



# the CANORA CHRONICLE

*"Capturing history – Building community"*

*At the close of our 2016 season, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members and volunteers for their dedication, time and support over the past year. Many of you have been supporting us for over 10 years, and without that support we would not be able to continue to 'Capture History and Build Community.'*

*Thank you to our directors and board members as well as the society's managing director, Doug Roper, who has been a great asset to the society this past year.*



*Warmly wishing you all the hope and joy that the holiday season can bring and a healthy and safe new year.*

*- Lorrie Tiegs, Society President*

**Planning a Christmas party during this festive season?**

**Contact the Camrose Station by email to [canadiannorthern@telus.net](mailto:canadiannorthern@telus.net) or visit [www.canadiannorthern.ca](http://www.canadiannorthern.ca) for information on renting our Camrose site. Book early, dates are limited.**

**Membership renewals due January 2017. Thank You for your support! Visit [www.canadiannorthern.ca](http://www.canadiannorthern.ca) for more renewal information.**



Help us to increase our followers and "Like" us on Facebook!

## *Acknowledgements*

- Thank you to the Big Valley Library for the very generous cash donation towards the Big Valley station and community meeting room.
- Through the efforts of Bill Walker in Camrose, your Society contributed a nice curios cabinet for the agent's office at the Viking depot. This will be used to display some Grand Trunk Pacific artifacts from our collection that are rightfully at home in the Viking station.
- Thank you to Mrs. Dean Mayberry for the kind memorial donation towards the Hanna Roundhouse Project.
- Thank you to the County of Stettler No. 6 for their annual grant of recreational funds towards our Big Valley preservation efforts. This funding is appreciated as it goes towards paying liability insurance which is now in excess of \$3500 per year for our society.
- Thank you to new member Kevin Quigley of Calgary, AB, for his generous cash donation. Welcome also to new members Gerald Stotz and K. Frobb both from Hanna, AB, and Bonita Hudson of Rosebud, AB. Sincere thanks to recent members, Phyllis and Wayne Garrison of Big Valley, AB, for helping to take care of the Big Valley station this summer.
- We welcome Glen Chapman, a new volunteer for Meeting Creek whose wife, Cynthia, lived in the Meeting Creek Station as a child.
- Thanks to the Battle River Community Foundation for financial donation used towards the gates installed on the Linear Trail at Meeting Creek.

*1857, March 12 (160 years ago) – A Great Western Railway train breaks an axle while crossing a swing bridge and plunges into the Desjardins Canal near Hamilton. 59 people are killed.*

*1882, January 1 (135 years ago) – William Cornelius Van Horne is appointed General Manager of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Van Horne succeeded in laying 480 miles of track across the Prairies in the summer of 1882.*

*1977, January 12 (40 years ago) – Via Rail Canada is incorporated to operate inter-city passenger rail service.*

## CAMROSE HAPPENINGS

All hands were on deck on October 8 when we put the gardens to sleep for the winter. Over 200 bags of leaves were delivered to the station where they were promptly mulched and mixed with compost. This mixture was placed on the flower beds by volunteers who helped out. Water tanks were drained, water hoses were put away, and Bruce Smith removed all the replicas from the Garden Railway to once again await the return of spring.

We would like to thank Donny Loewen, Jeremiah Landlord and Bruce Smith for completing the building of the gates into the grassland and the underpass at Highway 56 on the Linear Trail in Meeting Creek. They also did some remediation to the platform of the station. With a good cover of snow the trails will be ready for country skiers who are ready to break their own trail or those who like to take a winter hike. Thank you to Michele Ratz and Bernice Kadatz for assisting in adding late-fall amendments and soil kookies to the grasslands prior to our first snow. We will be continuing to apply for grants for signage along the linear parks and for fencing.

