



Minneapolis  
Park & Recreation Board

# *Minneapolis Parks History*

# **TRIVIA!**

*Test your knowledge of  
140 years of park history with these  
8 trivia questions...*

1

Who was the **first** superintendent of Minneapolis parks?

a. William Berry

b. Theodore Wirth

c. Charles Loring

d. Al Bangoura

1

**William M. Berry was the first superintendent. He served for over 20 years from 1883-1905.**

Theodore Wirth was next from 1906-1935.

Charles Loring was the first president, but never superintendent.

Al Bangoura is currently superintendent.

a.

**William Berry**



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2

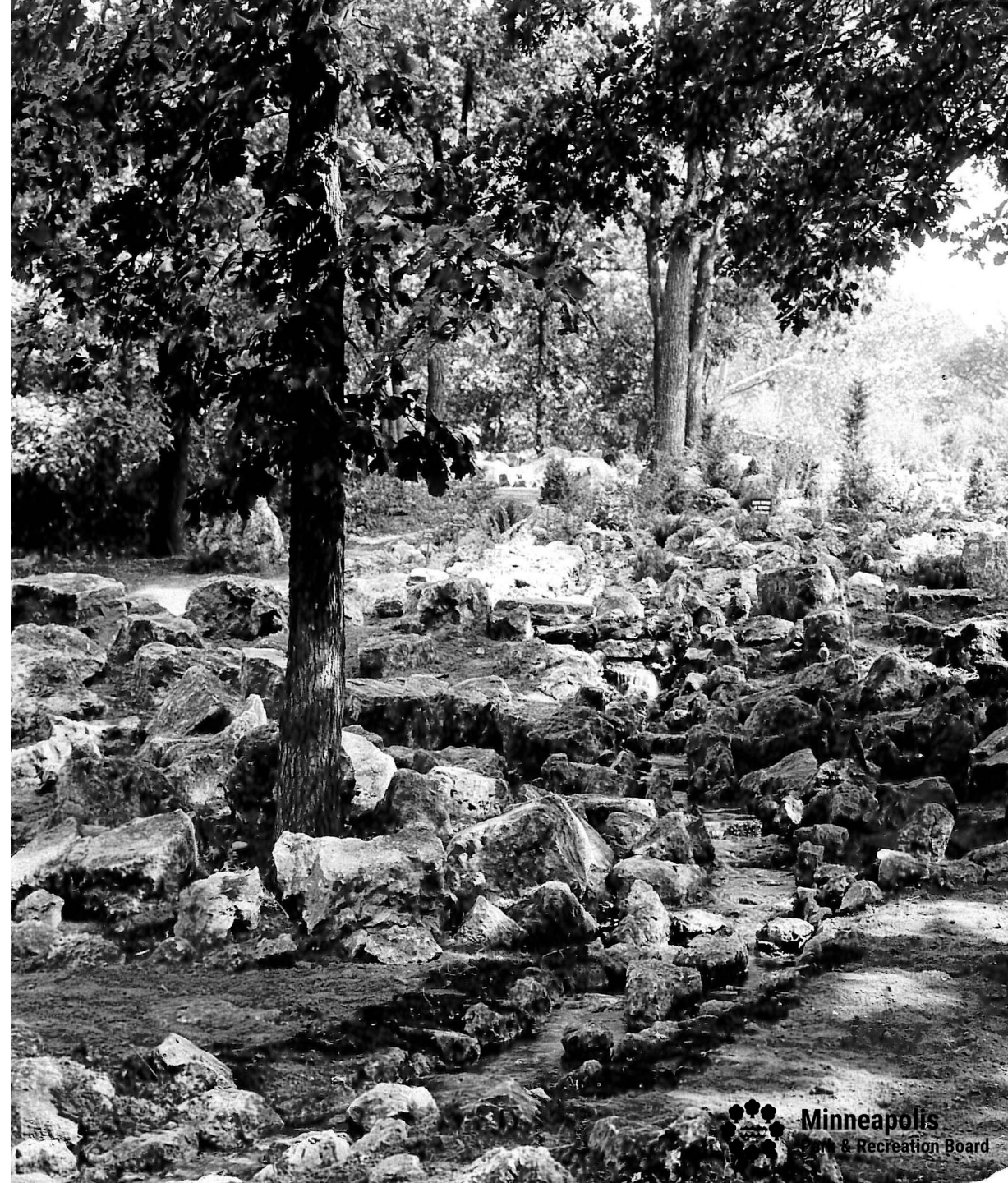
## True or False?

