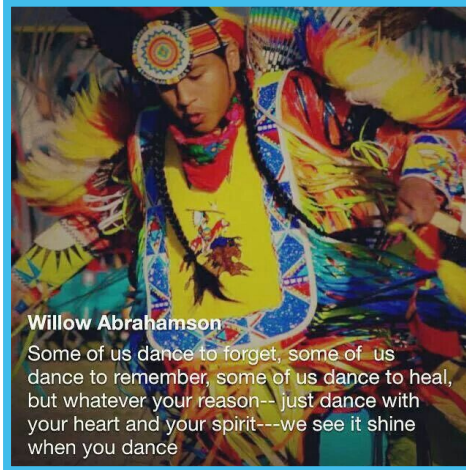




# SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER



**Willow Abrahamson**

Some of us dance to forget, some of us dance to remember, some of us dance to heal, but whatever your reason-- just dance with your heart and your spirit---we see it shine when you dance

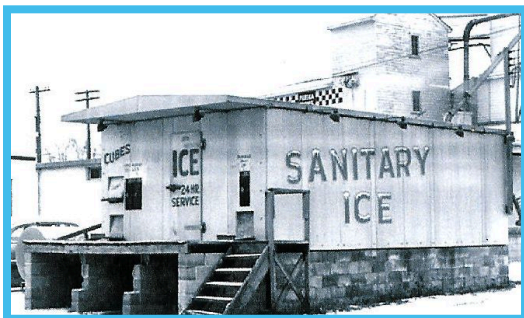
### Ice Houses in Shakopee

Ice houses were buildings used to store ice throughout the year, commonly used prior to the invention of the refrigerator. They were usually man-made, close to natural sources of winter ice such as freshwater lakes, or in Shakopee, the Minnesota River.

During the winter, ice and snow would be taken into the ice house and packed with insulation, often straw or sawdust. It would remain frozen for many months, often until the following winter, and could be used as a source of ice during summer months.

According to Lucille Siebenaler Olson, an interview by John Siebenaler and information from the **Shakopee Heritage Society Newsletter** and the Scott County Historical Society, Shakopee has a lot of information about ice in Shakopee. (Note: On the *other* ICE, SHS suggest *ICE Comes to the Heartland* from **Rolling Stone** at [rollingstone.com](http://rollingstone.com), which talks about the ICE raids in Shakopee.)

*(continue on page 4)*



## Presentations

Shakopee Heritage Society gives one-hour presentations at the Shakopee Community Center Šakpe Ti at 1255 Fuller Street South, Shakopee on the second Tuesday of each month from 1-2 pm. The presentations are free.

Apr. 14, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives: Restaurants in Early Shakopee (Part 2)***

May 12, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***A Place to Belong: Civil War Veterans in Early Shakopee***

June 9, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***Cata Wambli and the Dakota Alphabet: The Story of Rev. Samuel Pond***

July 14, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***Thomas Holmes & Ety-shah Red Face William Quinn in Holmes Landing 1851***

Aug. 11, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***"We Were Here, Too!" African Americans in Early Shakopee***

Sep. 8, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***The Great Fire of 1879***

Oct. 13, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***Hola! Latinos/Latinas and Hispanics soin Early Shakopee***

Nov. 10, 2026 1 to 2 pm: ***Old Town, New Town: Shakopee in the Last 50 Years***

## Join the Shakopee Heritage Society!

\$20 per year, including 96 brochures, 4 newsletters, monthly presentations, and cemetery tour, downtown Shakopee tours, and more. To join, send a check, with your name, address, email, phone number to:

Shakopee Heritage Society  
2109 Boulder Point  
Shakopee., MN 55379  
952-693-3865

## Cemetery Cleaning at Valley Cemetery

9 am to Noon. Starting in May 2026, and happen every two weeks on Thursday. This is the 5th year that the Daughters of the American Revolution Keewaydin Chapter and the Shakopee Heritage Society have worked on cleaning the cemetery using D2, the cleaner. It's a great opportunity Bring a lawn chair! Contact David Schleper at 952 693 3865 if interested.

## Cemetery Tours

Cemetery Tours happen 4 times a year at 4 cemeteries in the area on a Saturday from 10 am to Noon. People should bring a lawn chair. Contact David Schleper at 952 693 3865 if questions.

