



LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 PO Box 128  
 TWO HARBORS, MN 55616

Place  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

VETERAN'S DAY  
 AT THE LEGION  
 11/11

WINTER SOLSTICE  
 AT LIGHTHOUSE POINT  
 12/21

**Depot Gift Shop Open**  
**Saturday's**  
**11:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

THE LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS A 501c.3 NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
 DEPENDANT UPON THE GENEROSITY OF IT'S MEMBERS AND PATRONS.  
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

## Volunteer Recognition Awards



This year the LCHS recognized Todd Lindahl for his work on the Ore Car and Caboose Display and Sharon Erickson Ropes for her efforts to get the Oral History Project back on track.

November 2013



# Two Harbors Iron Port



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
 LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## The Felix School or Knife River Valley Club House

*From—Mel Sando Executive Director*

This past October the Board of Directors of the Lake County Historical Society made the decision to Quit Claim on the property known as the Felix School/ Knife River Valley Clubhouse. I would like to share with our members and friends some information about our decision to let go of the Felix School property.

The Felix school built in 1918 was a school house until 1935. It was built to serve the agricultural community in the Knife River Valley. It is built in a style that the state Board of Education built all over Minnesota by the dozens. Felix

was a whistle stop along the Alger Smith's Duluth & Northern Minnesota Rail Road as it came up from the Knife River north of the Stanley Road. Of course the Alger pulled out in 1921 and as roads improved students were bussed into town. In 1935 it became the Knife River Valley Clubhouse and its maintenance was sup-



ported through volunteers and with dues paid by the club's membership up to 1984. Throughout its long

history many different types of events took place there including dances, weddings, scout meetings, and 4H meetings to name a few. By the late 1980's the members had aged and groups were moving to more modern facilities that had running water and indoor bathrooms. The school to this day has no running water and only has outhouses. The .8 acre lot it is sitting on does not meet the necessary 10 acre requirement to drill a well or install holding tank making the property undevelopable for any modern amenities.

In 2005 the Knife River Valley Club gave the schoolhouse to the Lake County Historical Society (LCHS). The LCHS only received it under the agreement that the school would eventu-

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ally be moved to the Lake County Fair-grounds in partnership with the Agricultural Society to be used in a pioneer village to be built there sometime in the future. This venture proved to be cost prohibitive and was never pursued.

When I began to work for the Historical Society in 2007 the building was not used for anything. I used it as a cold storage facility for some of our larger archival furniture pieces. That same year the adjoining property owners contacted the LCHS about purchasing the school property. The property owners wanted to re-integrate the .8 acre into the family's original homestead and expand their pasture. I did not want to sell it as we needed the storage space. I did promise the neighboring land owner if we did sell it I would see to it that he had first right of refusal.

By 2013 the building continued to slip into disrepair until I realized that we simply did not have the resources to invest in the maintenance of the school house. Our Board of Directors and I decided that our focus would stay on the Depot, the Light Station, and the Dwan Office Building and so the decision to Quit Claim was made this summer.

The LCHS will no doubt be criticized for letting the school go. However that school sat for more than 20 years and NO ONE lifted a hand to do anything to save it. In addition to the lack of



community involvement, preservation is expensive. The LCHS is already heavily burdened by real estate on the National Registry; we simply can't fix everything without more help.

To put all this into a better perspective I would like to share my experience as a member of the Minnesota Historical Society's Grants Review Committee. The Grants Committee reviews dozens of applications for funding to save historic structures. This is an incredibly competitive funding process. Current attitudes towards saving structures are based upon community involvement, the structures mission, and sustainability. Specifically, vacant buildings do not have a mission. Sustainability is a question of the structures ability to generate revenue either through rent, event programming, admissions, or government appropriations. The bigger picture here is really about the lack of community involvement. If a community is united in creating a use for a structure then the question of mission and sustainability will resolve itself.

## Thank You to Our Supporters

Since Last Quarter

**Individual/Senior/Student (\$20)**

Berg, Bill                      Farlow, Sherry

**FAMILIES (\$30)**

Aery, Gary                      Egger, Jerald & Louise      Engman, Elmer      Fitzpatrick, Mike  
 Kragseth, Glen      Lane, Doug & Sula              Leon, Kay              Maloney, Pat & Rachelle

**BUSINESS / FRIEND (\$55)**

Beardsley, Judy & Leonard	Erickson, Karen & Timothy	H & R Block
Iverson, Dan & Marie	Johnson Piano Service	Jones Cleaning Services
NinaWorks!	North Shore Rotary	Northey, Lyle
Spurbeck, Carol	Smith, Ann Cullen	Superior Shores Resorts
The Pub	Two Harbors Auto Value	

**SPONSORS (\$100 TO \$249)**

American Legion Post 109	Congdon, Dale & Joan
Co-Op Light & Power	Costley Law Firm      Daehn,Dawn & Jeffery
Gruver, C & Medler, M	Hoseth, Don      Lake Superior Magazine
Larson, Milton & Sharon	Minnesota Power      Sandvik, Kenneth
Svee, Cindy & Ron	Two Harbors Federal Credit Union

**Benefactor (\$1,000 or More)**

Lake County  
 Family of D.James Jumer  
 3M Corporation

**PATRON (\$250 TO \$999)**

NorthShore Mining

**Acquisitions**

The following people have donated to the permanent collection.  
 We would like to thank them for their generosity.

