THE CANORA CHRONICLE

Canadian Northern Society—Camrose, Meeting Creek, and Big Valley, Alberta

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2010 Canadian Northern Memberships are due!

Please send your membership to:
Canadian Northern Society
P.O. Box 142, Big Valley, AB T0J 0G0

Associate memberships are $10
Full voting memberships are $20

We thank you in advance for your support.

Acknowledgements

The society welcomes a new member: Jeffrey Chapman of Edmonton.

The society expresses its sincere sympathy to the family of Mrs. M.C. Didrichsen of Stettler, after her passing this fall. Mrs. M.C. Didrichsen had been an ardent supporter of the Canadian Northern Society for many years—quietly enjoying the *Chronicle* and each year being generous with cash donations.

To all society members and especially our volunteers —we thank you— for your support and wish you a very merry holiday season with many new joys in 2010!

Big Valley Happenings

Canadian Northern Society is wishing Kathy Evans a sincere "Get Well Soon!" Everyone's thoughts and prayers have been with Kathy, Russ and her family over the last month as she recovers from her unfortunate accident while doing volunteer maintenance work around the Big Valley station.

We miss her work around the station and wish to thank all of those volunteers who have pitched in to help out with the "off-season" caretaking that needs to be done around the station and grounds.

On the maintenance front, we have acquired a new sign to direct guests to the Roundhouse, which will be installed before next spring, and are repairing another roundhouse sign, which was vandalized last year.

The Canadian Heartland Training Railway has renewed their license agreement with the society until December 31, 2010, and will continue to use the station and Big Valley railway yard as they require it for rail industry training purposes. While they do not expect any full student conductor programs to take place at Big Valley over the next year, they do anticipate a number of one-to-two-day training sessions, and will continue to use the station facilities for their business meetings as required.

We are embarking upon the final stage of conservation of the interior of the station this winter. The Big Valley Historical Society has relocated its displays to the McAlister Motors heritage site, which will allow the refurbishing of the *south room* or express room of the station. Our plan is to create a community meeting room that will house artifacts, photographs, and be multi-purpose in function, allowing the room to be used for Alberta Prairie Railway guests as well as the community at large. As a result of this work, we expect some additions and improvements to the remainder of the station displays.

After having shared the station first floor with the Big Valley Historical Society for 20 some years we would sincerely like to acknowledge the contribution of this group to the on-going operation of the station over the years, and in particular the personal contribution of Allan and Florence Johnston who have been wonderful dedicated ambassadors of the Village and its heritage.

Camrose News

By the time this is published the last of our 2009 fundraising events will have been completed, that being the annual Cookie Walk, Christmas Tea and White Elephant Gift Sale. We do still have one event remaining, the annual Station Christmas by Fireside—Saturday, December 18, 7–9 pm. Stories, songs and socializing, please join us if you can.

The second annual Meeting Creek Harvest Festival went very well despite the weather. Bruce Smith had to make a trip to Camrose to pick up more hotdogs and there was a comment from Norm Prestage that he had never had so many people tour the elevator. It was kind of Lorraine

Bergstrom to donate back to the society the amount we paid for renting the Community Hall. Thanks to the many volunteers it took to make this day a success!

We have some outstanding events planned for 2010! April 23 will mark the 100th year anniversary of the Canadian Northern tracks being laid to Camrose, giving the small community three major rail lines and making us the *Railway City*. As directed at the last Board of Directors meeting I am arranging a Society community dinner—this would be an ideal date to have it on. Please watch for additional details and plan to attend this auspicious event.

Other dates to take note of:

February 14, 2010: Annual Victorian Valentine Gourmet Supper with entertainment including classical guitar by Lyndee Olson and a visit with Jane Austin.

March 27, 2010: Hot Cross Bun Tea and Children's Easter Egg Hunt.

There are so many volunteers to thank for all that they do to keep the station and grounds looking good, for help during events, for cooking and baking, serving and sorting. Our station keeps history alive because of assistance of you. We had a great turn-out for the volunteer appreciation dinner in October—good food and great company!

