were located off the point of the eastern shore. A raucous and short-lived amusement park that had occupied the island in the center of the channel closed in 1908.[33]

By 1909, the scene was set for the advent of the South Channel Bridge. A waterway linking Phalen to Round Lake had been completed, with some of the dredged material creating a lovely picnic island. The channel entered Lake Phalen under the 1906 Island Canal Bridge (a Bedstead pony truss renamed the Neid Bridge in 1992 in honor of former Councilmember Karl Neid), built as part of a roadway around the lake.[34] Smaller footbridges of wood and steel built between 1900 and 1909 spanned the channel. Canoe concessions that opened in the late 1800s




This St. Paul city map shows the completed amenities in Phalen Park with a picnic pavilion and the South Channel Bridge along the new Arcade Street entry roadway. Three canoe facilities on the channel and lake and the route of the streetcar coming into the park on its private right-of-way leading to the depot and main pavilion are also clearly marked. *In* Map of the City of St. Paul, Minnesota, *G.M. Hopkins Co., 1916, courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*


From the deck of the South Channel Bridge, pedestrians and passengers in early cars and carts could take in the charming setting, looking to Lake Phalen beyond and the channel immediately below. *Courtesy of Christine Podas-Larson.*

expanded that year. By then, there were three canoe rental and storage options on the west side of the lake and in the channel itself.

Early in 1910, the city added a new entrance at Arcade Street with a roadway that expanded access through and around the park.[35] As part of that roadway, the South Channel Bridge was built to carry wagons (initially both automobiles and horse-drawn carts) over the channel that connected Round Lake to Phalen. To the northeast, the bridge site presented a treed sloping landscape to the water with a nearby picnic pavilion.

The commissioners heralded the new bridge as "well designed" and "fittingly set in the surrounding landscape."[36] The graceful, almost sensual, form of its central elliptical arch spanned the channel as though it arose organically from the banks. Its deep barrel form supported a roadway nearly 42 ft. wide and 108 ft. in length above and offered a cool, shaded, echoing passage for boats beneath.

The bridge was a barrel arch between two piers supporting a flat slab. The central span was 50 ft., 9 in. wide with a clearance of 12 ft., 9 in. above the water line. The spandrels were open above the arch and below the abutments. The railing, with its turned balusters made of artificial stone fabricated by the National Stone Manufacturing Company of Minneapolis, endowed the bridge with a Beaux-Arts style, consistent with the ideals of the City Beautiful Movement.[37]

Engineer Claude Allen Porter (C.A.P.) Turner, nationally recognized for his innovations in reinforced concrete, designed the bridge. His use of an elliptical form in this structure was unique among his other works. A native of Rhode Island and a graduate of Lehigh University's School of Engineering, Turner worked for bridge companies in Delaware, Ohio, and Pennsylvania before coming to Minnesota in 1897 to work for the Gillette-Herzog Manufacturing Company and, later, the American Bridge Company. He eventually formed his own consulting company in 1901, designing the Duluth Aerial Ferry Bridge, which opened in 1905. Along with Walter H. Wheeler, he is credited with the design of the Mendota Bridge, built between 1925 and 1926 and, at the time, the longest continuous concrete arch bridge in the world.[38]

Turner's South Channel Bridge embodied the aesthetic possibilities of the new reinforced concrete. It inspired many picturesque postcards over the next twenty years featuring canoe riders paddling toward it along the channel.[39]

Contractor Jacob Lauer constructed the bridge for $10,474. Precast concrete played a big role in this cost efficiency, as did the builder's


No longer a piece of Beaux-Arts architecture that made its presence known in the landscape, the rustic redesign of the Phalen South Channel Bridge became an environmental sculpture, quietly and rustically expressing its beauty. *Courtesy of Christine Podas-Larson.*

cost-saving strategies. Lauer had timbers on hand from a former job. He cut these down, beveled the ends, and formed the pieces into arched form work. Cost was a concern. A. B. Stickney, a recent retiree and former president and board chair of the Chicago Great Western Railroad and a newly appointed member of the Board of Park Commissioners, raised questions about park costs, and in his 1910 annual report, President H. W. Topping lamented Stickney's "deplorable interference with the financial condition of the Board resources."[40] The controversies Stickney created held up work in parks throughout that year.

