

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western Railroad Depot

other names/site number Crystal Lake Station, Metra Station UP-NW

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 70 East Woodstock Street and Grant Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Crystal Lake

☐ vicinity

state Illinois

county McHenry

zip code 60014

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - SHPO

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Crystal Lake C&NW RR Depot

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	buildings
	site
	structure
	object
<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation/Rail-related

Train Depot

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation/Rail-related

Train Depot

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Early 20th Century

Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: brick

roof: wood

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western (C&NW) Railroad Depot, located at 70 West Woodstock Street, was constructed in 1914 in Crystal Lake Illinois and continues to retain its integrity and operates as a commuter station on the Metra UP-NW Line.¹ The building, a single story under a hip roof parallel to the rails, adjoins automobile parking and a passenger platform.² All the doors and windows appear as constructed with the entrance for passenger drop-off, then through the Depot to the platform and tracks. A freight-centric train depot has occupied the same location since 1855 until moved in 1914 for construction of the existing depot. In the intervening years since the construction of the Depot, the surrounding land uses have changed from rail supporting functions and businesses to commuter parking lots and a community park with an U.S. Armed Forces memorial and flag pole. Commercial buildings are located beyond the commuter parking spaces and similar to the exterior of the Depot constructed of press brick and few have more than a second story.

Narrative Description

The Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western (C&NW) Railroad Depot is visible from the public streets in the City of Crystal Lake of Woodstock, Grant, Railroad and Main Streets. Commuter parking is the immediate and adjoining land use between the Depot and the streets. Williams Street as configured in 1914 terminates into the southern parking area. Commercial buildings in the area of the Depot and along Williams Street are complementary in workmanship as they themselves are constructed of the materials of the time, being pressed brick and terracotta. Few of the commercial buildings along those streets have more than a second story.

The landscape area to the southeast of the Depot, named Depot Park, exists were acquired by the City of Crystal Lake in 1924 from space created by the removal of the track during the construction of the Depot and thereafter, there has been installed a flagpole and military memorial.

The exterior architectural character of the Crystal Lake Depot, substantially intact since its construction in 1914 by the Chicago & North-Western Railway, is a single-story building under a hip roof, parallel to the rails. Its load bearing, red pressed brick masonry walls, from ground to soffit, are topped by extended exposed rafters, creating overhang eaves, opened on all four sides which in turn are supported by spandrel brackets; the building's most noticeable design element. A hip roof, orientated east to west, utilizes an inverse truss system supported through the configuration of brick corbels in the exterior American brick course. Except for these brackets and spandrels, the building is unornamented and conveys, with the brick and hip roof, its Arts and Crafts style of appearance.

The massing of the rectangular building is balanced by a center bay on the south and opposing one but a bow on the north; both topped by a gable that does not extend above the roof line. On the western third of the roof is an eyebrow lattice dormer used for ventilation of the attic area. The roof has an exterior gutter with corner

¹ The Chicago & Northwestern Railway Company is no longer in existence, rather than use its commuter station name or local convention, the historic line name is used. The geographically nomenclature "Crystal Lake" has been used since inception in 1836 and still used today. The use of Depot, Station, Terminal and Stop have specific rail industry applications. Depot as used, being a full-service location including water, fuel, crew changes, round house and repairs. While no longer evident, Crystal Lake had all those facilities except a shelter or terminal. There was a cross connection or junction between two service division of the C&N-W at this location. No effort is made to distinguish between the words "railroad" and "railway".

² The cardinal directions used are approximate: the Depot and tracks are oriented in a northwesterly – southeasterly direction.

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down spouts as well as down spouts on either side of the dormer. A window is on each eave of the gable. Doors with transoms are located on the north and south sides. Windows are on all four sides of the Depot with the use of shorten lower half sashes on the west side and in the bow at the South Elevation.

SOUTH ELEVATION

The passenger entrance to the Depot is on South Elevation. The eight brackets, painted pine, are visible under the eaves. In the area of the western corner is a double door and to its east, is another double door. Continuing in the same direction of travel is a double hung window, wooden and movable. There then follows along the same wall a single-entry door. At this area of the South Elevation is the rectangular bay with two windows, none on either side of the extruding wall. Each window in the face of the bay has a lower sash that is half the size of the upper sash. A gable roof tops the bay with a six-pane, single sash window in a brick face of the same type and bond pattern below it. Continuing easterly on the South Elevation is a single-entry door, identical to that which is on the other side of the rectangular bay. There is a six-pane half-light within the door. Next along the South Elevation is a four-over-two, double-hung wood sash window which is standard at the other elevations. The wall ends without stylistic brickwork or ornamental quoin to continue to the East Elevation.

EAST ELEVATION

The exterior braced, truss brackets are perpendicular to the East Elevation of which there are four, and identical to the design used on the South Elevation. A down spout connects to the roof line gutter along the fascia and the piping extends to the footing below the surface. A four-over-two wooden sash double-hung window, standard in design as the others, creates an opening of approximately 32 by 78 inches, with the upper sash in four panes over two panes in the lower. The frame and sill are of the same brick as the exterior walls with a change in course to provide a sill. The sashes have separate rails with a chain pull to stay open. A second window identical in design is located to the north and that is the extent of the breaks in the eastern brick wall. Air conditioning compressors are located on the ground, behind a hedge row, in this area of the building.

NORTH ELEVATION

The northeast corner is also the location of a gutter downspout to below surface. The truss bracket is joined at this corner and the others, at 45 degrees, rest on the corbel supported brackets. The beam 18 x 24 inches, used to support the trusses across the brackets, varying in length from 22 to 38 feet. The design creates a 50-inch overhang around the entire building. In the area of the northeast corner is a set of double hung windows with the standard 4 over 2 panes. Given the height of the windows, 82 inches, the rowlock brick course is used as a sill for window support while adding wall support and providing drainage away from the upper brick course. The use of the rowlock brick course continues around the entire building interrupted only by the door frames. West from the double windows are double doors with transoms. Between the two sets of double doors, is the bay under the gable with four, double hung windows, 32 by 78 inches, each has a four over two panes. The gable is in a vertical alignment of the outer brackets, approximately 115 inches apart, and wider than the face of the bow. Its peak does not rise above the roof line. A window, twelve panes, is within the brick faced gable. A double door is west of the bay with a six-pane upper window. West of the doors is a double set of sash windows, 32 by 78 inches, with the upper sash of a four over two panes. The western most face of the North Elevation is two sets of double doors, framed on either side by the extended eave, created by the truss bracket feature of the building. The second eyebrow dormer is on the roof in the opposing location in the South Elevation. The North Elevation wall ends without stylistic brickwork or ornamental quoin to continue to the West Elevation.

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WEST ELEVATION

The first feature in the northwest corner is the half window with the lower pane having half the height of the upper sash. and the second location for this window design used in this building. The windows have the panes that follow the four over two patterns and are movable. Within the box frame of the windows are metal chains connected to the moving part of the window. A brick sill is constructed as the shortened window does not use the rowlock brick course which appears below the window in a continuation as seen on all elevations of the building. Three extended brackets support the chamfer slope of the hip roof. No brick ornamentation is in the wall return to the South Elevation.

INTERIOR

Passengers on the Metra UP-NW commuter line enter the Depot in the single doorway at the South Elevation and exit to the track through the double doors at the North Elevation. When leaving the Depot to depart for Chicago, the train is not on the trackside of the northern platform; rather a passenger must cross to the furthest set of tracks to the northernmost platform to board the train.

The South Elevation of the Depot has two single doors with transoms as an entrance on either side of the box bay. The western door was originally constructed for men and the easternmost, for women. The double set of double doors entered a room for freight and another for baggage. From either single entrance door, men to the right, women to the left were able to access the corresponding washrooms. Windows in these rooms, centered to either side of the bow, are half size on the lower sash as a design acknowledgment of the privacy needed for the usage of the room. The entryway path continues through the Depot to double doors at trackside but between each door as configured by the bay window on the north elevation was the Ticket Office for the ticket and yard master. On either side of the Ticket Office was a gender-specific waiting room. Being that the predominant path of passenger rail traffic is from east to west, the eastern Waiting Room has the largest set of windows, over six feet high, along all three walls. Multi-pane windows, a solution to the fabrication limits of glass as existed at the time, enable larger openings for view and illumination. One can, with the overhead eaves, wait on the platform trackside.

The conversion circa 1955 by the Chicago North Western Rail Road of the Depot from passenger to freight and short line commuter, while within the period of significance, was recorded some fifty years later in 2004 by the renovation of the Depot by Metra. Building plans for the renovation were filed with the City of Crystal Lake.

The load bearing exterior brick walls enables the Chicago & North-Western Railway Company to change room configurations without conflict of interior columns. A construction feature that accommodated the change in the 1950's to the Depot to a freight centric point of business with a single waiting room for commuters in the eastern Waiting Room.

Renovations by Metra in 2004 included the passenger walkway around the Depot being made into a single level, removing the steps to enter or leave the building. The raised walkway matched the existing grade established by the freight doors on the South and North Elevations as existed when the Depot was originally constructed. All doorways and windows were restored to operating conditions of a movable sash. The eyebrow vent dormers in the western half of the roof were restored.

