



# Preston Historical Society

Post Office Box 138  
Preston, Minnesota 55965

A 501C/3 Non-Profit Corporation

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## PAST TIME

Richard G. Petsch, President

Greetings to all,

Another summer has come and gone. For me it has been a very busy summer, but also a bittersweet summer. I did not get to hardly any car shows, which as you may know is a very big part of my summer season. Worst of all I did not get to go to 'Back to the Fifties' at the State Fair Grounds. That was not good!

On the 'sweet' side, there were two big events put on by the Preston Historical Society that went a long way to soothe the 'bitter'. One was the dedication of our fully restored caboos on August 16. The caboos looked 'Grand' in its orange paint with the maroon 'Milwaukee Road' in large letters at the top and the '02095' in big numbers also in maroon, and all the other stencils, some in black and some in white as prescribed. The caboos were restored just the way it came from the Milwaukee Road shops back in July 1951.

The day was cloudy with a fairly good attendance. The speakers included State Representative Greg Davids, Charlie Sparks representing the City of Preston, John DeVries, a PHS member, who introduced our main speaker Bob Storozuk, President of the Milwaukee Road Historical Society. I was the MC. After the dedication, the caboos were open for viewing by all who attended. Oh, I cannot forget a really good lunch was served by PHS volunteers.

The other big event was the PHS 'Tractor Ride' Sept 13-14. There were about 71 tractors overall. There were three 'speed' groups, slow, medium, and fast. Registration started at 7:00 on Saturday morning in the O'Hara School at the Fillmore County Fairgrounds, where donuts and coffee were served. Each group left at half hour intervals starting at 9:00. Each group had a leader and a follower to watch for any breakdowns. At noon lunch was served by the ladies at the Highland Prairie Lutheran Church and Saturday night was a pork chop dinner, catered by the Branding Iron, following the ride.

Sunday started with a hearty breakfast of pancakes, scrambled eggs, and sausage at 8:00. 9:00 started the groups again at half hour intervals going a different route than Saturday. Noon lunch on Sunday was roasted hot dogs, salad, and chips served in Forestville State Park. The 'fast' group started returning to the fairgrounds by about 3:00 and by 4:30 most tractors were back at the Fairgrounds loading up to go home.

The drivers came from all parts of the country. Three were from Kentucky, with Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota being well represented. Plans are already started for next year. I understand there are 8 drivers signed up already. It was a lot of work, but a fun two days. More volunteers would be welcome, think about joining the PHS to help.

Best wishes for a good Holiday Season.

## **CABOOSE DEDICATION**

Sheila Craig

A dedication of the restored 1951 Milwaukee Road Caboose No. 02095 was held on Saturday, August 16 at 10:30 a.m. at the Trailhead in Preston. The caboose has now officially joined the 1902 Milwaukee Elevator (on the National Register of Historic Buildings), a 1939 Milwaukee Road boxcar, and the restored O'Hara Schoolhouse on the historical campus in Preston.

Preston Historical Society has been working for the past 5 years to completely restore the actual caboose once used on the Milwaukee Railroad. After purchase in Mauston, Wisconsin, the caboose was then moved to Preston. Welded, set on original rails, painted, reupholstered, and with new lettering, the caboose was ready for the dedication and ribbon cutting,

Bob Storozuk, president of the Milwaukee Road Historical Association was the featured speaker. Bob Storozuk has been president of MRHA for the past 17 years and lives in Chicago. You can visit the Milwaukee Road Historical Association website at [www.mrha.com](http://www.mrha.com). Membership in their organization is only \$30 per year and you receive 4 excellent magazines each year.

## **CABOOSE OPEN HOUSE**

Norma Vogt

"Taste of the Trail" event September 6<sup>th</sup> at the trailhead in Preston gave us the opportunity to host an open house at the newly refurbished Caboose. A nice crowd over the course of the day told of stories about fathers and grandfathers who worked on the railroad and those who rode on the

train between the towns in Fillmore County, children couldn't believe they were in a real caboose. Comments were, we been watching this caboose under construction each time we bike through, they were so happy to be able to see inside and hearing the duties of the conductor and the brakemen who rode in the caboose making the caboose the command center of the train. Ken Stager, Marilyn Duxbury and Norma Vogt were the hosts for the day.

## **TRACTOR RIDE UPDATE**

Elaine Maust

We had a successful 2014 tractor ride with 71 participants, more than twice as many as in 2013 coming from Kentucky, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota. We are already planning ahead for a future ride September 12th and 13th, 2015 and have several requests to participate already. We will be establishing next year's route shortly. People love our beautiful bluff country scenery and hospitality.

