McLeod County Railroad Builders
By Local Railroad Historian
Gary Lenz
Sunday, April 13th
2-3 PM
Museum Educational Media Center

As a part of the McLeod County Historical Society and Museum’s year of the History of the Railroads in the county, we are so excited to have local historian Gary Lenz as a guest speaker. Gary is a railroad enthusiast who has logged countless hours researching railroad history and has donated many photographs and historical content to the Museum’s collections. As a boy Gary grew up watching the Luce Line roll by in his home town of Winsted, MN and his fascination and love of learning led him to research the history of the Luce Line and interview many local residents who worked for the railroad.

Gary’s presentation will cover the early history of the Railroads and the men who worked to bring them to McLeod County. The railroad represented industry, progress, and a vitality that every western community yearned for. The Railroad Builders knew this and used all the tools within their power to ensure that their community was not left out of the great steamroll of progress and innovation that would be brought by the rails. We hope you will join us for this interesting and informative presentation that mixes historical facts and photos to tell the story of the McLeod County Railroad Builders who brought progress to the prairie! Gallery tours and refreshments served following the program.

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Director’s Review:
I was so happy to see the great turnout for our past two programs, Antique and Preservation Appraisal Fundraiser, (Photos below), and our Luce Line Railroad Club Program, (Top Right)! These programs would not be possible without all the volunteer time from our appraisers: Lynn Buck, Kathy Krone, Dick Desens, and Gerald Karstens. They do a great job and we always learn so much from their insight and experience. I also want to thank the Luce Line Railroad Club for setting up the model train, which the kids and grownup kids really enjoyed, as well as the great program they put on at the Museum. Thanks for a job well done guys!

Be sure to drop by and check out the 7th Grade History Projects, now on display in the Museum’s Educational Media Center, (Middle Right). Six lucky students, three from each of two classes, will win cash prizes for their work!

“Orphan Train”
Author Program by Christina Baker Kline
Sunday, April 27th
2-4 PM
Hutchinson Event Center
1005 Hwy 15, Hutchinson, MN

As most of you know, the Museum has been working the past few months on the One Book, One Community Read project with the Heart of Hutch and the Hutchinson Public Library. This has been a great way to get the entire community reading and learning about a part of our past. If you have just heard about the program, or have been faithfully following the string of events we have held, you will not want to miss our grand finale! On April 27th, at the Hutchinson Event Center, author Christina Baker Kline will be joining us for a presentation of her book, and the focus of this year’s One Book, One Community Read, “Orphan Train”. The event is free and open to the public, with a book signing and refreshments, following Ms. Baker Kline’s presentation. Haven’t read the book? There is still time! Books can be purchased through the Museum’s gift shop. Just call or stop in and we can have one ordered for you.
Nostalgia Nite Fundraiser

The coming of the Railroad Era...
Monday, May 19th 7-9 PM
Hutchinson Depot
Adams Street SE, Hutchinson, MN
$25 a ticket for tours, food, music, trivia and prizes!

It was September of 1886 when the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad, engine #329, rolled into the prairie town of Hutchinson, MN. The rails had already reached Glencoe in 1872, with a spur to Hutchinson finally being realized fourteen years later.

The coming of the railroad was cause for celebration and the saving of the Hutchinson Depot is also a cause worth celebrating! So as a part of our 2014 Theme, “History of the Railroads of McLeod County”, the Museum would like to invite you to celebrate the “Coming of the Railroad Era…” for our Nostalgia Nite Fundraiser!

With the official grand opening in June of this year, this will be a sneak peek of what this newly renovated structure will look like. The City of Hutchinson has done a tremendous amount of work to preserve this piece of Hutchinson’s history, and the Historical Society will be highlighting that history with tours of the structure, including its historic coal drawn graffiti from the late 1800s thru the 1920s. There will be a costume contest, for those brave enough to wear Victorian dress. A railroad display of photos and artifacts, plus a chance to win great prizes donated by local businesses, for answering our McLeod County Railroad Trivia! Oh, and best of all, we will be entertained by Hutchinson founders and performers, The Hutchinson Brothers! As founders of the town, they will be signing the praises of the railroad and all it would bring to Hutchinson! As an added treat, you will have the first chance to get your name in the drawing to win the honor of driving the golden spike, that will be used to christen the new structure at its grand opening in June!

Win a chance to drive the Golden Spike!
The McLeod County Historical Society and Museum would like to introduce you to our 2014 Theme, “History of the Railroads of McLeod County!”

The McLeod County Historical Society and Museum is filled with historical information about how the Railroads changed Minnesota and McLeod County forever, as well as artifacts and documents that show the progression of railroad technology and all the tools and schemes used to keep the rails running.