Entry to the Depot was again possible from the single doors on either side of the bow at the South Elevation. Once inside the relative shallow depth of the building, moves one outward on the path to the trackside. Exiting the Depot again uses the two sets of double doors on either side of the four-window bay at the North Elevation.

Oak woodwork from beadboard, picture rail, cove molding and window framing was restored as duplicated from the southeast corner of the eastern Waiting Room, previously the Women's Waiting Room. The wooden

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benches were placed in the eastern Waiting Room.³ The maple wood flooring was replaced with stone tile flooring throughout. Hardware fixtures for the doors followed permitted public facility requirements.

The business office of the Station Master was restored which included freight, telegraph and ticket operations. Ticket windows remain to serve those passengers arriving into the building from either of the two south side doors and the East Waiting Room. The two public bathrooms across from the business office were moved to the southern half of the parcel room. The freight office was converted to a commissary. Utility functions for the building utilize the half-basement as originally constructed in 1914.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> | A | Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | B | Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | C | Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | D | Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. |

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | |
|---|--|
| F | a commemorative property. |
| G | less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years. |

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A | Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | B | removed from its original location. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | C | a birthplace or grave. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | D | a cemetery. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | E | a reconstructed building, object, or structure. |

³ The Algonquin Historic Commission, 2 S. Main St. Algonquin Ill, has original furniture from their C&N-W Depot constructed in 1914 whose wood finish matched that of the current interior of the Crystal Lake Depot.

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1914-1974

Significant Dates

1914, 1974

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles Summer Frost

Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western (C&NW) Railroad Depot, now known as Metra UP-NW, is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and locally significant under Criteria A "History".⁴ The Depot's association with the passenger railroad traffic made it a vital link to the multi-state transportation system that first arrived in Crystal Lake in 1854 to connect and unite people not only in Crystal Lake, McHenry County and northeastern Illinois, but throughout the United States.

Since the construction of the Depot in 1914, the building still serves passenger travel by rail and now since the end in 1974 of the passenger era of the Chicago & North-Western Railway Company, as the only extant depot and rail platform from that era of the shipment of goods and travel to and from Crystal Lake, northeastern Illinois and beyond.

The building, architecturally, is a substantially intact example of a railroad passenger depot which Chicago & North-Western Railroad, using the talents of Charles Sumner Frost, to replace along its rail lines, the freight-centric, wood exterior buildings of the 19th Century. The period of historical significance begins in 1914 when the Depot was built in its current location and continues to 1974 when passenger travel was subsumed by the operation in northeastern Illinois of the Regional Transportation Authority for inter-city rail commuter traffic by Metra.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Crystal Lake and the Chicago & North-Western Railroad

The namesake of Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western (C&N-W) Railroad Depot is more than a town stop but a 233-acre natural, glacially formed lake in southeastern McHenry County, Ill., 50 miles northwest from Chicago. During the late Wisconsin Glacial Period In southeast McHenry County, the Barlina Moraine was created in the area of present-day City of Crystal Lake and further west such other moraines as Woodstock and Marengo.⁵ The glacial moraine created a rise or ridge in the local topography. The morainal ridge, given its relative height above adjacent land area, served as a walkway for the Potawatomi and other indigenous populace and later a roadway to the commercial attractions in the Galena mining territory. The glacial outwash of the moraines contributes to the local hydrological feature, Crystal Lake, whose appearance was unnamed in the 1834 government land survey and described as an unnavigable waterway. Surveyors documented for land speculators in railroad ventures, the nominal slope in the Fox River watershed as conducive to the emerging transportation technology of the day, steam engines.

A surveyor, Ziba S. Beardsley recorded likely locations for roads and bridges in McHenry County for the Internal Improvement Act, a statewide program of public works.

*The first highway run through the county was the State road running from the Indiana State line through Lockport, Naperville, Du Page, Warrenville, Dundee, Woodstock and thence to Madison. The act passed the Legislature in 1837 and the road was located by William Smith of Will [County] I.M. Warren of Cook [County] and Zeba S. Beardsley of McHenry [County] [sic]*⁶

⁴ Metra serves the Chicago metropolitan area with eleven separate rail lines from Chicago's Loop which includes the former Chicago & North-Western RR Terminal, nka Ogilvie Center. Metra www.metra.com accessed April 2025

⁵ R. T. Sasman, The water level problem at Crystal Lake, McHenry County, Illinois State Water Survey, Report of Investigation 32, 1957 27p www.isws.illinois.edu/pubdoc/ri/iswwsri-32.pdf Curry, R.C. Berg and R.C. Vaiden, Geological Mapping for Environmental Planning, McHenry County, Ill. ISWGS Circular 559, 1997 p.5

⁶ "Locating a County Seat" Preface and County History, McHenry County Ill Archives History 1877

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Beardsley along this State Road secured from those who held Land Patents, a town plat in 1836 called Crystal Lake and described the lake water as crystal. With nominal depth and sustaining availability of supply, the location became a stop on overland travels through McHenry County across northeastern Illinois. The gravel shoreline of Crystal Lake accommodated ice extraction and its geology of glaciated out wash served the construction needs of building and transportation projects with large rock for cobblestone, gravel for road ballast and clay for bricks.

In the same year that Beardsley filed the town plat of Crystal Lake, the first charter for a railroad in Illinois was granted by the Illinois Legislature, Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. While its point of origin was to be Chicago, how it would arrive, if at all, to Galena would not be established for nearly twenty years and take it through Crystal Lake.

Despite the list of improvements that Beardsley and others filed with the Legislature, the Great Panic of 1836 forestalled the plans of Crystal Lake and the Railroad.⁷ The territory of Cook County in these years was divided further to a combination of Lake and McHenry and by 1840, McHenry County was separated from Lake.

"... the [1840] Census showed that from 1837 when the first vote was cast and from which the population was estimated at 500 people the population had increased to 2578 and the county contained 13 mills and manufacturing establishments."⁸

With all this development, travel was still by beast or foot and Beardsley would have another role in the transportation history of Crystal Lake. Investors arrived in Crystal Lake, one was John Terry Pierson elected to the Illinois legislature, secured a charter for a school, and built brick buildings. Along the State Road A mail post office was established and inn for travelers. Ice was extruded from Crystal Lake.

The charter for the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad was still valid but capital for construction needed to be locally created. A gathering attended by hundreds, was held by William B. Ogden in Rockford Illinois. The path for financing was to create stock in the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. Beardsley was tasked by Ogden to sell such certificates in McHenry County and Crystal Lake. The stock offering successfully raised the capital to expand a route for the market of wheat, corn and ice to Chicago. The Galena and Chicago Union built a rail line out of Chicago to Elgin and followed the previous surveyed, limited elevation of the Fox River, northerly to Crystal Lake.

By 1854 the first chartered railroad of Illinois was the first railroad to arrive in Crystal Lake, a stop furnished with corn and water. The next year another rail company traveled albeit at a different elevation, due northwest from Chicago and its meeting with the Chicago and Galena Union is documented

Fox River Valley Railroad extended a line through McHenry County across the right-of-way of the Chicago & North Western. Despite a different grading that allowed the Fox River Valley to run under the existing line without interfering in its operation, the Chicago & North Western refused to cooperate. Determined workers for the FRV tunneled beneath the existing tracks, only to have Chicago & North Western men, according to the old county histories, "fill the excavation as soon as it was made." This continued for days. Finally, the Fox River Valley "rallied its troops on the Sabbath," dug all the way through unopposed and built a pile bridge to support the Chicago & North Western tracks passing above their new line. Satisfied, the Chicago & North Western offered no further objection, peace was made..."⁹

⁷ Illinois Blue Book 2023-2024 p.324

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The retelling over the years contributed to the misuse of line and company names; the Fox River Valley Railroad references the Chicago Galena Union and the Chicago & North-Western was at the time of the incident, the Illinois & Wisconsin. "Railroad Through the County" McHenry County Living, Sept 13, 2019. The C&N-W organized after the

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The Chicago and Galena Union Railroad brought the first station to Crystal Lake in 1855 and installed it to the west of the Wye of the two rail lines, placing it between the tracks. Notwithstanding being located within the political township of Nunda, the rail stop was called Crystal Lake as was known the post office. The first spur line went southwest to the ice business on Crystal Lake.

Continuing north into Wisconsin was Genoa and east on a junction rail line to the shipping business in Kenosha; there on the shores of Lake Michigan to bypassed the congestion of the Chicago harbor. The northwesterly line continued and though not reaching Galena, went to Rockford, and on to Beloit, Janesville and Madison, Wisconsin.

In the ten-years from the arrival of the first train to Crystal Lake, travelers in northeastern Illinois could ride a train, where there were none earlier. on a junction rail line, from Wisconsin to Chicago, On Monday October 3, 1859 Abraham Lincoln passed through Crystal Lake Depot returning from a speaking engagement in Beloit and Janesville Wisconsin.¹⁰

Ice extraction from Crystal Lake as it did at depots in central Wisconsin, dominated the initial freight service with its own spur line on Dole Avenue from the Crystal Lake Depot to the seasonal icehouse on the south shore of the Lake.