When the bridge was built in 1910, Turner and others assumed maintenance costs would be minimal. They were wrong. By the early 1920s, some deterioration was evident, and the city made modest repairs. But less than a decade later, visitors arrived mostly by car, with increased traffic promoting a move to pave park and parkway drives.[41] Heavy use and the weight of newer automobiles took a toll. By the early 1930s, the bridge's condition made it unsafe.

In 1934, the Civil Works Administration (CWA) led extensive rehabilitation of the bridge and, in the process, transformed its surface aesthetic. The National Park Service (NPS), founded in 1916, developed an architectural policy for its parks. Under the influence of landscape architect Thomas Chalmers Vint and architect Herbert Maier, rustic architecture became the standard for national parks. It was "a natural outgrowth of a new romanticism about nature. . . . [A structure] became an accessory to nature [with] native materials best blending with the environment."[42] In the 1930s, the Park Service also managed various projects in state parks, an opportunity to promulgate the rustic aesthetic. At the same time, the South Channel Bridge restoration changed the bridge facade to a rustic appearance. While the exquisite elliptical arch remained, everything else transformed. Spandrels were filled and white concrete morphed to a facing of Kasota stone. Late Gothic Revival became the new railing style, with small, paired arched openings allowing the bridge to metaphorically breathe.[43]

The bridge carried traffic over the channel through the park for another forty years. Fewer pedestrians used it as larger cars consumed more of the bridge deck, exceeding its capacity and compromising the integrity of the structure. By the 1970s, park officials and landscape designers were taking a new approach, giving more attention to environmental concerns and

pedestrian access. They realized that the roadway running through the park encroached upon the fragile biome and discouraged pedestrian use. In the mid-1970s, the road closed to vehicles and gave way to walking paths.

The bridge, however, was neglected and again fell into disrepair. The city talked of replacing it altogether. Thanks to advocates, it was restored in 2011. The City of St. Paul invited input about whether the bridge should continue in the rustic style or be returned to its original Beaux-Arts design. Citizens chose to keep the rustic style, which remains to this day. The restoration installed a new concrete deck, repaired the railings, and replaced the stone on the spandrel walls and railings. Precast liner panels were added to the underside of the arch.[44] Today, the bridge carries only pedestrians and park operations vehicles.

With the early visionaries' big dreams of a canal linking the lakes from Gervais through Phalen finally a reality, canoes (and now kayaks) continue to ply the waters and approach this angelic bridge in a reflective, idyllic silence.

## The Montreal Bridge

*Bridge #62075*

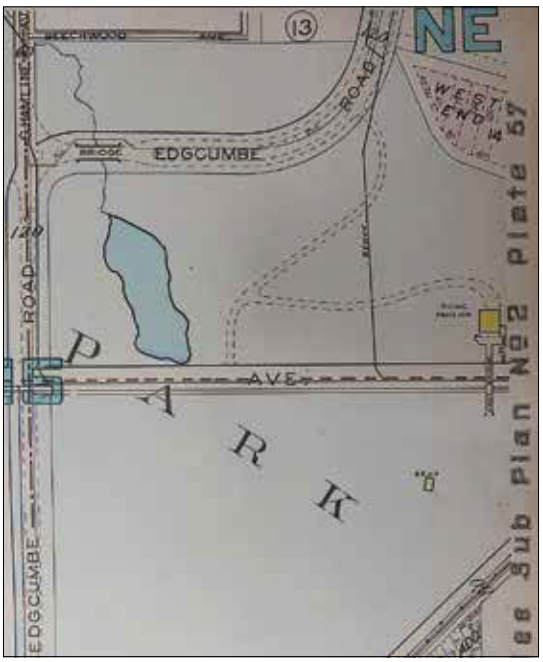
An 1896 topographic map of the area we now know as the Highland Park picnic area and home of Circus Juventas shows a small stream meandering down a steep gully to Crosby Lake. From the heights of what is today Snelling Avenue above to West Seventh Street below, small wetlands dotted the landscape.[45]

