



MNHG Newsletter

Fall 2015

Our Mission: *The Monarch Neihart Historical Group was established to promote and preserve the rich history of the settlers, miners, loggers, ranchers, and the railroad industry that served them well.*

Board of Directors

Janet Enloe
Secretary

Hugh Enloe
Director/Treasurer

Donna Kramer
Director

Bob Majerus
Director

Neil Jerry Taylor
Director/Vice
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It was a busy and productive spring and summer for the Monarch Neihart Historical Group.

Great Northern Railway Depot Restoration. In March, Phase I of the Foundation/Stabilization Project for the restoration of the Monarch Great Northern Railway Depot, was started with volunteers. This phase was the removal of a concrete slab not original to the Depot, and the damaged rotted original wood floor. The MNHG Board of Directors broke the concrete with sledge hammers and a rented jackhammer and concrete saw and additional volunteers removed the wood floor. Forest Service employees from Monarch, White Sulphur Springs, and Helena volunteered to remove the broken concrete rubble on Earth Day as a community project. This volunteer work lowered the cost of the project by \$14,000. The contractor brought a retired house mover on site for consultation. He suggested changes to Phase II (2016) and III (2017) of the three-year foundation project. Instead of hoisting the Depot in Phase III, he suggested it be done in Phase II. The architect, contractor, and house mover met for several hours to develop a new plan. Because MNHG had a \$5000 grant from the

Montana History Foundation to be spent within a specified time frame, a \$500 grant from **3 Rivers Communications**, and a large anonymous donation, the Board of Directors decided to proceed with Phase II of the project a year early. Excavation around the exterior of the Depot began on August 10. Work continued for seven weeks which included rebuilding the rotted lower wall sections, hoisting the building for the construction of concrete forms and the pouring of the concrete, and lowering the building on the new foundation. The new wall sections were covered with temporary sheathing and house wrap for winter protection. Check the MNHG web site for pictures of this project. As much as 16" of rotted wood was removed and replaced in some areas of the Depot walls. This project cost \$35,000.

Caboose Exterior Restoration. In June, two board members, Bob Majerus and Hugh Enloe, undertook the exterior restoration of the 1902 Northern Pacific Railway bay window Drover Car caboose based on photographs of the caboose as it worked in the Missoula area in the 1970s. They rebuilt four windows frames and repaired seven window frames and new glass was installed. The original siding where the large concession window had been cut in the side of the caboose was removed and replaced with salvaged wood flooring from the Depot. **Johnson-Madison Lumber** donated additional lumber to complete the project. Bob used his 'paint eater' sanding device to removed five layers of paint. Bob and Hugh uncovered the original reporting marks painted on by the Northern Pacific Railway. These numbers are currently protected to keep as a record. MNHG purchased paint from **Sherman Williams** at a discounted price in a color matching the paint on the caboose believed to be the original mineral red. All original interior fixtures were removed by Belt when it was converted to a concession stand however, MNHG has the interior layout which was provided by the **Northern Pacific Railway Historical Society**. Cost of this project was about \$600.

Caboose Dedication. A MNHG volunteer, Sue Majerus, worked extensively on the acquisition and the moving of the caboose from nearby Belt, Montana. She initiated the fund raising, tried to locate used or new materials for a rail line, and locate a crane to lift the caboose. Sue was tragically killed in an accident four months prior to the delivery. Because of Sue's extensive volunteer work, the MNHG Board of Directors decided to dedicate the caboose in her memory. The exterior restoration was completed in time for the July 31 dedication. Cost of this project was \$125.

Kiosk Project. MNHG was awarded a \$750 grant from the **Great Northern Railway Historical Society** located in St. Paul, Minnesota, for a kiosk. It arrived in time for the Monarch Rocks! Festival and although designed to be anchored in the ground, it is mounted on railroad ties for support and mobility

during restoration of the depot. One side of the kiosk gives historical information about the Great Northern Railway and the Neihart area and the other gives the Drover Car caboose history and MNHG information. If you are in our area, stop by to read articles from the *Neihart Herald*, 1899 and the *Mainstreeter*, Winter 2008. The cost of this project was \$775.

Monarch Rocks! Festival. The second annual Monarch Rocks! Festival took place on August 8 as a fund raiser for the Depot restoration. Additions this year were more vendors, horse drawn wagon rides, and the caboose was open for walk-through. A sponsorship of \$525 from **Belt Valley Bank** provided funding for the cost of extra liability insurance and port-a-potties.

Recent Donations. MNHG received donations of hard wood flooring for the Depot and caboose, and an ore car. The ore car came from the Lincoln area however similar cars were used in Monarch and Neihart mines.

This newsletter costs \$.29 per copy for paper, printing, and postage. Written by volunteers.

Your donations are well managed. Please remember MNHG for your tax deductible end-of-year donations.

The Board of Directors meets the **second Saturday of the month**. Due to lack of heat in the Depot and the Drover Car, winter meetings take place in Great Falls. Notifications of the meetings are posted in the Monarch and Neihart post offices or email: mnhg@3rivers.net for meeting information. Please stop by and join us. Current topics are the plans for the **Monarch Rocks! Festival, August 13, 2016**, continued Depot restoration, and caboose steps.

Please visit our website for photos of all MNHG projects. www.mnhg.org

Mark your calendar for the next Monarch Rocks! Festival, August 13, 2016. This year will be bigger and better. All proceeds from the Festival will go towards the Depot Foundation/Stabilization Project.

Your tax deductible donations are greatly appreciated and your dollars are well managed. Help us continue with the Depot restoration.

Mail to MNHG, P.O. Box 924, Monarch, MT 59463.

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