

THE LARSMONT LINE

Larsmont Community Club • August 2007



Home of the
Little Red Schoolhouse

At time of Reunion and Remembrance

Come to the Annual Picnic

The Larsmont community will once again gather at the Little Red Schoolhouse to celebrate the season with its annual Larsmont Community Club Summer Picnic. On



August 20, beginning at 5:30 p.m., old-timers and newcomers are all invited to come to the school for a time of food, talk and remembrance.

This year, pizzas will come from Pizza Hut, served with tossed salad and beverages provided by the Community Club. Keeping with the Larsmont tradition, desserts will to be donated by attendees to the picnic, adding greatly to the variety of tastes. Don't miss the classic bars and cookies.

This is the one time during the year that the schoolhouse is open for all to mingle, meet and greet new members of the community. The welcome is especially extended to those who are not year-round residents, but who have found this to be a wonderful place to visit on a yearly basis.

The annual picnic will offer the opportunity to learn more about Larsmont as neighbors share their personal histories and what has been happening to their properties over the year and the history of Larsmont.

In 2006, 35 residents attended during the two-hour picnic. Organizers would love to increase participation this year, especially among first-time attendees.

No RSVP is needed, so everyone is invited to come out for the picnic. For a low fee of \$6 for adults and free for children under 6, there isn't a better deal in town.

Fun at the 2006 Picnic



If you are a resident of Larsmont, full- or part-time, we invite you to get involved in the community.

Join the Larsmont Community Club for only \$10 per year. Paid members get one free use of the Little Red Schoolhouse during the year.

Color copies of this and past newsletters are located on the Larsmont Website

www.larsmont.org

Building Fund Donations Up

The Larsmont Community Club Building Maintenance Fund was begun in 2006 in an effort to raise money to maintain the Little Red Schoolhouse and make sure there are adequate resources for the minor and major repairs that come up over the years. Donations to the fund totalled \$670 in 2006.

– 2006 DONATIONS –

IN MEMORY OF MARVIN ERICKSON

Mary Jo Giddings & Joyce
Muellerleile \$60

Charlene/John Barbknecht \$50

Beverly/Ken Erickson \$20

Walt Barthell \$100

John/Irene Quam \$100

Bill/Helen Tranah \$100

Ted/Ruth Wahlberg \$100

Charles/Carol Gunder \$50

Viola Hedvall \$50

Robert/Cherrol Soiseth \$25

Paul/Carlene Swirtz \$15

– 2007 DONATIONS (TO DATE) –

IN MEMORY OF DAVID STOUT

Geri Stout \$100

Anonymous \$100

Margaret Larson \$20

In 2007, funds are already accumulating. Residents are invited to donate cash to the fund. A donation of \$100 or more will be recognized publicly on a plaque in the Schoolhouse. Donations should be sent to Marlys Wisch, Larsmont CC secretary.

*Larsmont
Community Club*

701 Larsmont Road
Larsmont, MN 55616

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President's Column by Bill Tranah



Bill Tranah

As president of the Larsmont Community Club, I was trying to figure out how to develop a better sense of community spirit among the people who live here. I decided, what better way than to give people some history of our area. Mrs. Edwin Norgard of Duluth wrote such a history in July 1980, titled *Larsmont Yesterday*. Unfortunately, the number of copies made of her publication was very limited and most of you do not have access to it, so I decided to use excerpts from her works in this column.

The Earliest Days

The following an excerpt from *Larsmont Yesterday*, by Mrs. Edwin Norgard.

The year was 1888, and on the rugged shores of Lake Superior at "Milepost 22" stood the first settlers of what was later to become known as Larsmont. The Thompson brothers, Theodore, Tollof and Louis, gazed out over the lake, no doubt with many thoughts of their native Norway. Suddenly from the east there appeared two canoes being paddled by Indians and carrying rich furs on their way to the Trading Post in Duluth. This scene was to be repeated in the months to come, on the first "main highway" of the North Shore, with the Chippewa making a return trip after about a week in Duluth. The Thompson brothers had come here with their oxen to clear a bit of land for a small farm, and later they became commercial fishermen, a career they pursued for many years.