On October 30 the Canadian Northern Society held their annual Volunteer Appreciation supper. Our theme for the evening was the Maritimes. Everyone had an enjoyable evening which started with food such as homemade beans, Irish stew, clam chowder, homemade blueberry cake, pie and



more. The next part of the evening was a treat of Scottish dancing featuring our Bonnie Wee Lass Shannon performing the Highland sword dance and Highland

Fling. Shannon and her parents drove from Gwen, Alberta, to entertain our most deserving group of volunteers. Shannon has been dancing for a couple of years and will be starting completion soon. Liam Smith sang a rendition of the "Canadian Railroad Trilogy" by

Gordon Lightfoot with accompaniment by the Station Band. Barb MacDonald played a few tunes on the fiddle to the delight of our group. Thank you to all the talent who entertained and all those who helped with the delicious meal!

We decorated the station for the holidays and the opening of our White Elephant Christmas Gift Shop on November 3 and 4. Thank you to our volunteers, Glenys Smith, Barb MacDonald, Sharron Ofrim and Carol Roy who all did a great job of decorating the station for Christmas. There was a great turnout for the White Elephant Gift shop opening with many people donating Christmas decorations and many more making purchases. The station looked lovely and our patrons seemed to have their spirits lifted at the thought of starting their seasonal shopping in such a great atmosphere. A Christmas tree and holly mixed with the artifacts of our 1911 Railway Station will create a magical setting for the Annual Cookie Walk on December 3. Within our beautiful seasonally decorated Tea Room or King George Room, enjoy one of our major fundraisers for the year. Our volunteers bake batches of cookies (including gluten free) and other items including homemade carrot pudding and loaves. Enjoy tea with seasonal homemade desserts.

Sincere thanks to the following:

- The speeder has been put to bed for the winter thanks to Art Reiten.
- Thanks to Garry Middleton for placing addition electrical to the sheds.



Please join us in offering our best wishes to Dorothy Lysons of Camrose on her birthday. Glenys Smith with a group of Dorothy's friends from the station treated her to lunch for her special day. Dorothy has been a long-time volunteer at the station and has performed many different functions such as baking, cleaning, and running the White Elephant Gift Shop just to mention a few. Happy Birthday Dorothy!

◀ Dorothy Lysons (right) at her recent birthday lunch with a friend.

Gary also arranged the restoration of several historical plaques commemorating the Railway Bridge Builders.

- Donny Loewen, Bruce Smith and Jeremiah Landlord have played key roles in the repair of the walkway between the office and elevator as well as the station platform at Meeting Creek.

We are able once again to work a casino and require volunteers for March 2017. Please contact the station for more information or if you are able to help.



L to R: Christmas decorators Barb MacDonald, Sharron Ofrim, Glenys Smith and Carol Roy. Great job!



## BIG VALLEY FALL NEWS AND EVENTS

As usual the Big Valley Station is getting plenty of use. The local ukulele players are there on Monday mornings, a young fellow is renting space to teach guitar lesson on Mondays from 4 until 8 pm, the Big Valley Historical Society meets monthly, and the local painting group is there on Wednesdays. Various other local groups and the Village have used the meeting room. As a result of these groups being able to use the station, the Friends of the Big Valley Library Society donated \$1000 to the Canadian Northern Society. I'm very pleased to see the station becoming a hub of activity for the community as it would have been in its heyday.



Last month one of the large trees in the yard was removed because it was dying. There was a safety issue leaving the tree any longer as there was a crack in the trunk from the ground to about 6 feet high through the middle of the tree. Thanks to Walkers Tree Services from Stettler, AB, for a job well done in cutting the tree and removing it off site.

It was a great season this year at Big Valley. Wayne and Phyllis Garrison kept the place in great shape all summer and were my "go to" people for help. Eddie Funicane kept an eye on things and pitched in as well. I'd also like to thank the Village of Big Valley for cutting down brush at the roundhouse that needed to be removed. They worked very hard on some hot days this summer to do so.

