



HISTORY PRESENTATIONS

CONTACT: Tony Dierckins | tonyd@zenithcity.com | 218-310-6541

Zenith City Press publisher Tony Dierckins has developed over 20 presentations covering a variety of topics concerning historic Duluth and the Western Lake Superior Region. Presentations are developed from our books and designed to take anywhere from 20 to 60 minutes. Select from the topics listed on the next pages or have us create a custom presentation* for your event.

SPEAKING FEES

CORPORATE EVENTS & CONFERENCES

(Annual dinners, fund-raisers, staff retreats, client-enticing events)

COST: \$300 | *\$250 if the speaker is allowed to sell books following the presentation.*

LENGTH: Up to one hour with Q&A

EQUIPMENT: Facility or host organization provides screen and projector

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION LUNCHEONS, ETC

(Weekly or monthly meetings of occupation-related societies, including labor unions)

COST: \$150 | *\$125 if the speaker is allowed to sell books following the presentation.*

LENGTH: Up to one hour with Q&A

EQUIPMENT: Facility or host organization provides screen and projector

SENIOR FACILITIES & HISTORY-RELATED NONPROFITS

(Senior Living Facilities, Assisted-Living Facilities, "College for Seniors" Classes, Historical Societies, Preservation Groups, Genealogy Clubs, Libraries, etc.)

COST: \$100 | *\$75 if the speaker is allowed to sell books following the presentation.*

LENGTH: Up to one hour

EQUIPMENT: Facility or host organization provides screen and projector

SERVICE-ORIENTED CIVIC ORGANIZATION LUNCHEONS, ETC

(Weekly or Monthly meetings of Rotary, Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

COST: Free | *Speaker must be allowed to sell books following the presentation*

LENGTH: 20 Minutes

EQUIPMENT: Facility or host organization provides screen and projector

*CUSTOM PRESENTATIONS

If you would like us to develop a new presentation on a topic not currently offered, we can create a custom presentation for your event. Costs include research, image procurement, presentation design, and speaking at the event itself:

20-30 Minute Presentation: \$350 | *Speaker must be allowed to sell books following the presentation*

35-60 Minute Presentation: \$500 | *Speaker must be allowed to sell books following the presentation*

SEE ACCOMPANYING PAGES FOR TOPICS AND DESCRIPTIONS



HISTORY PRESENTATIONS

BEER BREWING HISTORY OF THE TWIN PORTS [20–45 MINUTES]

Beer brewing is the oldest and newest industry at the Head of the Lakes. It began in 1859 and by 1910 the Twin Ports supported for major breweries—Fitger’s, Peoples, and Duluth Brewing & Malting in Duluth and Northern in Superior. Prohibition forced breweries to adapt to survive (most didn’t), after which they retooled only to face stiff competition following World War Two as larger breweries overpowered regional brands. By 1972, all four were gone, but brewing returned with the craft-brewing movement in 1994, and today the Twin Ports boast of having twelve breweries. We offer several presentations adapted from our book *Naturally Brewed, Naturally Better: Historic Breweries of Duluth & Superior*:

- “Pioneer Brewing at the Head of the Lakes (1859–1885)”
- “Pure Lake Superior Water: It’s What Makes Twin Ports Beer Naturally Better”
- “Soda & Candy: How the Twin Ports’ Breweries Survived—or Failed—During Prohibition”
- “Fitger’s: The Twin Ports’ Longest-Lived Brewery”
- “The ‘Moose Brewery’: Duluth Brewing & Malting”
- “We Made It Good, You Made It Famous: Superior’s Northern Brewing Company”
- “Peoples Brewing Company: A Brewery for the...People?”

DULUTH’S HISTORIC PARKS [20–45 MINUTES]

Duluth as one of the most expansive and remarkable public park systems in the world, with over 170 park properties that make up more than 25 percent of the city. Our book *Duluth’s Historic Parks: Their First 160 Years* won the 2018 Northeastern Minnesota Book Award for nonfiction. We developed a series of presentations about the park system, including:

- “For the People, By the People: Duluth’s Park System 1889–2018”
- “Duluth’s Summer Playground: The Parks of Minnesota Point”
- “Morell & Nichols in the Zenith City: Minnesota’s Premier Landscape Artists Left Their Mark on Duluth”
- “Super Superintendents: How ‘Gramp’ Cleveland and F. R. Paine shaped Duluth’s Park System.”