*Ice was king in Crystal Lake for roughly seven decades. Indeed, owing to the prospect of a rich winter harvest, from the mid-1850s through the early 1920s, local ice purveyors and laborers alike welcomed the frigid days of January and February—the more bitterly cold, the better. The arrival of the Chicago and North Western Railway in 1855 facilitated shipping to the big city market. And the following year, Amos Page, owner of the Crystal Lake Ice Company, laid a railroad track from the lake's edge to the downtown train depot—a spur line running along present-day Dole Avenue... By the 1910s, there were more than a dozen icehouses, large and small, lined Crystal Lake's shores. The largest had a storage capacity of 24,000 tons. Ironically, fire was the number one plague of the local ice-harvesting industry, and over the years, several icehouses burned down, causing major setbacks to an entire season's crop. Nevertheless, the local ice harvesting industry thrived through the 1910s, until the advent of electrical refrigeration made it obsolete.*¹¹

Passenger traffic expanded with troop transport from the Civil War and residents of Crystal Lake and McHenry County responded to the call out of military service. Land grant conditions mandated discounts for government travel. Later inducements for passenger travel were made for the assemblies of the Grand Army of the Republic, a fraternal organization of Civil War veterans and other fraternal conventions in the latter 19th Century, all conveniently reachable from routes at the Crystal Lake Depot.

By the end of the Civil War, both rail lines in Crystal Lake were owned by the Chicago & North-Western Railroad and a likely homage to its history was called the Wisconsin Division. Over these rail lines were brought, besides ice, timber, wheat, and minerals from beyond the Mississippi in Minnesota and Dakotas and on to Chicago. The market reach of the Chicago North-Western Railroad enabled a greater audience of Crystal Lake products, ice to the stock yard of Chicago and breweries of Milwaukee. The Depot, a necessary building in the late 19th Century for the dozens of trains a day that passed through Crystal Lake, supported freight and US Postal Service. The original wooden depot building at Crystal Lake, referred to as Dearborn for appearing like the name's sake fort with its Board and Batten construction, was common to its box car origin. Elsewhere

incident in 1859 and acquired the Ill and Wis. All lines at the CL Depot were acquired in 1864 by C&N-W. Robert J. Casey, W.A. S. Douglas, Pioneer Railroad: The Story of the Chicago and North Western System (New York, NY: Whittlesay House, 1948). pp.78-79

¹⁰ David Spratler Fellows, The Cut-Off and Fellows Station, Evansville Wis 2004

¹¹ "On the Rocks in Crystal Lake" McHenry County Living, accessed January 29, 2025

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C&N-W was constructing its wooden depots using one of three standard designs to accommodate passengers as opposed to freight.¹²

The wooden stations were moved, in most cases down the line and in their place, brick buildings were constructed by the Chicago & Northwestern Railway. Crystal Lake benefited in 1914 from that program in three ways, it retained the rail freight services by the move of the original station among the adjoining freight businesses, the switching lines were moved west that were impeding the use of the Wye and automobile traffic on Main Street. The sustaining benefit for Crystal Lake from its association with the Chicago & North-Western Railroad, was a press brick station with the modern conveniences that the travelling rail passenger, men and women, could expect in 1914.

Passenger destinations were not limited to Chicago. Crystal Lake's connection as a junction station of two distinct routes, enabled rail travel to numerous locations for business and recreation. all reported in the social column of the local newspaper. The north route by 1894 went beyond Kenosha, Milwaukee to a Depot constructed in Green Bay on the shores of Sturgeon Bay, one of the new architecturally designed passenger terminals by the Chicago firm of Frost and Granger.

As an indicator of the growth of passenger traffic, ten years after the Crystal Lake Depot opened, the local newspaper reported on June 4, 1925, that "... on the Wisconsin Division there were thirty passenger trains and twelve passenger trains on the Galena Division".¹³

Those forty-two trains crossing to the east of the Crystal Lake Depot utilized the water towers, coal chutes and changed direction with the round house. The Chicago & North-Western Railway Company was buying from the City of Crystal Lake some 200,000-gallon water daily for the operation of the steam engines. In that same year, it was reported ninety-two trains passed through Crystal Lake daily and more than half of these were passenger trains. The freight trains moved dairy, produce, timber and gravel. Even kit homes with all the parts ready to be assembled on a lot, arrived on its rail system by the dozens in Crystal Lake.¹⁴ Another work product from Crystal Lake delivered throughout the Midwest by rail, was America Terra Cotta, designed by Louis Sullivan, molded and cast in Crystal Lake and shipped for adornment on buildings that are now considered National Historic landmarks.¹⁵

Passengers traveled not just within the immediate area of McHenry County and northeastern Illinois but could go to resorts in northern Wisconsin and beyond to Minnesota and the Dakotas. In 1927 President Coolidge went on his way through Crystal Lake to inaugurate the start of the construction of Mt. Rushmore in the Badlands of South Dakota and instilled in the American public the concept of summer vacation travel.

During the First World War, military departures and arrivals were so common an occurrence at the Depot, especially with Ft. Camp Grant, an Army infantry Training Camp to the west in Rockford.¹⁶ After the War, the VFW erected in the grassy area of the abandoned southern track south of the Depot, a flagpole for the initial observance of Memorial Day and other Armed Forces memorials that followed throughout the period of significant.¹⁷

¹² Clem Devine, "C&NWs Standard Number Two Depot: Variations on a Theme" North West Lines Fall 1984 pp. 34-42.

¹³ "92 Trains Pass Through Daily" Crystal Lake Herald, June 4, 1924, p.1

¹⁴ "90-year-old Sears kit house recommended for Crystal Lake landmark status" Aaron Dorman, Northwest Herald, September 12, 2022

¹⁵ Northwestern National Bank of Owatonna https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NHLS/71000441_txt

¹⁶ Camp Grant (Rockford, Ill.). Soldiers' Shirt Pocket Handbook of Camp Grant and Rockford, Ill.; with Maps of Camp and City. Rockford, Ill; [The Camp], 1918. OCLC 13042782; Gregory S. Jacobs Camp Grant, Charleston, S.C.; Arcadia Pub, 2003

¹⁷ "Will Dedicate New Flag Pole" Crystal Lake Herald, April 28, 1927 p.1

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Passenger traffic was promoted by the Chicago & North-Western Railway for recreational purposes and from or to Crystal Lake or any of those resorts or scenic areas reachable from the Depot. A traveler did not have to make the journey first to Chicago then from there, to depart to such bucolic locations as the National Parks or national events like World Fairs. Crystal Lake itself became a vacation destination, and Chicago & North-Western promoted the Lake, no longer a source for ice business, for summer recreation. Convenient travel from or to Chicago provided the inducement of year-round residency. The Chicago & North-Western became a source for delivery of kit homes and Crystal Lake soon saw such constructed among its existing residences, after being removed from box cars packed in central Ohio, southern Illinois, or northern Wisconsin.

The spur line to Crystal Lake for the ice business was removed in the 1920's. Passengers traffic replaced that business for the Chicago & North-Western, filling the Depot on their way to lakeside summer resorts.¹⁸ Crystal Lake came to benefit from the promotion by the Chicago & North-Western of working in Chicago and by rail, enjoying those vacation-like amenities when home or as Crystal Lake adopted the motto, "a good place to live".¹⁹

During the post-World War Two era, Chicago & North-Western continued to experience a diminution in traffic, freight and passenger, and responded by abandoning its lines and closing its depots. Where once freight-centric businesses were located in the area of the Crystal Lake Depot, the property became parking lots for commuters. While the Chicago & North-Western was closing depots, abandoning rails lines, the Company took no such action with the Crystal Lake Depot.

The Company closed its rail service between Crystal Lake and Elgin. Likewise, closed Crystal Lake to Lake Geneva and well before that to Milwaukee. Passengers no longer traveled from Crystal Lake to western Illinois, or Iowa, Wisconsin or Minnesota. With the introduction of commuter diesel trains by the Chicago North-Western, gone were the coal chutes, roundhouse and water tanks at the Crystal Lake Depot. Freight service on the line was managed inside the western two thirds of the Crystal Lake Depot and commuters could pass through the Eastern Waiting Room entering from the single door at the South Elevation, obtain a ticket, sit on the benches, or look out of one of the six windows to see the activities at the far rail platform and then exit through the double doors at the North Elevation of the building. Freight service ended in the building in the mid-1980's.

Beyond the period of significance, Metra, the operator of short line commuter rail traffic in the Chicago metropolitan area, began a program of replacing and restoring the original Chicago & North-Western Railroad Depots. In 2003 Metra obtain a building permit from the City of Crystal Lake to undertaken the conversion of the Depot from a partial and unused freight office to the restored configuration of the passenger service as existed when first constructed in 1914. The freight and parcel area of the Depot become the location for public restrooms and a commercial commissary, complementary of the commuter traffic. The intact interior woodwork of the Eastern Waiting Room was replicated throughout the building. In 2006, at the conclusion of the renovation, a plaque was affixed on the North Elevation of the Depot commending the Depot to the citizens of the City of Crystal Lake. The commuter traffic on the Metra UP-NW Line as the Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western Railroad Depot is known, is the second busiest Metra line, with an average of 38,600 weekday boardings.

Chicago & North-Western Railroad

The year 1850 marked the real beginning of the railway era in Illinois. When that year began, there were about 7,400 miles of railroad in the United States, more than four fifths of which were in states bordering the Atlantic Ocean. Ohio had 319 miles of railroad; Michigan, 270 miles; Indiana, eighty-six miles; Kentucky, fifty-five miles; Tennessee, none; Wisconsin, none; and there was not a mile of railroad west of the Mississippi River.

