Minutes - Executive Policy Committee – September 6, 2006

REPORTS

Minute No. 600 Historic Marker for 1947 Train Wreck - Land Dedication Reserve File EP-2

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation from East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee and recommends to Council:

1. That funding to assist with the cost of installation of a historic marker to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Dugald Train Disaster of September 1, 1947, which claimed the lives of 31 Winnipeg residents, in the amount of $2,500.00, be allocated from the East Kildonan-Transcona Land Dedication Reserve Fund.

2. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Minutes - Executive Policy Committee – September 6, 2006

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor O'Shaughnessy,

That the recommendation of the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Kathy Wilkinson, Springfield Women's Institute, 1947 Train Wreck Committee, submitted a communication entitled Dugald Train Disaster Memories from 1947 in support of the request for land dedication funding.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 18, 2006, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee recommended:

1. That funding to assist with the cost of installation of a historic marker to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Dugald Train Disaster of September 1, 1947, which claimed the lives of 31 Winnipeg residents, in the amount of $2,500.00, be allocated from the East Kildonan-Transcona Land Dedication Reserve Fund.

2. That the criteria of the Council Policy for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund be waived for any expenditures which do not qualify.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing,

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee.

Manitoba Women's Institute

SPRINGFIELD WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
Local Branch of the
MANITOBA WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

RECEIVED
CITY CLERKS
WINNIPEG

July 6, 2006

6 JUL 11 P1:22

Dear Mr. Wyatt,

Thank you for your interest in our Dugald/Minaki 1947 Train Disaster marker project. Please allow me to fill you in.

The Springfield Women's Institute is a local group of women who are a branch of the Manitoba Women's Institute,associated with the Federated Women's Institute of Canada and Associated Country Women of the World. Our Springfield chapter has just marked it's 25th anniversary.

We have undertaken a project to recognize the Dugald Train Disaster of September 1,1947. The Winnipeg bound Minaki "camper special" collided head-on with the stationary east bound Continental passenger train in Dugald. The crash and fire that followed claimed 31 lives,injured many more and destroyed one of the two grain elevators in Dugald at the time. All those that died were on the "camper special". The entire engine crew,the brakeman and all the passengers were Winnipeg residents. One family lost 5 members,another lost 3 of their loved ones. Because of the violence of the impact of the two mountain class steam locomotives,the collapsing of the wooden rail cars and the horrific fire that engulfed the scene,most of the human remains were unidentifiable. As a result,they were buried in a mass grave at Brookside Cemetary in Winnipeg. Twenty-five names are on that massive headstone. Many of those whose bodies could be identified were buried in Elmwood Cemetary.

This "moment in history" severly impacted many many lives, also including the emergency crews that rushed out from Winnipeg and the Dugald people that came to the rescue.

September 1,2007, will mark the 60th anniversary of this disaster. The Springfield Women's Institute will be dedicating an historic marker,in Dugald,to commemorate this tragedy.

Over the past two years we have been working toward this goal by raising funds to pay for the material costs.

We raffled a framed print of a Via Rail train passing the Dugald elevator-a picture donated for our use by the R.M. of Springfield council.

We sent out a letter asking businesses for monetary support and as a result,also received private donations sent "in memory" of a loved one.

Our major fundraising project was launched on July 1,Canada Day. We have printed a booklet entitled

DUGALD TRAIN DISASTER
MEMORIES FROM 1947.

This is a collection of the personal memories of people involved in that disaster;of those who lost loved ones, those that survived,those involved in the rescue and clean-up and those with a connection and story to tell.

WE are very proud of this oral history collectable booklet. The beautiful and respectful design was all done by Cats in the Bag design of Winnipeg, without any cost to us. Poplar Press in Springfield printed it with a cost arrived at by "using a very sharp pencil" and the Dugald Convenience Store and the Costume Museum of Canada have offered to handle over the counter sales. Besides their memory of the event itself, the 36 individuals whose stories appear give a unique peek into the times-about 60 years ago:

- wooden rail cars
- gas lighting (the fires)
- locomotives (not diesel)
- common train travel (no roads into Minaki/Malachi)
- remains could not be identified (no DNA, mass burial)
- electricity just coming to the country area

These hints of history are all to be found in the booklet:

DUGALD TRAIN DISASTER
MEMORIES FROM 1947

We have had contact with Randy Briercliffe of Briercliffe Estates and the Transcona Funeral Home on Day Street. Mr. Briercliffe has offered to design and place the Marker as his contribution. Our costs, of course, will be for the material.

After speaking with you, Mr. Wyatt, and feeling your interest we wondered if you might be able to spread the word of our project and of the train disaster that is becoming lost to memory. Any publicity is welcome and any monetary support will be most graciously accepted.

Thank you for your interest and for allowing me to share, with you, our work to date, bringing us to the dedication of the Marker in Dugald, September 1, 2007.

