



The History of Lake Josephine

As recounted by Maribelle Cushman, longtime resident and historian

In the early 1900's, Lake Josephine looked a bit different than it does now. There were two beaches, the earliest one located along the south side of the lake (Josephine Road) and a later one on the east side of the lake (Lexington Avenue). There were also a few homes and at least one farm scattered around the lake.

George & Ida Kowalske bought a large stretch of property along the south side of Lake Josephine and opened a private beach on that land in 1910. They – and later their daughter Gertrude and her husband John Waggoner – operated it for 50 years. Beachgoers were able to enjoy all kinds of activities. Halfway down the south shore was a beach house that sold homemade ice cream and popcorn, and featured a large dock where boats could be rented. Stretching westward was a tall driving tower, followed further down by a giant water wheel. Just beyond that was a 10 ft. tall raft with a sun-bathing tower. Admission to the beach was a whopping 10 cents in 1910! Lockers were available for an additional 15 cents.

The other beach that ran along 800 feet of Lexington Avenue was called Josephine Beach. It was initially the property of a German immigrant Fred Schlichting, who settled here in 1920. The Schlichtings – then later their daughter Pauline and her husband Albert Muggenberg – operated the beach from 1931 – 1941. The property also offered a bathhouse, snack bar, dock, and rowboat rentals.

Beachgoers paid an admission, and they could rent dressing rooms. They could also rent ill-fitting swimsuits for an additional 10 cents! In 1959, the Muggenbergs sold the property to Ramsey County, and it is now home to Lake Josephine Park.

We've all driven or walked by the beautiful property at 3030 Hamline Avenue, which is part of Roseville's Heritage Trail. It was built by State Senator Joseph Hackney in 1920. He also owned Arden Dairies, which was located on the SW corner of Hamline and Lydia. The property changed ownership throughout the years. In the late 1920's it was called the Carroll Mansion. Fromm

1945 – 1962 it was home to two Archbishops. In 1983, Raye Kanzenbach and Joni McDonald purchased the property and still reside there today.

In the early days, the north side of the lake was predominately private property, with just a few homes. One of the largest properties was that of Dr. Ingerson, who was a prominent and influential resident. The city of Arden Hills later named the street for him.

Over the years, both Roseville and Arden Hills grew, and properties were subdivided and sold. Today, there are roughly 70 properties located on the shores of Lake Josephine. In addition, Lake Josephine Park continues to be a gathering place and source of enjoyment for all.