



THE CANORA CHRONICLE

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

Phone: (780) 672-3099 • E-mail: canadiannorthern@telus.net • www.canadiannorthern.ca

Volume 21, Number 1, February 2008

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.*

Interested in Volunteering? We could use your help!

Meeting Creek:

- Grass mowing and grounds keeping
- Light maintenance, painting on elevator and station
- Cleaning station and elevator
- Maintenance of lawn mower and equipment
- Interpretation at events

Big Valley:

- Security walk throughs: elevator and station
- Painting bunkhouse
- Painting caboose
- Cleaning and maintenance of wooden caboose
- Improvements to heritage displays
- Interpretation at events

We are currently seeking an active "chairman" to help coordinate and promote the society locally in Big Valley. We are also seeking someone on the society executive to be the prime contact for this person in the future regarding activities at Big Valley. If you are interested in the above or are able to help maintain the sites please contact Diane at (780) 672-3099.

Dates to Remember

••• Saturday, April 5 - 5:30 p.m.

Big Valley Historical Society and Canadian Northern Pot Luck Supper
Big Valley, AB, Seniors Drop-In Centre
All are welcome, bring a dish of your choice
Questions: Fran Stuber (403) 876-2349

••• April 11-13

Stettler Trade Show

Seeking volunteers to help promote the society and Village of Big Valley
Questions: Diane (780) 672-3099

••• Saturday, April 26 - 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Creek Station and Grounds Clean-up and Annual General Meeting
(Meeting to Start 1:00 p.m.)

Picnic lunch supplied for those who attend the clean-up.

Questions: Lorrie Tiegs (780) 484-4038

By way of this notice, please be advised that Dean Tiegs, Secretary of the society, shall seek nominations for the following positions up to the close of the meeting; President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four Directors. Contact Dean at (780) 484-4038 or email to secretary@canadiannorthern.ca.

••• Saturday, August 16 - 11:00 a.m.

Annual Big Valley Railway Day

Asking for volunteers to do tours of the station and grounds and others to help with a dinner program this year. Interested, please contact S.I. Smith. The highly successful "Free-Mo" model railroad show will also be back at the Big Valley AgriPlex, with the largest model railroad layout of its type in North America. The Canadian Heartland Training Railway will also have an open house in conjunction with this event.

Questions: S.I. Smith (780) 271-5782

••• September 1 - 2

Cash Casino for Canadian Northern Society

Red Deer, AB

Asking for volunteers to help out and raise money for the society. Last time the society raised in excess of \$25k which went to the Camrose kitchen, Big Valley platform and signs and Meeting Creek Elevator work.

Questions: S.I. Smith (780) 271-5782

••• Saturday, October 4

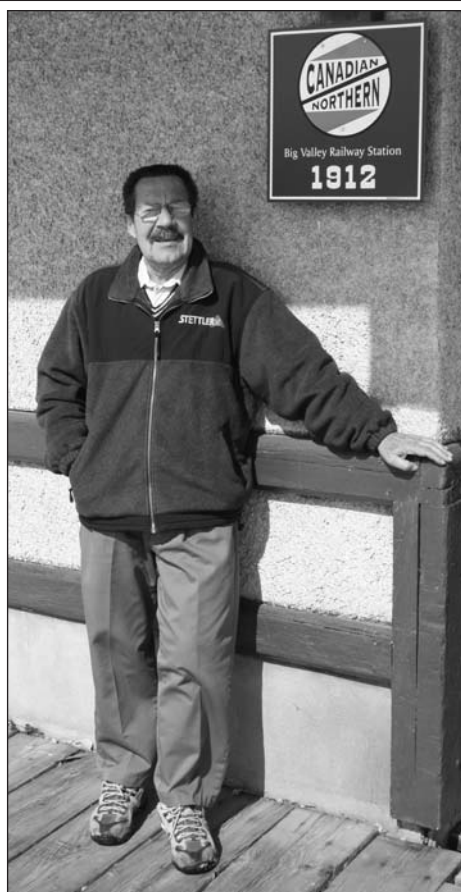
Meeting Creek Harvest Festival

Bring your pumpkins, grain, produce, stay for elevator tours and hay rides. More information to follow in the summer *Chronicle*.

