



the CANORA CHRONICLE

"Capturing history – Building community"

2013 MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE IN JANUARY

Please send your membership dues to:

Canadian Northern Society
Box 1174, Camrose, AB T4V 1X2

Associate memberships are \$10
Full voting memberships are \$20

The society will no longer print membership cards; however, any donations received with memberships will continue to receive tax deductible receipts.

Thank you for your support.

RAILWAY MAGAZINES

Looking for some archival railway magazines? The Canadian Northern Society has a large collection of *Trains* and other magazines in storage at Big Valley. If you are interested in these, let contact Rich Graydon (403-755-9552).

ORGANIC MASTER GARDENER

An exceptional learning opportunity for local and surrounding area residents an opportunity to earn an Organic Master Gardiner Certificate. If you aspire to learn more about the organic process and science, join the January 2013 class. Email canadiannorthern@telus.net or call 780-672-3099.



Canadian Northern Society celebrates 25 years in 2012.

www.canadiannorthern.ca



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Acknowledgements



Thanks to Rich Graydon for the generous donation of time he spent in refinishing the small baggage cart from the Big Valley Station. He was able to find a company to do the sand-blasting free of charge and thanks to Ernie Beskowiney who was kind enough to free up space in his shop. The society greatly appreciates this.

Thank you to Rushton Agencies of Stettler for the generous corporate donation towards the continued preservation of Big Valley depot.

To Jimmy Munsey who is the first member to renew his membership.

Thank you to long-time member Norman F. Corness of Edmonton, who attended the Meeting Creek Harvest Festival this year—and donated a number of small items to the society including CN dining car menus for display at Camrose, some glass insulators, a portion of mine rail and an associated mine rail spike, and several tie date nails—now part of the display at Meeting Creek. Norm also provided some post cards now in the Society archives. Thank you Norm for your support through the years!

Thank you to all of the Meeting Creek maintenance volunteers in 2013: Shawn, Liam, Adam Smith, Peter Didrichsen, Paul Penner, Lorene Bergstrom, Bruce Smith, and Don Gillespie.

The Canadian Northern Society quietly celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. There was little fanfare, however the celebration at Big Valley sponsored by Alberta Prairie certainly was a great way to mark a quarter century of community preservation work. There are many people to be recognized for their continued work with the Canadian Northern Society—from founding members and board, volunteers present and past, and those who continue to press on for further success. Everyone who as paid a membership, made cookies at the Camrose depot, cut grass at Meeting Creek, cleaned washrooms at the Big Valley Station, provided articles for the *Chronicle* or updated our website and Facebook page—you all make a difference!

One of the greatest joys of this holiday season is the opportunity to say THANK YOU all for the 25 years. May all the joys of this season by yours throughout the new year!

~ Lorrie Tiegs, President

CAMROSE NEWS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The station and site have been a bustle of activity since the last *Chronicle* was written. Gardens were cleaned and mulched and over 200 bulbs planted. Pots and ornaments are washed and outside artifacts put away. Thank you to Michele and Carol Rawson for help with some of the mulching. The Victory Garden has been started. Thank you to the City of Camrose for turning the sod as we are going to use a lasagne type of preparation for the soil. We are thankful to Bruce and Rob Stagg for the fence post installation. The garden will be completed next spring.

The beginning of November was time for annual cleaning of the entire station including sorting of cupboards, washing walls and pictures, cleaning of freezers, care and cleaning of artifacts such as care of leather suitcases. Displays were re-evaluated and reorganized as needed. Decorations for Christmas and the White Elephant gift shop were set up. We are often asked why we start so early. Mid-November bookings are already started for Christmas and it is a time when I feel I need to and I am sure other volunteers need to turn to caring for their own home which has been put on the back burner since early April due to the many activities—school programs, student hiring and training, gardens and events. Thank you to the many hours put in by so many people who helped.

Dorothy and Eleanor have worked at the gift shop on Thursdays and in the two weeks we have already raised \$500 from sales. Val Simms will also be helping one Thursday. I want to thank all community and society members for their generous contributions.

Thank you to all the volunteers who attended the Volunteer Appreciation Supper and made it a fun affair. Barb has been Volunteer Coordinator for the past year and it has been a great help in the operations of the station. Barb is paid for 100 hours of time, but also puts in many hours of volunteer work in addition to these hours. Barb has been in contact with the University to determine if we can access the volunteer program using students to help at the station with some projects. She is also responsible for marketing the Mentorship Program.