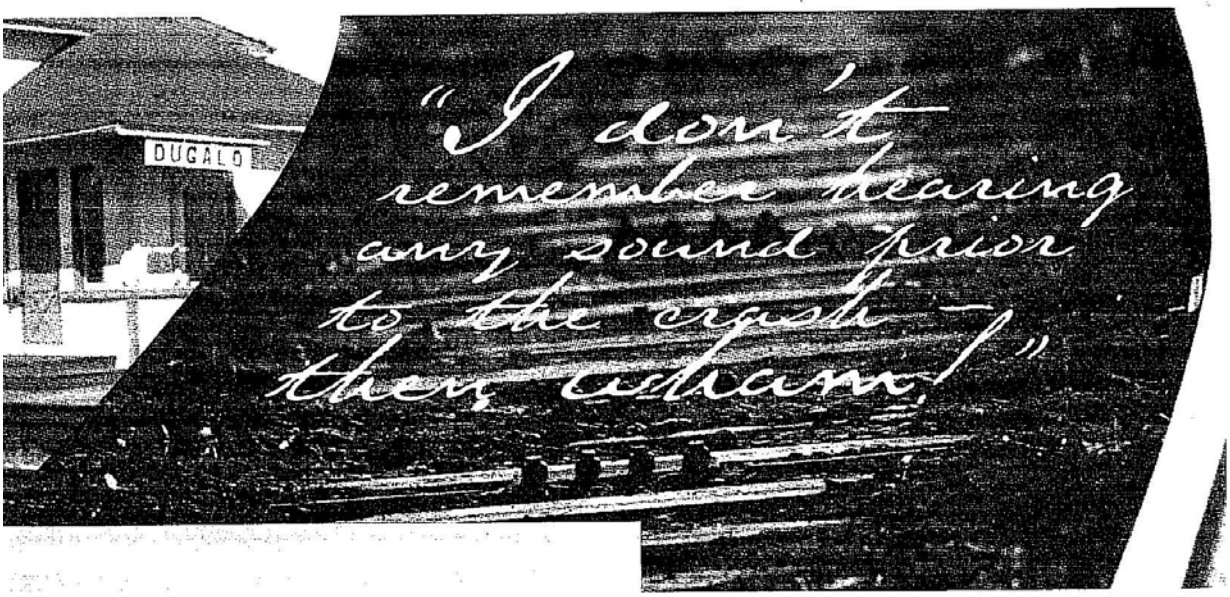
I have included a copy of our booklet DUGALD TRAIN DISASTER MEMORIES FROM 1947

We have been in touch with the Transcona Historical Museum regarding having some of the booklets placed there. We expect to have them available for the public to purchase ($15.00) there soon.

Most sincerely,
Kathy Wilkinson
Springfield Women's Institute
1947 Train Wreck Committee

