**HISTORY OF LAKE MINNEWANKA**

Lake Minnewanka has a rich history. There are several archaeological sites showing pre-contact occupations that date from an estimated 5,000-year period. Artifacts have been found from the early, middle, and late pre-contact periods. The Minnewanka site is one of a series of such early sites in the lower Bow Valley. There are also historical sites like the old Cascade Power Plant and the submerged features of the Lake Minnewanka townsite – Minnewanka Landing.

The resort village of Minnewanka Landing was established in 1888, when the first hotel - the Beach House - was constructed. Development continued at the site as wharves were built, cottage lots were made available for lease, hotels and restaurants were constructed, and lake tours and abstract cruises were offered.

The changes to the lake and the area surrounding it began in 1912. A dam was constructed on Devil's Creek to improve the lake's shoreline. A second dam was built by the Calgary Power Co. in 1932 on Devil's Creek for water storage.

This dam raised the lake level (12'), creating a new shoreline lift the townsite and flooding Devil's Creek. The government built a bridge over Devil's Creek to maintain the original road from Banff to Minnewanka.

In 1923, the government built the Cascade Power Plant and three employee residences in Devil's Canyon. The power house supplied hydropower to Calgary. Electricity was shut down when the third and final dam was completed in 1934 by the Calgary Power Co. in 1941 under the Upper Water Measurement Act. This dam raised the lake level (10'), flooding the townsite, the 1923 dam and the bridge at Devil's Creek.

The historical activities surrounding Lake Minnewanka reflect the development, growth and changing attitudes towards natural parks. This townsite is the best preserved, rare example of a submerged historic village in Canada. It contains unique specimens of early 19th century technology that in the same location as they were when they were submerged.

1895 DAM

An important dam is the Minnewanka Submerged Cultural Resource. It is located in the area in which the site as wharves were built, cottage lots were made available for lease, hotels and restaurants were constructed, and lake tours and abstract cruises were offered.

The changes to the lake and the area surrounding it began in 1912. A dam was constructed on Devil's Creek to improve the lake's shoreline. A second dam was built by the Calgary Power Co. in 1932 on Devil's Creek for water storage.

This dam raised the lake level (12'), creating a new shoreline lift the townsite and flooding Devil's Creek. The government built a bridge over Devil's Creek to maintain the original road from Banff to Minnewanka.

In 1923, the government built the Cascade Power Plant and three employee residences in Devil's Canyon. The power house supplied hydropower to Calgary. Electricity was shut down when the third and final dam was completed in 1934 by the Calgary Power Co. in 1941 under the Upper Water Measurement Act. This dam raised the lake level (10'), flooding the townsite, the 1923 dam and the bridge at Devil's Creek.

The historical activities surrounding Lake Minnewanka reflect the development, growth and changing attitudes towards natural parks. This townsite is the best preserved, rare example of a submerged historic village in Canada. It contains unique specimens of early 19th century technology that in the same location as they were when they were submerged.

**PROTECTION OF LAKE MINNEWANKA'S MARINE HERITAGE**

The submerged features of Lake Minnewanka are important cultural resources. Due to the presence of the Minnewanka site as wharves were built, cottage lots were made available for lease, hotels and restaurants were constructed, and lake tours and abstract cruises were offered.

The changes to the lake and the area surrounding it began in 1912. A dam was constructed on Devil's Creek to improve the lake's shoreline. A second dam was built by the Calgary Power Co. in 1932 on Devil's Creek for water storage.

This dam raised the lake level (12'), creating a new shoreline lift the townsite and flooding Devil's Creek. The government built a bridge over Devil's Creek to maintain the original road from Banff to Minnewanka.

In 1923, the government built the Cascade Power Plant and three employee residences in Devil's Canyon. The power house supplied hydropower to Calgary. Electricity was shut down when the third and final dam was completed in 1934 by the Calgary Power Co. in 1941 under the Upper Water Measurement Act. This dam raised the lake level (10'), flooding the townsite, the 1923 dam and the bridge at Devil's Creek.

The historical activities surrounding Lake Minnewanka reflect the development, growth and changing attitudes towards natural parks. This townsite is the best preserved, rare example of a submerged historic village in Canada. It contains unique specimens of early 19th century technology that in the same location as they were when they were submerged.

The submerged features of Lake Minnewanka are unique and rare. They reflect the history and development of early Canada. They are subject to a fine of $2000.00.

**CAUTIONS**

Deeper areas for experienced divers only. To get from one pier to another, divers need to swim over deeper water – good buoyancy control is necessary to avoid going deeper.

**DIVING SAFETY**

1. Certification: All divers should be trained and certified by a recognized organization. Training must include the supervision of a certified diving instructor.

2. Never Dive Alone: The buddy system is your protection in the event of unexpected problems.

3. Cold Water: Low water temperatures in this area can cause special hazards. Only experienced divers should attempt deep dives. Regular freeze-up can occur, so divers should take appropriate precautions.