In the new year Lindsay Simms will be helping with the Library and Archives and also assisting with some school programming. Thanks to Karen Smith we are closer to completing our database and a functional, user-friendly library. Thanks to Dean Tiegs for the donation of several railway books for our library.

The station just hosted a week-long training school for the Heartland Railway. This was successful and the evaluations were very positive. Thanks to Bruce and others who helped. We are having new blinds professionally made for the Waiting Room that will be easily

put up and down. The money made from the railway school booking will pay for the blinds.

The station also hosted an event for ALL (Association for Lifetime Living) where the 'Treasures of Battle River' were paid tribute to. Each year ALL are picking people over 80 years of age who have contributed to their community. Stories were told and will be now compiled for posterity. ALL has tentatively booked the station for a number of upcoming events. We are proud to partner with this agency. The station has to date seven upcoming bookings including a wedding before Christmas. Christmas Eve and Boxing Day are booked for families who only require us to let them in and out. The same family have booked for three years on Christmas Eve.

Janine and I will be meeting soon to begin to evaluate how we do things and setting definite plans for events based on the input of the Friends of the Station, Eleanor, Barb and public feedback. Plans will then be approved by the Board.

~ Glenys Smith

Our gratitude goes out to the many people who baked cookies for the Annual Cookie Walk! Additionally to Carol and Ted for growing our carrots and potatoes; Carol and Murray for preparing the mincemeat and Christmas puddings, to Diana Nichel for the red currant jelly. We additionally had many society and community members contribute amazing items to our White Elephant Gift Shop including Greta Reitan and Diana Smith for particularly large contributions. And thanks to Eleanor White for the CN spoon and fork.

~ Janine Carroll



ON SALE NOW

**25TH ANNIVERSARY
EDITION COOKBOOK**

**Featuring over 600
interesting recipes!**

Pick up your copy at the Camrose
Railway Station Museum
Camrose, Alberta

**Limited copies
on sale now for
the Christmas season
\$30.00**



BIG VALLEY EVENTS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the vision of Don Gillespie, and the hard work of Bob Willis, Carol Gillespie, and the staff of Alberta Prairie Railway—and to dedicated volunteers from the Canadian Northern Society and Big Valley Historical Society—a very successful 100th anniversary celebration was held on September 29 at Big Valley, commemorating the fact that the splendid Canadian Northern Railway Second Class station is 100 years old this year. The autumn weather and prairie air was fantastic.

Built as a passenger station at this one-time divisional point in 1912, the Big Valley station has survived many changes in the railway industry and local economies, two world wars, the nationalization of its original owners, and the digital age. It retains its prominent spot at the end of main street, the centrepiece of the Village of Big Valley, and 100 years later remains a significant part of the community.

Big Valley owes its existence to the Canadian Northern. 100 years ago on September 10, the railway's land agents held a townsite sale that would lead to the development of the Community over the following two years. As home terminal for the Canadian Northern, there was at its peak in the early 1920s over 300 personnel working for the railway in Big Valley. While those days are gone, it is clear that Big Valley is still in many ways a "railway town."

The event was a time to bring the community together to celebrate the continued link to the railway - a tradition carried on by short line/excursion hauler Alberta Prairie Railway. There were games for the children, speeder car rides (courtesy of the keepers of the 6060), site tours, hay rides, tours/orientation of Big Valley and the roundhouse site, and a great steak fry. Local Big Valley ladies raised over \$800 for the eventual restoration of the depot roof by selling delicious pies and

coffee. Alberta Prairie graciously donated the proceeds of the event to the community organizations involved - including our Society. Thank you again to Don and staff - without your support, this event could not have been possibly pulled off. Sincere thanks to all of the Canadian Northern Society, and local Big Valley volunteers who also came together to make this a very successful day.

~ Photos and write-up courtesy of Shawn Smith

We would also like to thank the Village of Big Valley for their fantastic contribution that allowed the celebration success. Additionally we would like to thank Bill Smillie and the Big Valley Elks; Big Valley Historical Society, Beautification Committee, Seniors Drop-in Centre and Royal Purple; Alberta Treasury Branch, Art Tizzard Trucking, Rocky Mountain Rail Society, East Central Alberta Heritage Society, Stettler Home Hardware and R.J. Airey Sales. Special mention to Travel Alberta and the Government of Alberta and to all volunteers who pitched in to make the day a memorable one.



Alberta Prairie President and CEO Don Gillespie handing out over 250 plus helium balloons to the children—they were thrilled, thank you Don.



My number one son, Liam, behind the throttle of venerable consolidation Number 41 which was a big part of the celebration and later riding the Mechanical bull.