Questions: Diane (780) 672-3099

Big Valley News

It is with great sadness to report that Harry Stuber, a dedicated long-time member of the Canadian Northern Society passed away on January 30, 2008.



Harry in-front of the Big Valley Station, Spring 2007.

A Tribute to His Memory

It was the spring of 1989, and the Canadian Northern Society—a small group of local history buffs—had begun its work to preserve the Big Valley railway depot and roundhouse sites. Blessed with youthful enthusiasm, support from the community, and the prospect of a helping develop a tourist railway—featuring live steam locomotives pulling train loads of excursionists on the old Canadian Northern line, it was an exciting time to be part of the Big Valley community!

And it was from this point that Harry Stuber became “Mr. Canadian Northern” in Big Valley.

Selling countless memberships, promoting improvements, helping manage projects, and lending a hand in the work—Harry went from being a retired oil man to a first class railroader! Watching over the village’s treasured railway depot and Roundhouse Park, he ensured that these heritage sites would remain an important part of the fabric of the community.

Then of course there was Communities in Bloom, “the flag project,” and later the Canadian Railway Hall of Fame. Without Harry’s persistence and dedication, these projects would never have happened in Big Valley. And what of his work with the Historical Society as well—who could forget him climbing down the side of the elevator? Then there was the pumping unit display and installing the church bell chimes at St. Edmunds. Indeed, there is a bit of Harry Stuber in every corner of the Village. Big Valley, and the Canadian Northern Society in particular, will never be the same.

Those of us who valued Big Valley’s railway heritage and sought to preserve it also gained a true and unfailing friend. His commitment and dedication to the cause were second to none. His legacy must be allowed to live on.

Harry—you’ll be sincerely missed, but never forgotten.

You will note that in this edition of the *Chronicle*, there are listed the names of several new members, and there are as well acknowledgements to certain individuals who recently have contributed cash donations to our society. This is simply part of the legacy that Harry Stuber has left the society. He had an “unorthodox system”—as some call it—of selling memberships in the society! In reality, he was raising funds for the society in his own fashion, whether by selling a membership to someone interested in the group, or one to some of you who have—thankfully—contributed over the years thanks to Harry’s persistence! In any event, we thank all of you for your support, and again, must look back

at how Harry’s influence has just been so important to the profile and success of the Canadian Northern Society over the years.

Memorial donations are beginning to flow into the society in memory of Harry. We would sincerely like to thank Fran and her family for thinking of the society.

Thank you to Art Tizzard and Alana Stefanik for their help in keeping the station platform clear of snow this winter. In addition, we thank Lois Miller and the volunteers from the Big Valley Historical Society and the Big Valley Beautification Society who have continued to help keep the roundhouse site tidy and

presentable. Lois is going to put a work list together of some of the items that need attention at this site, and we would appreciate any volunteer assistance. It’s not a lot of work for those interested, and it sure helps keep this site a major attraction for the Village of Big Valley.

The Big Valley station and roundhouse committee had a meeting on January 25 to try and put together at least some initial plans for the upcoming summer and Alberta Prairie excursion train season. Through the co-ordination of the Big Valley Historical Society, the station and washrooms will once again remain available for arrivals of Alberta Prairie trains, and by appointment for other

guests during the Museum's opening hours. We also are counting on the Village to lend an appreciated helping hand in keeping the roundhouse site, and the railway yard area grass mowed. Thanks also to the Historical Society, we may be able to get a bit of painting and minor maintenance done this coming year through sharing the time of summer students.

The Big Valley Beautification Society has really "adopted" the depot gardens and does a great job. The Canadian Northern Society hopes to work closer with this group in the coming year as well.

