



Historical Shore *VIEWS*

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Shoreview's 59th Year

'preserving today's history for tomorrow'

April 2016

From the President

Gangster Era Stories From '30s Stay with Us

As someone who was born, lived and worked in Shoreview my entire life, I have always been aware of the 1930s "gangster era connection" to our area.



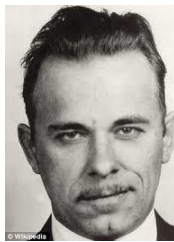
"Jacci, did you know there used to be a still on Twin Lake?", "Did you know that gangsters used to stop for gas

at Roy Guerin's Texaco station?", "Did you know that men in shiny black cars would often stop at the Snail Lake Tavern?" These were only some of the
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'John Dillinger Slept Here' Author to Speak Apr. 17

The home on Snail Lake Rd, on a 10-acre farm in now Shoreview owned by gangster Harry Sawyer, was a frequent hideout for many of the nation's leading outlaws, including John Dillinger, during the 1920s and early '30s. Sawyer, involved in the infamous kidnapping of St. Paul bank president Edward Brenner, was captured and later sent to Alcatraz.

Sawyer (photo right) was just one of dozens of gangsters enjoying a hey day in the greater St. Paul area, and his exploits are captured in the book "John Dillinger Slept Here," authored by Paul Maccabee, the scheduled speaker at the SHS membership meeting at 2 p.m. Apr. 17 at the Community Center. There is no charge and the public is invited. The special program is held in connection with SHS's 25th Anniversary.



Sawyer and Dillinger's deeds are also noted in *Shoreview Reflections*, published by the SHS a few years ago. Dillinger (left photo) was a nationally-hunted criminal. Maccabee's book was published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press in 1995, and he has been a sought-after speaker ever since.

Ma Barker and her sons occupied a house on Rice St. before mov-
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Those Lake Region Hockey Memories are Gentle on Their Minds



A panel of former Lake Region Hockey Association and Mounds View High School hockey players and coaches, from the 1950s thru the 1970s, told of the early days---when coaches worked with fledgling youngsters, shoveled snow, sharpened skates and did it all---to provide feeder systems for the area high school and to put the community on the Hockey Map. Entitled "The Early Years
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A panel discussing Lake Region and Mounds View High School hockey history was moderated by Ted Wegleitner, standing, and (left to right) Rob McClanahan, Pete Goldsmith, Ted Skildum, Mike Winkel, Bob Quick and Dennis Hoppe, former coaches and players.

From its Beginning Shoreview Was a Different Kind of Suburb

When is a suburb a suburb? And why is Shoreview a different kind of suburb? Those two questions were among the major themes at a SHS membership program last quarter.

Dr. Holley Wlodarczyk, a student of cultural life, explained the growth of suburbs today --- changing greatly from the Levittown, N.Y., an iconic suburb of post WW II, wherein multiple



Dr. Holley Wlodarczyk told of suburban communities' growth through transportation and geography.

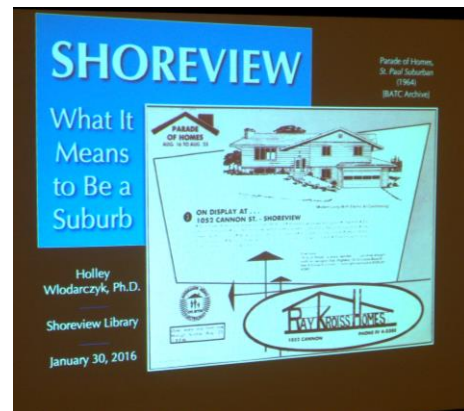
rows of similarly styled homes sprung up in a single development. Wlodarczyk was the coordinator of the recent lauded Suburbia exhibit at the Minnesota History Center, depicting the changes from core cities.

Homes were built to answer the "dreams" of young marrieds---having their own property, a two car garage, and away from the hectic inner city. Early on, suburbia "was defined as a place of comfort and prosperity. The homes were containers for the good life," she said. A community becomes a suburb when it has a different relationship with the core city, that is, it becomes somewhat self-sustaining.

