

# *Rails & Rivers - Mankato 2022*

## **CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**May 19-22, 2022 ----- Mankato, Minnesota**

**Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato**

For room reservations at the adjoining Hilton Garden Inn, 20 Civic Center Plaza, call 507-344-1111. Use the rate code, 'Chicago North Western Historical', for the convention rate of \$119.00, single or double per night plus tax. Our room block will be released April 28.

All convention events take place at the adjacent Mayo Health Systems Event Center.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Hotel and convention sites are across the street from the former Omaha Road/C&NW depot and mainline now used by UP, CP, and RCP&E railroads.
- All day SW Minnesota bus tour; See depots at New Ulm, Sleepy Eye, Walnut Grove, Currie & Westbrook. Visits to museums at Currie, Sleepy Eye and Tracy.
- Veterans' panel and discussion by former C&NW Mankato area employees.
- Presentations by railroad historians on southern Minnesota railroading.
- Program about the railroad snow blockades during the Hard Winter of 1880-81, as made famous by the novel *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder.
- Bus trip to the St James railroad park & model railroad club.
- Banquet speaker- Jeff Otto on the planning and building of the Wyoming coal line.
- Society model railroad and photo contests. Please bring models and photos to display.
- Company store and silent auction. A custom-made CGW logo sign will be raffled.
- Non-rail tours of New Ulm (Friday) and Mankato (Saturday).
- Sunday swap meet and home layout tours.
- Shuttle bus service is available between the Minneapolis-St Paul airport and downtown Mankato. Go to [landtoairexpress.com](http://landtoairexpress.com) or call 888-736-9190 for information.
- Honeymead HO covered hopper by Accurail available only at C&NWHS convention store

### **Questions? - Looking to Volunteer?**

Registration questions: Registrar John Berg [jberg@hbc.com](mailto:jberg@hbc.com) 507-429-2922

Meet questions and volunteer offers: 2022 Meet Co-Chairs Terry Davis [ptdavis@hutchtel.net](mailto:ptdavis@hutchtel.net)  
& Dave Mikelson [Davem1385@Comcast.net](mailto:Davem1385@Comcast.net)

### **DAILY MEET ACTIVITIES**

#### **Thursday, May 19th**

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 12:00-1:30 PM | - Board of Directors Meeting   |
| 2:00 PM       | - Registration, Company Store, Silent Auction and Model/Photo Contest Set-up |
| 3:00-4:45 PM  | - Presentation: Mankato Union Station & walking tour of depot grounds        |
| 5:30-6:45 PM  | - Meet & Greet Reception at the Mayo. Wings & mini-burgers with cash bar     |
| 7:00-9:00 PM  | - Craft event for non-rail participants. Mayo Center. (see details below)    |
| 7:00-8:00 PM  | - Veterans panel   |
| 8:00-9:00 PM  | - Mankato Railroads 1966-96, photos by Loren Johnson, Terry Davis            |
| 9:15 PM       | - C&NW Southern Minnesota photography of Gary Rumler                         |

## **Friday, May 20th**

- 6:30-7:45 AM - Breakfast buffet at the Mayo banquet hall
- 7:00-7:45 AM - Registration open. Model & photo contest drop-off
- 8:00 AM-4:45 PM - Southwest Minnesota depot bus tour. Box lunch at Currie
- 9:00 AM-4:30 PM - Non-rail tour of New Ulm area (see details below)
- 5:00-6:30 PM - Dinner at the Mayo banquet hall – Pulled pork sandwich buffet
- 7:00-7:30 PM - Archives update
- 7:45-9:00 PM - Mike Lenzen – A Photo Trip from Mpls to Sioux City on the Omaha Road
- 9:00-9:45 PM - Tom Edwards – Online operating program for model railroaders
- 9:45 PM - Open showing of members' slides & videos

## **Saturday, May 21st**

- 8:30-9:30 AM - Cindy Wilson – Railroading during the 1880s winters in SW Minnesota as made famous in Laura Ingalls Wilder's novel *The Long Winter*.
- 9:30-10:30 AM - John Luecke – Winona & St. Peter (later known as the Alco Line).
- 10:00 AM-3:30 PM - Non-rail tour. Greater Mankato area (see details below)
- 10:30 AM - Voting ends for photo & model contest, and silent auction bidding
- 10:30-11:15 AM - Annual membership meeting
- 11:15 AM-12:45 PM - Lunch on your own
- 1:00-5:00 PM - Bus tour. Drive-by of Mankato railroad sites, then to St. James Railroad Park, museum and the model railroad club
- 5:30-6:00 PM - Happy half hour at the Mayo banquet hall
- 6:00-8:00 PM - Annual banquet. Jeff Otto, speaker: "Coal line planning and construction"  
- Raffle drawings, Door prizes
- 8:00 PM - Pick-up Silent Auction Items & Models/Photos
- 8:30-9:30 PM - Presentation: Photo collection of Mankato in the steam & diesel eras