¹⁸ The former home and grounds of the ice industrialist became the Crystal Lake Country Club and Golf Course.

¹⁹ City of Crystal Lake (n.d.) *Our Community* <https://www.crystallake.org/our-community>

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The significant event that year was the Land Grant Act, as signed by President Millard Fillmore on September 20, 1850, that a railroad should extend from a point at or near the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the western terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, at Peru or La Salle, with a branch line from that point to the extreme northwestern corner of Illinois, opposite Dubuque, Iowa and with another branch to Chicago along Lake Michigan.²⁰

Of even greater significance to the financiers and investors in Illinois was the passage in the Act providing for a grant of 11,500,000 acres of public lands for sale to the state of Illinois to aid in finance of the construction of the long-awaited Central Railroad and of increasing the taxable wealth of the State.

A rail company, the Galena and Chicago Union in that same year ran forty-two miles from Chicago as far west as Elgin. By September, a 10-mile branch connected this rail line to an area of modern-day Aurora. The nominal slope of the Fox River Valley and known water stops on an established coach line, was an inducement for the rail company to continue north. The economic inducements of state land grants in Illinois and Wisconsin launched another route for another rail company, the Illinois and Wisconsin, who would meet up with the Galena & Chicago Union at a point, albeit different grades, in Nunda Township, McHenry County.

The first rail company, Chicago and Galena Union, after reaching Elgin continue in a northerly direction of the Fox River watershed by following its negligible slope to cross the River in the Kane County area of modern-day city of Algonquin. The rail line, the first to arrive in McHenry County in 1854 on its path underway to Wisconsin.

Concurrent in a more direct path from Chicago was the Illinois and Wisconsin Railroad Company crossing the rise and fall of multiple watersheds, Chicago, Des Plaines and Fox River. The arrival of the two rail companies in Crystal Lake created a junction that from thereafter would benefit with access to Lake Michigan to the east and Mississippi to the west.

William Butler Ogden, the then president of the Galena & Chicago Union railway was likely instrumental in selecting and simultaneously pursuing both destinations. In 1855 a rail station was set to the west of the Wye in the location of the Crystal Lake Depot.²¹

The Chicago and Galena Union brought the first station to Crystal Lake in 1855 and installed it to the west of the Wye of the two rail lines, placing it between the tracks. Although located within the political township of Nunda, the rail stop was called Crystal Lake as was known the existing post office. The first spur line went southwest to the ice business on Crystal Lake.

The Chicago & North-Western was organized 1858, some three years after a railroad arrived already (1855) in McHenry County to Crystal Lake and by then the Illinois Wisconsin Railroad had a bridge across the Fox River and Galena and Chicago Union had a depot in Crystal Lake.

The Chicago & North-Western when it had already acquired the Illinois Wisconsin Railroad company, replaced the Fox River bridge in 1865 with a popular style of iron work known as the Bollman Truss Bridge only to replace it again in 1882.

²⁰ "The Land Grant Act of 1850" Early Government Aid to the Rails

www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/landings/Ambot/SOCIETY/SOC13.htm

²¹ Ogden's personal papers, which may have documented such a decision, didn't survive the Great Chicago Fire.

"William B. Ogden and the railroad that pioneered Chicago's place as a transportation hub" Ron Grossman, Chicago Tribune March 12, 2024

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Not only did the gravel pits of the area contribute to the advancement of the railroads in McHenry County but so financially confident in the freight traffic that when the Chicago & North-Western constructed the bridge, the latest design of its time, exclusively for railroads.

Both train companies, using wood-fueled steam engines, needed water. Later coal as fuel was brought to Crystal Lake but locally sourced water would serve the engines until 1964 when the Chicago & North-Western converted its engine fleet to diesel. These operational conversions would contribute to the elimination, in the area of the Depot, the coal towers, water tanks and the round house as the diesel engines could "push and pull" directionally.

Passengers from Crystal Lake no longer needed to travel by stage to whatever the destination in northeastern Illinois or ship commodities east to Chicago or west to the Mississippi; now travel was in days instead of weeks. While the fuel changed from cord wood in the 1860s to Illinois coal, the steam engines needed water. Crystal Lake Depot provided that water.

In addition of Crystal Lake being connect to the region by the service of the Chicago & North-Western Railway, in the summer of 1855 a telegraph line was laid alongside the Galena tracks from Chicago to Freeport, and for the first time on any western railroad, trains were operated by means of Morse's code.

With cartage, freight and passenger, as its core business C&N-W was always in an economic balance between serving the two on a fixed route system. The financial milieu of each decade occurred amidst the vagaries of individual markets which by all appearances to their customers, employees, regulators, both in Illinois and Washington D.C. seem under the control of the railroad industry but the historic record proved otherwise.

Technology and demands of market interests changed the rail industry like refrigerated cars who by the mid World War years carried dairy products from processing plants near the Crystal Lake Depot to Chicago. The mining, timber and agricultural locations, commercially attractive in their own right, like Crystal Lake, became resort destinations. More distant locations beyond Crystal Lake but accessible from the Depot were described for their wilderness attraction. Prior to the Second World War, Crystal Lake and other locations were also promoted by the Chicago & North-Western for their suburban amenities including proximity for commuter travel to Chicago.²²

At the start of the Twentieth Century, some fifty years after the arrival of the railroad in McHenry County, the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company comprised nearly 3,000 miles of railroad, building eight or ten branch lines in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota. The whole system covered nearly 8,000 miles of main line or equivalent to one third the circumference of the Earth.

The most significant connection on the C&N-W from Crystal Lake was to Council Bluffs, Iowa where it connected to the Union Pacific providing for the transport of freight and passenger along the east and west routes of the Transcontinental Railroad. Local social news reported trips to California by train. Originally the C&N-W served as the supply line for construction materials for the rail coming from the east and after construction, benefited from the trade and serving the settlements across the continental United States.

Notwithstanding the financial panic of 1893, Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company had the financial stability to continue its desire to attract passengers through the construction of new terminals, depots and stations. The wooden stations were moved, in most cases down the line and in their place, brick buildings were constructed.

²² The former home and grounds of the ice industrialist Charles Sidney Dole became the Crystal Lake Country Club and Golf Course. www.thedole/history accessed June 28, 2025

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The intersection of the two rail lines owned by the same company accommodated alternative directions of travel. While the freight travel moved centrally into Chicago, passenger traffic elected to travel northerly into Wisconsin or northwesterly to Minnesota and the Dakotas. Locations like Crystal Lake and beyond northeastern Illinois were promoted for their scenic beauty or resorts. In 1904 the Chicago & North-Western created a passenger centric division with its own in-house publication. After the construction in 1911 of its Terminal in Chicago, only two other cross connection or junction depots were constructed, Des Plaines and Crystal Lake, both in 1914, to provide passengers with access to or change their routes in the Chicago & North-Western Railroad system.

Civic boosters and towns requested their rail service companies design depots, grander or larger than previously constructed from down the line. Even though this conversation of sorts was occurring in the height of the Gilded Age as called, the national economy was unstable in labor and capital, the latter being paper currency and precious metals. Marvin H. Hughitt who, as President of Chicago & North-Western Railroad, well known to follow the principle of acquiring nothing until the ability to pay was in hand. Grand depot were not prevalent construction projects from the passenger center Division nor could they, especially when every town, city or state wanted a stop on the Chicago & North-Western Railroad system.²³

Contrary to the grandiose Chicago Terminal constructed in 1911 by the Chicago & North-Western Railway as designed by Charles Sumner Frost and Alfred Hoyt Granger, some three years later much less grand depots were construct in that year, 1914, of such similarity that several on the line were referred to as twins. The Crystal Lake Depot construct that year was identical to Woodstock, Barrington, Des Plaines, on other lines was Algonquin and Rochelle and in other states, Jefferson, Wisconsin. Reflecting the utilitarian attitude of the railroad business and the likely frugality of its President, the depots were single story, pressed brick and passenger centric in its floor plan. Gone was the fireplace, few had dinners or eating areas and but for the Station Master office, none had associated business in the building. Frost wrote the design principle for these types of stations that "the approaches must be ample and the exits to the street so arranged that large bodies of people pass from trains without passing through waiting rooms."

The setting of the Crystal Lake Depot originated during the single-track days when a train traveled to its destination and not going further on the line, rotated on a turntable or roundhouse and returned. A roundhouse, even with the through rail traffic, existed in Crystal Lake. When the second line was introduced by the Chicago & North-Western, it was on the side of the existing track furthest from the station. As a result, the "left-handed train station" persistent when the three new stations were constructed at the time, Chicago (1911), Des Plaines (1914) and Crystal Lake (1914). Passengers were required to board on the atypical side compared to other rail lines radiating outward from their terminals in Chicago.

In keeping with the principles of design that Frost articulated, the trackage on the south side of the Crystal Lake Depot at the time of its construction was removed and a driveway was constructed to the single-entry doors on the South Elevation; once inside, ahead were double doors to the rail platform, A passenger passed the ticket office but need not stop to reach the rail platform or the driveway.