Shoreview, a second ring suburb, has wisely used its natural amenities of lakes, terrain and biking trails as keys in its development, she explained. It has maintained a level of stable housing stock, not candidates for "tear downs", evident already in some other suburbs.

Terry Schwerm, Shoreview city manager, agrees: "What makes Shoreview unique today perhaps is it that it was developed over a longer period of time (than other suburbs.)

"We have a good mix of housing styles and values. We have always placed a premium on planning. In all of our community surveys, parks and lakes rate high. We benefit, too, from the Ramsey County Park system."



Using the homebuilders' promotion, "Parade of Homes", as her barometer to follow stylistically the changes in home construction, Wlodarczyk said the parade "helped sell those dreams." Architects like lush-like settings, lake sides and woods, celebrating the change of seasons and connecting with nature, she added.

SHS Members May Nominate Persons for Tribute Tree Awards

Since its inception 25 years ago, the Shoreview Historical Society has purchased Tribute Trees that have been planted in some Ramsey County parks located in Shoreview. Trees have been planted honoring Ken Wingard, Dick Wedell, Ken Hoff, Doris Claeys, Eunice Hoff and Kay Stahl. The Tribute Tree program is operated by the Ramsey County's Friends of Parks and Trails.

Now SHS members can nominate a current or past Shoreview resident to honor with a tree that would be paid for by the SHS. (Cost of most Tribute Trees is \$150, including installation by Ramsey County.)

It is expected that nominees would have some or all of the following qualities: 1) have been involved with Shoreview's history by donating photos, artifacts, or sharing personal stories; 2) have through their position in the community encouraged the value of history, i.e., teacher, business person; or 3) have supported historical programs either locally and/or county and state wide. The SHS board will review all nominations and make awards. Send nominees names and supporting information to the Shoreview Historical Society, 350 W County Rd 96, Shoreview, MN 55126. For more information on the county's Friends of Parks and Trails contact info@friendsofthepark.org or tel. 612-703-9044





Looking for Artifacts The North Lake Owasso Neighborhood Group (NLONG) has been busy looking for Native American artifacts. Pictured far left are Archeologist Jeremy Nienow, (back row, left to right) Jack Brewer, Linda Brewer and John Vadnais; and Lu Slaten, (right front.) The other folks are volunteers. This dig was on Lake Wabasso peninsula last summer. Submitted photo.

SHS is Fiscal Agent for NLONG Organization

The SHS board approved action last quarter to become the fiscal agent for the North Lake Owasso Neighborhood Group (NLONG).

Under regulations governing IRS 501,c,3, organizations, SHS is authorized to assume that status. In taking the action, SHS assumes no responsibility for either the actions or fiscal obligations of NLONG. The group sought the fiscal agent status as an aid in its solicitation of grants to help finance its work. In recent years, the organization has focused mainly on performing small archeological digs, primarily searching for Native American artifacts.

Lake Region Hockey--- continued

to the Glory Years”, the SHS presentation was a time for story telling with plenty of laughs, recalling the hits and misses, and how much community hockey has changed.

Moderator Ted Wegleitner, son of Tom Wegleitner, former hockey coach at Mounds View High school in the 1950s, said his father soon realized they would need a feeder system to compete with other area high schools with mature hockey programs.

Each panelist told how he

started out working with some primitive conditions---utilizing lake ice; some kids used newspapers and magazines as substitute shin guards, as either the proper equipment was scarce or they couldn't afford to buy it. Hand-me-down helmets and gloves were in tatters. Competitively, it was tough going early on playing other established teams, and the locals generally suffered losing seasons before improving over the years.

Panelists were asked how they "gave back" to the community" and virtually all had either

Check Out the Community Center Display on Gangsters

You may want to check out the SHS Community Center display that captures the gangster era here in Shoreview and promotes the upcoming special SHS membership meeting Apr. 17, and also highlights our 25th Anniversary.

There's sheet music from the 1930s some old home furnishings and lots of other items to ponder. If you have ideas for a SHS display exhibit, please let a board member know.

Call the Cops!

Here's a factoid in connection with the SHS Apr.17 membership meeting: During the national depression era in the 1930s, gangsters were busy. In 1932, 20 percent of all bank robberies in the U.S. took place in Minnesota, mostly in out state and in Minneapolis.

coached or helped out later at the skating rinks. "All of the early supporters had one thing in common," said one. "It was a total commitment to the sport and the kids."

