

One time, the boat and barge headed back to St. Paul, and the people enjoyed the dancing.

But somehow, the people arrived in St. Paul too late, and they missed the train back to Shakopee.

Their parents were not happy.

At all.

It almost stopped the excursion boats. Luckily, the boats continued for a few more years.



And Lena and her sisters enjoyed the time dancing up and down the Minnesota River.



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## SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



# Lena Strunk and Sundown Dancing 1915



The Minnesota River was a highway for people going up and down the river. Starting in 1915, the thrill was the excursion boats, which started in St. Paul and arrived in Shakopee in late morning.

The boat would spend the day in Shakopee, and then head back to St. Paul. The boat would have a barge in the back, where bands would play in the moonlight. Young adults, including those in Shakopee, would dance while the boat headed back to the capital. Lena Strunk, along with her three sisters, often were on the boats!

Once the boat arrived to St Paul, it was time for the young adults to walk two or three blocks to the train station, where they took the midnight train back to Shakopee, arriving back at 1 a.m.



Julius A. Collier, II

Julius Collier II had a monthly show on KSMM radio in Shakopee about the history of Shakopee. In the July 1982, he told the story of the sundown dancing in Shakopee, which happened from 1915 to 1917. The clergymen were not happy, and they told the parents and children to stop this from happening. But instead of stopping, the people wanted to experience the thrill, and so more and more people from Shakopee experienced excursion boats and sundown dancing from here to St. Paul.



The anxious clergymen didn't like the idea of sundown dancing, and having those young kids having too much fun. So the homilies on many weekend churches was for telling parents and children to stop the sundown dancing.

In a tape of Jack Collier II in a monthly episode of KSMM Radio show **T, T, & O (This, That, and the Other)** which happened the first Wednesday of every month since 1976, the clergymen were not amused.

in Shakopee, in July of 1982, the radio was very popular, and many people in Shakopee listened.



Of course, just the opposite happened.

As more people heard about the moon light dancing, more wanted to experience the thrill. So excursion boats and sundown dancing continued in 1915, 1916, and 1917.

