



Photo by SandHill Marketing, LLC

The Depot-Richland Museum and Visitor Center, 397 West Seminary- 1909. Phone: 608.649.3376, email: Visitorcenter@richlandcenter.com. Hours: Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

The railroad came to Richland Center in 1876. Established as a small spur line, this narrow gauge railroad connected Richland Center to the outside world and helped create a dramatic growth in commercial activity. (In fact the rails were of maple logs in the very beginning of operation.) The first building boom in the city was a direct result of the economic growth of such businesses such as the collection of commercial ventures of the A.H. Krouskop Company, the John Kirkpatrick Wholesale Cheese Company and the Carnation Milk Condensery plant which relied on the railroad to ship their products throughout the United States. The railroad brought a wide variety of manufactured goods into Richland County like agricultural implements, automobiles as well as passengers who depended on it for travel that far outstripped the capabilities of the horse and buggy age.

The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad Passenger Depot was built in 1909. The depot is characterized by exposed rafter ends and by an emphasis on structural parts that are generally associated with the Craftsman style of the early twentieth century.

It served passengers until the 1950s and freight into the 1980s, but by the late 1990s had been neglected for many years. In 1998, the city of Richland Center purchased the building and through a number of federal grants and local fundraising efforts, a group of tireless citizens worked together to restore the Depot to its current state. The Depot now looks much like it did when constructed in 1909. It was re-dedicated in October of 2001.



The Depot now functions as the Richland Museum & Visitor Center. Its focus is on local history and features area artists and craft-persons. The Visitor Center offers information regarding, local and area attractions, local events, lodging, restaurants, state maps, city maps, county maps and historical displays. It utilizes the extensive collection of historical artifacts of the Richland County History Room at the Brewer Public Library, 325 N. Central Ave. Richland Center, WI 53581. For more information, contact the library at richlandcenterpl@gmail.com phone 608.647.6444.