4. High Altitude: High altitudes alter dive times. Dives at Lake Minnewanka are high altitude dives, and must be deeper than 15 m (50'). The shorter dive times dramatically.

5. Use the Dive Flag: Always display a fully visible dive flag when in the water. Reckless diving to within 30 m (100') of the flag and do not confuse boaters by flying the flag when no activity is underway. Do not attach your dive flag to the rock. Attachment anchors for the purpose are provided at many sites.

6. Boat Diving: Never leave a boat unattended, especially when it is used for diving. At least one person must be left on board when the boat is anchored or moored.

7. Night Diving: Only experienced divers should engage in night diving. Each diver should be equipped with an adequate underwater light and a backup light.

For further information: Alberta Scuba Diving Council - (403) 455-8565

In case of an emergency: Ward Service - 762-4506

**LAKE MINNEWANKA SUBMERGED CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**BANFF NATIONAL PARK**

**Diving Safety**

1. Certification: All divers should be trained and certified by a recognized organization. Training must include the supervision of a certified diving instructor.

2. Never Dive Alone: The buddy system is your protection in the event of unexpected problems.

3. Cold Water: Low water temperatures in this area can cause special hazards. Only experienced divers should attempt deep dives. Regular freeze-up can occur, so divers should take appropriate precautions.

4. High Altitude: High altitudes alter dive times. Dives at Lake Minnewanka are high altitude dives, and must be deeper than 15 m (50'). The shorter dive times dramatically.

5. Use the Dive Flag: Always display a fully visible dive flag when in the water. Reckless diving to within 30 m (100') of the flag and do not confuse boaters by flying the flag when no activity is underway. Do not attach your dive flag to the rock. Attachment anchors for the purpose are provided at many sites.

6. Boat Diving: Never leave a boat unattended, especially when it is used for diving. At least one person must be left on board when the boat is anchored or moored.

7. Night Diving: Only experienced divers should engage in night diving. Each diver should be equipped with an adequate underwater light and a backup light.

For further information: Alberta Scuba Diving Council - (403) 455-8565

In case of an emergency: Ward Service - 762-4506
Lake Minnewanka is 1450 m above sea level, 18 km south of Hotel. Lake Minnewanka is cold water, altitude dives. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Sidewalk” Sidewalks and cellar 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - approximately halfway between the Hotel and House Foundations #4 and #5. Easy to follow by the old road southward from the Hotel. Description: Two level cement sidewalk, 10 in. Calcutt pipe line has 7 in. away. Two holes nearby - one rectangular with plank crib (possibly a root cellar), the other square with no crib. Remains of a small jocket. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 13.5 m (44'). Light recreational diving is advised. Visibility generally good. Currents entering the basin are strong.

2. “Outhouse Hole” Cellar 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - over 40 m from shore. Situated close to House Foundation #4 and 50 m in southerly direction. Description: Criffled hole approximately 30 sq. m and 1 m deep - possibly a root cellar. Probably owned by N.K. Luxton.

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Good complement dive with the nearby house foundations. Limited recreational diving is advised. Visibility in the area is good. Caution: Very fragile resource. Do not lean on or touch. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Three very interesting resources close to each other. 1912 Dam Area is accessible from the shore. Heavy boat traffic from nearby wharf and boat ramp.

3. “Guthouse Hole” Cellar 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - over 40 m from shore. Situated close to House Foundation #4 and 50 m in southerly direction. Description: Criffled hole approximately 30 m square and 1 m deep - possibly a root cellar. Probably owned by N.K. Luxton.

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Very fragile resource. Do not lean on or touch. Diving is possible inside the building. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Hotel” House Foundation #1 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - 200 metres from shore. Situated near a bend in the old road. Large concrete foundation with a brick wall has fallen in the basin. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Hotel” House Foundation #1 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - 200 metres from shore. Situated near a bend in the old road. Large concrete foundation with a brick wall has fallen in the basin. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Hotel” House Foundation #1 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - 200 metres from shore. Situated near a bend in the old road. Large concrete foundation with a brick wall has fallen in the basin. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Hotel” House Foundation #1 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - 200 metres from shore. Situated near a bend in the old road. Large concrete foundation with a brick wall has fallen in the basin. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.

1. “Hotel” House Foundation #1 1912-1942 Location: Townsite area - 200 metres from shore. Situated near a bend in the old road. Large concrete foundation with a brick wall has fallen in the basin. 

Difficult Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Very interesting diving. Divers may find items of interest in the area. Caution: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate the sponge. Very large number of divers visit the site. Most visited feature because of the depth. Great visibility in the area. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Unique diving experience due to the size and complexity of the structure. Over the second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. The second dam was constructed. Visibility varies depending on the time of year and the depth as well as the weather. Depths listed below were taken in October.