The rock garden at Lyndale Park was once lost.

2

# TRUE!

**When Lyndale Park's horticulturalist retired in the 1940s, the rock garden became wildly overgrown with weeds. The rock garden was later rediscovered in 1981, after a tornado pulled down the trees and exposed what was underneath.**



# Did you know...

**The first female park police officer was hired in 1915 to patrol the beach and enforce “appropriate conduct.”**

Some citizens were offended by the too-revealing women’s swimsuits, so the Park Board proposed an ordinance that would have required women’s swimming suits to extend at least *four inches below the knee*.

Superintendent Theodore Wirth put an end to consideration of the ordinance when he asked if he was supposed to take a tape measure onto the beach.



# Which neighborhood won the **first** community singing competition?

a.

Logan Park



b.

Powderhorn  
Park



c.

Riverside Park



3



**C. Riverside Park**

**“Community sings” were created in 1919. Singing included musical accompaniment and were judged on audience participation. In its first year, 73 were held in Minneapolis.**

**Riverside Park won the first year and Logan Park won the second. On some occasions, attendance at a community sing exceeded 10,000 people!**

Which is the  
**oldest** park in  
Minneapolis?

a. Loring Park

b. Murphy Square

c. Farview Park

d. Logan Park

4

**Murphy Park is the oldest park and was dedicated in 1857 by Edward Murphy, *before* the formation of the Minneapolis Park Board.**

Loring, Farview, and Logan Park were all established in 1883 in the Park Board's first year.

**b. Murphy Square**



# Did you know...

**One of the first expressions of concern for water quality in Minneapolis's lakes and streams came in 1902.**

Park Commissioner and noted architect Harry Jones asked Superintendent William Berry to talk with the Minnesota Sugar Company about its discharge of water and refuse into Minnehaha Creek from its St. Louis Park plant.



5

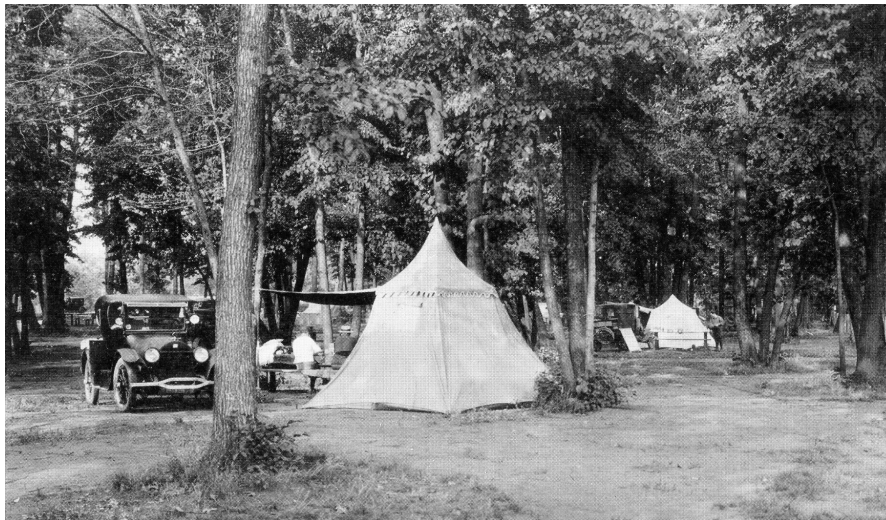
Which attraction has been in a Minneapolis park?

- a. Ski Jump
- b. Zoo
- c. Campground
- d. Airport
- e. All of the above

5

e.