This high, marshy farmland roused the interest of early residents from the Fort Snelling Reserve. An 1849 survey of the larger Highland Park area established eight one-mile square sections and several fractional sections. Those section lines later became the area's major streets—Snelling, Fairview, and Hamline. A land sale in 1854 asked a minimum of $1.25 per acre in what would become Reserve Township in 1858. The city annexed the township in 1887.[46] While property owners in the area north of Randolph had been subdividing their holdings for housing development since early in the twentieth century, the area south of Otto remained largely farmland until the early 1920s when Park Commissioner Wenzel led the charge to secure a swath of it for a public park.

Developed in a new era, Highland Park was intended for active sports and recreation, rather than the slower paced lake-centered scenic joys of Phalen Park. The plan, unveiled by Wenzel and Superintendent of Parks George L. Nason in 1924, called for a central pavilion, bandstand, golf course, and athletic fields. It also envisioned picnic facilities, including a shelter pavilion and children's playground "in the wooded area leading down to West 7th Street."[47]

In 1910 at a cost of $3,200, E. S. Zimmerman had built a large house near this wooded area—atop the bluff at 1233 Montreal. When the city acquired the land in 1925, the home was converted to the park's first picnic pavilion, with lodgings for the park caretaker on the upper floors.[48]

In 1927, the city erected the footbridge to span the gulf across the roadway to connect the two picnic areas. This became the first structure in the expansive park that would unfold in the years ahead.[49] The new Montreal Bridge seemed almost like a drawbridge to the pavilion, offering immediate access to shelter and, from there, to the pathway that wound down the slope to a small swimming hole (the eventual site for a 1935 pool). The path continued to Edgcumbe Road and a small bridge over the ravine. Photographs from the 1930s show a remnant of the stream running under the Edgcumbe bridge with




Having finally secured the parkland, work began immediately to grade Montreal Avenue, laid out earlier along what had been a half-section line of the 1849 survey. Creating a forty-foot cut, the new roadway bisected the planned picnic area. *In* Map of the City of St. Paul, Minnesota*, G.M. Hopkins Co., 1916, courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

two tiny bridges built across the trickling water for pedestrian access.

A seven-span, open-spandrel fixed arch and concrete girder bridge, the Montreal rises nearly 40 ft. above the roadway. Made of reinforced concrete, it is 244 ft. long and 13 ft. wide. Its broad central arch is flanked by three concrete deck-girder approach spans on each side. The main 86 ft. fixed-rib arch has six spandrel columns. Consistent with the era of its construction, its railing is Art Deco style with simple rectangular posts and steel railing panels with tubular top rail and square balusters. The bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register as a "landmark structure representing an extraordinary aesthetic effort . . ."[50]

Martin Sigvart Grytbak, an innovative and influential Norwegian-American engineer who was involved in the design of the great bridges of the Twin Cities, signed the original Montreal Bridge drawings and likely designed the structure. He was the engineer of the Ford Bridge, built the same year in 1927. He is credited with design of the smaller Edgcumbe Bridge, as well. He graduated in 1903 from Trondheim Technical College as a civil engineer and came to Minnesota two years later. Initially he worked as a draftsman for the Northern Pacific Railway and, within a few years, was chief draftsman in its bridge department. In 1913, he joined the city's Public Works Department. He was also responsible for major efforts like the 1926 Robert Street Bridge and the 1930 Third Street Viaduct.[51]

The Montreal Bridge is nothing short of thrilling, both as one drives or cycles along Montreal to or from West Seventh and as one crosses it on foot. Evocative of Nussbaumer's 1917 vision, from the sublime prospect in the middle of the