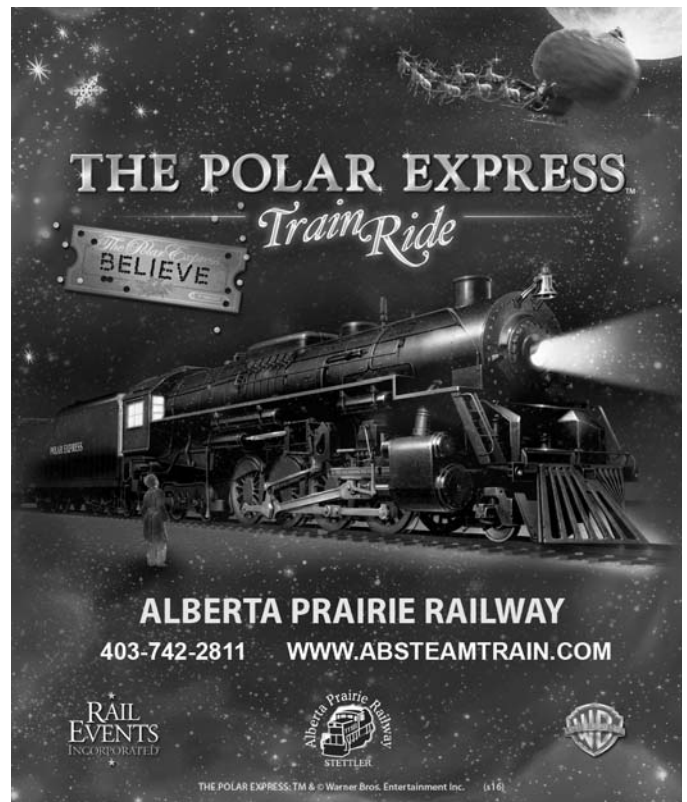
Last weekend I cleaned the gutters and did some yard work. This week I'll be putting up Christmas lights. The first Alberta Prairie Christmas train is on Nov. 26 followed by trains on Dec 3 and 10. I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

~ Rich Graydon, Big Valley CNoS Director

The Christmas magic of the Polar Express will ride the historical rails of the Canadian Northern! Alberta Prairie Railway is hosting the Polar Express this Christmas—and this promises to be a wonderful journey for all ages.



Having the tree removed in front of the Big Valley station opened up the view of the station from the street and it looks great.



## MEETING CREEK NEWS

Thanks to all of the volunteers who did such an excellent job of repairing and restoring the wooden walkway from the Meeting Creek elevator office to the driveway this fall. Outstanding work on the elevator remains repairing some of the tin siding that has come loose due to winds—perhaps a project that can get finished this winter. The storm windows have been installed, and the furnace has been serviced—the depot is ready for another winter.

We are currently constructing a standard railway snow fence “south” of the depot. Our 2017 plans include relocating the garden shed from this area, and having the former washroom facility moved to the ball park for expanded use by the community. We have also begun the process of requesting quotes for re-shingling the station roof—potentially to be conducted in 2018. We are looking to raise funds for this project from several sources. It seems that the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation is under continued funding pressure and at this point it is unknown how much we can count on funds, as we have in the past, from this source.

Thanks to Don Gillespie and Alberta Prairie for the donation of some new crossing planks that will be installed by the toolhouse to allow safer take off of the track motor car, and for the pedestrian crossing near the grain elevator. Special mention to Reg Harper and Jerry and Lorene Bergstrom who keep a watchful local eye on all of our heritage properties at Meeting Creek every day. This is greatly appreciated.

## HANNA ROUNDHOUSE SOCIETY

We have a lot going on this fall including building a sign and getting quotes for plumbing and power to the roundhouse. We met with Canadian Badlands who were checking to see if they want to work with us as one of their 2017 projects. We are also planning an event for August 2017 which we’ve called Roundhouse Summer Festival, in conjunction with Hanna’s Fall Fair. Our event will be August 11 to 13 with our 3rd Annual Church Service held on August 13. More information will follow in the new year as our plans develop.

We are looking forward to 2017 and would like to thank the Canadian Northern Society for their support! I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and the happiest of new years from all the Hanna Roundhouse Society members!