The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology finished up their second conductor training program in early December. The Canadian Heartland Training Railway reports that they are yet uncertain as to the schedule for similar programs which of course use our Big Valley facilities. However the CHTR will be undertaking some "industry training" events at Big Valley this coming spring and summer, and will keep us abreast of developments.

We have two new interpretive signs to put up at the roundhouse site this coming year, and are working on some improvements to

the photographic displays in the station. On a related note, Lois Miller is working on putting all of the Big Valley Historical Society's heritage photographs on electronic media—with a plan to then have these available for sale to raise funds for their efforts. A great idea that we'll report back on.

Again, we could always use one or two more individuals just to help "steer" the efforts of the Canadian Northern Society in Big Valley. We'd love to hear from you if you could lend a hand.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Peter Didrichsen and Thorogood and Company Public Accountants both of Stettler, AB for their cash donations.

Sincere thanks to all who have sent memorial donations to the society on behalf of Harry Stuber.

The society thanks all the "Free Mo" railroader modellers who showed their respects to Harry by attending his memorial service on February 5.

Thanks to Dean and Lorrie Tieg of Edmonton, and Mike Westren of Calgary for their cash donations to the society.

Thanks also to Ted and Carol Rawson of Camrose for their kind cash donation.

Thank you to Mr. Carl Leaman of Pequot, Connecticut—who in a recent note encourages the Canadian Northern Society to "keep up the excellent work"—for a recent cash donation received with his annual membership renewal.

In addition, we sincerely thank long-time supporters Leslie Kozma of Edmonton, Harry Home of Jasper, and Ray Taylor of Bashaw for their generous financial contributions.

The Canadian Northern Society extends sincere sympathy to the family and friends of R.N. (Dick) Coleman. Dick had been a member of our society for the last 18 years, and

an active member of the Rocky Mountain Rail Society as well. He passed away in November in Calgary.

Thank you to Don Walsh who donated his time and equipment to snow plow the parking lot at the Camrose Station.

From the Royal Mail:

Calgary, Jan 6, 2008

Friends:

Time to renew my membership for another year, please accept my dues and accompanying cash donation as a little extra towards this worthwhile effort.

The initiative of the *Then and Now* enclosures with the *Canora Chronicle* is beautifully carried out and most enjoyable. This has been well-worth doing and an appreciated "extra." Thank You!

Once again, having the Alberta Free-Mo Meet model railway gathering in Big Valley was excellent, with an incredible number of modules connecting giving a staggering 600 feet of running track. This represents an even more incredible distance in "HO" scale models! The popularity of this event has been steadily gaining momentum over the past few years.

We look forward to getting around some of the Canadian Northern Society sites again in 2008 with motorhome "STEAM".

Sincerely, Mike Westren

(Mike is a faithful long term member of the society and supporter from Calgary.)

New Members

The society welcomes the following new members:

- Adam Smith and Don Walsh, of Camrose, AB
- Diane McLaren, Gladys Taranger, Greet Rootmaker, Sharon Zaharchuk and Donna Phillips of Camrose, AB
- Caroline Pound, Gail Knudtson, Melwood Dods, Betty Ferris, Duke Russell, Wayne and Phyllis Garrison, Art Tizzard, Corinne Feusi, LaRue Ester, Bobbie Kargaard, Irene Duncan and Marty Gridley of Big Valley, AB
- Thorogood and Company Public Accountants of Stettler, AB
- Dr. Roger Bruntjen, Keith Ryder, Mike Chase, Dr. Philip Vogel, Dugall Woods, Allan Willis, Phil Holton, Tim Fox, Dave Grover, Norm and Lisa Ternes and Garry Kunstman, of Stettler, AB
- Gwen Robinson of Delburne, AB
- Julia Siemens of Edberg, AB
- Earl Marshall and Joseph Gendre of Erskine, AB

Thank you for your support!