Each month, the Museum will feature an excerpt from our theme booklet, “History of the Railroads of McLeod County”, which will be available for purchase in the Museum’s gift shop. The Booklet will cover the early history of the railroad system in Minnesota, each of the railroad lines that ran through our county, plus the “Paper Rails” that were never to be. So come along with us, and ride the rails of history in 2014!

Taken from:
“The Great Northern Railway, a History”, by Ralph W. Hidy, Muriel E. Hidy, Roy V. Scott, and Don L. Hofsommer - University of Minnesota Press

...Edmund Rice was a remarkable railroad pioneer. As a member of the Minnesota legislature, he had worked hard to obtain a charter for the railroad, and later as senator to have its rights, expanded, and to gain extensions of time limits on construction and land grants...

...In 1862, Rice negotiated an agreement with Electus B. Litchfield and Company of Brooklyn, New York, a financial middleman. In a contract with the St. Paul and Pacific dated May 3rd, Litchfield agreed to guarantee the construction and equipment for seventy miles of railroad northwest of St. Anthony to near present day Sauk Rapids. In return, he was to receive all shares issued on that mileage and payments in cash at specified dates, determined by a schedule for construction, to earn the land grant. Work was to be supervised by the railroads own officers.

To pay Litchfield and Company, directors of the St. P&P voted to issue bonds...

...In truth, conditions were favorable for neither marketing railroad bonds nor building railroads in Minnesota. The Civil War drained off money and men; rails and labor rose in price; low water on the Mississippi delayed delivery of construction materials; and, in 1862, a Sioux Indian uprising killed settlers, frightened others into towns, and discouraged immigration...

...The railroad’s drive for greater traffic demanded serious efforts to attract settlers to its lines and buyers for its land. The credit ranking and the general development of Minnesota also depended on these tasks. Because land served as collateral for the railroad’s bonds, proceeds from sales were pledged against securities...

Taken from:
“Early Minnesota Railroads and the Quest for Settlers” - By Harold F. Peterson - Duke University-Durham, North Carolina

...The work of the Northern Pacific illustrates how all the land grant railroads endeavored to encourage the settlement of their lands, although no other road used such an elaborate organization. Its land department, created in the late sixties, was supplemented in its activity by a bureau of emigration, the purpose of which was to stimulate emigration to Minnesota and the West beyond. A general European agency was set up in London, with sub-agencies and agents throughout the British Isles and the courtiers of northern Europe. Arrangements were made with various steamship companies to grant special favors to settlers bound for Northern Pacific lands, and in the ports of entry of the United States and Canada special agents were appointed to aid the new arrivals...
Welcome New and Life Members:

Ken Schumann, Hutchinson, MN (Lifetime); Jim & Becky Felling, Hutchinson; Mary Ann Kerkvliet, Hutchinson; Nancy Jo Schulz, Hutchinson; David & Audrey Chute, Ray, MN; Bernard Schulte, Litchfield, MN

Donations & Memorials:

Log Cabin Home Fund:
In Honor of Delmar & Margaret Wehking from Bev & Mike Wangerin;
In memory of Adelaide Popp from Liz & Bill Schwarze

General Fund:
Anonymous; Pat Melvin; David & Audrey Chute

Archives Fund:
In memory of Loretta Jungclaus from Annette Zimmerman

Heritage Garden Fund:

Endowment Fund:
In memory of Thomas Friauf and Emil Anderson from Roger & Shirley Karstens;
In memory of Adelaide Popp from Bill & Joan Arndt;
In memory of Adelaide Popp and Loretta Jungclaus from Ruth Schwarze

Technology Fund:

Restoration Fund:

Genealogy Fund:

Museum Artifact Donations:  The Society thanks you for your donation!

Ellie Becker  M.D. McMonagle  Lanette Grenke  Liz Schwarze
Bruce Drahos  Ron Sommerdorf  Ronald Black  Glencoe Regional Health Services
Peter Smyth  Corinne Marz  Judy Srsen  Carol Wegner Anderson
Bill & Liz Schwarze  Dave Horrmann  Anne Hahn  John & Norma Magnuson
Marlys Fredrick  Gerard Stifter  Annette Zimmerman  Doris & Russell Nelson

Artifact/s of the Month:

Donor: Margaret (Knaff) Abbott
Accession #: 2010-0150-035 & 2010-0150-036

History: Photo of the MN Western Depot in Hutchinson. On the back of the photo is written, “Freddie Knaff worked here.”

Photo of Fred Knaff and three other Luce Line Railroad employees near the Hutchinson Depot.

Photo of graffiti, drawn in coal, on the walls of the Hutchinson Depot.
McLeod County Historical Museum’s Historical Happenings Radio Show

Tune into AM 1260 KDUZ the last Friday afternoon of each month to catch the latest in Museum Programs & Events, Local History, and special topics on Preservation

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