

LSRHA Application Summary & Narrative

B. Project Summary

Lake States Railway Historical Association, Inc. (LSRHA) is requesting \$3,000 to pay for data entry for the CRI&P Drawing Project into the PastPerfect database maintained by LSRHA. This project has a total budget of \$20,236 with \$12,341 funded. This collection of nearly 15,000 technical drawings was donated and delivered to the LSRHA archive in June, 2012. This is a unique collection consisting mostly of technical drawings of operating equipment such as locomotives, passenger and freight cars, and maintenance-of-way equipment but also includes buildings, bridges, and other structures of an important railroad serving the heart of America. It is possible that these drawings may date back to before the Civil War period of American history.

Processing these technical drawings will take one year, starting in September, 2014 and continuing through the summer of 2015. All collections processing is overseen by the Chairman of the Collections Management Committee, Mr. Don Ginter (an SIA member), and this project will be directed by the volunteer Development Coordinator, Dr. Byron Long. Volunteers will unroll, flatten, repair, and sort the drawings before describing them on Collection Data Sheets. Data entry will take place during the summer of 2015 with volunteer members contributing an estimated 900 hours of service in support of this project.

The CRI&P Drawing Collection is one of six major collections obtained by LSRHA over the past five years. The other collections include: the Chicago & North Western Railway (C&NW); Copper Range Rail Road (CR); Illinois Central Railroad (ICRR), Fairbanks Morse Company (FM); and Sheffield Car Company (Sheffield) focused collections. The C&NW, CRI&P, FM, and Sheffield collections are mostly technical drawings dating from the 1870s to the 1960s, whereas the IC and CR focused collections are broader topic collections that include a number of documents and reports. The combined number of technical drawings may exceed 50,000 in number, of which about half have been cataloged (see the "Collections" page of lsrha.org). The posting of catalogs and thumbnail images of photographs and drawings along with descriptions of documents on the lsrha.org website will broaden public interest and understanding of the industrial heritage preservation ongoing at Lake States Railway Historical Association.

The cataloging of one major collection of C&NW drawings and three smaller Copper Range drawing collections have been completed and several smaller C&NW collections should be completed by the end of summer, 2014. Likewise, the ICRR drawings should be described and cataloged during this summer. Processing of the Fairbanks Morse Collection has been deferred and describing of the Sheffield drawings is an ongoing process but with a lower priority.

As a Wisconsin not-for-profit corporation, LSRHA has provided more than a thousand requested copies of technical drawings, first by paying for copies made in Madison, Wisconsin, then by using copying equipment recently donated to LSRHA. These copies have been ordered by a railroad museum and a company restoring or reconstructing steam locomotives and by hobbyists constructing scale model operating locomotives and rail cars. Also, LSRHA has received several inquiries about Sheffield equipment but, for the most part, fulfillment of these requests will have to wait until the cataloging is complete.

C. Application Narrative - Responses to Questions

1. Documentation of need for the Project: What is the proposed project's significance to industrial heritage?

The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad began as the Rock Island & La Salle Railroad Company, which received its charter in 1847 to construct the first railroad from the Mississippi River at Rock Island to the Chicago area at La Salle, Illinois. The charter and name were changed in order to capitalize on a connection with other railroads in Chicago. Thus began the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad. Construction began in October, 1851 and continued, reaching across Illinois to Rock Island on February 22, 1854. The Chicago and Rock Island was one of the first railroads to obtain land grants from the United States Congress by the Land Grant Bill of 1850. Another railroad, the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, received a charter to build a railroad from Davenport, Iowa across the Mississippi to Rock Island and extended the line to Iowa City in 1855. The first bridge to span the Mighty Mississippi was completed in 1856 to connect these two railroads that would eventually merge. Continued construction and mergers resulted in further expansion to become one of the great railroad systems in the United States. The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad network eventually stretched into Nebraska and Kansas, even as far as Colorado, north into Minnesota, east into Tennessee, and south to Galveston, Texas. The Rock Island (The Rock) entered its last receivership in 1975 but with reorganization impossible, the company shut down in 1980 and the assets distributed.

The ongoing vision of Lake States Railway Historical Association is to collect and preserve corporate archives and private collections of railroad documents and artifacts, with emphasis on endangered collections, and make these collections available to the public for viewing and research. The LSRHA mission statement in the bylaws states that the "principal focus of the collections shall be the Western Great Lakes Region of the USA during the 1880-1916 era." The CRI&P Drawing Collection was one of those rare and endangered collections

The Association is dedicated to the highest standards of collection, restoration, preservation and scholarship and is committed to facilitating research, interpretation, and publication from its collections. The collections are being catalogued and preserved under climate-controlled conditions at the archive, which is maintained as a research facility. The purpose of our organization is to make the archive and its collections available for researchers and the public and ensure that retrieval of specific collection items can be achieved readily using the full capacities of Excel and PastPerfect utilities. Photographs, corporate paper documents, and blueprints and drawings of buildings, locomotives, railroad cars, hoist houses, loading docks, etc. will be valuable to community and railroad historians and industrial archeologists.

As mentioned above, other large collections include the C&NW, FM, Sheffield, and ICRR Collections. The C&NW Collection of 20,416 drawings is completely cataloged. The ICRR Collection arrived in the archive in 140 banker boxes and other containers and includes negatives, reports, technical drawings, accident studies, and the like. The FM Collection was deeded and transferred to LSRHA in February, 2012 in 108 roll boxes containing Fairbanks Morse technical drawings and 157 banker boxes of related documentation. The FM Collection is essentially

all technical drawing of Fairbanks Morse and Company, a petroleum-fueled motor manufacturing company in the late 19th century that continues today. The Sheffield Car Company, which was purchased by Fairbanks Morse, manufactured three-wheeled, lightweight handcars, the well-known two-man, four-wheeled handcar, self-propelled motorcars, and streetcars. LSRHA experts estimate that the FM and Sheffield Collection drawings may contain about 10,000 technical drawings and supporting documents that are irreplaceable.