The Montreal Bridge in Highland Park majestically frames the river valley and offers the promise of the Mississippi below. Michelangelo has been attributed as saying that "a bridge ought to be built as though it were intended to be a cathedral, with the same care . . ." That Renaissance aspiration expresses itself in this early twentieth century bridge. *Courtesy of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation.*

The lovely Como Park Footbridge could not really be seen from the streetcar as visitors arrived from the west. It was best viewed as they disembarked from the streetcar station and from the hillside to the east, as seen in many postcards of the early twentieth century. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

## Como Park Footbridge: The Melan System Epitomized

The streetcar arrived in Como Park in 1891 on a line from downtown St. Paul. In 1898, the extended seventeen-mile interurban Como Harriet line opened. Demand rapidly grew. Soon, the Twin City Rapid Transit Company wanted to make changes that would bring visitors right into the park. For this to happen, Park Commissioner Joseph Wheelock stipulated to the company that "tracks would not cross any permanent park road at the surface, but were to run under or over bridges constructed by the Company." The transit company would also contribute to the cost of a new station and be allowed to change its single loop line to a double track.[a]

The company built two bridges conforming to these requirements, and Wheelock enthused about the new railway entrance: "[T]he tracks now run under a handsome bridge of iron and concrete material laced with sandstone, over which a continuation of Lexington Avenue affords a dignified entrance for teams to the park. A concrete footbridge molded into forms of architectural elegance ensures the safety of passengers in crossing over the tracks."[b]

In the same report, Park Superintendent Frederick Nussbaumer added, "[T]he bridge is of a tasty design elaborately finished and without question one of the most artistic structures of its kind."[c] In 1905, Nussbaumer reported that the transit company completed the beautiful new streetcar waiting station just in time for the opening of the park season.[d]

The footbridge, constructed with reinforced concrete (Melan system), is the second oldest documented extant reinforced concrete bridge in Minnesota. Along with the Lexington Avenue Bridge, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its most striking feature is its 50 ft. main-span arch. At 88 ft. in overall length, the bridge carries a 15 ft. pedestrian walkway, steeply pitched to allow room for streetcars to pass below. Ornamental concrete railings line the bridge deck in Classical Revival style.[e] Both the footbridge and the Lexington Avenue Bridge were designed and built by William S. Hewett.

Service on the St. Paul portion of the Como-Harriet line ended in 1953. The tracks and wires were removed. The bridge remained but, unattended, it slowly deteriorated and became a dangerous eyesore. The lovely railings and balusters were mostly gone. The concrete spalled away, exposing the supporting Melan steel structure.[f] Historic preservationists fought hard for restoration. With support from a transportation enhancement grant, the restored bridge reopened in 2015 to pedestrians and became part of a bike path through the entire park.[g]

This image illustrates the Melan system. A three-span, open-spandrel, reinforced-concrete, barrel-arch bridge, its reinforcement consists of five latticed Melan ribs in the arch ring with Thatcher bars in the piers and floor slab. *Courtesy of Dr. Robert Frame, Mead & Hunt.*

bridge, one can pause to breathe in and survey the grandeur of the river valley.

## The Making of A Bridge

This story of two St. Paul park bridges is part of the author's larger exploration of the city's many elegant bridges. Visionaries set the stage and provided civic leadership to bring them forward; exceptional designers gave them form. But, to paraphrase artist Siah Armajani, a bridge is not a bridge until the first person crosses it.[52] The people walking the bridges in Phalen and Highland and other locations throughout the city have made those bridges from the very beginning and continue to do so each time they venture across the divide, from one side to the other.