~Sandra Beaudoin, President HRS

## CAMROSE STATION WORKSHOPS FOR 2017

### January 21, 2017

Sunny Boy Bread and Sausage Making Workshop

Time: 9 am to 2 pm

Learn to make Sunny Boy Bread and homemade Mennonite Sausage. Take home a loaf of bread and samples of your sausage. Bring along a morning snack and enjoy a complementary lunch of homemade soup and fresh bread. Workshop presented by Donny Loewen and Glenys Smith. Cost: \$40 per person; Class size: 6

### January 28, 2017

Handmade Paper Making Workshop | Time: 1 pm to 4 pm

Join in creating interesting and unusual handmade paper. We will be doing a series of simple projects using dried flowers for accents and color techniques. All you need to bring is an old large bath towel, additional materials supplied. Workshop presenter Diana Nickel who has taught classes at the Devonian Botanic Garden and Hay Lakes Library.

Cost: \$20 per person; Class size: 6

### February 11, 2017

Communicating with Nature Workshop

Time: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

One of the most powerful healing energies we have access to is just being in natural areas. This workshop will explore the concepts of how natural systems work as well as offer tools to actively communicate with nature. Cost \$50 per person

### March 18, 2017

Bokashi Composting Workshop

Time: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Learn the secrets of this simple and natural composting technique that will change the way you garden. Bokashi composting can effectively compost any type of kitchen waste. The workshop will consist of a lecture describing the power of bokashi composting, how to compost your kitchen waste and how to prepare bokashi compost bran. The lecture will be followed by a demonstration and each participant will prepare a 5 kg batch bokashi bran. Cost: \$60 per person; Class size: 12

### March 25, 2017

Growing Your Own Soil Workshop | Time: 1 pm to 4 pm

This workshop, which is complementary to the bokashi composting, is designed to describe the system that ancient civilizations throughout the world used and how to transform your soil. The workshop consists of a lecture followed by a practical session on making soil kookies from clay, which will be added to the soil. Cost \$60 per person; Class size: 12

**All workshops held at the Camrose Heritage Railway Station. To book please contact the station at 780-672-3099 or Email: [canadiannorthern@telus.net](mailto:canadiannorthern@telus.net).**

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

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## WORKING ON “THE RIVAL RAILROAD’S” INTERESTING HISTORY

Those of us that know our Vice President Leslie S. Kozma know the passion he has for western Canadian railway history – and his penchant for accuracy, fact, and expert research. Recently he’s come across a project on a subject that he has been researching for over 30 years – that being the particular phenomenon of station names on the Grand Trunk Pacific.

The Alphabet Railway Project, known as “Dreams from A to Z” will certainly benefit from Les’ knowledge and enthusiasm. The following media release, provided by the project’s founders describe their objectives. However – as Les would say - “let’s get a few things straight first.”

The Grand Trunk Pacific station naming philosophy appears to have started in 1906 with the company’s Superior Lake Branch, from Fort William north to Graham (Sioux Lookout): one full cycle of the alphabet, plus two stations.

Between April 1907 and 1909, the GTPR used an alphabetic progression along its main line, commencing at Portage la Prairie and completing five full cycles before it ceased at Bickerdike or Dandurand (you pick!), both just west of Edson – not Jasper as many have claimed. Also, be advised that when the line was completed between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie in 1907, the GTPR chose to re-start an alphabetic sequence from Winnipeg westward - Alcrest, Beaudry, Chaveau (Cabot), Dugas, Elie (North Elie), Fortier, Gervais – to Portage la Prairie.



Photo © S.I. Smith

Charles W. (“Chuck”) Bohi, (left) a founding member and great friend of the Canadian Northern Society, and Leslie S. Kozma, (right) Vice President of Canadian Northern Society and member of the Order of Mount Robson at Camrose, Alberta, September 9, 2016. Chuck and his wife Lynn visited the Rowley, Big Valley, Donalds, Meeting Creek, and Camrose heritage sites, along with the preserved Stettler P&H elevator on a glorious fall day. Chuck was the author of the first Canadian National’s Western Depots book, published in 1977, which started for many of us a latent interest in railway stations in western Canada. Later, Les teamed up with Chuck to write the second version of the CN depot book, plus Canadian Pacific’s Western Depots, as well as many other very informative articles and other publications on western railway history.

