**HISTORY OF LAKE MINNEWANKA**

Lake Minnewanka has a rich history. There are several archaeological sites showing pre-contact occupations that date from the early Archaic 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 Canmore Pioneer 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 abroad cruise boats 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 in Devil's Creek for water storage.

1895 DAM

This small dam is the earliest structure associated with the site. Marine archaeologists have assessed its condition to be extremely fragile. The structure would be destroyed if it was kicked on or touched by divers. You can help to protect the unique structure by avoiding it.

**Protection of Lake Minnewanka’s Marine Heritage**

The submerged features of Minnewanka Landing are important cultural resources, rare within a national park. This submerged heritage belongs to each and every Canadian. Anything altered or removed from it diminishes the heritage. Individual visitors may not have a great impact on the site, but hundreds of divers and heavy boat traffic for sightseeing and fishing causes major cumulative and irreversible damage to the sites. Activities such as artifact retrieval, attaching objects to the features, graffiti, anchor dragging and down rigging fishing are all very harmful to these resources. Under the National Parks Act, irreversible removing, damaging or destroying prehistoric or historic artifacts or structures is subject to a fine of $2000.00.

Please help us to protect this resource by minimizing your impact and reporting any vandalism to the Wardens Service at 1-888-WARDENS (toll free).

**DIVING SAFETY**

1. Certification: All divers should be trained and certified by a recognized organization. Courses must be under 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 create special hazards. Only experienced divers should attempt deeper dives. Regulator freeze-up can occur, so divers should take appropriate precautions.

4. High Altitude: High altitude affects dive times. Dives at Lake Minnewanka are high altitude dives, and must be deeper than 14 m (50'). These shortens dive times dramatically.

5. Use the Dive Flag: Always display a fully visible dive flag when in the water. Bring all diving to within 30 m (100') of the flag and do not continue boating by flying the flag when no activity is underway. Do not attach your dive flag to the structure. 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) 455-8566

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

**Marine Heritage**

Canyon Waterfall Park (Canada), 1977

**Canadian Heritage\n Parcs Canada**
Lake Minnewanka is 439 m above sea level, 14 km long with a maximum depth of 180 m. All dives at Lake Minnewanka are cold waters, altitude dives. Visibility varies depending on the weather conditions of the day. Depths listed are depending on the time of year and the water level. Dates given are post 1912. Depths listed below were taken in October.

**SITE DESCRIPTIONS**

Lake Minnewanka is 439 m above sea level, 14 km long with a maximum depth of 180 m. All dives at Lake Minnewanka are cold waters, altitude dives. Visibility varies depending on the weather conditions of the day. Depths listed are depending on the time of year and the water level. Dates given are post 1912. Depths listed below were taken in October.

**1. “Sidewalk”**

Location: Townsite area - approximately halfway between the Hotel and House Foundation #4 and #5. Easy to find if you look for a remnant of the old road. wooded.

Description: Two cement sidewalks, 10 m long. Cultural life has less in area. Two sidewalks - one rectangular with planck with possibly a roof. Other hill with a roof. Remains of a small picket fence are nearby.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 10 m (33'). Low recreational interest. Recovery structures are small and forested.

**2. “Guthrie Hole”**

Location: Townsite area - approximately halfway between Hotel and House Foundation #4 and #5.

Description: Cracked hole approximately 9 m square and 1 m deep - possibly a root cellar. Probably owned by S.K. Lutton.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Good complement dive with the nearby house foundations. Limited recreational interest - remains of a small picket fence are nearby.

Cautions: Very fragile resource. Do not lean on or touch. Practice careful buoyancy and emergency control in the area of resource.

**3. “Long Wharf”**

Location: Townsite area - over 400 m from shore and 120 m from House Foundation #4. Located north of the Long Wharf. Modest depth with a small jetty to the southeast and a breakwater.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Interesting dive especially if combined with the Long Wharf. Probably owned by S.K. Lutton.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate these remains particularly damaging to the structure.

**4. “North Breakwater”**

Location: Townsite area - over 400 m from shore and 120 m from House Foundation #4. Located north of the Long Wharf. Modest depth with a small jetty to the southeast and a breakwater.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Interesting dive especially if combined with the Long Wharf. Probably owned by S.K. Lutton.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth.