**Acknowledgments:** Libraries and public offices were closed or minimally accessible during the COVID-19 pandemic as this article was being researched and written. The author is grateful to those who went to extraordinary lengths to provide research assistance: Glenn Pagel, Mike Engel, and Brent Christensen, St. Paul Public Works–Bridges Division; Morgan Strickland, George Latimer Central Library, St. Paul Collection; Rich Arpi, reserch associate, RCHS Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center; Cheryll Fong, interim curator, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota; Michael Hahm, director, and Clare Cloyd, marketing and public relations manager, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation; Dr. Robert Frame, senior historian and Kristen Zschomler and Katie Ohland, cultural resource specialists, Mead & Hunt; Peter Kramer, architect; and Dr. David Lanegran, professor emeritus in the Department of Geology at Macalester College.

***Christine Podas-Larson*** *is the founder of Public Art Saint Paul and the recipient of a 1994 St. Paul Companies' Leadership Initiatives in the Neighborhoods award to study the aesthetics of bridge design in America.*

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**NOTES**

1. Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge On the Drina*, trans. Lovett F. Edwards (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 208. First edition published 1945; "The Nobel Prize in Literature 1961," NobelPrize.org, accessed June 16, 2021, https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1961/summary/. Andrić was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for "the epic force with which he has traced themes and depicted human destinies drawn from the history of his country;" "Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge in Višegrad," UNESCO, accessed June 16, 2021, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1260/. Mimar Sinan designed the Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge in Višegrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Completed in 1577, it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

2. Frederick Nussbaumer, *Report of the Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings of the City of St. Paul 1914-1919* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1917), 13.

3. "An Act to Incorporate the St. Paul Bridge Company," Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes 1854 General Laws, chapter 30, 72-75.

4. "A Bridge at Saint Paul," *The Minnesota Pioneer*, December 12, 1849, 2.

5. Marvin Anderson, Reconnect Rondo correspondence with author, Spring 2021. As an example, a community-led group is currently working to reconnect St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood, which was severed by the mid-twentieth-century construction of I-94. With a proposed land bridge extending from Lexington Avenue to Rice Street, the project aims to weave the neighborhood back together, reigniting a vibrant African American cultural enterprise district in St. Paul and ensuring a brighter, better, and more equitable future.

6. The Minnesota Department of Transportation refers to bridges by number. Formal names used to describe the bridges vary. For purposes of this article, Bridge #L8560 is titled the "Phalen South Channel Bridge" and Bridge #62075 is the "Montreal Bridge."

7. Horace Cleveland spoke at the invitation of President William Watts Folwell of the University of Minnesota. Cleveland's address was entitled, "The Application of Landscape Architecture to the Wants of the West." His June 1872 lecture to the city's Common Council discussed "A Park System for the City of St. Paul." These and Cleveland's various presentations and essays are in the public domain, and his work in the Twin Cities has been covered extensively in numerous articles, including: William H. Tishler and Virginia S. Luckhardt, "H. W. S. Cleveland Pioneer Landscape Architect to the Upper Midwest," *Minnesota History* 49, no. 7 (Fall 1985): 281–291; Donald Empson, "A Grand Topographical Feature: The History of the Mississippi River Boulevard," *Ramsey County History* 29, no. 2 (Summer 2014); and *Historic Resources Evaluation for the North Portion of Saint Paul's Grand Round*, report prepared for the City of St. Paul and SEH, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota, by Landscape Research LLC, 2016, 8-10.

8. Andrew J. Schmitt, "Pleasure and Recreation for

the People: Planning St. Paul's Como Park," *Minnesota History* 58, no. 1 (Spring, 2002), 46; Daniel Nadenicek, "Emerson's Aesthetic and Natural Design: A Theoretical Foundation for the Work of Horace William Shaler Cleveland," in *Nature and Ideology* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1997). Cleveland was born in Lancaster, Massachusetts, in 1814, the son of ardent Unitarians linked to Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson's writing greatly influenced Cleveland's approach to landscape design. Both looked to the landscape to seek beauty and "from that beauty would be found pleasure arising from natural form."