- ***Valley Cemetery Tour:*** May 16, 2026 10 to Noon
- ***Catholic Cemetery Tour:*** June 13, 2026 10 to Noon
- ***Marystown Cemetery Tour:*** June 27, 2026 10 to Noon
- ***Calvary Cemetery Tour:*** July 18, 2026 10 to Noon

### Downtown Shakopee Tour #1

Downtown Shakopee Tour #1 talks about various people and places in downtown Shakopee, including Ida Gertrude Gjerdrum Buck (1883-1957), Paul Pablo Edward Schwaesdall (1949-2024), Maximus Max Guido Wermerskirchen (1931-1959), Charles Manaige (1846-1938), a Chinese man in Shakopee (1892), Sophia de Levie (1919-1943), John Shoto (1798-1899), Mahala Conklin Shumway (1835-1909), Mary Brown Griffin (1825-1882), and Jane Lamont Titus (1827-1899) and others will be discussed.

**April 25, 2026 Saturday from 10 am to Noon. Meet in front of the Library on Lewis Street. Bring a lawn chair.**

### Downtown Shakopee Tour #2

Downtown Shakopee Tour #2 will discuss people in downtown Shakopee including the WEA Mural at Central School, Jacob Ries and the Shakopee Bottling Works, Samaha Islamic Center, the first hospital in Shakopee (and Albert Leclair who was refused treatment), the Great Fire of 1879, which including the destruction of many buildings, including the National Hotel, Miss Hill's Millinery, John Gutenberg Meat Market, and John Frank's Tailor Shop, Charlie Sam and the Chinese Laundry in 1901, and the attempted robbery of John Beren's store, among others.

**May 23, 2026 Saturday from 10 am to Noon. Meet in front of the old Central Elementary School. Bring a lawn chair.**



### Presentations at Benedictine Living Community



952-234-7650

March 31, 2026 2 pm to 3 pm at Windermere Way  
**Instigate, Inflamm and Ignite: Fires in Early Shakopee**

April 21, 2026 2 pm to 3 pm at Windermere Way  
**For the Good of the Women: The Minnesota Correctional Facility in Early Shakopee**

*(From page 1)*

Frank and Leo Siebenaler went into the ice business during the 1920s in Shakopee. They bought the business from Edward Veight. The ice house was right by the old feed mill.



The storage place for the ice was an old packing house on the west end of Shakopee. The building was three layer thick, red brick building which measured 30' x 100'. The building was 20' above ground, with a 10' basement.

The ice cutting was done with a big ice saw, by hand. They always waited for below zero weather. The ice was made mostly at night because of the cold weather. They hauled the ice with teams of horses. The ice was packed in sawdust.

The homes in Shakopee at that time had ice boxes. The brothers carried the ice with tongs. They wore rubber aprons and rubber vests. Later on the electric refrigerator came along.

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 cleaning the snow off the ice with his Oldsmobile truck. He went too far on the current side, and his truck broke through. Luckily, Leo and Frank always plowed with the driver's door removed for a quick exit! The water was over his cab, with only one angle iron on the top of the truck sticking out. They had to wait for two weeks to get quick enough to work around the truck to remove it!

At the loading platform, the rafts of ice were split into single blocks by a splitting bar and a needle bar. To put the blocks on the loading platform, a long slide was used 3 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 to eight teams with sleds, each hauling 8 cakes of ice, were used to haul the ice to the ice house. Some of the men who used horse teams to haul the ice up the hill to the ice house

included John Breeggemann, George Ince, Jake Menden, Peter Ploumen, George Realander, and Sonny Scherer.

If there were bare spots on the road, the snow had to be hauled to cover that area so that the horses could pull the heavy loads. Later, the horses were replaced with a Model T Ford truck, and in 1927, a Chevy Truck was used.

The road from the river to the ice house was two blocks. Eventually, Frank and Leo cut the teams in half by blasting a road with dynamite behind the ice house, making it into a road. Pete Thielen, the local dynamiter, did the blasting.

Leo's Oldsmobile truck was used with a long rope and pulley to pull the cakes up the slide and into the ice house. Later, Frank made an elevator, which raised one cake at a time. The ice packers, who worked inside the ice house, had to be good at handling and packing ice. Bill Greening, Art Schultz, Sam Jansen, Paul Prellwitz, and Art Hamilton were some of the ice packers. The ice was heavy, and they could easily be hurt if they weren't fast and careful.