DULUTH’S LOST GRAND STAGE THEATRES [45 MINUTES]

Audience members travel from 1868 to 1963 to cover the life of Duluth’s grand theatres—the 1883 Grand Opera House, the 1889 Temple Opera Block, the 1891 Lyceum Theatre, and the 1912 Orpheum Theatre—and goes beyond the architecture to introduce them to the civic leaders—and downright scoundrels—associated with them. It ends with the history of Duluth’s iconic Art Deco movie house, the NorShor Theatre. Adapted from *Lost Duluth: Landmarks, Industries, Buildings, Homes & the Neighborhoods in Which They Stood*, finalist for the 2013 Minnesota Book Award.

LOST INDUSTRIES OF THE ST. LOUIS RIVER: [45 to 60 MINUTES]

Both sides of the St. Louis River at Duluth and Superior were once lined with ore docks, coal docks, lumber mills, flour mills, grain terminals, and metal manufacturers. From the early fur post and brownstone quarries of Find du lac to Morgan Park’s giant Minnesota Steel Plant, this presentation explains the rise—and demise—of the industries that built the Zenith City. Adapted from *Lost Duluth: Landmarks, Industries, Buildings, Homes & the Neighborhoods in Which They Stood*, finalist for the 2013 Minnesota Book Award.

CROSSING THE CANAL BEFORE THE BRIDGE 1865–1905 [45 MINUTES]

Duluth finished digging its canal in 1871, but it wasn't until 1905 that a permanent bridge spanned its piers. The presentation covers the many legends surrounding the canal dig, Duluth's legal struggle with Superior over the canal's existence, early ideas for crossing it (including a tunnel), and the struggle to build the iconic Aerial Bridge. Adapted from *Crossing the Canal: An Illustrated History of Duluth's Aerial Bridge*, finalist for the 2009 Minnesota Book Award.

THE AERIAL TRANSFER BRIDGE 1905–1929 [45 MINUTES]

When Duluthians finally built a bridge over its 1871 ship canal—in 1905—it was one of the most innovative structures in the world. An aerial transfer bridge, it ferried passengers back and forth across the canal in a gondola car—but by 1925 the automobile had rendered it obsolete, and the presentation covers its entire life. Adapted from *Crossing the Canal: An Illustrated History of Duluth's Aerial Bridge*, finalist for the 2009 Minnesota Book Award.

HISTORIC GLENSHEEN [20–45 MINUTES]

We begin with the story of Chester and Clara Congdon and their family, how they came to make Duluth their home and how Chester built the fortune that paid for their remarkable estate. Then modern and historic images help explain what makes Glensheen a remarkable example of shifting ideals in American architecture at the turn of the twentieth century and show off the work of Minnesota's premier architect, interior designers, and landscape designers. Adapted from the books *Glensheen: The Official Guide to Duluth's Congdon Estate* (winner of the 2017 Northeast Minnesota Book Award) and *Historic Glensheen 1905 – 1930*.

AMERICA'S ROBBER BARONS & THE IRON RANGE [20–30 MINUTES]

Duluth's famous Merritt family opened the Mesabi Iron Range in the early 1890s only to lose it to John D. Rockefeller by 1895. Afterwards, Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie and Henry Oliver (with his partner Chester Congdon) battled over the Iron Range until J. P. Morgan formed U. S. Steel, creating the fortune that financed public libraries and Duluth's most famous home, Congdon's Glensheen. Adapted from the book *Glensheen: The Official Guide to Duluth's Congdon Estate*, winner of the 2017 Northeast Minnesota Book Award.