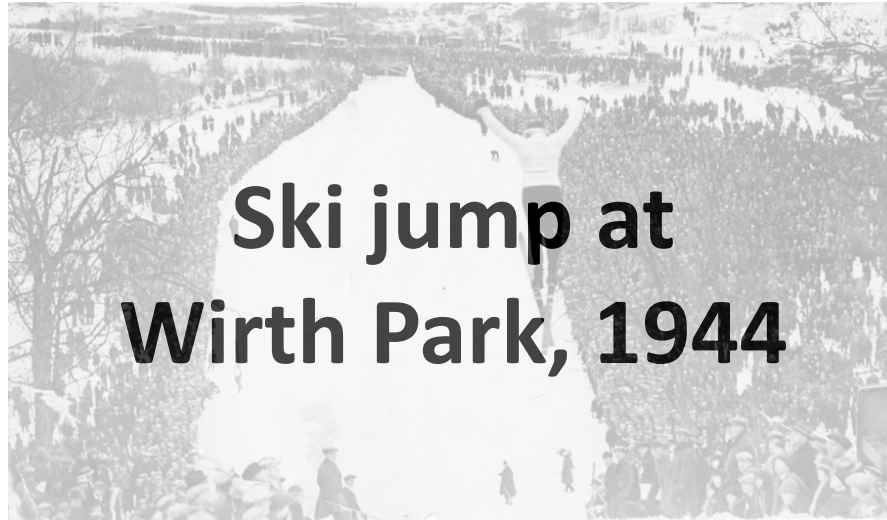
All of the above!



5

e.

All of the above!



# Did you know

**The Park Board's had a zoo from 1894-1907.**

Animals there included a moose, foxes, alligators, monkeys, a mountain lion, wolves and sea lions, among others!

When the Park Board's zoo closed, animals that could live outdoors all year—deer, elk & bears—got to stay, and the rest were moved to the new Longfellow Zoological Gardens located nearby. There, flamingos and seals wandered freely!



6

## True or False?

The rocket in Brackett Field Park was once a playground slide.

# TRUE!

Installed in 1964, the futuristic “moon rocket” was one of the most innovative of its time!

It returned to Brackett Field Park in 2005 as the sculpture *Return Journey* by artist Randy Walker.



# Which park had the first dry-land ice rink?

a.

Logan Park



b.

Van Cleve Park



c.