Once the ice house was filled with ice, it had to be completely covered with sawdust. The sawdust pile was on the outside of the ice house. It usually took two days to fill the ice house with sawdust. Frank later made a hay carrier track, attached to a 55 gallon barrel. The Siebenaler boys had to fill the barrel, and sometimes they got a shower of sawdust!

During the summer time, Frank and Leo was at the ice house by 6 a.m. Cutting the ice out of the 10 foot basement was quite a chore. Later, Frank bought a hoist for \$40 from Mrs. Whaeling. Her husband had dementia, and he didn't want them to sell the hoist. So Mrs. Whaeling put the hoist in the grass across the street from where they lived, near Hennen's Station, and Frank and Leo picked it up late in the evening.

Ice was delivered to private homes and businesses. They filled the ice boxes 4 times a week, and it made a mess on the floors of some houses! When the brothers were delivering ice, children would come and the men would chisel off pieces of ice for them.

The cost of the ice delivery was \$2.50 for a 500 pound coupon book. The chips were marked with Siebenaler Bros. Ice Co. and the ice was the size of a 50 cent piece. The wholesale price for large orders or a truck load was \$4 per ton. Some of the places that had ice delivered included Barney Jansen and Charles Hartman, who both had 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 Street was Siebenaler's biggest customer.

John Siebenaler was the grandson of Leo. "Leo and Frank invented the first ice cubes by cutting the ice, which they got out of the Minnesota river, into cubes with a series of saws. In the beginning they used horses to cut the ice out of the river and pull it up the banks of the river into their ice house. Later on they invented a series of belts powered by a gas engine to pull the ice up from the river."

Frank and Leo also invented an ice cube machine and sold ice cubes. According to John Siebenaler, “Before the ice cubes became popular bars or restaurants had ice picks that they used to chop up larger chunks of ice to fit into a glass.”

John also remembered his dad riding on the ice wagon and throwing ice at other kids running after the ice truck. He also recalled his aunt. “One of my dad’s sisters used to carry blocks of ice into people’s homes to put into their ice boxes. I remember the ice man coming into the house and putting the ice in our ice box.”

And that is how people got ice in the good ole' days!

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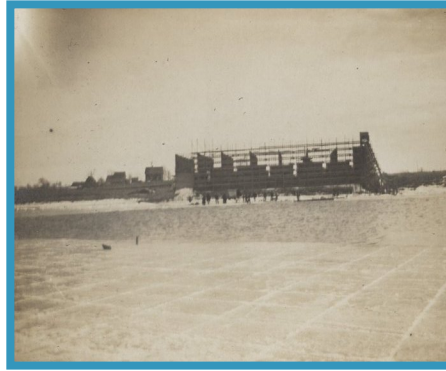
The **Shakopee Heritage Society** and the **Scott County Historical Society** has a collection of a 1905 ice harvest on the Minnesota River in Shakopee. *In an article on the January 12, 2018 on Harvesting Ice from the Scott County Historical Society shows photos depict a complex operation that involved cutting blocks of ice by hand and then using a wooden pulley system and conveyor belt to move the ice.*



*Ice harvesting on the Minnesota River at Shakopee. This photo shows a man holding a long wooden pole. Behind him is a wooden pulley system and conveyor belt used for moving blocks of ice.*



*Workmen cutting ice on the Minnesota River at Shakopee. They are standing on a wooden boardwalk placed over the frozen river.*



*Close-up of the wooden pulley system and conveyor belt used to move blocks of ice.*

*Another view of the pulley system and conveyor belt. The ice visible in the foreground of the photo appears to have been scored.*



*Men standing on the narrow wooden boardwalk cutting blocks of ice by hand.*



*The front side of the wooden pulley system and conveyor belt. The wooden pulley system is constructed along the shore of the river. The front side shows areas divided by vertically placed pieces of wood. Blocks of ice available for purchase are stacked within each stall. The image is looking down into one stall, which contains blocks of ice, five workers and a wooden conveyor belt*





**Shakopee Heritage Society**  
2109 Boulder Pointe  
Shakopee, MN 55379

**President:** David R. Schleper

**Vice-President:** Sandy Olson

**Treasurer:** Liz Lundin      **Secretary:** Joanne Musick

**Trustees:** Dave Regan, Melissa Whiting, Jeff and Candace Williamson

**Talk to Us!** Facebook: [shakopeeheritage](#)

Web: [shakopeeheritage.org](#)

Email: [newsletter@shakopeeheritage.org](mailto:newsletter@shakopeeheritage.org)

Phone: 952-693-3865



**The ducks at Rahr!**