Kathy Wilkinson

Dugald Train Disaster, Memories from 1947



Springfield Women's Institute

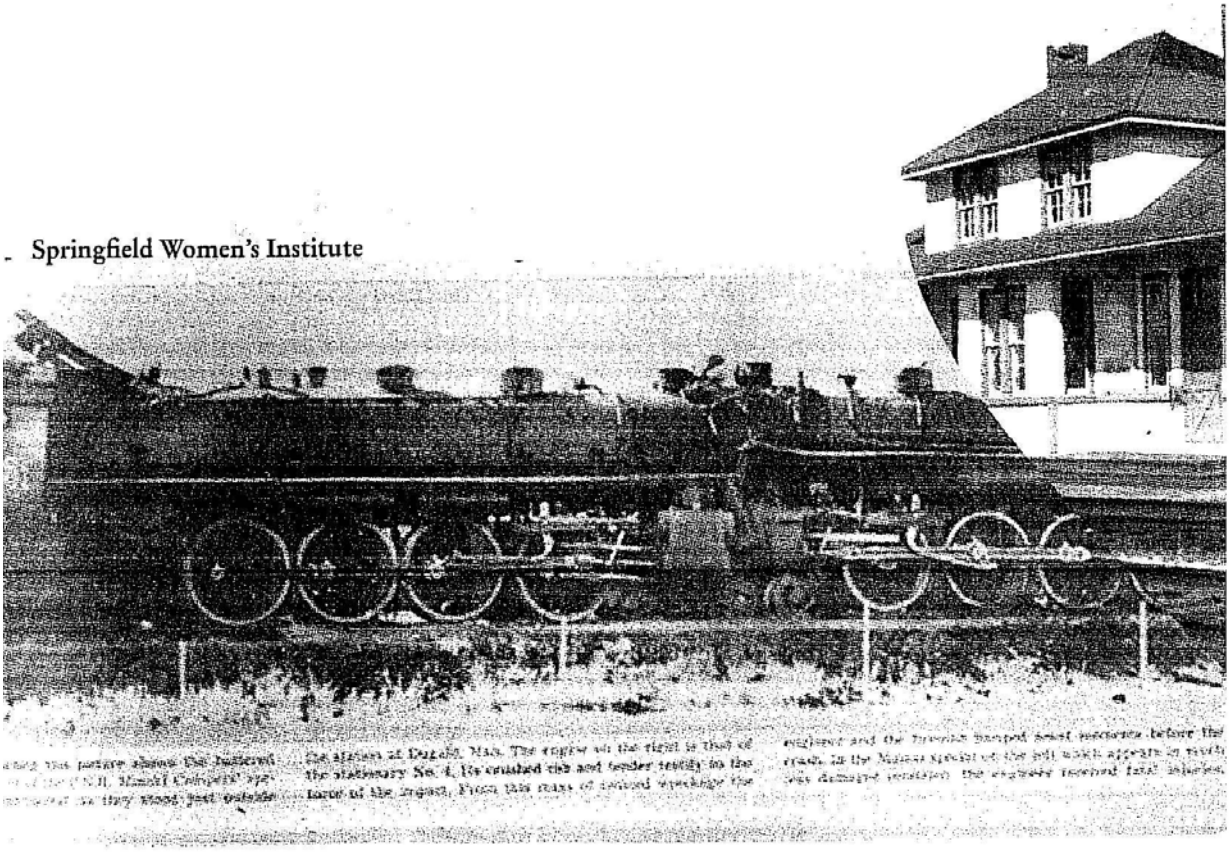
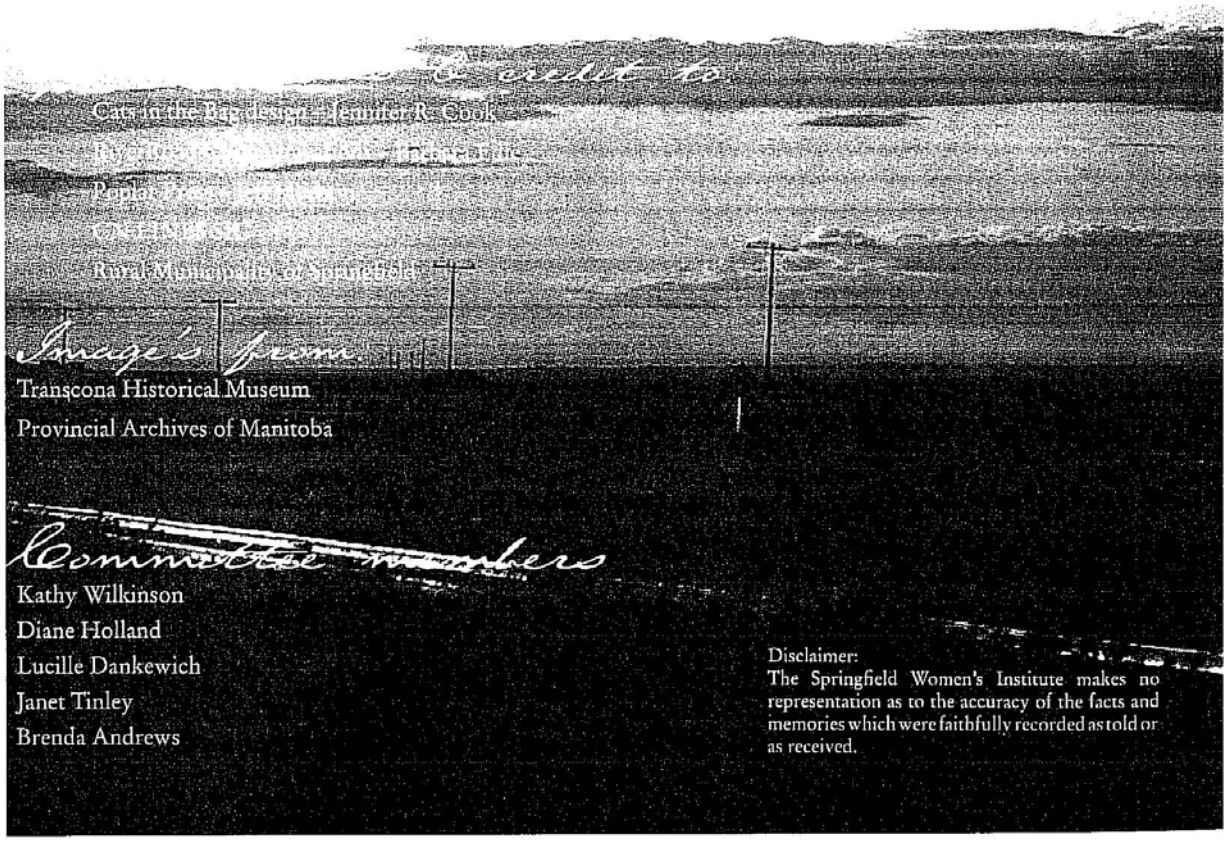


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Cats in the Bag design – Jennifer R. Cook
Rural Municipality of Springfield
Images from:
Transcona Historical Museum
Provincial Archives of Manitoba
Committee members
Kathy Wilkinson
Diane Holland
Lucille Dankewich
Janet Tinley
Brenda Andrews
Disclaimer:
The Springfield Women's Institute makes no representation as to the accuracy of the facts and memories which were faithfully recorded as told or as received.