



NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 43

Winter 2012

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- *And page 6*
- *Our Speaker for October is Tom Melchoir.*

Please join us and bring a friend, if any of the following interests you.

- Sharing stories of Shakopee's past.
- Listening to stories of Shakopee's past
- Finding the answers to the questions you have.
- Reminiscing and telling stories of your past.
- Meeting new people or making a new friend.

The Shakopee Heritage Society

Annual Membership Meeting will be held January 21st 2012 At the Shakopee Library Downstairs Meeting Room At 1:00 PM.

We will be electing officers and Board Members at this meeting.

Do you wish to serve in some Capacity?

Nominations will be accepted at the meeting from any member.

Or let us know, and we will nominate you.

[See more on elections in editor's comments](#)

Editor's notes

By Don Wagner

a. *It is time again for us to elect Officers and Directors. We have seen a lot of the same faces for a number of years now, and would like to see some new ones every so often. If you would like to serve on the board or in any capacity, let us know by mentioning it at the January meeting. We will get you on the ballot in time for the balloting that day. The board has selected former members who will run again if needed, and they have agreed to serve if no one else volunteers. That white list will include; Lois Wendt President, Joe Collins Vice President, and a new board member position is open.*

b. *We have a new Silver Club Sponsor; The Stonebridge Bank, Located at the old Citizens state bank site 1100 4th Avenue East. They join long term Silver Club Sponsor Lyons Tap as our two silver club sponsors. We really appreciate the extra boost those memberships give us.*

c. *And that is a good segue into the next subject. Our Membership fees are due again in January. Those Fees have not changed; we are trying to maintain the fees as reasonable as possible. Single membership is \$10.00 a Family membership is \$15.00 Supporting is \$25.00. The Corporate memberships are; Gold club sponsor \$500; Silver club sponsor is \$100; Club sponsor is \$50.*

*See Pat Ploumen at the meeting to get dues paid up, or mail your dues to;
Shakopee Heritage Society
519 East First Avenue
Shakopee MN 55379.*

*Don't forget that we have a Website WWW.shakopeeheritage.org.
Check it out once and a while.*

d. *Beginning on page 4 is a presentation on the Siebenaler Bros. Ice Business once located here in Shakopee. SHS member Gertie Siebenaler Roepke is sharing with us a history of her Father, Leo, and Uncle Frank's ice business. The story as related by Ed Siebenaler, (a son of Frank's) is an account of the families ice business. The story was written in July of 1996 for a commemoration at a Siebenaler reunion. Thank you Gertie for giving us a peek into Shakopee's past history. Some of our members will have first hand knowledge of this business. (Eileen Schmitz) See Page 4*

e. *November 5, 2011 approximately 12 SHS members went to tour the Strunk/Nyssen/Bjornberg home. The members had a very good time and more of these excursions are planned for the future. Do you have any suggestions on a site for them to visit?*

Gilbert Delbow Our speaker at the last meeting giving us a close look at the location, and an Idea of the relative population, of bars in Shakopee from the time of prohibition forward.

As compared to grocery stores, churches and other retail establishments the bars won hands down. We heard a little of some arrests and the gambling that was well known at the time. I think everyone enjoyed the presentation.

Thanks Gilbert



November 5, 2011 approximately 12 SHS members went to tour the Strunk/Nyssen/Bjornberg home. The group was warmly welcomed by the family. Everyone was impressed with the beautiful workmanship and care given to the home. Thank you to the Bjornberg family for their hospitality.



And after the meeting there is a cookie and Conversation time. That's when you can escape and go about your business or hang around and coffee klatch a while.

Is coffee klatch still a term people use or do I show my age?

Siebenaler Bros. Ice Dealers

Frank and Leo Siebenaler went into the ice business during the year 1920. They bought the business from the Veight Bros. The storage place for the ice was an old packing house on the west end of Shakopee. The property is now owned by Sonny Scherer who was married to Leo's daughter, Martha. This building was a three layer thick, red brick building which measured 30'x100' --20' above ground with a 10' basement. It was only a building with four solid bricks.

HARVESTING AND DELIVERING ICE

Ice was harvested on the Minnesota River, about Frank and Leo Siebenaler went into the ice business during the year 1920. They bought the business from the Veight Bros.

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three blocks down the hill north of the ice house. With the purchase of the ice business they acquired what was called an ice plow. It had plow handles and 2-12inch planks, 6 feet long, bolted together with several steel knives attached between them. Each cutting was 1/4inch deeper than the one in front of it. This plow was pulled by horses. The plow had to be run three times to acquire a 10 inch deep cut.

This method was too slow and awkward for Brother Frank. Since he had a blacksmith and the mechanical know how, he made the first power driven ice saw which was driven by an Overland car motor. He later made two more power ice saws. The rest of the ice was cut by a hand drag saw in rafts 100 blocks or more and floated with the current down the stream to the landing platform.