### Dreams from A to Z: the legacy of the Alphabet Railway

Published on Sunday, July 10, 2016, mywestman.ca, Media Release

*Our project brings a focus to small prairie towns in 2016. The rail line that has captured our imagination is a very specific slice of Canadiana which provides us with parameters that are current, national and universal. When Grand Trunk Pacific (GTP) laid a rail line across Canada’s northern prairies at the beginning of the 20th century, it promised a new world of “Health, Wealth and Happiness,” according to a 1913 GTP ad. Despite its early bankruptcy and subsequent absorption by Canadian National Railways (CN) in 1923, GTP was instrumental in creating community along this new route from Winnipeg to Prince Rupert, B.C. Today, the section of railway between Portage la Prairie and Jasper is fondly known as the Alphabet Railway. CN freight trains ply the rail line, maintaining its role as the heart of the local communities and intrinsically tying it to international economic progress. Interestingly, the extensive network of rail lines that once snaked across the Prairies, it is only this line that still carries passengers on Via Rail.*

*This project will see a team of four Canadian women, researchers and photographers, follow 1,557 kilometres of track through three provinces, following the orderly arrangement of towns, whimsically named in alphabetical order. Our goal for the fieldwork is to identify the imprint of the GTP concept on the western Canadian landscape, and photograph that impact as we see it in 2016. Two preliminary visits to sections of the Alphabet Railway in 2015 introduced us to the communities and allowed us to plan our journey to the towns along the entire length of the railway, with time to create a library of photographs that tell some interesting visual stories. Our model for this project is the Postcards from America series undertaken by Magnum Photographers.*

*In exploring the towns, we will identify and photograph common demographic and spatial themes that reflect on the state of the nation on the 150th anniversary of Confederation – themes such as community pride, immigration past and present, the impetus of transportation corridors and the fabric of historical geography. During the course of the research our progress will be shared [on social media].*

*The team includes photographers Cheryl Hoffmann, Morina Reece and Dianne Byrdon. Cheryl is a street photographer who will weave a story of cultures, communities and the vision of immigrants, old and new. Morina specializes in environmental portraiture and will be creating a story that reflects the character of small prairie towns. Dianne will illuminate the textures of small town architecture and tell a story rich in the vestiges of promise. The project’s co-ordinator, Judy Wiesinger, received her PhD in historical geography for a thesis entitled The Evolving Urban System in the Canadian Prairies. Her understanding of the impact of the railroad on settlement in the West and the themes of immigration, industrialization and modernization will direct the work of the photographers and the resulting publication.*

By Sheila Runions

Following are a selection of archived photos from long-time Canadian Northern Society member, author and historian Charles Bohi of White River Junction, Vermont.

One section of the Alphabet Railway through Saskatchewan is as follows: Atwater, Bangor, Cana, Elroy, Fenwood, Goodeve, Hubbard, Ituna, Jasmin, Kelliher, Leross, Lestock, Mosten, Punnichy, Quinton, Raymore, Semans, Tate, Undora, Venn, Watrous, Xena, Young, Zelma.



*Fenwood, SK, GTP depot, looking NW, August 1971.  
Depot was built in 1911.*

*Missing depot photos for Leross (station sold in 1966 to a local resident, moved off-site and still remains standing today), Lestock and Mosten.*



*Punnichy, SK, GTP depot, looking SW, August 1971.  
Depot built in 1909.*



*Goodeve, SK, GTP depot, looking NW, August 1971.  
Depot was built in 1909.*



*Quinton, SK, GTP depot, looking NW, August 1971.  
Depot built in 1918.*

*Missing photos from Hubbard, Ituna (station burned in 1962), and Jasmin (station demolished in 1967).*



*Kelliher, SK, GTP depot, looking NW, August 1971.  
Depot was built in 1909, stucco added in 1922 and plumbing in 1966.  
Kelliher is the hometown of our Chronicle newsletter designer and current CNoS President, Lorrie Tiegs.*



*Raymore, SK, GTP depot, looking NW, August 1971.  
Depot built in 1920.*