2. What research methods will you employ?

Processing of all collections is being conducted by experienced volunteers following procedures approved by the board of trustees. A summer intern may be involved in processing for the summer of 2015 and a professionally trained archivist may join the team in processing this collection if a National Endowment for the Humanities grant application is funded. The project will start in September, 2014 and should end by September, 2015 with an overall budget of \$20,236.

Processing of the CRI&P drawings will involve carefully removing the rolled drawings from canisters and flattening prior to separating each drawing. An initial visual inspection will identify drawings in need of repair. Repair generally involves taping torn or frayed edges with archival tape. The drawings are then sorted by size and subject then described on data sheets. Each drawing will receive an object identification number following board-approved procedures then the CRI&P drawing number will be recorded. Additional information will be entered including Category (drawing), Subject (eg. locomotive, structure, etc.), Type (steam, tender, office, etc.), Railroad (mostly CRI&P but not always), Title, Class or Capacity, Notes, Date, Revision Date, Redrawn Data (manufacturer), Size, Medium, and Location (in archive). Standardized search terms are used to define Category, Subject, and Type; these search terms appear in the pull-down menus on the search window of the LSRHA website.

3. Who is responsible for your project?

Don Ginter, Chairman of the Collections Management Committee, has overall responsibility for all collections in the LSRHA archive and Dr. Byron Long will be responsible for supervising the processing of the CRI&P Drawing Project. The Collections Management Committee establishes procedures and priorities for LSRHA and implements these upon approval of the Board. A board-approved Collections Management Policy and Archive Collection Processing Procedures Policy are on file at the archive office in Baraboo and available for volunteers, summer intern, and archivist to follow. The resume of Dr. Long is included in this package. Even though Dr. Long resides in Pennsylvania, he will be attending a two-day workshop in early June at Northern Illinois University developed by the Society of American Archivists and sponsored by AASLH and will be in Baraboo before and after the workshop. He also will be in the archive the last full weeks in late July and October of 2014 and January, April, and July of 2015 for LSRHA board meetings and volunteer work. LSRHA received the 2012 Governor's Award for Archival Achievement recognizing LSRHA and the Collections Management Committee for its accomplishments in cataloging its collections. This award is described in greater detail below.

Ken Breher is Treasurer for LSRHA and he is responsible for following the account established for this project. Michael Harrington is Secretary for LSRHA and he resides in the same town as

the bank where accounts of LSRHA have been established. Mr. Harrington has authority to sign and mail checks only as directed by Richard Goddard, President of LSRHA, who instructs Mr. Harrington by e-mail to write checks, copying Mr. Breher.

4. What tangible products do you expect to produce with this project?

The first tangible product of this project will be the ability of LSRHA to not only post descriptions of the drawings on the LSRHA website but also to have all drawings searchable on the website and archive PastPerfect database. The ultimate and long-range goals of LSRHA will be to achieve MARC cataloging of LSRHA collections and the ability of LSRHA to hire a professionally trained archivist who may be paid, in part, by revenue generated by the sale of reproductions of LSRHA drawings, photographs, and other documents on its website.

To date, nearly 200 private collections have been added to the LSRHA Archive. These donations include a major collection of original equipment drawings of the Chicago & North Western Railway and its acquired lines. The cataloging and preservation of the C&NW and its acquired railroad mechanical drawings was an eighteen month initiative of LSRHA that was completed in early 2012. Approximately 1,000 additional C&NW drawings have come from other collections. These additions are being cataloged and listed on the lsrha.org website on the “Collections” page. Processing of two very large photographic collections is ongoing. The Ritzman collection comprises mostly of black-and-white photographs of steam locomotives (50%), structures (40%), and rolling stock (10%) with focus on Chicago & North Western and Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific, but other Midwest railroads are also represented. The Kuba Negative Collection covers a wide variety of railroads of North America with attention mostly paid to motive power.

As evidence of effectiveness, the C&NW and Copper Range drawings and documents have been described, cataloged and listed publicly on the lsrha.org website. The combined budget for this project was \$23,729 and total expenses were \$23,026. This project received funding from the National Railway Historical Society, Union Pacific Foundation, British Petroleum Foundation, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, U.W. Extension Arts & Culture, Alliant Energy Foundation, and associate donations. LSRHA also completed the NEH Preservation Assistance Project, which had a budget of \$4,436. This project was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities to have the practices and policies of LSRHA evaluated by a professional archivist. The 20-page report presented to LSRHA by Dr. Michael Doylen, Archive Department Head, UWM Libraries/Archive Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, commented very favorably about our archive, our procedures, the professionalism and dedication of our volunteers, and the historic value of our collections.

LSRHA is proud to announce that it was selected by the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board of the Wisconsin Historical Society to receive the 2012 Governor’s Award for Archival Achievement for the recently completed C&NW Drawing Collection. Matt Blessing, State Archivist and Administrator for the Library-Archives Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society, stated that, “Gubernatorial appointees serving on the WHRAB’s selection committee were very impressed by [the LSRHA] application, noting that the LSRHA project offered a model for how a volunteer organization can effectively manage large scale archival projects.”