In 1886, the D.&I.R. (Duluth & Iron Range) Railroad had been completed between Duluth and Two Harbors. Before this, there was a wagon trail just about where the old gravel road is in Larsmont (UT101), below the railroad tracks. This trail was still in use in 1911. The railroad carried mail from Duluth to Two Harbors, and previous to that it was delivered by boat. John Bear Grease (sic) carried the mail from Two Harbors to Grand Marais from July 1895 to June 1897. He was an Ojibway-Chippewa Indian, born near Cass Lake in 1852. He died in 1910. The old paths found around here may be old Indian trails that date back 300 years. They were called corduroy paths because of the logs that were placed over the creeks.

In the late 1880s or early 1890s, the railroad paymaster came out to pay the men, using silver dollars. He was robbed here in Larsmont by two men, who ran up the hill with the money. They were later caught, but the money was never found. It is believed that the maple trees, which are still found in groves in this area, were planted by the Indians for maple syrup. In 1857, a government survey of this area was made by a man named Burke. In 1913, a plat of this particular area was made by Frank Kempffer.

The old road was graveled about 1913 and was called the Old North Shore Road. In 1914, a road was built to service the settlers on the hillside. It was built in sections, first to Peter Erickson's home. This was the original Township Road, and mention of it was made when the land was deeded to the school district. The new Highway 61 was built above the tracks in 1922, and was paved in 1928. The Expressway which runs parallel to this was begun in 1962 and was completed in 1965.

President's Column continued

Early Settlers

The early settlers of Larsmont were natives of Norway, Sweden and Finland. Their first homes on the lakeshore were roughly built shacks, and many were used later as fish shanties, when they were able to build larger houses. They cleared land, planted a garden, raised hay for a cow and owned some chickens. They built boats and made boat landings, and set out nets. A catch of 400 lbs. of herring a day was not unusual, and the price of it was about 2 cents a pound. Some of this was shipped fresh, some salted and some frozen. This was picked up by boat or shipped by freight train. Later, others came and built homes across the railroad tracks on the hillside.

Early settlers (some single men, but mainly families) were:

1888	Thompson Brothers	1914	Peter Erickson
1905	Gust Mattson	1914	Andrew Barthell
1908	Reinert Reinertsen	1915	Peter Villa
1909	Victor Sjoblom	1915	Olaf Nordquist
1910	Charles Hill	1915	John Coson
1910	William Lounsberry	1915	John Jackson
1911	John Strom	1916	Herman Anderson
1911	John Sjoblom	1916	William Hill
1911	S. Skomars	1917	Carl Wahlberg
1912	John Hendrickson	1918	Eric Johnson
1912	Matt Strom	1919	Ole H. Isackson
1912	Ingvald Jacobson	1921	A.B. Oberg
1913	Carl Lindwall	1928	Albert Montague
1913	John Nyquist		

Those were the days of kerosene lamps, keeping the woodbox filled, carrying water from the well and outdoor plumbing. Transportation was by boat, by foot (in the evening carrying a kerosene lantern), by horse and wagon or by bicycle. Groceries were bought in large quantities, flour by the 100-pound sack and apples by the barrel. The neighbors helped each other with butchering and got meat from each other. Women borrowed each other's dress patterns and the men cut each other's hair. Whole families were involved with hay making, and many times the men carried such a large load of hay on their backs that only their legs showed as they walked.

Telephones were installed in 1915. Each home had its own ring, such as one long and two short, or a short, a long, a short ... and most everyone "listened in" at one time or another. Everyone in Larsmont was on the same party line until in the 1930s.

Electricity was brought into Larsmont in the 1930s. It was turned on for the first time on February 29, 1937, at 3 p.m.

The first baby born in Larsmont was Bertil Sjoblom, in 1911.