Nicollet Field



7

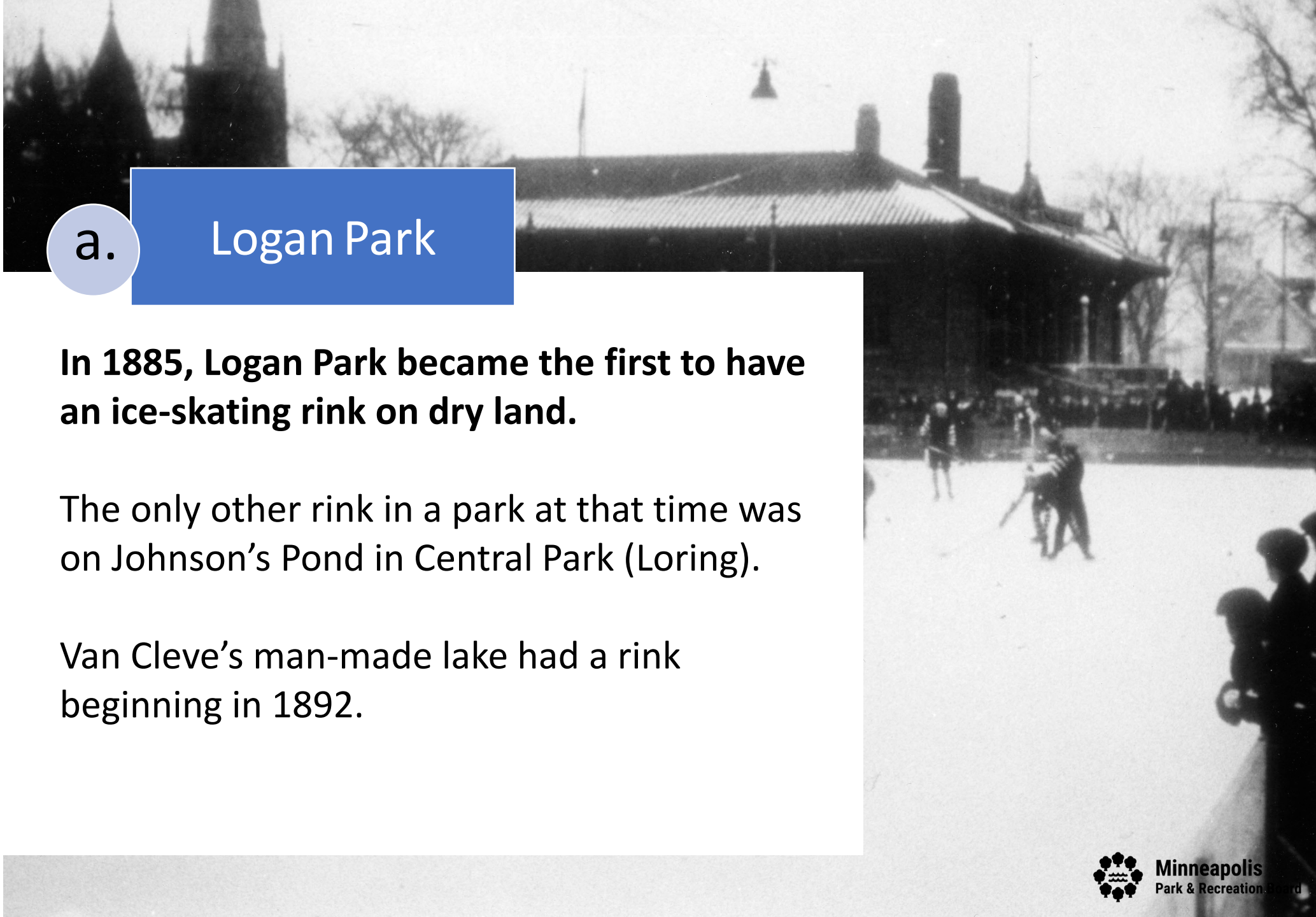
a.

## Logan Park

**In 1885, Logan Park became the first to have an ice-skating rink on dry land.**

The only other rink in a park at that time was on Johnson's Pond in Central Park (Loring).

Van Cleve's man-made lake had a rink beginning in 1892.



# Did you know...

The first mention of a park hockey league was in 1914. They played on a lighted rink on Lake Harriet.



When was the first year for concerts in the parks?