The efficiencies of departure and arrival were promoted by the C&N-W as well as travel time. None was more evident than the creation of the 400 Club, the C&N-W train covering 400 miles in 400 hundred minutes; a route from Chicago to Minneapolis accessible through Crystal Lake. The green and gold colored passenger cars were seen on its route, promoting the efficiencies and speed of the Chicago & North-Western. The same passenger cars were enrolled in the short line commuter run from Crystal Lake to Chicago and convey the same image of efficiency and power to those who saw it pass through Chicago suburbs to the Terminal, especially knowing its passenger were benefiting from air condition travel.

²³ Father-in-law of Frost and Granger.

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Passenger traffic between Elgin and Crystal Lake ended in 1940 and freight traffic ended by 1964 and the 400 Club ended its route one year earlier. Passenger traffic continued from the Crystal Lake Depot, north to Lake Geneva until it ended in 1971. As businesses themselves changed in the area of the Depot, their property became used for automobile parking, initially for those train passengers whether local or long distant destinations. As the decline of passenger traffic continued, by the late 1950s, during the term of Benjamin W. Heineman of the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company, the passenger features of the Crystal Lake Depot were converted to support the remaining freight operations and the Waiting Room in the east area of the building was used for commuter and fare collections. The freight business likely sustained the need for the Depot in Crystal Lake whereas elsewhere in the Chicago & North-Western system, depots from that construction class of 1914, were either abandoned in place or modernized for efficiencies of operations. As food operations in another time moved from within-station to on-train, so did ticket and fare collections move to conductors replacing the ticket offices in the depots. Roof-only shelters were constructed in place of buildings for the commuter. In 1974, the last year of the period of significance, the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company ended fiscal responsibility of its commuter service upon the creation of the Regional Transportation Authority and the Crystal Lake Depot became a passenger stop on the Metra Commuter System.²⁴

In 1974, the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior published for a Conference, an inventory of train depots and their preservation. In the text of the Conference publication, a trend was reported.

Because of their size and the precarious financial situation in which many railroads have found themselves, railroad stations are particularly vulnerable to destruction or abandonment by companies unable or unwilling to maintain them.

The observations followed a statistic that,

Within the last ten years numerous railroad terminals have been threatened or demolished both in large cities like New York and Chicago and in smaller towns like Parkersburg, West Virginia and Kent, Ohio. While there are an estimated 20,000 stations still standing in the United States, this is less than half the number that were standing only twenty years ago.

The source for the statistics is not identified in the Conference publication but nearly twenty years earlier [1956] Meeks wrote that there were 80,000 stations. The number speaks to the necessity of train depots in the National experience and thereby, their popularity. So common an image and invoking a visceral feeling was captured in the Wausau ad campaign The Depot both visual and print to become the company's logo and years later, it stands the test of time and familiar to people nationwide. "The trains are gone now. But the little depot works on."²⁵

*The station was an essential part of the new system of transportation; it reflected the impact of the technology and mobility of the masses. It played its part in the opening up of the frontier; it is associated with conurbation, the spread of suburbs, the development of resorts.*²⁶

From the so-called Class of 1914, the record of their survivability other than Crystal Lake is questionable as many have already been removed from service or demolished

Chicago - demolished

Des Plaines - demolished

²⁴ H. Roger Grant, "The North Western: A History of the Chicago & North Western Railway System (Railroads in America) December 4, 1996

²⁵ Scott Kosinski, "Transformational Sales and Marketing Leader in the Healthcare and Insurance Market, LinkedIn May 24, 2016 <https://images.app.gd/AapH8z7VA43tfh59> accessed June 30, 2025

²⁶ Meeks preface ix

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Park Ridge - demolished
Barrington - closed and moved
Rochelle - demolished
Woodstock - converted
Algonquin - demolished²⁷
Jefferson, Wisconsin - demolished
Iron River, Michigan - closed
Rapid City, S. Dakota - demolished
Redfield, S. Dakota - closed

Santiago Calatrava said, "A railway station is something that can generate a city." For over 110 years, the Chicago & North-Western Depot has been a part of Crystal Lake's transportation, businesses and tourism history, which all played roles in the economy of Chicago. It was the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company and later railroad lines that enabled 19th century Chicago's incredible economic growth and success and likely created a national transportation hub of commerce and travel.²⁸

The Crystal Lake Chicago & North-Western Railroad Depot maintains its essential appearance and location from the period of significance (1914-1974). It is a rare intact physical link to the beginning of railroad service in McHenry County, and to the once economically dominant Wisconsin Division of the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company both for freight and passenger.

Depot Architectural History

During the period of significance, the architectural style of the American train depot went from a brought-in-place boxcar to fantastical expanses of multi-storied buildings. The professional life of Charles Summer Frost, whose works is most associated with the Chicago & Northwestern Railway, reflects these changes.

Carroll L. V. Meeks in his watershed book *The Railroad Station: An Architectural History*, opines that the form of the building is as much part of its function and that, contributed to the changes Frost saw in his practice along with other architects of train depots. The trend further explains the abandonment of those extent remnants of the Chicago & North-Western Railroad depots.

*Recent observers have too often failed to realize that it is not the structure alone which gave the distinction to Gothic architecture or to the architecture of any other great building. Rather it was the fusion between structured systems and pervasive form feeling ... Roman architecture is more than an architecture of arches and domes, gothic more than the architecture of buttressing vaults. The architecture of the past 100 years is more than an architecture of structural steel and glass*²⁹

A style of architecture was created for this technology of transportation described by the riddle asking, where must you go in, to go out and the answer is a train depot. In the post-Civil War period with the creation and expansion of passenger travel points of entry to the rail system, depots became one of a kind architectural style.

Railway termini and hotels are to the nineteenth century what monasteries and cathedrals were to the thirteenth Century. They are truly the only real representative building we possess. . . Our metropolitan termini have been leaders of the art spirit of time. -Building News, 1875, forward "The Railroad Station", Carroll L. V. Meeks

²⁷ Not only was the Depot demolished, but no mention of its existence was made in Ira J. Bach and Susan Wolfson. *A Guide to Chicago's Train Stations, Present, and Past*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986

²⁸ Donald L. Miller, "City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America" (Simon & Schuster, 1997)

²⁹ Meeks p. 162

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The Chicago & North-Western Railroad retained for its own buildings, the private architectural services of Henry Ives Cobb (1859-1931), who partnered with Charles Sumner Frost (1856-1931) who himself in turn worked in partnership with Alfred Hoyt Granger (1867-1939). At the end of the 19th Century, the Chicago architectural firm of Frost and Granger were already known, whether enabled through their matrimonial connections, for buildings of the most picturesque and ornate structures for railroad companies. Their designs are seen in the passenger terminals of Omaha Nebraska, Minneapolis St. Paul, Milwaukee and even in their own city of Chicago for their family affiliated company, Chicago & North-Western Railroad.³⁰ Towers and columns from the Revival Italianate and Queen Anna design look, were readily apparent from building to building and other architects emulated the trend as seen in the Grand Western Depot in Springfield Illinois. The size of the city was not commensurate with style as Green Bay benefited with a five-story clock tower at its construction, the largest in Wisconsin.

Beaux-Arts and columns once appeared in passenger terminals throughout the railroad system but as the age of classical picturesque faded in style or yielded to the demands of the functionalism of the operational requirements of a railroad business, such elements disappeared in the pattern and configuration of the depots, which occurred, even in the same railroad company. The juxtaposition of the design shift is no more evident than the front page of the C&N-W Passenger Bulletin of 1914 that showcase the Italian Renaissance Revival-style of the Frost designed Terminal in Chicago, created three years earlier and once located on a site bounded by Madison, Lake, Clinton and Canal Streets. In the same issue, by way of comparison the eight passenger depots on page 22, created under his hand or still engaged with the Company, but all bereft of such stylistic embellishments.

Amidst all this design work of the Chicago Terminal, Charles Sumner Frost writes in a professional journal regarding the principles of small-depot design.

The design for small stations is very similar; each requires two waiting rooms, one ticket office, and a baggage-room, but so simple a problem, if considered rightly, has many points important both to the company and the travelling public. The waiting room should always command a view of the trains. The approaches must be ample and the exits to the street so arranged that large bodies of people may pass from trains without passing through waiting rooms.

*Architecturally, the building should express its purpose and when possible, also give some hint as to the character of the town or city it serves. Above all things, as it is intended for a waiting place, the shelter feature must be strongly developed. The wall and piers should be massive, even out of proportion to the load they carry, in order not to be damaged by the vibration and jar caused by passing trains. The roof is, after all, the chief feature, and its handling and material depend much on the failure or success of the design. The carriage porch is practical only at points of small travel; at others, the platforms, with long shelters projecting a few feet over the road may serve a better purpose.*³¹

The partnership of Frost and Granger survived six years, though not unusual for the organization and reorganization of the architectural firms of the time in Chicago. Frost on his own by 1909 continued to design buildings for the Chicago & North-Western Railroad Company. Now absent columns, clock towers and second floors, Frost's signature design was hip roof, press brick masonry and freight and baggage areas segregated from passengers. When architectural styles changed in the early 20th century to the emerging Arts and Crafts aesthetics, the movement did not leave completely behind the previous classics. Frost's education and professional practice, associated for a time among the practitioners from European schools of Beau Arts architecture and his first collaborator, Henry Ives Cobb occurred amidst the then experiences in Massachusetts

³⁰ Frost, Charles Sumner (1912, May2) Construction of the Chicago & Northwestern Terminal: Detailed, *The Construction News* vol 33 pp.9-18

³¹ Frost, Charles Sumner (1897, September) *Architectural Reviewer* pp. 19-22

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created by Henry Hobbs Richardson (1838-1880). There, among the works of Richardson was a depot in North Easton, Massachusetts [1886] of all the elements that Frost would later use in the small depot design.³²

Carroll Meeks described this trend in design of depots as utilitarian for the benefit of the passenger.