Two special complimentary excursions from Big Valley up the old Battle River Sub to Caprona and return, pulled by AP diesel 1118.



Special cake made for the celebrations.



Canadian Northern Society volunteer Leslie S. Kozma providing a special guided interpretive tour to Wendy Nelson and her family of Edmonton. Wendy is a great niece of Sir William Mackenzie, President and co-founder of the Canadian Northern Railway! It was great to have Wendy and her family participate—another fascinating “living link” to the old Canadian Northern.



A wild west show by the “Guns of the Old West” in front of the depot.



Tourists and guests for the day in Big Valley waiting for the complimentary excursion train.

MEETING CREEK HARVEST FEST

There was plenty of pumpkin painting and scarecrow stuffing at the 2012 Meeting Creek Harvest Festival held on October 6. Always a great day for a wagon ride and a piece of homemade pie. Thanks to the many volunteers who delivered another memorable harvest event. There were tours and speeder car rides, dance, music and sing-alongs. As a twist we commemorated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with a brilliant Royal display, games and crafts.

Thanks Norm and Cheryl Prestage for touring people through the Meeting Creek Station and Elevator during Prairie Fun Days, welcoming many visitors.



Cheryl Prestage giving station tours during Prairie Fun Days.



Bruce Smith with grandson Adam, ready to give speeder rides at the Harvest Fest.



Visitors enjoying wagon rides at the annual Harvest Festival in Meeting Creek, Alberta.



Right: Glenys Smith dressing to fit the occasion to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee during the Meeting Creek Harvest Fest.



When I walked into the Camrose Railway Station today I was filled with the warmth and the spirit of an old-fashioned Christmas. That's what happens when Carol Roy shares her gifts of decorating flair and artistic talent. Carol has been decorating and creating atmosphere at the station for over 10 years. Many of the holiday ornaments, table centrepieces and the classic Victorian theme decorations have been donated to the station by Carol.

Carol also has a knack for sewing and has made curtains, period costumes and the many pinafores and bonnets worn by children in the school program. She loves baking and cooking specializing in carrot puddings and gluten-free recipes. If there is an event at the station you know Carol will be there, donning an apron, serving tea.

Over the past 2 years Carol has adopted the South Station Garden and has enjoyed learning new gardening techniques and tips from Glenys. Another recent position for Carol is the secretary of the Friends of the Station.

If you hear roaring laughter you will know that Carol's husband, Murray, and his excellent sense of humor are somewhere about the station. Carol and Murray have volunteered hand in hand for many years. The first station venture Murray became involved in was construction of the gazebo. He then continued to volunteer with carpentry and other projects.

Carol states her greatest joy of volunteering at the station has been the many good friends that she has made and had the opportunity to work with. *Carol, you are a pivotal member of the volunteer team and your work is not only appreciated but enjoyed immensely by all. THANK YOU!*

A very warm welcome to our newest volunteer, Michelle Danderfer.

CANADIAN HEARTLAND TRAINING RAILWAY

The Canadian Heartland Training Railway (CHTR) has undergone some changes in its corporate organization, whereby the CHTR has progressed from an industry-led not-for-profit railway training institution to a new private company, the Canadian Heartland Training Railway Services Inc.

At present, the new company has elected to continue to lease the second floor of our Big Valley Railway depot in order to provide office and classroom space for practical training that does occur from time to time on the Alberta Prairie Railway. With the changes in the CHTR,

the Canadian Northern Society's board position (Dean Tiegs) is no longer required, and with the dissolution of the "old" CHTR organization, the Canadian Northern Society was provided with a cash donation that will go towards continued operations, including maintenance at Big Valley. This donation is greatly appreciated.

We wish Joe Bracken, Dave Armitage, and the rest of the associates of the CHTRS all of the best in their continued efforts.

For further information on CHTRS, see www.chtr.ca.

MELVILLE GRAND TRUCK PACIFIC STATION PRESERVATION



From Melville, Saskatchewan, comes news that the preservation of the 1908 Grand Trunk Pacific depot continued this summer with the installation of a new trackside platform canopy. Passengers who regularly ride VIA's famed *Canadian* through Melville will have noted the steady progress made on the station preservation project over the last several years thanks to the dedication of local volunteers. It is a significant project, that in 2010 also saw a new cedar roof installed on the building. Congratulations to the community for the progress made to date—Melville is indeed a historic railway town, a member of the Canadian Railway Hall of Fame, and the depot is a fitting link with the area's history.

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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