



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Restoration of Great Northern Railway Section house Located in Monarch, Montana**

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The Monarch Neihart Historical Group, Inc (MNHG), a 501 (c)(3) corporation, has accepted a donation up to \$30,000 from the Grey Family Foundation of California for the restoration of a Great Northern Railway section house in Monarch, Montana. The section house will be an addition to the MNHG railyard which contains the 1901 Great Northern Depot, the 1902 Northern Pacific Drover Car Caboose, and the Great Northern privy. All three structures have been restored and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

To honor the life of Steve Severance and his connection to Logging Creek and the Monarch-Neihart area in the Little Belt Mountains, the Severance, White, and Grey families, through the Grey Family Foundation will provide the initial funding to launch this project. MNHG is raising an additional \$20,000 to complete the restoration. The original construction plans have been provided by the Great Northern Railway Historical Society and will serve as a guide during restoration. The rejuvenation of the building serves as a reminder of the families who settled in the Monarch area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and who were connected with Great Falls through the railroad.

Steve's grandparents build a summer cabin at Logging Creek in 1927. Steve spent many summers there and dearly loved this area of Montana. Logging Creek had been pivotal to Steve's family: his wife, children, and grandchildren, who he taught about the Little Belt Mountains, nature, fishing, gun safety, and how families thrive with each other. Now the third and fourth generations use and enjoy the cabin creating a lasting connection to the area.

Section houses were often seen across the northern tier of the country when the Great Northern Railway ran from Chicago to Seattle. They were built in areas where no accommodations were available for railroad workers who needed a place to shelter and prepare meals. Specialized workers were brought in for equipment repairs and in

Monarch, the train arrived Monday and Wednesday and returned to Great Falls Tuesday and Thursday. The section house was used by train crews on Monday and Wednesday nights.

The first train to Monarch was the Montana Central Railway, a division of the Great Northern, arriving in October 1890 to haul ore from the many lead and silver mines to Great Falls for processing. The rail line to Neihart was completed in November 1891. The last train to both towns ran in 1945.

The section house, donated by the Stober Family, will be moved from private property to MNHG property and placed on a new foundation. The roof needs repairs and shingles, new windows and doors, and a new floor is needed. Walls and ceilings will be repaired and electricity and insulation will be added. Anyone wishing to help fund this restoration or other MNHG projects can send a donation to MNHG, PO Box 924, Monarch, MT 59463.



MNHG Photo

The three room section house provided sleeping area for eight men. Each bedroom could accommodate two bunk beds and the living room provided cooking and eating space.