## **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

membership committee

We welcome the following new Lifetime members:

Hallie Snyder  
Greg & Bonnie Davids  
Wayne & Donna Dreier  
Donald & Betty Riehl  
James & Kay Maust  
Roger Burgess  
Brunsvold Enterprises

## **FENCE FOR CABOOSE**

Robert Maust

Progress is being made on establishing a permanent steel fence connecting to the southeast corner of the elevator and from there enclosing both rail tracks that contain the boxcar and the caboose and back to the northeast corner of the elevator. The fence will meet OSHA standards and the posts will be set in concrete. The fence will include two 5 foot gates to allow access to the boxcar door and eight two foot gates that will swing in to the four caboose entrance walkways.

Bakke Construction will do the concrete work at an approximate cost of \$3,000.00, Shamiah Welding will make the fence and install for \$11,250.00 after it has been powder coated by EZ Coating of Chatfield for an approximate cost of \$2,500.00 for a total cost of \$16,750.00. To date we have approved an expenditure of \$500.00 to Shamiah Welding to do the post location engineering with Bakke Construction. We hope to complete this project in 2015 as funds become available.

## **TRACTOR RIDE T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE**

T-shirts from the 2014 Tractor ride are still available for sale at \$15. Sizes are limited with small and medium available. Contact Sheila Craig at 507.273.1481 if interested.

## **WEBSITE**

Checkout the Preston Historical Website at [prestonmnhistory.com](http://prestonmnhistory.com)

## **ELEVATOR BIRD HOUSES ARE POPULAR**

Sheila Craig

In May it was announced that Jon Haugan, Preston Trout Days Grand Marshal, was making bird houses in the shape of the Milwaukee Elevator. He is donating his labor and woodworking talents for the benefit of the Preston Historical Society. Jon makes the bird houses (about 13" tall), Elaine Maust is adding the red stain, and a team of Dick Petsch, Norma Vogt, and Sheila Craig are adding the lettering just like on the Elevator. The lettering is being made by Kelly Printing. To order your bird house, contact Sheila Craig at 507.273.1481 or [ncraigfam@outlook.com](mailto:ncraigfam@outlook.com).

## **FALL EXPO**

Norma Vogt

Preston Fall Expo held Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup> the Preston Historical Society joined in with a booth that had a collection of historic pictures of Preston and different community groups, all who stopped in enjoyed finding different people they knew and giving a living history on some of the scenes. All our information was available at the booth. Thanks to Jeanette Schmidt, Donna Dreier, Norma Vogt, Sheila Craig and Dick Petsch who made this all happen.

## **THANK YOU DONORS**

Sheila Craig

We have 3 levels of 'Giving' for contributions to the Preston Historical Society. We have just completed a 'Plaque Full' for the \$100 donations called the Boxcar level. Donors filling the plaque include:

Mark Woodward  
Robert Maust  
POET Biorefining

In Memory of Vernon Runningen  
 Robert & Grace Bluck  
 Rosalie Odden Bjorkman  
 Flora Grabau  
 S & A Petroleum  
 JailHouse Historic Inn  
 Sheila Craig  
 Amos Anderson  
 Raffle Winner Steve & Julie Hovda  
 2009 Raffle Winner Hellickson Farms  
 Scheevel & Sons  
 Thauwald Funeral Homes  
 In Honor of Gordon & Doris Kimber  
 2010 Raffle Winner John & Vickie Hokenstad  
 In Memory of Don Duxbury  
 Fillmore County Physical Therapy Services, Inc.  
 Peter Ott, Depot Agent  
 John & Eloise Ostrem  
 In Memory of Evelyn & Harland Marzolf  
 Marilyn Duxbury given by Janet Scheevel  
 Jon & Christine DeVries

We are starting another \$100 level plaque and would welcome your donations. We also have space remaining to have your name or business on the \$200 or \$300 plaques. As you can see above, the plates can be engraved 'in honor' or 'in memory' of someone.

### I CAN STILL REMEMBER

*This column was originally printed as a column leading up to Preston's Sesquicentennial on June 23, 2005. It was written by Dick Wildgrube and reprinted here with permission of the author. In the last newsletter we included the first part of the article describing the site at the Trailhead. We continue with his story....*

As one follows the bike trail out of town, ones goes past a rock house that was once an active brewery. "Forget Me Not" beer never made it back after Prohibition.

Look closely and one can see the remains of an old wagon road heading to the east. The road ran parallel to the tracks for several hundred feet. Being so close to the track, one would have to

choose the right time to journey on foot or by horse to stay clear of the movement of any trains.

A favorite trick of the engineer, when approaching a walker on the road, was to release some steam from the driving cylinder to excite the said walker.

If observant, one can find some poured concrete remains of a rock quarry that was right along the road. A keen eye may even find some remaining metal pipe and flat iron.

The road continues over laid-up rock abutments for a makeshift bridge just before the road goes up past the farmhouse and on to Lanesboro. Three hundred feet past Mile Marker 5 was the location of the brickyards. Looking closely, one can see a few remnants sticking up through the soil. Many of the bricks from this yard found their way into the building in Preston, along with being shipped by rail to points long forgotten. Further down the line the track would switch to go over the river and proceed to Harmony or follow the river to Isinours.

### Preston Historical Society Officers

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