*The simple but not primeval station of the future will accomplish the following objectives with distinction: short clear routes for arriving and departing passengers, mechanical transportation of hand luggage, waiting areas adjacent to the platforms, frequent exits from the platforms to local transportation and an atmosphere of dignity and quiet.*³³

A chronological itinerary of Frost workmanship followed his application of design in the Lake Forest depot (1900), Norwood Park depot (1907) and outside Illinois in Sac City, Iowa (1916). What can be described in 1914, as an explosion of pattern design, the Chicago & North-Western in-house publication, Passenger Bulletin, identified eleven stations, two documented from contemporary records by Frost and others, conveyed the elements of his design to such an extent as called twins by observers in the day.

Among this collection of Chicago & North-Western Railroad depots constructed in 1914 was the Crystal Lake Depot and the elements of a Frost design can be seen in the substantially unaltered surviving appearance of the building. The intact surviving Crystal Lake Depot conveys what Charles Sumner Frost accomplished for his client, the Chicago & North-Western Railroad, and local newspaper described as a pretty little station in Crystal Lake, Illinois updated with all the necessary conveniences.

"The new building will be larger than the old one, being 88 feet, 11 inches long by 22 feet, 2 inches wide. It'll be built of brown pressed brick with gray J. M. Transite asbestos shingle roof. The interior woodwork will be of red oak, quarter sawed for the panels, doors and countertops.

The plans of the interior provide for a women's waiting room, 23X20 feet, a men's waiting room 23X20 feet, baggage room 15X20 feet, express room 12X29 feet, and a ticket office 11 X12 feet. The floors of the waiting rooms and ticket office will be constructed of hard maple and those of the express and baggage room of cement.

*The building will be steam heated, the plant being located in a boiler room in the basement, 14 feet and three inches by 20 feet. Both the men's and women's waiting rooms will be equipped with all sanitary toilet rooms and drinking fountains.*³⁴

The Depot neither towers above the commercial buildings along Woodstock or Railroad Street nor is there any external fenestration of an architectural period of almost a century and a half ago when the building was constructed. Its brick massing, augmented by the hip roof atop a red press brick foundation wall and no other stonework or material used in the exterior walls, creates a distinct, destination point in the commuter parking area.

During its construction, the southern side rail track was removed leaving the area for a carriage pull-up which even by 1914 was a travel way for automobiles.

Close examination of the Crystal Lake Depot illustrates an American bond of red press brick and a roof truss which precludes the necessity of interior columns. The variables of the railroad business could accommodate

³² A single story in height with Richardson's characteristic heavy masonry and oversized roof. It runs north-south trackside. The interior is laid out symmetrically within, with a passenger room at each end, one for women, the other for men.

³³ Carroll L. V. Meeks, "The Railroad Station, An Architectural History" (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1956) p.164

³⁴ "Work on Depot is Progressing" Crystal Lake Herald August 6, 1914, p.1

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changes in room usage. Along with the passengers, the principal occupant of the Depot was the Station Master who under his direction or himself accommodates mail, telegraph, freight and the control of the outside semaphore signal for the daily passing of dozens freight and passenger trains. The window lintels and sills are pressed brick. The double hung wood sash windows served for ventilation, and heat was a steam boiler in the half-basement under the freight and package rooms.

The two, single entry doors, specific to gender along the South Elevation are the furthest away from the double doors used for freight and packets and provide the visual clue to the point of entry.

Multi-pane windows are of a size to accommodate the maximum illumination, and visibility outward of the activities of the rail platform.

Once inside, the relative shallow depth of the building moves one outward on the path to the trackside. Double doors are on the North Elevation to accommodate the passing traffic of passengers entering and leaving the rail platform. No shelter or porch exists.

The interior woodwork and benches are stained finished oak wood and convey a sense of dignity and reservation of purpose. The largest waiting room with the most windows is the East Waiting Room facing toward Chicago.

While described by local newspapers as a pretty little station, the design elements by Frost accommodated the volume of passenger traffic recorded at that location on the Chicago & North-Western Railroad for the Crystal Lake Depot.

The Crystal Lake Depot remains one of the small numbers of intact railroad related structures of the Chicago North-Western Railroad Company and the only one from its junction of multi-state passenger service terminals. Notwithstanding the diminished level of service in comparison to its history in the Chicago and North-Western Railroad system, the Crystal Lake Depot functions so well for commuter railroad transportation that it is difficult to believe the age of the building. Meeks foresaw the value of such buildings.

*Their legacy of inspiration for our own buildings will be safeguarded so that it may be readily available in many places for those who will certainly seek it out. In the days to come calculated use will be made of such ... studied as starting points for new developments.*³⁵

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³⁵ Meeks, p.165

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: C&NWS Archives Research Center, Illinois
Railroad Museum, 7000 Olson Road, Union
Illinois

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Crystal Lake C&NW RR Depot
Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 (±)

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>42.244169</u> Latitude	<u>-88.317190</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Within an area bounded to the south by East Woodstock Street, west by Grant Street, north by Railroad Street and east by Main Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Physical parameter of the building

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Robert Kosin</u>	date	_____
organization	<u>Crystal Lake Historic Preservation Commission</u>	telephone	<u>815-459-2020</u>
street & number	<u>100 W. Woodstock Street</u>	email	<u>rkosin@gmail.com</u>
city or town	<u>Crystal Lake</u>	state	<u>IL</u> zip code <u>60014</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Crystal Lake C&NW RR Depot
Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:	<u>Crystal Lake Depot</u>		
City or Vicinity:	<u>Crystal Lake</u>		
County:	<u>McHenry</u>	State:	<u>Illinois</u>
Photographer:	<u>Robert Kosin</u>		
Date Photographed:	<u>2023-2025</u>		

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

PHOTO LOG - EXTERIOR

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_001
Exterior East Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_002
Exterior North Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_003
Exterior West Face

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_004
Exterior South Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_005
Exterior South Face Truss Brackets Detail 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_006
Exterior South Face American Bond Detail 2024

PHOTO LOG - INTERIOR

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_007
Interior East Waiting Room 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_008
Interior East Waiting Room Southeast Corner Detail 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_009
Interior Ticket Window Hallway Southeast Corner 2024

Crystal Lake C&NW RR Depot

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_010

Interior West Waiting Room Northeast Corner 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_011

Interior Commissary 2024

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Crystal Lake C&NW RR Depot

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

FIGURE LOG

001/010 Figure Memo C&NW 13Jun31914

002/010 Figure Train Depot CL Herald 19Nov1914

003/010 Figure CL Depot Dec1914

004/010 Figure Ice Car Date Unknown

005/010 Figure C&NW Line Map 1904

006/010 Figure Travel Poster Date Unknown

007/010 Figure C&NW Suburban Directory Date Unknown

008/010 Figure C&NW Suburban Golf and Country Clubs Directory Date Unknown

009/010 Figure C&NW Water Tank and Coal Chute Crystal Lake Date Unknown

010/010 Figure Steam Engine 1533 C&NW CL Depot 1940 circa

CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

PHOTO LOG

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_001
Exterior East Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_002
Exterior North Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_003
Exterior West Face

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_004
Exterior South Face 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_005
Exterior South Face Truss Brackets Detail 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_006
Exterior South Face American Bond Detail 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_007
Interior South Bay Window 2025

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_008
Interior East Waiting Room 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_009
Interior East Waiting Room Southeast Corner Detail 2024

CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

FIGURE LOG

001/010 Figure Memo C&NW 13Jun31914

002/010 Figure Train Depot CL Herald 19Nov1914

003/010 Figure CL Depot Dec1914

004/010 Figure Ice Car Date Unknown

005/010 Figure C&NW Line Map 1904

006/010 Figure Travel Poster Date Unknown

007/010 Figure C&NW Suburban Directory Date Unknown

008/010 Figure C&NW Suburban Golf and Country Clubs Directory Date Unknown

009/010 Figure C&NW Water Tank and Coal Chute Crystal Lake Date Unknown

010/010 Figure Steam Engine 1533 C&NW CL Depot 1940 circa

CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

001/010 Figure Memo C&NW 13June1914

Chicago 6-13-14

G. M. O. 14593

-Warrant No. 4450

Work under Engr. of wtee.

Division Wisconsin

Location Crystal Lake

Description:-

authorizing the erection of brick passenger station
and moving and remodeling of present station to serve as freight
house at Crystal Lake, in accordance with revised plan and estimate
of 5-13-14

Est. Cost. \$13,315.00

Commenced

Completed

Reqn. No.

CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

002/010 Figure Train Depot CL Herald 19Nov1914

Shaw Local

The Herald (Crystal Lake, Illinois) · 19 Nov 1914, Thu · Page 1
Downloaded on Mar 29, 2024



Train Depot

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rkosin
Fri, Mar 29, 2024

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CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

003/010 CL Depot Dec1914



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

004/010 Figure Ice Car Unknow Date



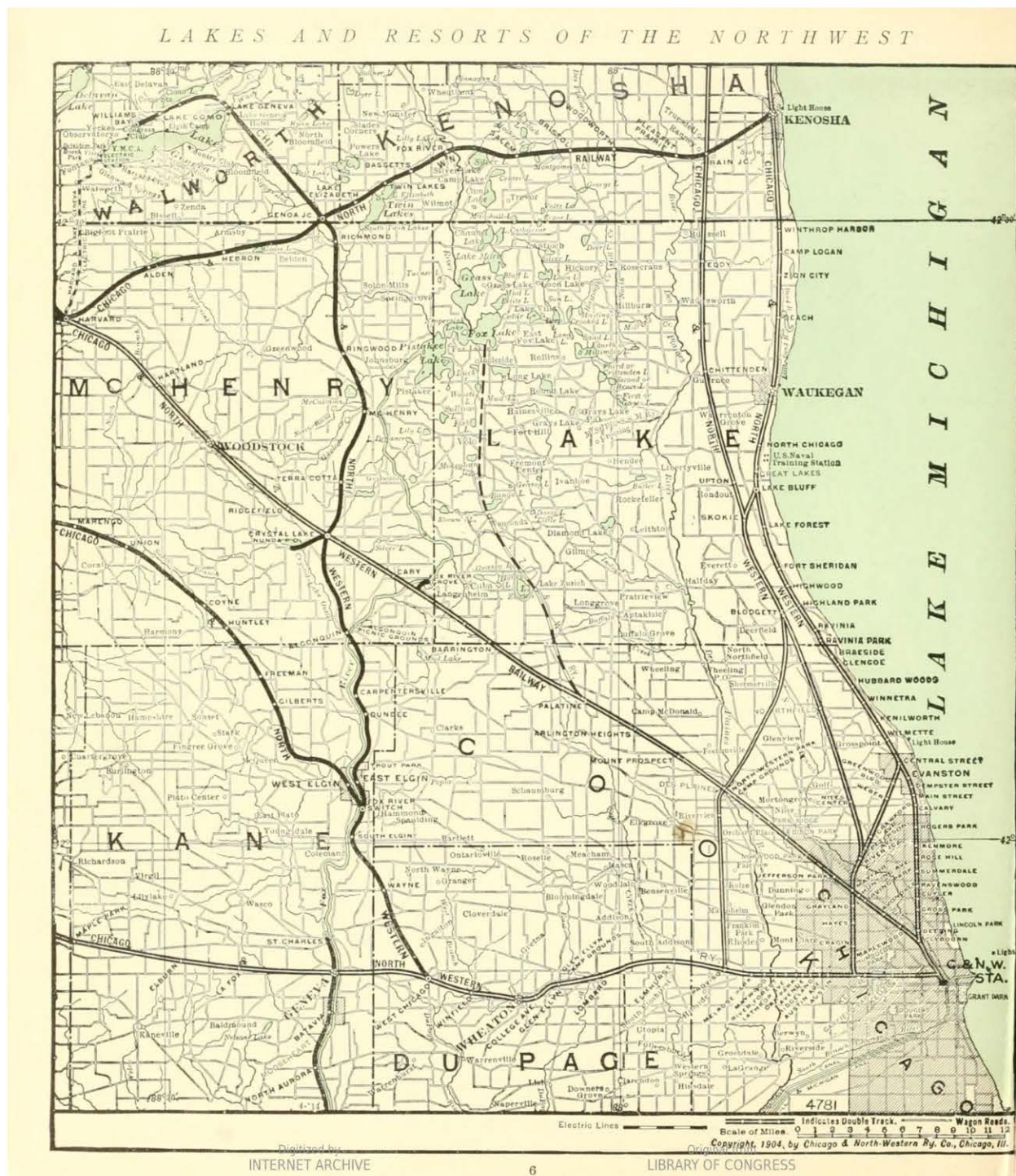
CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

005/010 C&NW Line Map 1904



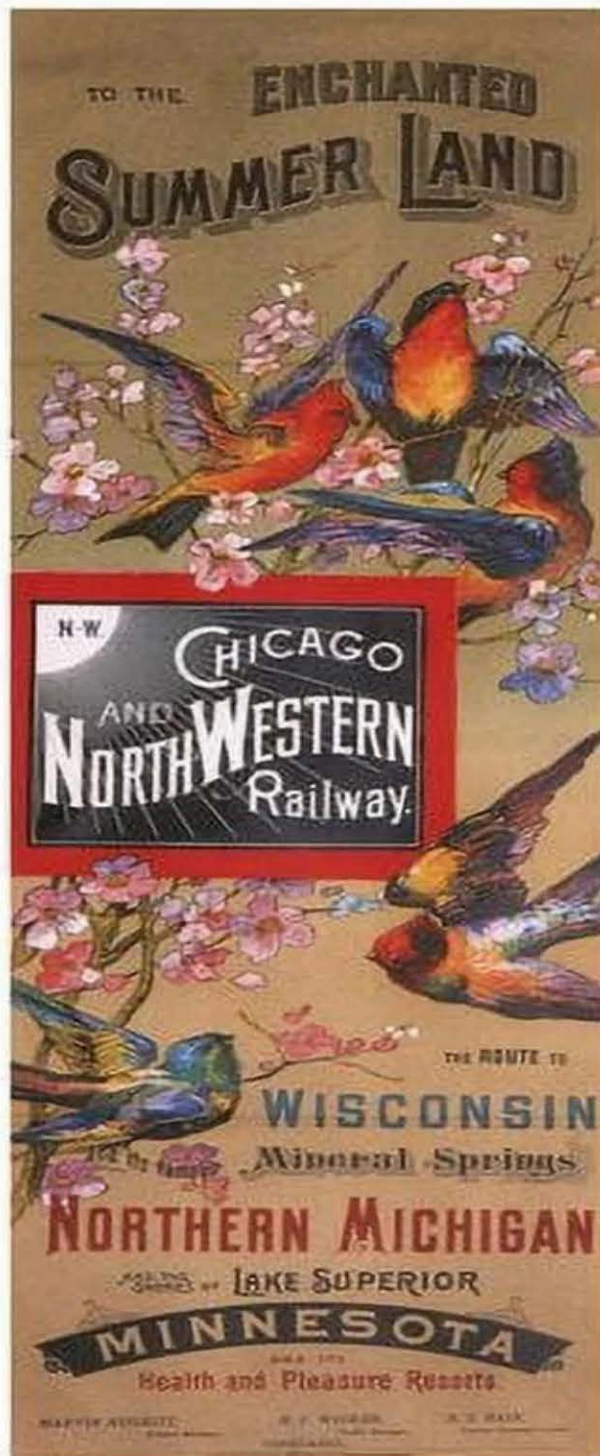
CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

006/010 C&NW Travel Poster Date Unknown

McHenry, Illinois

County and State



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

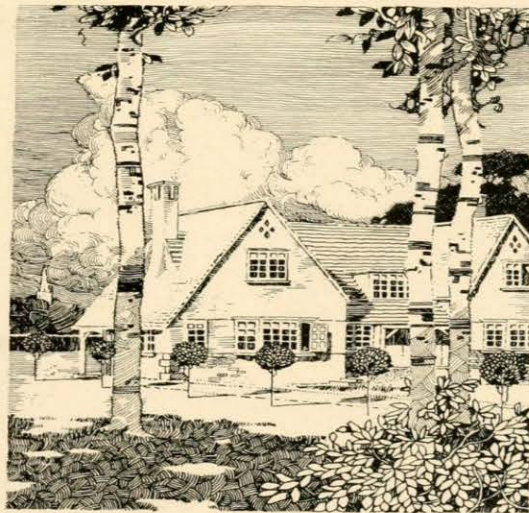
Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

007/010 C&NW Suburban Directory Date Unknown

BEAUTIFUL
SUBURBAN
TOWNS



*Issued by the Passenger
Department of . . . THE
CHICAGO and NORTH
WESTERN RAILWAY.
Chicago.*

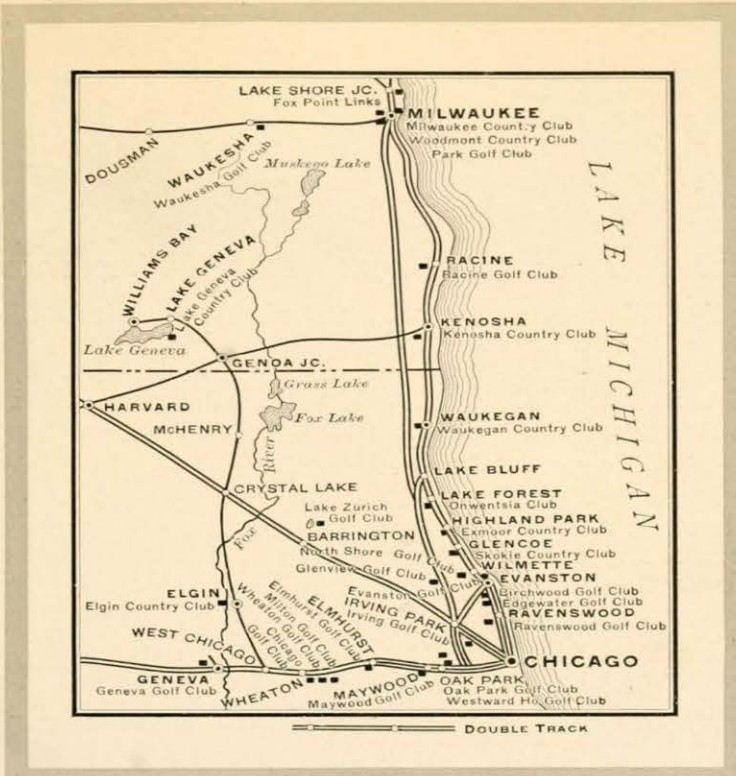
CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

008/010 C&NW Suburban Directory Golf and Country Clubs Date Unknown



One of the most agreeable features of life in the suburban districts is the convenient location and the attractive buildings and grounds of various golf and country clubs.