## **Sunday, May 22nd**

- 7:00-8:30 AM - Set up for the swap meet – Tables \$10. To reserve a table call or email Dave Mikelson at [952-484-3596](tel:952-484-3596) or [Davem1385@Comcast.net](mailto:Davem1385@Comcast.net)
- 8:30 AM - Swap meet open to meet attendees
- 9:00 AM-3:00 PM - Swap meet open to the public
- 11:00 AM-3:00 PM - Home layout tours on your way home

**SATURDAY EVENING BANQUET: Jeff Otto – Director of Administration, C&NW's Western Railroad Properties Inc. subsidiary.** Jeff was heavily involved in the proposal, planning and construction of the western coal line. He will discuss how the coal line came about, and the challenges and construction of this large project.

## **OTHER PRESENTATIONS:**

**John Hallman – The history of Mankato Union Depot.** John has performed a deep investigation into the building of and changes made to the Mankato passenger depot over the years. He will present his findings, which will be followed by a walking tour of the depot grounds.

**Veterans Panel.** Several C&NW veterans will talk about their experiences of working for the North Western in southern Minnesota.

**Mike Lenzen – A Photo Trip in Time from Minneapolis to Sioux City on the Omaha Road.** Mike is native of St James and had a long career with the C&NW and Union Pacific. He has done extensive research on the Omaha Road's Western Division and will present a photographic tour of this line.

**Terry Davis – Mankato area railroading, 1966-1996.** Stories about Loren Johnson and Terry Davis and several of their rail photos taken from the late 1960s through the 1990s in the Mankato area can be found in North Western Lines issue 2019:4. This presentation will show more of their photos of Mankato area rail action, including rare Milwaukee Road shots on the Farmington to Wells line.

**Cindy Wilson** – Cindy is the author of the new book *The Beautiful Snow: The Ingalls Family, the Railroads, and the Hard Winter of 1880-81. The Long Winter* is one of the most memorable novels in Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House series. It beautifully details the dramatic events of a harrowing winter with months of never-ending blizzards leading to railroad blockades that all but cut off fledgling communities. This fast-paced presentation focuses on railroad blockages that kept food and fuel from reaching the infant towns of southwest Minnesota and southeast Dakota Territory during the Hard Winter of 1880-81. Cindy uses newspaper accounts, photos, maps, drone photography and more to tell the story of the struggle to fight the train-blocking drifts of snow.

**John Luecke - Winona & St Peter.** John is an accomplished rail historian and author, having published countless books on Minnesota railroads. He will be telling us the story of the Winona & St Peter as it was built & operated west from Winona. It became known as the Alco Line in the 1960s.

**Tom Edwards – New operating system for model railroading.** Tom will talk about a free online program he has developed for a way to do operating sessions on model railroads without all the usual paperwork of a typical car-card system. The program can be used on a smart phone or pad device.

**Mankato railroading in the steam and diesel era.** The railroad scene in Mankato was well-documented by the cameras of C&NW employees Roger Mueller and Steve Horn, along with Mankato-native railfans John Hallman and Spencer Wood. Their collection of rail images spans the steam era of the 1950s to the final years of C&NW in the 1990s. To complete the steam era review you will see photos from the C&NWHS archives and the John Teskey collection.

## BUS TOURS

**Friday, 8:00 AM-4:45 PM** - Bus tour of southwest Minnesota. You will see seven different C&NW and Omaha Road depots. Wheels Across the Prairie Museum at Tracy, and the End-O-Line Railroad Park & Museum at Currie, with a box lunch served. Westbrook and both Sleepy Eye depots will be open for us.

**Saturday, 1:00-5:00 PM** - This afternoon tour will offer a brief look at Mankato railroad sites, followed by a trip to the St James railroad park & model railroad club.

## NON-RAIL EVENTS

**Thursday, 7:00-9:00 PM** – Join other non-rail attendees in a mixed media "Seascape Escape" craft event. Another non-rail event is planned for Friday night, too!

**Friday, 9 AM - 4:30 PM** – Bus tour to New Ulm area. Reception at the New Ulm Chamber of Commerce. See the John Lind House – Minnesota's Sweden-born 14<sup>th</sup> governor. Lunch will be at historic Turner Hall. Guided tour of New Ulm, including Herman the German monument, followed by a visit to the Morgan Creek Winery and the historic Schells Brewery.

**Saturday, 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM** – Guided history tour of Mankato, lunch at Rapidan Dam Store (individual settlement). Make a souvenir craft at Sharon's Craft & Floral Center.