**5. “South Breakwater”**

Location: South wharf. The wharf was extended in 1927. Large concrete block piers with occasional timber supports and rock-filled log cribs. The wharf is ended by a rock-filled breakwater. The breakwater is constructed with a succession of cement piers with occasional timber supports and rock-filled log cribs.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Interesting dive especially if combined with the Long Wharf. Probably owned by S.K. Lutton.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth.

1912 DAM AREA

All structures in this area are related to the second dam built by the Calgary Power Company in 1912, and is the dam operating structures built in 1923. This area was submerged in 1946.

Cautions: 1912 Dam Area is accessible from the shore deep and on rocks along the shore. Heavy boat traffic from nearby wharf and boat ramp.

**11. “1912 Dam”**

Location: 125 m from the causeway and 120 m from the boat ramp. Northern section - south from Deer Crossing.

Description: A stone spillway concrete dam over 12 m high topped with a 3 m high earth-fill crib upper structure. Adjacent to the dam is a two-storey concrete building. The powerhouse has two openings on its roof and door; two openings on its roof and door and opening above passage from one level to another. Ground Conditions: Depth is 12.5 m (41') to 25 m (82'). Possible penetration inside the powerhouse. Construction of the powerhouse varies. Very fragile resource. Do not lean on or touch the resource. Practice careful buoyancy and emergency control in the area of the resource.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 12.6 m (41'). Interesting dive offering a differentv view.

Cautions: Would be a hard dive to do if they attempted to slip into it. Do not lean on or touch the resource. Practice careful buoyancy and emergency control in the area of the resource.

**12. “House Foundation #4”**

Location: 120 m - 400 m from shore and 40 m in NE of house foundations. Easy to find from House Foundation #4 by going to the southwest over the ledge. Ground Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Interesting dive offering a different view.

Cautions: Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

**13. “House Foundation #5”**

Location: 120 m - 400 m from shore and 40 m in NE of house foundations. Easy to find from House Foundation #4 by going to the southwest over the ledge. Ground Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Interesting dive offering a different view.

Cautions: Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.


Location: 120 m - 400 m from shore and 40 m in NE of house foundations. Easy to find from House Foundation #4 by going to the southwest over the ledge. Ground Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Interesting dive offering a different view.

Cautions: Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

**10. “Old Wharf”**

Location: 120 m - 400 m from shore and 40 m in NE of house foundations. Easy to find from House Foundation #4 by going to the southwest over the ledge. Ground Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 18 m (59'). Interesting dive offering a different view.

Cautions: Limited recreational interest, as it is presently hidden by weeds.

**9. “House Foundation #3”**

Location: South wharf. The wharf was extended in 1927. Large concrete block piers with occasional timber supports and rock-filled log cribs. The wharf is ended by a rock-filled breakwater. The breakwater is constructed with a succession of cement piers with occasional timber supports and rock-filled log cribs.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 17.5 m (57'). Interesting dive especially if combined with the Long Wharf. Probably owned by S.K. Lutton.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth.

**2. “FireplaceÓ**

Location: Townsite area - 420 m from shore and 200 m south of Hotel. Situated close to House Foundation #6 and #7 in southerly direction.

Description: Square concrete footing 9.20 m x 6.75 m. Approximately 25 cm thick and 20 cm above bottom. Probably owned by N.K. Luxton.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 10 m (33'). Low recreational interest - remains of a small picket fence are nearby.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth. Anchor dragging to locate these remains particularly damaging to the structure.

**3. “SidewalkÓ**

Location: Townsite area - approximately halfway between Hotel and House Foundation #4 and #5. Easy to find if you look for a remnant of the old road. wooded.

Description: Two cement sidewalks, 10 m long. Cultural life has less in area. Two sidewalks - one rectangular with planck with possibly a roof. Other hill with a roof. Remains of a small picket fence are nearby.

Dive Conditions: Depth is 10 m (33'). Low recreational interest. Recovery structures are small and forested.

Cautions: Recommended for experienced divers because of the depth.