Asked about the changes today in community hockey, several panelists felt--- there was better equipment though more expensive, and more coaching help, including youth hockey clinics. On the minus side, they told of limited ice time, instances where activities were perhaps "overly-organized", and there has been a disappearance of pickup games.

Gangster Era----continued

questions I remember.

When the Shoreview Historical Society began in 1991, I interviewed many local old timers, including Carl Holmberg, Neil O'Neill, Hank Millette and George Verley. Each had a gangster story to share. In 2007, one of my favorite interviews was with Betty Knoll Connors, a childhood playmate of Francine Sawyer, Harry and Gladys" adopted daughter. Their story is in *Shoreview Reflections* and the entire video can be linked from our web site:

When Paul Maccabee's book, "*John Dillinger Slept Here*", was published, I stood in line to get my hardcover copy autographed by him. I have taken the St. Paul Gangster Tour three times, have enjoyed the White Bear Historical Society's gangster program and I'm excited that our Shoreview Historical Society (see page one story) will share our "gangster connections." Although it is not something to celebrate, it is part of our history.

If there is a criminal connection, Shoreview also has a law enforcement connection. Gus Barfuss, the sheriff who helped clean up the unlawful element, had a son who built a home and raised his family in Shoreview---right down the street from me !

----Jacci Krebsbach

Historical ShoreViews is published quarterly by the Shoreview Historical Society, (marking 25 years in 2016) 350 W County Rd. 96, Shoreview, MN 55126, for its members and friends. SHS board members are Mike Cuningham, Don Follett, Jacci Krebsbach, Bob Minton, Lucena Slaten, John Vadnais and Pam Videen.

To join the society, contact Pam Videen, 4305 Parkview Court, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127. To contribute items to the newsletter contact editor Don Follett, Tel: 651-490-7510 email: DHFCVF29@comcast.net

Dillinger---- continued

-ing to White Bear Lake. She assisted members of the Barker-Korpis gang, although the FBI regarded her as a lesser threat.

Places in Shoreview known to be visited by Dillinger included the Snail Lake Tavern. On the north side of Snail Lake, an area called "Paradise Park" had a dance hall and roadhouse where the gangsters visited. St. Paul was seen as a friendly hideout city for many of the hoodlums.

While legends grow and stories are embellished, what's for sure at least is that gangsters of a national scale made this area their home for parts of the early 1930s.

Dillinger and Sawyer were both captured and arrested after several years of dodging the police for crimes they had committed. Dillinger was shot leaving a movie theater in Chicago.

Some SHS members can tell stories of their parents and others in the community having sightings of the pair over the years---Dillinger robbed banks in South Dakota and in Iowa; and Sawyer, operated the Green Lantern restaurant in St. Paul, a place where gangsters' allegedly planned bank robberies and the kidnapping of businessman Bremer.

SHS Annual Meeting Apr. 17

SHS will hold its annual meeting at 1:30 pm. Apr. 17 at the Shoreview Community Center, just prior to a membership meeting set for 2 p.m. that will feature St. Paul author Paul Maccabee.

For several years the society has held its annual meeting in conjunction with a special membership meeting.

Besides a brief review of last year's activities, there will be an election of directors, with voting done again on site prior to the meeting's start time.

Director Lucena Slaten is

SHOREVIEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP/DUES OR RENEWAL FORM

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Additional tax deductible donations are welcome.

Please make your check out to: Shoreview Historical Society, c/o Pam Videen, 4305 Parkview Ct., Vadnais Heights, MN 55127.

A Historical ShoreViews subscription is included in dues.

The Shoreview Historical Society was born in 1991 when a group of residents took an interest in preserving and recording both the important and informal events in the city, and those that told of our city's growth and deeds of our people. Since its inception, the society has worked to fulfill that mission. If you are interested in participating on a SHS committee or the operating board, please give any director a call.

up for re-election. Dian Gardner, whose three-year term is also up, is moving outstate and not running for re-election. Write-in candidates are welcomed.

As always, current SHS members and others interested in serving on the board or other activities can contact any board member for further information.

