



# HERITAGE GROUP NORTH

HGN is an all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to preserving community history and identity through various projects, programs, and displays. Among HGN's most visible works are the restored railroad depot, the caboose, the historic fire-engine display, and HGN's walking tours. If you enjoy history and are supportive of community development, please consider donating or joining HGN. The modest dues are \$10 a year for general membership. HGN also seeks volunteers.

APRIL 2018

Volume 4

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## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT – JOHN ROHR - submitted by Annette Houg



What a wonderful person to have had the pleasure to know! There have been many, many articles written about John in the past. He also received numerous awards.

I would like to touch on how he impacted the lives of so many in Pine River. Here are a few memories and things that have been shared by others.

- Did you know that every winter (during the 1950's and 1960's) John would keep Forbes Pond shoveled or plowed for ice skating? He also set up a loud speaker so that skaters had music!
- Did you know that during many of the parades and town events, John might be seen standing on the Marlow Theater roof filming the festivities?
- Did you know that in the very early years, the Marlow had quite an elaborate meeting room in the basement?
- And do you remember attending the childrens' Christmas parties at the theater? There was always a visit from Santa and a bag of treats for everyone. What wonderful memories!

Steve Cox

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#### NEWSLETTER

Annette Houg

Editor

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Heritage Group North

P.O. Box 266

Pine River, MN 56474

This is just one article about John. Amazing man.

### **John Rohr, Minnesota Drive-in Exhibitor, is North Central Allied's "Man of the Year"**

MINNEAPOLIS — John Rohr, of Pine River, Minn., one of the nation's pioneers in outdoor motion picture exhibition, was chosen as North Central Allied's Exhibitor of the Year at the organization's annual convention at the Pick-Nicollet hotel here. The award was presented by Jack Armstrong, national Allied president.

Rohr's connections with motion pictures predate the advent of sound in 1927 but he first became an exhibitor in his own right in 1934 when he opened the Marlow at Pine River. A year later he made his first experiment in outdoor exhibition, mounting projection and sound equipment in a truck which toured smaller northern Minnesota towns.

His weekly circuit included Longville, Hackensack, Remer, Nimrod, Pillager and a CCC camp near Outing, Minn., operating until 1943 when he closed his four-wall Marlow and discontinued his touring circuit for a stint in the U. S. Air Force. During his service of 22 months spent at a base near Lincoln, Neb., Rohr continued as an exhibitor, operating a theatre for the armed service with the rank of technical sergeant.

Rohr returned to Pine River after the war and by 1947 he had organized his Marlow Mobil Theatre circuit in substantially the same form it follows today with his chain of "Theatres In The Pines" at Hackensack, Crosslake and Longville.

Rohr was married to Evelyn Iverson during his air force service and the couple have two sons, Michael and Tom, who assist their father with his theatre work.

During the 30 years in his chosen field, Rohr has been active in all avenues of civic work, giving of his time and effort to serve and promote the northern area. He has served several terms as mayor of Pine River. Always interested in the Vacation Area, Rohr was primarily responsible for the formation of the Long Pine Playground Association,



**HONORED** — One of the pioneers in outdoor motion picture projection, John Rohr of Pine River was honored at the recent NCA meeting by National Allied.

which has since become a potent force in resort circles, and a considerable aid in bringing summer tourist business to Cass county. **GA**

Greater Amusements April 24, 1964

HGN Annual  
Membership:

\$10 for individual

\$20 for family

Mail to:

Heritage Group North

PO Box 266

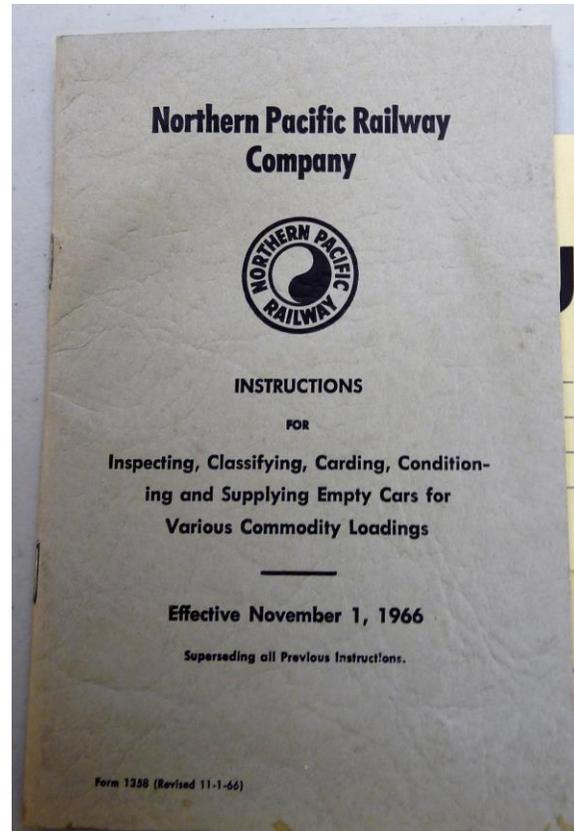
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### DEPOT HISTORY

This is one of the many things left in the depot when it was closed. One of the goals of HGN is to have display cases where we can share these items!



### **FUTURE GOALS AND NEEDS**

The mission of Heritage Group North is to preserve and share Pine River area history. To accomplish this, we are asking for your help. We welcome donations of items from individuals that represent the area history. This could be an old postcard, menu or other items from local businesses. It could be a snapshot of a town event. It could be an old tool used by a blacksmith or many other things you may happen to have and would like the history to be preserved. Please contact us!

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to [heritagegroupnorth@yahoo.com](mailto:heritagegroupnorth@yahoo.com)

**GENEROUS DONATION FROM MYRLE DABILL**

Watch future newsletters for more articles on local residents, depot history and memorabilia, photos and history of donated articles and much more!



*copy*

My sewing machine

In the summer of 1942, a year before we were married, Don took me to my first public auction sale. Bill Seaton was the auctioneer and he was selling all the Utton belongings in the Utton house yard. There were many beautiful things and not a very big crowd. I saw something I would really like to have but I had no money so I could just wish. As we walked around I always came back to look at the cabinet sewing machine. Bill wanted Don to buy it for me but I knew my folks would not approve so I said he could buy it if I could pay him back. He did and I did and I sewed happily on it for more than sixty-nine years. He paid twelve dollars and fifty cents for my treasure.

Myrle Dabill  
2012