9. Nadenicek.

10. Lloyd Peabody, "History of the Parks and Public Grounds of St. Paul," address to the Executive Council of the Minnesota Historical Society on March 10, 1913 (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society, 1915), 7.

11. Horace Cleveland also was instrumental in the development of the Mississippi River Boulevard and the design of the Minneapolis Park System.

12. Peabody, 1.

13. *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1906). Joseph Wheelock also served as one of five commissioners appointed in 1872 by Ramsey County District Court to contract for the purchase of the original land for Como Park.

14. John Talman, "Joseph Wheelock, 44 Years As Editor on St. Paul Papers, Wielded Mighty Pen," *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, October 24, 1920.

15. Henry A. Caste, *History of St. Paul and Vicinity* II (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), 1157.

16. The Board of Park Commissioners was created by an Act of 1887 that, among other stipulations, required the board to publish an annual report. The first was published in 1888 and, for the first several years, these reports summarized activities and enumerated expenses. Wheelock joined the board as its president in 1893. By 1895, he changed the report's scope and format, making it more expansive and including illustrations and an introduction by the president. Wheelock used this new format to review happenings and to forcefully state the case for park funding and improvements. In that first report, Wheelock expounded on the changes in city life that mandated more parkland outside the downtown core and broader transportation options to bring people to parks. He continued to speak to those issues in reports from 1895 to 1905.

17. *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1905).

18. The *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* and *Dispatch* followed Wenzel's career, with biographical information provided in *Pioneer Press* articles on November 13, 1938 and July 16, 1940, and in the *Dispatch* on November 25, 1938 and April 1, 1940; "Highland Park Project to Serve Western St. Paul," *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, August 10, 1924, 4.

19. Nussbaumer, 13; C. C. Andrews, *History of St. Paul, Minn.* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1890), 668. Andrews commented, ". . . no important area for a park has yet been procured in all of that beautifully undulating expanse of field and forest known as Reserve Township, and midway between the two cities, shows that St. Paul is not yet educated up to the proper appreciation of parks."

20. City of St. Paul Zoning Map, to accompany the Building Zone Ordinance, approved July 7, 1922. Prepared by the City Planning Board; Brian McMahon, "Minneapolis and St. Paul Stumble: Henry Ford Wins the Power Struggle for the High Dam," *Ramsey County History* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2007), 5.

21. "Highland Park Project to Serve Western St. Paul," *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, August 10, 1924, 4.

22. The saga of Highland Park land acquisition was extensively covered in the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, especially in "Highland Park Project To Serve Western St. Paul," August 10, 1924, 4; "Wenzel After Funds for Highland Park," August 23, 1924; and "Park of 224 Acres Ordered Acquired," December 21, 1924.

23. All quotations from "Highland Park Tax Will Be Reviewed," *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, March 19, 1925, 12.

24. David P. Billington, *The Tower and the Bridge: The New Art of Structural Engineering* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 147-148.

25. Edward Denison and Ian Stewart, *How To Read Bridges: A Crash Course Spanning the Centuries* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2012), 30.

26. Denis P. Gardner, *Wood Concrete Stone and Steel: Minnesota's Historic Bridges* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 59-60; Robert M. Frame III, "Reinforced Concrete Highway Bridges in Minnesota 1900-1945," National Register of Historic Places Documentation Form, 1988. Frame has written extensively about reinforced concrete bridges in Minnesota.

27. Cleveland worked for Frederick Law Olmstead in the design of New York's Prospect Park. They competed against one another to design Central Park. Both men developed a respectful, lasting friendship.

28. Frame III, 1988.

29. Joseph Wheelock, "President's Report," *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1903), 24-32; Joseph Wheelock, "President's Report," *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1905).

30. *Minnesota Architecture: History Inventory Form–Bridge L8560,* Minnesota Department of Transportation, June 13, 2013; "Harrison and Handy's Addition," tax document, City of St. Paul Office of the Treasurer, September 27, 1886.

31. Wheelock, "President's Report," *Thirteenth Annual Report.*

32. *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1909).