Special attention is given to travel to and from these clubs, the city and the various suburbs, particularly during the summer season.

Fast suburban trains with parlor and cafe cars and standard day coaches are operated on schedules especially adapted to the convenience of club patrons throughout the season, and low commutation rates are in effect the year round.

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CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

009/010 C&NW Water Tank and Coal Chute Crystal Lake Date Unknown



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

010/010 Steam Engine 1533 C&NW CL Depot 1940 circa



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_001

Exterior East Face 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_002

Exterior North Face 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_004

Exterior South Face 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

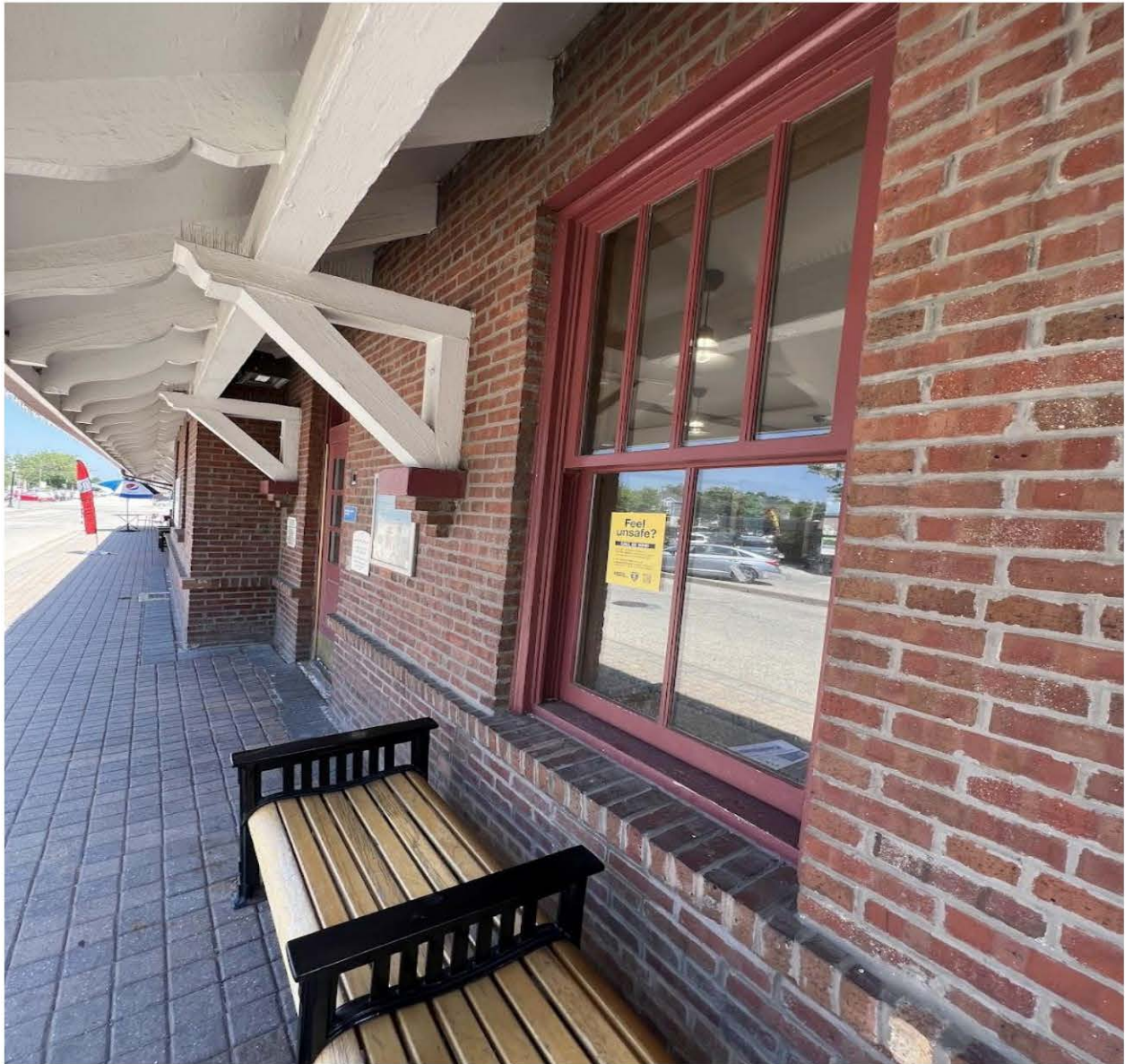
Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_005

Exterior South Face Truss Brackets Detail 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_006

Exterior South Face American Bond Detail 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_007

Interior Bay Window 2025



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_008

Interior East Waiting Room 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

Country and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_009
Interior East Waiting Room Southeast Corner Detail 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

PHOTO LOG - INTERIOR

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_007

Interior East Waiting Room 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_008

Interior East Waiting Room Southeast Corner Detail 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_009

Interior Ticket Window Hallway Southeast Corner 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_010

Interior West Waiting Room Northeast Corner 2024

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_011

Interior Commissary 2024

CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

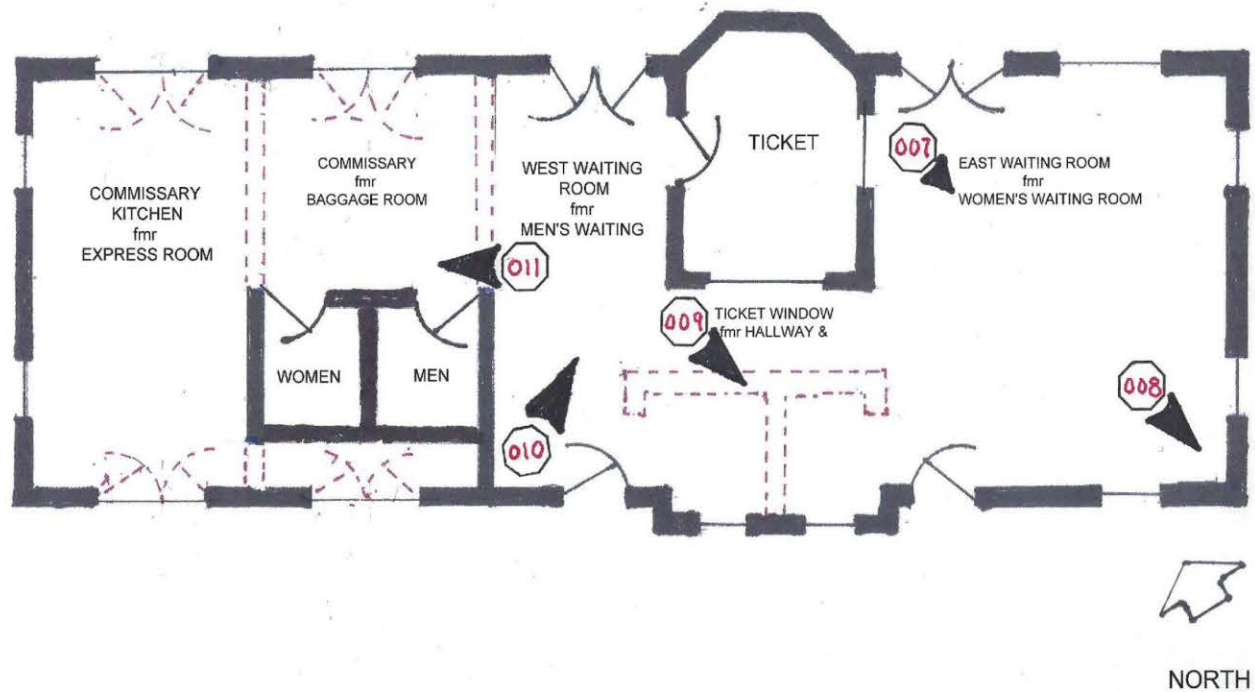
County and State

BLACK Present Day Walls, Doors, Windows

source: Crystal Lake Commuter Station, Permit Drawings 2004, METRA Chicago IL

RED 1914 Walls, Doors, Windows

source: Barrington Depot Floor Plan CNW Archive, Union, IL



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_007

Interior East Waiting Room 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_008
Interior East Waiting Room Southeast Corner Detail 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_009
Interior Ticket Window Hallway Southeast Corner 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_010

Interior West Waiting Room Northeast Corner 2024



CRYSTAL LAKE C&NW RR DEPOT

Name of Property

McHenry, Illinois

County and State

IL_McHENRY_CRYSTALLAKECNWRRDEPOT_011

Interior Commissary 2024