Camrose News

The station activities since New Year's have concentrated on preparation for the coming season and our Valentine Supper held on February 14. We served 56 people a lovely gourmet meal accompanied by musical entertainment. We want to give special thanks to Carol Roy who once again decorated the King George Room and Tearoom in Victorian attire. Thanks to Dorothy Lysons for making desserts, Carol and Murray, Bill and Gladys, Robbie and Bruce for hostessing. We also want to thank Rebecca Bridger who ably prepared the main meal.

Diane has prepared the AMA grant for operations and will be soon working on the Service Canada grant for a university student. On February 11, Diane attended an Alberta museum grant workshop in Kingman. We are very happy with the changes to the grant program. Prior to November we will be able to apply for funding to match Diane's present salary.

Diane will be attending a public health workshop this month, as tearoom supervisors are required to hold a certificate. I have completed the procedural manual for the Tearoom that is now required by Public Health. Thank you Diane for all the work you are doing on the society's behalf. Hopefully we can increase Diane's hours in the future, as her first love is working with people in events and programming.

We have been trying to work out a model that will result in some paid help in the Tearoom. Diane has agreed to manage the summer Tearoom for 20 hours per week at the rate of pay we would have paid someone else. She will still fill her 13 hours a week as Director at her present salary funded by the city.

I will continue to assist in serving and where needed along with other volunteers and students. We have a number of young people who are willing to volunteer for tips again this summer. Cheryl Prestage has agreed to help when Diane is busy with events. I feel as long as we remember what we are about, we can continue to build and demonstrate a mutually respectful place where problems are seen as challenges and worked out as we go.

I have re-evaluated all our children's programs and we have booked as many schools as we can handle in May and June. Most schools and kindergartens book a year in advance. Instead of St. Patrick's Supper this year we are planning an Easter egg hunt followed by decorating of the coloured eggs and refreshments. This event is for children and adults as homemade hot cross buns, cheese and refreshments will be served. We will also have a White Elephant sale that will feature spring and Easter items. The date is March 15 from 2 to 4:30 pm. We are in need of five volunteers to help on the day of the event. The cost is \$5.00 per child and includes their snack and \$3.00 for adults.

I would like to acknowledge the following donations: China cups and saucers from Janine Ashfeldt, \$200 cash donation from Ted and Carol Rawson and a crock pot from Robbie O'Riordan. Robbie also donated a number of very interesting and appropriate books for the library.

Donna Phillips has begun to data base our library articles and books. This will be a wonderful help for us in the future. Thanks to Dean Tiegs and Patrick Fitchie we have solved our wireless and computer problems. Thank you Dean for your special trip to Camrose to help us. We are in need of an updated

computer and ask you to keep companies in mind that may be willing to donate one to the society. I would also like to acknowledge Shawn for all his continued assistance and for applying for the STEP students. Also like to thank Carol Roy for the beautiful twin size quilt with train squares incorporated into the pattern. It will be raffled through the summer. I would also like to thank Alma Falk for washing, starching and ironing linens and lace table clothes donated for sale and use in the Tearoom. Thanks to Bruce Smith for the many hours of snow shovelling and behind-the-scenes work he does. The furnace motor in the Tearoom had to be replaced this winter. It was 15 years old, so it has done well.

- Glenys Smith

Stettler Elevator News

The Stettler P&H Elevator Preservation Society continues to make excellent progress on the work at their historic elevator and feedmill. Located across the main line from Alberta Prairie Railway Excursions in Stettler, there has been some wonderful restoration accomplished over the past year, led by President Stan Eichhorn and the dedicated volunteers of this group.

Canadian Northern Society recently provided the group with a large wall-sized diagram detailing the operation of a grain elevator, and we are pleased to support and promote the efforts of the Stettler P&H group.

The elevator "coffee stop" is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings and all are welcome to drop in. Proceeds go to the continued operation and preservation of this historic prairie sentinel.

The *Canora Chronicle* is the quarterly newsletter of the Canadian Northern Society—a registered charity dedicated to providing community service through heritage tourism initiatives. The editors may be contacted through the Canadian Northern headquarters or directly at their home:

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