33. John W. Diers and Aaron Isaacs, *Twin Cities by Trolley: The Streetcar Era in Minneapolis and St. Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 277-279; *Map of the City of St. Paul Minnesota* (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins & Co., 1916); Janice R. Quick, "Carnies and Calamities: A Carnival Midway on the Island

at Phalen Park, 1903-1908," *Ramsey County History* 50, no. 2 (Summer 2015), 19-23.

34. *Local Historic Bridge Report–Bridges L8560 and L8789*, prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation by LHB and Mead & Hunt, 2014.

35. James Cowin, "Phalen Park Bridge, St. Paul, Minn," *Municipal Engineering* 39 (July-December 1910), 279-280.

36. *Twentieth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1910).

37. *Minnesota Architecture–History Inventory Form, Local Historic Bridge Study*, prepared for the Minnesota Department of Transportation by Katie Ohland, The 106 Group, Ltd., 2013. The City Beautiful Movement swept America in the 1890s and early 1900s. It focused on beauty as a foundation for social order in urban development. Its idiom was the Beaux-Arts style, dramatically evident in the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

38. "Claude Allen Porter Turner," Lehigh University Alumni, accessed June 16, 2021, https://engineering.lehigh.edu/alumni/cap-turner; Robert M Frame III, "Fort Snelling–Mendota Bridge," National Register of Historic Places Documentation Form, 1978.

39. Nussbaumer.

40. *Twentieth Annual Report.* The opening statement by President H. W. Topping refers to new member A. B. Stickney, and a tussle prominently featured in news articles of the time.

41. Nussbaumer.

42. Merrill Ann Wilson, "Rustic Architecture, The National Park Style," *Trends*, July, August, September, 1976, 4-5.

43. *Minnesota Architecture*, 2013.

44. Jason Hoppin, "Near and dear and in disrepair," *Pioneer Press*, May 5, 2007; Dave Orrick, "Lake Phalen stone arch bridge to welcome park-goers again," *Pioneer Press*, July 10, 2010 and updated November 12, 2015; *Local Historic Bridge Report–Bridge 62075*, prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation by LHB and Mead & Hunt, 2014.

45. *Fifteenth Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey to the Secretary of the Interior, 1893-1894* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1895).

46. Donald Empson, "Highland-Groveland-Macalester Park The Old Reserve Township," *Ramsey County History* 10, no. 2 (Fall 1973), 3.

47. "Highland Park Project to Serve," 4.

48. St. Paul Building Permits, 1233 Montreal (Permit# 55616), Ramsey County Historical Society; *Report of the Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings of the City of St. Paul 1922-1929* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1929), 17; Photographs from Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Archives.

49. The footbridge predates both the Highland Water Tower, built in 1928, and the Pavilion, built in 1929.

50. Martin Grytbak, original drawings for the Montreal Footbridge, collection of St. Paul Public Works; *Minnesota Architecture: History Inventory Form–Bridge 62075,* Minnesota Department of Transportation, updated July 15, 2013, 1-12.

51. Original bridge drawings and bridge history document from St. Paul Public Works Bridge Division Archives; The report on the Historic Ford Bridge notes that "Bridge 3575 is also eligible under Criterion C as the masterwork of Norwegian American engineer Martin Sigvart Grytbak; Kenneth Bjork, *Saga in Steel and Concrete–Norwegian Engineers In America* (Northfield, MN: Norwegian American Historical Association, 1947), 43. Others mentioned were Kristoffer Olsen Oustad, Andreas W. Munster, and Frederick William Cappelen; James A. Stolpestad, "Building Through the Crash: St. Paul's New Directions in the 1930s," *Ramsey County History* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2015), 21.

52. Calvin Tomkins, "Profiles: Open, Available, Useful–Siah Armajani," *The New Yorker*, March 19, 1990, 48. Artist Siah Armajani, who designed the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge crossing from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to Loring Park, noted: ". . . it did not become a bridge until the first person walked across it."