COPPER RUSH: THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE NORTH SHORE [20 MINUTES]

The “Minnesota side” of Lake Superior first opened to western expansion in the mid 1850s and was expected to become a copper-mining community that would rival Michigan's Upper Peninsula, which at one time supplied 90% of the nation's copper. But lack of minerals, an international depression, and the American Civil War postponed dreams until Jay Cooke showed up in 1866.

BOOM & BUST & BOOM & BUST: Duluth, 1855–1887 [20–45 MINUTES]

In 1855 pioneers began platting townships on the “Minnesota Side” of the Head of the Lakes, and the air was filled with the promise of an ideal geographic location. But the next 20 years war and two major economic depressions led to instability for the fledgling communities along the lake's North Shore. They came together to form a city in 1870, only to see that city dissolve by 1877—but by 1887 Duluth was back on its feet.

MURDER IN THE ZENITH CITY [20 –30 MINUTES]

Duluth could be a rough-and-tumble place in its formative years, and not everyone got out alive. This presentation traces Duluth's early and notorious homicides, including the first murder in 1869, a murder that occurred on the land that is now Glensheen—97 years before the famous 1977 killings, and murderers who were executed, including the last man legally hung for capital murder in St. Louis County.

ITALIANS IN THE ZENITH CITY [30 MINUTES]

Duluth, especially its western environs, attracted many unskilled immigrants over the years who left their homelands for a better life and found themselves in a new land often performing menial labor in a mill or on a dock. This presentation follows the Italians who came to Duluth from 1880s to 1920 and what they found here, where they settled, and how they made their way. Adapted from *Lost Duluth: Landmarks, Industries, Buildings, Homes & the Neighborhoods in Which They Stood*.

OLIVER TRAPHAGEN: DULUTH'S QUINTESSENTIAL ARCHITECT [20 MINUTES]

Between 1886 and 1896 Oliver Traphagen—alone and with Francis Fitzpatrick—design more Duluth buildings than any other architect, primarily employing his signature Richardsonian Romanesque style to create powerful and often fanciful brick-and-brownstone masterpieces, some of which are still with us today. After leaving Duluth, Traphagen headed to Hawaii where his work heavily influenced the architecture of Honolulu. Adapted from *Lost Duluth: Landmarks, Industries, Buildings, Homes & the Neighborhoods in Which They Stood*.

DULUTH'S 1889 CITY HALL & ITS MAYORS [45 MINUTES]

Renowned Duluth architect Oliver Traphagen designed this brownstone jewel at the southwest corner of Superior and East Second Streets to serve the seat of Duluth's municipal government, which it did until 1929. This presentation reaches beyond the architecture to introduces audiences to the twelve mayors that served within its walls. From the forthcoming book *Duluth's Grand Old Buildings*.

DULUTH'S 1904 PUBLIC LIBRARY [20-30 MINUTES]

Duluth's Library, officially founded in 1889, has roots that go back to 1869 and did not have a home of its own until 1904, a neoclassical brownstone masterpiece designed by a teacher at Duluth's Central high School and funded by steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie. So where did Duluthians keep its public collection before 1904, and what lead to the library's replacement in 1980? The presentation explains it all. From the forthcoming book *Duluth's Grand Old Buildings*.

THE HOTEL DULUTH / GREYSOLON PLAZA [30 MINUTES]

In 1926 the Hotel Duluth opened as the most luxurious hostelry in the region and over the years played host to celebrities and dignitaries from Bob Hope to President John F. Kennedy—just weeks before his death in November, 1963. This presentation covers the construction and life of the hotel, now Greysolon Plaza, including the infamous black bear intrusion of 1929. From the forthcoming book *Duluth's Grand Old Buildings*.

THE KITCHI GAMMI CLUB & ITS PIONEER MEMBERS [30-45 MINUTES]

Duluth's Kitchi Gammi Club included the movers and shakers that shaped the Zenith City. From the pioneer grain traders who established the club to the mining magnets who cashed in during the 1890s, this presentation introduces the audience to some of the most important men of 19th-century Duluth including well-known names like Guilford Hartley and Chester Congdon. From the forthcoming book *Duluth's Grand Old Buildings*.