



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.

I trust everyone enjoyed summer, and took in a bit of history somewhere along the way. There are plenty of history sites and summer historical programs to visit in every state. July 2 - 4 was the big event at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania with the reenactment of the battle which was the turning point of the Civil war.

June 15 & 16 saw the Civil war reenactments in Wasioja near Mantorville. On Saturday June 15, two battles were reenacted. One was the Battle of Mill Springs, in which the Second Minnesota Volunteer Regiment participated. The second was the Battle of Antietam in which 260 members of the First Minnesota Volunteer Regiment charged about 1,600 Confederates, keeping the Confederates at bay until reinforcements arrived. Sunday, June 16, saw the reenactment of the Battle of Gettysburg, when on July 3, 1863 the First Minnesota held Cemetery Ridge, helping to win the Battle of Gettysburg.

Saturday, October 19, The Fillmore County History Center held its annual membership meeting. Michael Eckers, retired Postmaster and 40 year history student was the guest speaker. Michael has done extensive research on the Civil War and has written several books on the subject. Michael spoke about the role Minnesota men, particularly Southeastern Minnesota men played in the Civil War and their great contributions to the War. It was a great talk followed by a question and answer session. This was open to the public. The story of Minnesota representation in the Civil War is

quite lengthy and something we in Minnesota and Southeastern Minnesota should be rightly proud. Although I focused on the Civil War, I was very enlightened to find out so many people from our local communities helped to win the War. Look around your community, see what you can find. One never knows what historical surprises are out there.

History Happens!

2013-2014 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Jeanette Schmidt, Membership Committee

A big thank you to our new members who have joined the Preston Historical Society (PHS). Each new membership helps PHS financially to preserve the "History of Preston". This year we have added 26 new members, which allowed PHS to continue to make the historic Milwaukee Grain Elevator, Milwaukee Road boxcar and caboose, a focal point in Preston. We were also able to print a beautiful new colored brochure, which features pictures of the historic 1902 Elevator, the boxcar and caboose and the O'Hara school. A location map directing visitors to these historic sites is also included.

We don't want to forget those of you who are already members and have done so much to help with the efforts of PHS to keep Preston's history alive. You have worked tirelessly on the many projects to promote and preserve the "History of Preston".

Again, thank you to all!!

CABOOSE RESTORATION CONTINUES

Bob Maust, Caboose Restoration Committee

The restoration of the 1952 Milwaukee Road caboose continues. Chris Stutzman and his helpers were hired to restore the inside of the caboose. All of the inside fixtures were removed, a new ceiling put in, walls repaired where needed and a complete new floor put in place. After this everything was completely repainted to its original colors.

All of the steel components including stove, refrigerator, seats and handrails were taken to GP Sandblasting & Painting in Chatfield for refurbishing. The seats are going to Smith's Upholstery Service to be recovered to their original appearance. We are waiting for Kelly Printing and Signs to put the signage back on the outside of the caboose. Subject to weather, everything should be all put back together and be ready for viewing in the next few months.

The society's next project is to raise enough funding to put an attractive security fence around the boxcar and caboose installation.

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**2 Day Autumn Tractor Ride
in the beautiful Bluff Country!**

Sponsored by
Preston Historical
Society, with help
from Fillmore
County Fair Board.

**Saturday,
September 14
and Sunday,
September 15**

Round about start and end each day
at the Fillmore County Fairgrounds.

Registration \$75.00 including
four meals. For
more information
and registration
call 507-765-2451

AUTUMN TRACTOR RIDE A SUCCESS!

Elaine Maust, Tractor Ride Committee

The Autumn Tractor ride sponsored by the Preston Historical Society was enjoyed by all in attendance. We had 33 tractors entered with 2 who pulled people wagons that had 14 riders and 3 were fitted with a buddy seat for an extra passenger. Tractors on the ride were International, John Deere, Farmall, Oliver, Allis. Ford, Massey Harris, Minneapolis Moline, and Cockshutte and they ranged in age from the early 1950's to the late 1900's.

It was a beautiful fall day on Saturday when we left from the Fillmore County Fairgrounds and rode through Fountain, having lunch in Chatfield. Then on to Wykoff, for a rest stop and to the Cherry Grove corner, before coming back to Preston.

A ribeye steak prepared by the Fillmore County Cattleman's group as part of a banquet was enjoyed by all and those who love dancing could attend a dance in the 4-H barn sponsored by the Fillmore County Ag Society.

Sunday morning it rained, but had quit in time for us to leave from the fairgrounds,

travel to Harmony, Canton and arrive at the park by the Lenora Church for picnic lunch. Then on to Lanesboro for a rest stop with bars and cookies and back to Preston.

TRACTOR RIDE SPONSORS

The Preston Historical Society would like to thank all of the sponsors of the tractor ride.

Preston Equipment
Hammell Equipment
F & M Community Bank
Root River State Bank and
First State Bank of Fountain
Gehling Auction
Preston Dairy & Farm
JailHouse Inn
First Southeast Bank—Canton &
Harmony
POET
Kelly Printing
St. Joseph Equipment
Preble Farmers Mutual Insurance
S & A Petroleum
KFIL & KVGO
Marzolf Implement
Greg M. Davids Financial Services
Fillmore County Agricultural Society

TIDBITS OF HISTORY

Flora Grabau, Historical Committee

Doctor Wendell B. Grinnell's first occupation was farming with his Father. At the age of 16 he was granted a teacher's certificate and taught school for 3 years at Fort Washington, Wisconsin. He then entered the Milwaukee School of Medicine. He then attended the medical department at the University of Illinois. He graduated in 1900. He came to Preston in 1901. He was the County Coroner of Fillmore County and

the United States Pension examining surgeon besides having a large and successful practice in Preston.

J.L. Kramer came to America from Germany in 1865. He learned the wagon maker's trade in La Crosse, Wisconsin. In 1875 he came to Preston. He made specialty farm and lumber wagons known at The Preston Wagons.

In 1912 Ole Nelson was Preston's oldest blacksmith. He had been engaged in blacksmithing for 45 years. He was an alderman in Preston for 5 years.

John C. Mills taught school for 6 years. He married Emma F. Allen, formerly the County Superintendent of Schools of Fillmore County. He was one of the organizers of the Minnesota State Breeders Association, being its first treasurer, holding this office for 13 years. He helped organize the Minnesota State Shorthorn Association. He was greatly interested in the introduction of blooded stock of all kinds: sheep, cattle, hogs, horses, dogs, and chickens. He was the first to introduce pure-bred Oxford and Hampshire Down sheep and Poland China hogs into Fillmore County. He imported thousands of sheep and cattle from Canada.

Aslak Larson, was a pioneer and lived in Preston Township. He was an honored veteran of the Civil War. After coming to this country he settled in Allamakee County, Iowa. In July 1861 he enlisted in Company B. Twelfth Iowa Volunteer Infantry. He saw active service in many battles and campaigns and was wounded in the face. After returning to Fillmore County he purchased 160 acres in Preston Township which he developed and broke. He was considered one of the substantial law abiding citizens of the County.