According to a yellowed D.&I.R. Railway Company freight bill dated September 19, 1916, that was the day the William Hill family moved from Duluth to Larsmont with all their earthly possessions. In addition to the boxes, bundles and crates of household goods listed, there were such interesting items as: 1 cook stove, 1 velocipede, 1 sewing machine, 1 go-cart, 1 bundle stove pipes, 2 crates peaches and 1 cow! And the amount of freight paid? "Received \$3.19 in payment of the charges on the property described hereon." Today one could scarcely mail a small package for that amount!

Origins of LCC

One of the duties of the Club Secretary is to keep track of the history of the Larsmont Community Club. And lately, that's just what Marlys Wisch has been doing.

Hidden in the vault of treasured memories are the records that have been kept by the club since before it was founded in 1961.

"I have been reading through the books and other data that was in the file cabinet," Marlys says. "I found the minutes of when the Larsmont Volunteer Fire Department was formed and when the Ladies Auxiliary was formed, data on when the sheetrocking took place and the inside painting done. New electrical work inside. I found the minutes of when the decision was made to paint the outside red. [We even have] the abstract, so we have some history on the buying and selling of the property."

The property, originally owned by John and Sofia Strom, was deeded to the School District in 1914. The Larsmont Gospel Mission Society took over ownership in 1938, but later turned the property over to the newly formed Volunteer Fire Department in 1959. The VFD started organizing in 1953.

The Larsmont Community Club is an outgrowth of the Ladies Auxiliary of the VFD, which held its first meeting May 18, 1961. The president was Alma Kaldor. Dues were about \$1 a month. That group held dinners, bazaars, made and sold quilts and held the first annual picnic in July 1961 to raise money to help the Fire Department.

Over the next few newsletters we'll write about some more of the history and past decisions that have made Larsmont stand out as a great community in which to live. If you have any stories to tell, you're welcome to share.



Events Calendar

August –

Annual LCC Picnic

Mon., August 20, 2007, 5:30 p.m.

Rummage Sale

August 21-Labor Day

September –

Art Show

Sat., September 21, 2007

October –

Pioneer School Day

Lester Park School

Fri., October 5, 2007

Larsmont Lakeview Association

Sat., October 6, 2007, 10:30 a.m.

Send your Larsmont happenings to:

Events

Larsmont Community Club

489 Swanson Rd.

Larsmont, MN 55616

or e-mail to info@larsmont.org

Visit the
Community
Website at:
www.larsmont.org

- Community News
- Calendar of Events
- Links to Resources
- Story Contributions

Send your info and stories to:
info@larsmont.org

Paint-Up at the Old Schoolhouse

A squadron of volunteer painters turned out at the Little Red Schoolhouse on June 9, 2007, to complete work on two sides of the building that was begun in 2006. Last year, new siding that was acquired from Louisiana Pacific was prepared for installation with a first coat of paint by volunteers. It was then installed by Gary, Greg and Steve Swanson of Gary Swanson Construction. The final covering of the classic red color was applied to those two sides this year.

Besides the siding that was put on the building in 2006, volunteer painters primed additional siding that will be installed later this summer on the remaining two sides of the Schoolhouse.

In addition to siding and trim, stairs that were rebuilt on the side of the structure received a couple of coats of basic white paint at the June 9 gathering.

You'll notice a slight change in the configuration of the paint this year. The trim board below the slats has now been painted white to match the skirt of the building. In the past, that trim has been red. The remaining trim will match once the final sides are installed and painted.

Members of the painting party, led by Larsmont Community Club president Bill Tranah, included Helen Tranah, Marlys Wisch, David and Kathy Falk, Marv Holt, Paul and Cindy Hayden, Margaret Glass and Bev Erickson, who provided a sloppy joe lunch for all.



Bill Tranah outlines the plan to the Falks.



Kathy Falk (foreground) and Cindy Hayden keep those lines straight.



The cleanup is a patriotic red and white.

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