a. 1888

b. 1892

c. 1906

d. 1919

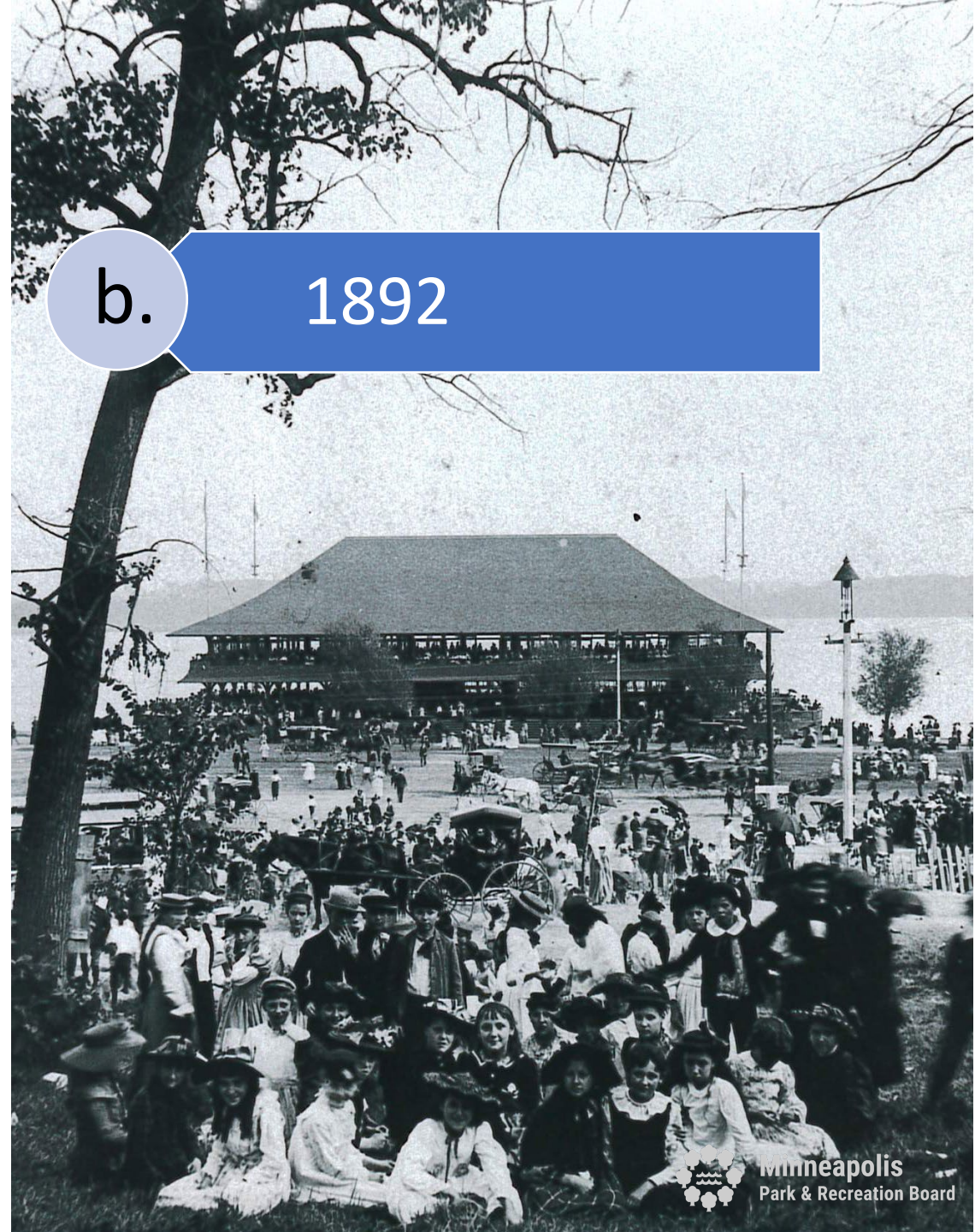
8

**Concerts were held as early as 1888 at a pavilion *next* to Lake Harriet Park.**

**When that burned down, a new pavilion opened in 1892 on park property on the shore of the lake, the start of the Park Board's organized concerts.**

**b.**

**1892**



**Beginning in 1906, free concerts were held on portable bandstand that was pulled from park to park by a team of horses.**

It traveled to The Parade, Powderhorn, Farview, Logan, Riverside, Windom & North Commons.

By 1919, small permanent bandstands were built in 13 parks.



# Did you know...

**Summer pageants in Lyndale Park attracted up to 40,000 people!**

The pageants were performed at Lyndale Park from 1916-1941 and featured children from every park. Plays were written and directed by Alice Dietz of the Recreation Department and involved elaborate staging and handmade costumes.

At its peak, up to 1,500 children participated!

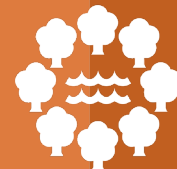




***Minneapolis Parks History***

**TRIVIA!**

***How did you do?!***



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# *Credits*

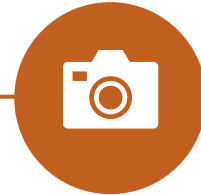


## **CREATED FOR**

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration  
*Our Parks, Our Stories*  
*Summer 2023*

[minneapolisparcs.org/140yrs](https://minneapolisparcs.org/140yrs)



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