***Notes to Sidebar on p. 27***

a. *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1903).

b. *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1904).

c. *Fourteenth Annual Report.*

d. *Fifteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* (St. Paul, MN: City of St. Paul, 1905).

e. Information about the history of the Como Park Footbridge is provided in the "Department of Interior, National Park Service, Registration Form" of September 29, 1989. See http://www.dot.state.mn.us/historicbridges/bridge/L5853/national-register.pdf.

f. For a time, the partially exposed bridge provided a rare opportunity to see an actual Melan system in place in a bridge. The restoration, while bringing back the aesthetics of the original bridge, also covers up the unusual engineering feature for which it is significant.

g. *Local Historic Bridge Report–Addendum Following Restoration–Bridge L5852*, prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation by LHB and Mead & Hunt, 2018.

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RAMSEY COUNTY
# History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.**

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) strives to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community, deliver inspiring history programming, and incorporate local history in education.

The Society was established in 1949 to preserve the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the original programs told the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, RCHS also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, now telling the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Ḣeyáta Othúŋwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 and rededicated in 2016 as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. The Society serves more than 15,000 students annually on field trips or through school outreach. Programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

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Mnisóta Makhóčhe, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóčhe. RCHS acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

RCHS is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

Find our full Land Acknowledgment Statement on our website, www.rchs.com. This includes actionable ways in which RCHS pledges to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóčhe.

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# Anne Field Named Chair of RCHS Editorial Board

Anne Field

Anne Cowie

Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) is pleased to announce that Anne Field has been named chair of the Society's Editorial Board. This group advises staff on publishing program policy and projects, assists with overall publishing efforts by connecting RCHS to writers and resources, as well as writing, editing, and reviewing manuscripts. Field, who is also on the RCHS Board of Directors, serves on the Collections Committee, and is co-chair of the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Committee, joined the Editorial Board in 2019. In her new role, she will lead monthly meetings, consult on editorial projects, oversee the production of *Ramsey County History* magazine, write its quarterly "Message from the Board" column, and offer insight into other publishing efforts.

"The work of the Editorial Board is essential in bringing unique and remarkable history content to the magazine, podcasts, books, and more," said RCHS President Chad Roberts. "We are thrilled to have Anne Field take on this essential leadership role. She brings a wealth of experience and passion for history to this outstanding team. High-quality research and publishing are at the center of what RCHS does. With Anne at the helm, I am confident we will continue to build on a tradition of excellence."

Field, a native of Minnesota's Iron Range and a graduate of the University of Minnesota, lives in Mendota Heights. She follows Anne Cowie, who has been involved with RCHS in different capacities since 1967. Cowie served as chair of the Editorial Board for the last fifteen years, overseeing sixty-two issues from Winter 2006 through Spring 2021, along with many other publishing projects. RCHS has greatly benefited from her insight and historical knowledge.

"Steadfast, inquisitive, thoughtful, and enthusiastic partner are all superlatives that start to tell the story of Anne Cowie and her time with RCHS," Roberts said. "It is a credit to her that *Ramsey County History* magazine is the field-leading publication it is today. We are grateful for her faithful commitment to the Society and local history as she continues to advise RCHS as an Editorial Board member."

## *Upcoming Events at RCHS & Gibbs Farm*

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Sept. 21 **RCHS Member Celebration at Gibbs Farm**

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*The Aesthetics of Bridge Design*

## A Paean to Two of St. Paul's Elegant Park Bridges

CHRISTINE PODAS-LARSON, PAGE 17

Canoers enjoy the view of the South Channel Bridge in 1905. By 1918, there were 1,000 privately owned canoes on Lake Phalen in addition to fifty canoes and eighty-five rowboats rented by the city. To read more about the bridge at Phalen Park and the Montreal Bridge at Highland Park, see Christine Podas-Larson's article on page 17. *Photograph by E. A. Bromley, courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*