Grace Zemlin      Kathy Kippley      Clarine Northey      Burt L Wagner      Gretchen Heath

**Year end review**

For those of you that could not make the Annual Dinner I would like to summarize our work this past year. In addition to the daily routines associated with museum and bed and breakfast operations here are some of the highlights.

New Logos and Newsletter format: We redesigned our logos to be smart phone and internet friendly. I experimented with the format of the newsletter because I would like it to have a more frontier feel to it. Not sure how successful I was with that.

Upgraded the LCHS website to accept ecommerce payments for memberships and donations.

Logging display: I am almost finished

Beaver Bay Panels: Collaborated with the Bay Area Historical Society and ARDC to design Interpretative Panels that will part of the new Wayside and Trailhead in Beaver Bay

Oral History Project: Reor-

ganized this program and purchased new equipment to support the project

Historical Marker Project: Started placing marker throughout the Historic Waterfront Business District and encourage the city to help enhance the designation of this part of town

Ore Car Restoration 3 Spot Exhibit As goofy as its sounds we were successful in reaching a lot of people this year through our Facebook page with an "Old Photo of the Week" posting

**Property Management**



Here is a partial list of Repairs and Maintenance projects we got done or started this year. Painted Dwan Office Building/ 3M Depot Archives Museum Lighting Windows: received grant award from MNHS to have four lower level Depot windows restored Fog Signal Building: Re-

placed rotted door jam and trim and reset windows to stop leaks Skiff House: Insulated (there was none) with the anticipation that we will have more bookings this winter.

**A quick look at our business interests for the summer season.**

**Museum Gift Shops**

Our gift shops did quite well this year with an increase in sales from last year of 11%. This is in part due the successful year the North Shore Scenic Railroad experienced.

**Museum Admission Report**

Paid admissions May through October 20th Depot Museum 3,230 Light Station Museum 10,117 3M Museum 1,770 Edna G 1,837

**The B&B**

The B&B had a slow start but overall a pretty good summer season with August being our busiest month. Thanks to our staff for all their hard work. InnKeepers Rose, Courtney, and Jessa, and Chelle managing our reservations. We have had 1220 guests as of November 1<sup>st</sup>. August Occupancy 93 %

**The List of things on my mind for the coming year**

Crusader II, there is a group from Knife River that wants this boat returned to their community. My concern with this is



even if it goes back to Knife River someone still has to accept the responsibility for the maintenance.

Water Babies fountain and patio at the B&B Skiff, the little boat behind the Lighthouse is in tough shape

Oil House, needs a new roof, would anyone like to buy us some red shingles?

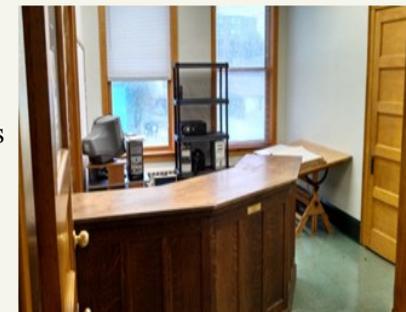
Archiving, hopefully we can get the computers set up before the end of the year.

Train Canopies need some TLC

**Edna G Commission**

It was a great year for the Edna G. The commission working with the TH City Council invested \$56,000 into the maintenance of the Tug and Dock. Councilor Seth MacDonald played a large roll in helping the commission to communicate with the City Council and working with contractors through the bidding and project implementing process. The largest cost were the new dock railings, the hull survey which required divers, and the tug barge combo to repair the dock fenders. Here is a list of projects completed in 2013.

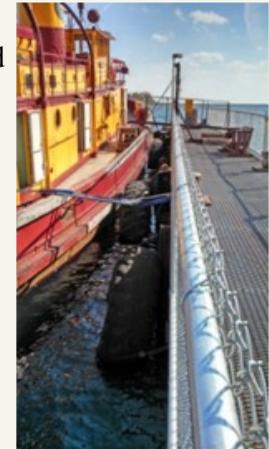
- Compressor / Whistles
- Flags/ flagpoles repaired
- Hull Survey
- Dock / Boat Safety fence



- New Mooring Lines
- Fenders (Tires)
- Bilge alarm light
- Protective covers for the monitor (water cannon) and whistles

**Looking to 2014**

Painting Iodes(?) these are attachments to the hull that will decrease damage to the hull created by rust and bacteria



The Edna G Commission has open seats, contact Mayor Bolen if you want to be on the commission and volunteer to work on the tug (that has to be done through the City of TH).

**Remember,**

Memberships make great a Holiday gift idea