Before the ice would get thick enough to harvest, the snow had to be cleaned off the ice field. The old method was a wooden scraper pulled by a team of horses. Later Leo and Frank used trucks.

The ice on the river was always thinner where the main stream runs faster which was on the north side of the river. One winter Leo was clearing the snow off the ice with his Oldsmobile truck. He went too far on the current side and his truck broke through. Luckily they always plowed with the driver's door removed for a quick exit. The waster was over his cab and only one angle iron on the top of the truck was sticking out. We had to wait for two weeks after the ice harvest for the ice to get thick enough to work around the truck to remove it. A channel was cut the width of the truck across the river and the truck was then pulled out.

At the loading platform the rafts of ice were split into single blocks by a splitting bar and a needle bar. The needle bar was like and ice pick, 5 feet long and 3/4 inch thick.

To put the blocks up on the loading platform, a long slide was used exiting three feet below the water level. A hook was placed behind two or three cakes and pulled up the slide by one horse.

Frank's job was to take care of the river crew and Leo took care of the ice house crew. Six or eight teams with sleds each hauling 8 cakes of ice were used to haul the ice to the ice house. Sometimes snow had to be shoveled or hauled on the bare spots so the horses could pull the heavy loads over the bare spots. The horses didn't last long for they were replaced with a Model T Ford truck and later with the 1927 Chevy Truck.

The first road to the ice house from the river was a rather long drag up hill, two blocks from the ice house. After a few seasons Leo and Frank cut the hauling time of the teams in half, by blasting a road with dynamite behind the ice house making it a long gradual grade for a road. Pete Thielen, the local dynamiter, did the blasting. Some of the men who used their team to haul the ice up the hill to fill the ice house were Peter Ploumen, John Thole, George Ince, Jake Menden, George Realander, John Breeggemann and Sonny Scherer.

Leo's Oldsmobile truck was used with a long rope and pulley to pull the cakes up the slide. Later Frank made an elevator which raised one cake at a time. He ran this elevator using a Model T Ford

band transmission and a five horse electric motor. For years Uncle Leo sat at the top of the elevator under the roof running the hoist of that elevator.

The ice packers who worked inside the ice house had to be good at handling and packing ice. These were heavy blocks and they could easily be hurt if they weren't fast and careful. The same men were used every year. Some of the ones were Bill Greening, Art Schultz, Sam Jansen, Paul Prellwitz and Art Hamilton.

After the ice house was filled, it had to be completely covered on the top and sides of the walls with saw dust. The saw dust pile was on the outside of the house. Frank made and installed a hay carrier track, attached to a 55 gallon barrel with a door on the bottom with a trip latch. It was the job of the young Siebenaler boys to fill the barrel. This was a two day job. Sometimes the door would open as the barrel rose about our heads and we would get a shower of saw dust.

Summer time meant more work. We were at the ice house each morning by 6 AM. Leo and Frank worked inside the house and dug out the ice cakes with shovels and bars.

Ray Siebenaler helped his dad, Leo, the first several years until Albert (Buddy) took over. He and I would load the two trucks at the platform.

Cutting the ice out of the 10 foot basement was quite a chore until Frank bought a gear hoist from Whaeling who was a well know contractor. Mrs. Whaeling sold Frank the hoist for \$40.00. Her husband was quite senile and didn't want her to sell it, so she put the hoist in the grass across the street from where they lived (now Hennen's Station) and we picked it up there late in the evening. Ice was delivered to private homes and businesses. We filled the ice boxes four times a week and made many a mess on some of the floors in the homes which the ladies did not like. The cost of the ice delivered was \$2.50 for a 500# coupon book. At some time, however, chips worth 100#, 50# and 25# were used. The chips were marked with Siebenaler Bros. Ice Co. and were the size of a 50cent piece. The wholesale price for large orders or a truck load was \$4.00 per ton.

Ice was delivered every week to the walk-in coolers to the following: Barney Jansen and Charlie Hartman, who each owned a meat market and the Hamm's Branch.

The Redman Ice Cream Factory which was located on the N.W. corner of First and Holmes was our biggest customer. All the deliveries to that factory had to be packed with rock salt on it to keep the ice cream frozen. They had 2 or 3 refrigerated trucks with sheet metal liners and a 6 inch space round them. This space was filled with crushed ice packed in plenty of rock salt.

Leo and Frank made two ice cube machines to cut cubes out of a block of ice. They put together several vertical saws on a shaft 1-1/4 inches apart. A 12 inch slat saw was used to cut these squares off. Ice cubes were sold by the bushel basket to 30 or more 3.2 beer and liquor places.

With the coming of the electric refrigerator they tried to save their fast outmoded business by selling a new ice refrigerator called the Coolerator.



Previous page 2 Pictures of the ice house on First Avenue in Shakopee. The one on the left is circa 1960; the one on the right is about 1945-50



Above left Leonard Seibenaler



on right is Albert (Buddy) with ice block

**Shakopee Heritage Society
519 East First Avenue
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