We have added yet another valuable member to our team, Joanne Hildebrandt, who has taken over the catering area of the Teahouse (allowing Glenys a long-awaited freedom from it). Joanne has now catered three events, serving excellent meals. If you know of anyone who is in the market for an event please head them our way. Joanne and her husband also run the local corn maze, which has been very successful.

A structure long dreamed of here was completed this past year—which houses our collection of track cars. Now that we are able to protect these heritage vehicles from the elements, efforts are going into their restoration. Bruce has the velocipede taken apart, is restoring it completely, keeping it as original as possible—and is doing an amazing job. A good story about it—Bruce was talking to Doug, owner of Zarski's Body Shop Ltd, who wanted to know if he could assist Bruce. But since the work is almost completed, Bruce declined. So, Doug generously donated $500 for the project.

Barb McDonald has been working on interpretive signage for the Track Car Shed and Bunkhouse. Doug Freeman has been volunteering with the database in the Library and Archives. Glenys and Janine are tackling a reorganizational project in the Library and Archives, assisted by Shawn, who has been a great help giving us direction as to categories and organization.

Others we would like to acknowledge for the following generous donations:

- Station annual clean-up: Matilda Fleck, Carol Roy, Bruce and Glenys Smith, Janine Carroll, Barb McDonald.
- Fall and Christmas decorating: Carol Roy, Bill & Gladys Douglas, Bruce & Glenys, Gale Freeman, Dorothy Lysons. And to Robbie O'Riodan and Gale Freeman for setting up the Christmas White Elephant Sale. Thanks to all society members and community members for the fantastic donations to this!
- A big thank you to Matilda Fleck for all the hours of garden work.
- Meeting Creek: Ann & Art Reitan, Hilda Saddleback, Bill & Gladys Douglas, Bruce & Glenys, Shawn & Karen Smith, Gale Freeman, Caitlin Thomson and friend Jane, Cheryl & Norm Prestage, Dave Wilcox & his band, Neil Tollefson, Lorraine & Jerry Bergstrom, Marlene Buns, Barb McDonald and Walter Kittler.
- Cookie Walk preparation and assistance: Carol Roy, Gladys Douglas, Glenys Smith, Ann Reitan, Carol Rawson, Carol Farquelson, Dorothy Lysons, Gale Freeman, Elizabeth Bagdan, Ashleigh Dickson and all the people who donated cookies. Alma Falk donated 19 dozen!
- Preparation of Christmas puddings: Carol & Murray Roy. In addition to these people for our huge staff on the day of the Cookie Walk Gladys Kupka, Taytem & Tammy Syrnyk, Cheryl Presage and her grandson Dustin Gagnon, Caitlin Thomson, Bill Douglas, Robbie O'Riodan, Hilda Saddleback, Regan & Haily Clarke.

Donations

- Harvey Coburn: railway memorabilia
- Verna Ducholki: donation of articles from Bill Holst, conductor on the *Super Continental* for 44 years. We were sorry to have heard of Bill's passing in October 2009.
- Helen & Stan Kopach: framed pictures and photos in memory of their son Michael, who passed away in 2008.
- Jeannette Schandl: huge railway collection that belonged to her husband Joseph including many books (too many to list hear but many that would be of special interest to our members including *The Crow & the Kettle*, and *The Romance and Folklore of North American Rails*.
- Ralph & Cec Atkinson: collection of plates
- ABC Fire Safety: antique fire extinguishers
- Bill McDonald & Morley Riske: vintage lights for the Track Car Shed
- Richard & Marianna Yamabe: Antique railway clock (from the 1800s)
- Janine Carroll: Christmas decorations
- Brent Cheek: *Train Time* (book) and manuals
- Laura McLartey (Cathie Murray's mother): *Oh! The Coal Branch* (a book we have been looking for)
- Robbie O'Rioden: *Siding 16, Wetaskiwin to 1930* (book)
- Norm Prestage: Camrose—*The First Seven Years*

Janine Carroll

The *Canora Chronicle* is the quarterly newsletter of the Canadian Northern Society—a registered charity dedicated to providing community service through heritage tourism initiatives.

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